



A.J. LLEWELLYN

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Story By **A.J. LLEWELLYN** and **JOHN BRUNO**

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LAD
MASSIVE STUDIO SERIES
BOOK ONE

BY

A.J. LLEWELLYN

DEDICATION

*To John Bruno for bringing me the idea in the
first place. Love you, man!*

CHAPTER ONE

I rolled up to the checkpoint, the street side row of Pavilions market parking lot. It was three a.m. and most of the clubs along Santa Monica Boulevard were closed. A few late night revelers came running out of the market with last-minute boxes of condoms and six-packs of beer.

A guy in a black SUV across the road was getting indiscreet head from another man in a pink baseball cap leaning over him from the passenger seat. The driver caught me staring and closed his eyes in an exaggerated display of ecstasy. Goddamn exhibitionists.

I looked around. I was the first one on site. I uncapped my coffee, took a sniff, made sure nothing nasty was floating on the top and sipped it. I'd had bad luck with sodas and coffees late at night. Tiny roaches nestled in ice cubes, a fake fingernail another time. I like my coffee straight-up.

From the corner of my eye, I saw Martinez roll up. Of the Big Four, he's the one I'd say is drop dead handsome. I'd do him in a nanosecond

except he's straight. And he also has no idea I'm gay.

Funny how we can be working for a supposedly gay-friendly cop shop and being outted is more terrifying for me than getting shot.

At the age of thirty, Martinez was two years older than me. We were both dark haired, except he has the mocha skin of a Puerto Rican. He parked, locked and rapped on the passenger window of my brand new GT Mustang. I never even glanced at him. I just popped the lock from my door panel.

"Nice wheels, Cannon." He shut the door. I locked it again.

For a moment, the smell of coffee was all I cared to think about.

"He's taking a long time." Martinez pointed a finger at Pink Baseball Cap going nuts on the driver's cock in the SUV.

"Do you remember the night we busted that actor with the trannie? Claimed he had no idea she was a he?"

I thought for a moment. That was a long time ago, when I was first on the beat, before the secret training, before the giant leap into the task force.

"Yeah," I said. "She didn't even look like a chick."

"Guy in the pink baseball cap looks like he loves what he's doing." Martinez's tone was wistful.

I glanced at him. "Problems at home?"

He shifted in his seat. "My wife said she loved giving head before we were married. Now she's suddenly developed a gag reflex."

"You need to take her out to dinner more."

"That'll fix her gag reflex problem?"

"It'll help ease it some."

He shook out a couple fries from a paper bag. I grabbed them and chewed. Still hot. My big weakness. He didn't gripe when I swiped a few more.

The show across the road finished and the cocksucker raised his head, glancing around. Fuck! It was Sal Pistone. Silly asshole always claims not to be gay, though I've had sex with him several times.

Pistone and I have met in a few dark places, away from prying eyes. I've never known him to be this...flagrant, but then it was three o'clock in the morning. He'd probably been cruising some of the daddy bear sites, fell in love with the driver's cock and just had to show it some respect.

Martinez and I ducked at the same time when Pistone looked our way. I inched my face up a little to glimpse him sauntering down the street, hands jammed in his pockets.

"Hey, I know that guy from somewhere," Martinez said.

The driver in the SUV pulled away, fast.

I opened the Krispy Kreme box. "Want a donut?"

"Shit, Cannon. How do you stay so thin?"

I fuck a lot. "I work out a lot."

Two seconds later, the other two members of our reluctant quartet showed up. I shoved the donut down my jaw, chasing it with the rest of my coffee.

They ran to my car and got in as I popped the locks once again. I traded glances with Henney and Burke in the rear.

"We ready?"

Burke, who at twenty-eight has seen combat experience in Afghanistan and Iraq, did a couple tours before coming to work in the anti-gang unit in South Central LA. He survived international war zones, but got shot on his first day on the job back in *civilization*.

I picked him for the Special Response Team because I dug the fact he grabbed his assailant's weapon and capped him right between the eyes as he lay dying.

He gave me a thumb's up and leaned back against the headrest. I could smell booze on him, but knew he wasn't drunk. He was going through four kinds of hell. His wife and his girlfriend had

just had babies the same day, in the same hospital. He got busted bad. One of them blasted him on Twitter, the other posted doctored photos of him in fishnet stockings on Facebook. He was facing disciplinary hearings, but for now, he was still an active member of the SRT.

Every day, he endured jokes about his stockings, his wigs and whatever else the ladies cooked up for him. I told him to be thankful they hadn't super-glued his cock to his belly like the poor schmo whose plight had become the latest news fodder.

"Donut," Burke yelled. "You got a blueberry fritter there?"

I handed it over. He looked a lot happier.

"You sure you want that, Burke?" Hennedy asked him. "I mean...it might put some cellulite on your thighs."

"Fuck you, man."

The rest of us laughed.

"Yeah, we're gonna have to buy you some Spanx," I joked and instantly regretted it.

"How do you know about Spanx?" Martinez asked. "I've seen the girls you date. They don't look like they got bulges anyplace...even where a lady should have bulges."

I am so gay. "So I like 'em skinny. But I got sisters." *Boy, I hope Noreen never hears about this.*

I drove quickly down Crescent Heights to the no-man's land of Los Angeles. Just south of Olympic, we entered a twilight border between good neighborhood and bad. Here, you had your hard-working families struggling to rise above blue collar to white. They cared about their homes, their families and they didn't care much for crime.

Our target was supposed to be in the good neighborhood, but it was in the bad. Very bad. I spotted an illicit set of sprinklers drenching a lavish green lawn, in violation of the city's Monday and Thursday only code.

Veering left, I appreciated the dark, quiet streets, but loved the dazzling lights still on display. My first week in LA ten years ago, there used to be a chick called Angelyne on billboards everywhere. She was a tiny platinum blonde with big tits, cute lips and minimal clothing. She was probably as old as dirt now, but I wondered if those big signs ever did anything for her. I kinda thought there was something cool about her. *Christ, I am so gay.*

I parked off Sierra Bonita and cut the lights.

"You think Monroe is sleeping again?" Hennedy asked. Of all the guys, he was my favorite. Hennedy gave me more laughs than anyone because he was a hot-looking Irishman who refused to marry when he could enjoy flings with both men and women. I asked him once

which he preferred, because I honestly don't know too many true bisexuals.

"I can't choose," he said. "It's apples and oranges."

So far, I'd resisted letting him know I was gay. You never know when a man will turn on you. I wasn't worried about Pistone because everyone thought he was an idiot anyway.

There was a gay cop I'd coveted once. Man...I still felt chills thinking about how badly things went. Will Tallman had been my partner. He was the first cop I seriously pursued.

"Nah, you're too hot, Cannon," he'd said. "I think I could fall in love with you."

I tried to tell him that wasn't an option. I never fall in love. I never play for keeps. We played, we both got hurt and I was determined never to let that happen again.

Will had his own special duties now and we never spoke at all. It hurt. I tamped down those memories. Opposite us, another unmarked car flashed its lights. We were on.

"Finally," Burke groaned. "Remind me to kick Monroe's ass."

All four of us got out and I flipped the trunk open. We put on Kevlar vests, flak jackets, hats, checked our weapons and moved across the street. Out of nowhere, a sleek black van appeared. The

letters SRT were stamped on the sides. Two guys in back, two up front. We jumped in.

“Well, if it ain’t the pajama brigade,” Pistone sneered.

Light must have dawned on Martinez because when he thought nobody was looking, he mimed Pistone giving head. Our lead tech blanched. Pistone wore a headset and night vision glasses, but I could tell his anxiety level just went into the red zone.

“Hey, Speed,” Pistone said, his voice cracking. Burke kept fiddling with his vest.

“Speed,” Pistone said again.

I nudged Burke. “He’s talking to you.”

“Why’s he calling me Speed?”

“That’s the nickname I gave you,” Pistone said.

“It’s either that, or Legs.”

“Fuck you, man.”

The rest of us laughed. Burke was getting a lot of that lately.

“Hey, what’s my nickname?” Martinez asked.

“Fence.”

Martinez’s face scrunched up. “Fence?”

“Yeah...border fence...you know...from Mexico to here.”

“I’m a legal citizen and my family’s from Colombia, you simpleton.” Martinez was pissed now. I could tell by the muscle twitching in his

cheek. "What about Cannon, what's his nickname?"

"I was thinking Bickus Dickus."

"Oh, brother," Hennedy said. "You been spendin' too much time in the locker room, pal. You need yourself a hobby."

Pistone shrugged. "I decided it's too long. Cannon works, don't you think?"

Hennedy closed his eyes. "Aw...geez. Now I'm gonna keep picturing Cannon naked."

Our captain turned around. "All right, ladies, you know the drill. They're Korean, but they speak English, according to our source, so don't let 'em tell ya otherwise. This is Cannon's bust, you play by his rules. Jack up and stay safe."

We put on our headsets and the truck took off fast, taking out a white picket fence and landing in the front yard of the house on Corinth.

"Whoa, the daisies just got eighty-sixed," Pistone chuckled.

Yeah, and the fence, a fancy garden gnome and a topiary shaped like a cow. *Shit, I am gay. I know the fancy name for everything.*

I jumped out with Hennedy and we took the sides of the house. All quiet. No dogs. I love dogs until I'm on a bust. I counted and said, "Go," into my mouthpiece and Martinez and Burke came running.

We met in the middle at the front door as SWAT waited in the alley at the back of the house. I knocked, real polite, and an old Korean woman opened the door. Her sparse white hair framed her furious face like a demented halo.

"Ma'am," I said. "I have a warrant to search these premises."

"No," she said, trying to push me back.

"Ma'am, I have a warrant and I will arrest you if you touch me again. How many other people are in this house?"

"Just me. I just a poor lady." She started to holler and cry, throwing her hands to the sky.

Poor lady, my ass. I knew roughly what she had in the house. I told her to sit on the sofa. We switched on lights and she cursed as we began our methodical search.

"*Dēji,*" she spat.

"You're calling me a pig?" On her startled look, I whispered, "Yes, grandma. I speak Korean. You be nice, okay?"

She stared at me, her angry little eyes quite a turn on. Man, she was gonna regret calling *me* names.

Hennedy found two children and another woman in the house. He brought them into the living room too.

"The fat kid's supposed to be in the house," Pistone said in my ear.

The four occupants of the house sat on the sofa and I told them to get up.

They ignored me.

“Stand up!” Something in my tone registered this time and they stood. I yanked the sofa open and found the kid we’d been looking for.

Shit. They’d been tipped off.

He seemed agonized and panted hard.

“Get him some water,” I told Martinez. Can’t have been fun being squashed between the folds of the bed when you’re fifteen and weigh close to two hundred pounds.

They hadn’t been tipped off fast enough.

“Cannon,” Hennedy said. He inclined his head and I followed him as Martinez returned with a glass of nasty looking tap water. Goddamn LA. He and Burke kept their guns on the five occupants.

In the first bedroom, Hennedy had found a cache of weapons. They’d expected us, but we’d come earlier than they thought.

I strolled in, marveling at the contrast between the shabby chic furnishings and the hardware on the bed. I counted nine weapons, including seven AK 47s with multiple-round clips, three .50 caliber sniper rifles, five semi-automatic rifles, three nine millimeter lugers and two .357 magnums. It was not until I found the bag of *cop killers*, Teflon-coated bullets that pierce bulletproof vests that I knew we had a big problem.

And a big score.

“Send in the clowns,” I said into my mouthpiece.

Our numbers swelled and our search was methodical, like I said, but as soon as you start finding serious weaponry, your crew’s going to get a little excited.

Martinez handed me a black cell phone. “Look at this.”

“What is it?”

“Cell phone stun gun. There’s a whole box of them.”

Hot fuckin’ dang. This was the tip that led to our search.

I immediately called the Loo back at the station. I’d just made our search warrant good. Asshole was still sleeping. Nice, when his team was on a big bust like this. I spoke into my mouthpiece and told Pistone to keep calling our commanding, slumbering officer.

“On it,” he said.

The Mayor, the Governor and the entire fucking news department of CNN would know within minutes that we had a serious, hard-core hit on our hands.

I photographed the stash of cell phone stun guns with my iPhone and sent it through to the Loo.

The fat kid in the living room was watching anime cartoons on the TV, his younger sister chewing a toy dog's ear. I glanced at him. He looked about as dangerous as a mud pie, but he was a little thug in the making.

Unfortunately, I couldn't interrogate him without a Juvie officer beside me. I asked Pistone to make sure Juvie rolled up to the station by the time we got back.

"You want Lindon?" he asked.

I controlled my temper. Lindon was my undercover officer who'd tipped me off about the kid in the living room.

"No, get me Grace Gordon."

Pistone inhaled. "Yeah, good choice. Tough, but nice."

I watched the kid for a moment, wondering if he had any idea his whole life was about to change. He worked at his family's cyber café in Koreatown and had apparently sold a few cell phone stun guns to teenage customers, for a lot of money. He'd boasted of having high-caliber weapons in the house and listed them off to Lindon after I sent him in there to work undercover.

Our haul mounted and as the sun rose, a police photographer lined up the stash on the lawn out front, photographing the unbelievable collection.

"I've been doing this a long time and I've never seen anything like it," Hennedy said as we dismantled the linen closet and found a cache of the biggest handguns I'd ever seen in my life.

"What the fucking fuck," Hennedy said.

Squinting at them, I had to take a deep breath.

"Shit, are these Desert Eagles?" I'd never seen one up close, but there were twenty of them. .50 caliber. The most deadly handguns in the world.

"You know, there's only one reason to have guns like this," Hennedy said.

"Yeah. To make sure you kill."

For four more hours, we collected and tagged and every now and then the old Korean woman yelled out swear words in both Korean and English.

I had the bright idea to check under the creaking floorboards in the kitchen, little dreaming I would find an unbelievable cash drop in neat piles lining the floor's surface. Using my flashlight, I looked across the stretch of exposed flooring. There was a lot of cash.

"Get the photographer in here," I shouted. I couldn't even begin to guess how much money was here, but I wanted strict protocol.

"How much you reckon is here?" Martinez asked me as I called the Loo and awaited instructions.

I looked at the top layers of notes. All hundreds. Shit. "Could be hundreds of thousands of dollars," I said.

The Loo called me back. We called him that, despite knowing his real name. Tony *Spud* Murphy was an ass off the job and the biggest one ever, on the job. And where do asses belong? In England, they belong on the loo, so I always thought of him as the Loo.

"Federal Reserve agents want to come and look at it. Leave it where it is."

How about a thank you? I knew one wasn't coming.

News crews found out about our bust and the local cops did a bang-up job of keeping them at bay.

"Are you starting to feel like frickin' Madonna?" Burke asked me.

"Not yet, Legs."

"Fuck you," he said, but he grinned. A bust like this was better than buying double loads of diapers any day.

I took a couple pictures of our haul out front, just for posterity. I was pleased with the job Lindon had done. He had given me solid information.

In the kid's bedroom, I made the final discovery. A grenade launcher, hidden inside his box springs.

"Fuck me," Martinez muttered.

"Maybe later," I cracked. I wanted to do a happy dance on the frickin' roof, but I settled for a long examination of this piece of work. I have to admit, it was another big surprise.

"It's an M320," I said. "Shit...I had no idea civilians could even get hold of these yet." Burke walked in, looking stunned. "Even the military's still using 203s." He'd been on the frontlines, he knew. And he didn't look happy about it.

Martinez frowned. "Wait...I've been readin' up on these. They're double grenade launchers, right?"

I nodded. "With night and day vision..."

Burke pointed at the side. "Yeah, and it's got a side breech, much easier to load than the 203s. A lot more user friendly."

I rolled my eyes. "Yeah, that's what you want in a weapon that can take out an entire neighborhood."

My squad of four took a long slow walk around the beautiful beast. It was chilling to think this was in a suburban home, easily available to gangs...to anybody.

"Oh, man," Hennedy said. "You think they've got more?"

Martinez threw his up hands. "We've covered everything."

"You know, they don't have much...stuff," Burke observed. "What are they doing with the money?"

I shrugged. "Buying beach property? Who knows."

We each picked up a section and brought the launcher outside. The rest of the search, crewmembers went nuts.

"Fuckin' beautiful," one uniformed cop crowed. "Have you ever seen so much shit in your life?"

No, I hadn't. I noticed an impromptu press conference had begun outside the house. I saw my Lieutenant straighten his tie and speak to the cameras.

I didn't mind who took credit for this one. Our information had been solid. No violence had taken place. My crew had done great.

Child Protective Services took the kids away. The uniform branch from my precinct took the mother and they struggled to haul the old granny away. She fought and kicked, scratched and screamed, adding to her list of charges. Finally controlled, she passed by me and muttered again.

"Bi bim man doo," I said back to her and she just stared at me over her shoulder as they took her out in her bunched-up nightgown. She only had one slipper on, I noticed.

"Wow," Martinez said. "What the hell did you say to her?"

I shrugged. "The only other bit of Korean I know."

"Which is?"

"Fried dumplings."

He roared with laughter and we hauled ass into the van as LAPD units cruising by stopped to gum up the traffic flow and get a look at our fruitful raid.

The neighbors were out, I even noticed a guy selling hot dogs. Fuck, I was hungry again. The van dropped us at the Mustang and I drove my crew back to the supermarket parking lot.

"Fried dumplings," Martinez said again. He was laughing so hard, tears fell down his cheeks.

"Later," I said when the others got out.

"Let's meet for dinner after debriefing," Burke said.

"Sure."

I'd done a good job. We'd all done a good job. Better than good.

Now, it was time to get laid.

CHAPTER TWO

Where to go, where to go? Lots of options for fast, friendly fucks, but I figured I should do a few laps, work the kinks out of my shoulders, so I headed to my favorite gym. You ask the proprietors, it's a clean operation. You ask guys like me and it's a smorgasbord of sex.

I flashed my membership card. The twink on the front desk smiled at me. He was a sweet little cocksucker who reminded me a lot of my favorite gay porn star, Leo Giamani, but I wanted to scope the locker and steam rooms.

There were a few loiterers in both, nothing worth investigating. I was starting to think my urge for a hot fuck after the biggest haul in my personal memory was going to be a bust.

And then, I saw him.

Man, he was hot. He had a body that appealed to my sense of aesthetics. His skin tone was the color of milky coffee, his hair dark. Nice cock, thick, big, half-hard. He was running his hands

through his hair, about to turn off the shower taps when he saw me.

We traded glances and he gave me a half-smile.

I held up a finger and his smile widened a fraction. I quickly dumped my stuff in a locker, grabbed a lambskin condom and joined him in the shower.

His gaze fell on my cock, which was big, hard and ready to play.

Fuck, he mouthed and turned around. His face was beautiful, his ass even sweeter. Hands splayed against the wall, water ran down his back and I heard him moan as I tore the package open with my teeth and rolled that rubber over the length of my shaft. I stroked it down, smoothing out the ridges and ran my hands over his ass. His skin was warm. My thumbs reached into his ass crack. Nice and tight.

My fingers ran over his hole and he squirmed against them. *Shit*, he was ready. I inched my cock toward his ass and felt the heat before I was even close. I sliced into him and felt his hole resist, then embrace me. I fucked him slowly at first and he pushed into my hips. I gripped him with both hands, but I didn't need to worry. His muscular legs were planted firmly on the floor and he wanted to be fucked.

I kept one hand on his ass, moving the other around his belly, reaching between his thighs to

stroke him off. I like the feeling of a guy coming when I am. I love the way their ass muscles bear down on my cock. Hell, if he's bringing me heaven, I should save a slice for him.

We fucked like we'd been doing it forever. He anticipated every move I made. And yet...and yet it was new and exciting. The thrill of being caught kept me hard until I felt his come spurt over my fingers and splash the wall. My cock was caught in his grip and I shot inside him, my mouth moving to his neck. I wanted to bite him, don't ask me why. I never want to kiss the guys I fuck, but this one seemed surprised, then turned his face and his tongue ran right across my lips and I thought I would never stop coming.

I kept in him until I wanted to pull out. He sighed as I took my cock away from him. He turned off the taps, but didn't turn around.

"Have dinner with me," he said.

I peeled off the lambskin thinking it would be so fucking nice to bareback this Adonis.

"Dinner?" *Are you kidding me?*

"Yeah, why not?"

I was ready to run. Dinner! Next he'd want Netflix and goddamn popcorn after dinner.

"Bi bim man doo," I said.

He turned his face then. "Fried dumplings?" He glanced away again. "I never pegged you for Korean food, but I know a nice little place."

"Yeah, I bet you do." I couldn't keep the smile out of my voice. My hand strayed back to his ass. Shit, I could have fucked this beauty all day.

"So how about it?"

"I'll tell you my number, and if you remember it, we'll have dinner."

"My memory's good. Hit me."

I rattled off my private cell phone number. Didn't want a potential nut case having my work number. All my private calls were re-routed to my work cell. He'd be able to get me.

He nodded. "And your name?"

"Jim. Just Jim."

"Hi, Just Jim. I'm Lucky."

"Just Lucky?"

"Yeah. Didn't you see me just now?"

I laughed. He was a funny Adonis. Shit. He had to go and have a sense of humor. "I'm Lucky...who loves your cock in his ass."

Giving his ass one last fondle, I grinned. "Call me."

I wondered if he'd given me a fake name, like I'd given him.

The Violent Crimes Unit of the West Hollywood police station houses four different teams in varying numbers, the Special Response Team being one of them. Though LA's mayor liked to publicly state he was reducing police

funding, SRT was one of the new babies attached to the unit's massive tit.

There were three groups within SRT and we rarely socialized outside them. My group was tight, but not especially social either. I felt restless at my desk and dropped the magazine I'd been going through. I took the stairs to the second floor and decided I should have a drink with my crew later, shoot the breeze over a job well done.

I waited for the desk sergeant to let me into lockup, signed my name and the time of entry and enjoyed the calls of congratulations from different cops. It made me feel good. I grabbed the evidence sheet still on the clipboard, waiting to be processed. In spite of the progress of modern technology, police work still involves a lot of paper work.

"Great haul," one officer said. "All those guns and you couldn't manage to get one to accidentally blow off Pistone's ass?"

"Next time," I joked, scanning the checked registry.

"Cannon."

I looked up, feeling a little guilty to find Martinez watching me. I trusted my crew to correctly tag everything and I certainly trusted them not to steal a gun or two as a souvenir, but we'd never handled anything in the nature of the

volume and size of this bust. Everything was correct and accounted for.

"It looks even bigger on paper," I said.

Martinez nodded. "I know...kinda hard to believe, innit?"

"Yeah." My gaze strayed to the black leather case housing the Desert Eagles. I couldn't resist stealing a look.

Martinez and I stared down at the gleaming weapons.

"We found some YouTube footage of the fat kid playing with one of these," Martinez said. "Creepy, huh?"

I swallowed hard. I had high hopes for the future of our country, but the more crimes I investigated, the more my hope wore down.

He followed me out of the cage and I faced the grim task of once again tackling the stack of spanking magazines on my desk. Martinez hovered as I picked up a magazine and realized I'd already gone through it. I tossed it on top of the pile I'd already scanned.

"What's up?"

He indicated the magazine I'd just picked up. "Anything in there?"

"Nope. Been through the whole box and all the models look like they're old enough. A couple of the twinks could be borderline, but they've got

hairs on their nipples. Makes me think they're at least eighteen."

"They look like they're enjoying it?"

"Not particularly, but then some of them look like the grimacing is part of the —"

"Pleasure?"

"Not for them...the guys that buy this stuff." I shoved aside my rust bucket of a swivel chair and once again stared at the picture parade of missing kids. Sixteen white boys between the ages of twelve and fifteen had disappeared in the space of fourteen months. Unfortunately, two had disappeared within the last two weeks. Maybe these were slave trade kidnappings, maybe the perps were speeding up their tricks.

Our intel said they were being used as sex slaves and a neighbor of the Korean family we'd raided earlier that day told us the family had a storage unit they visited obsessively.

One of our uniformed units found a bunch of junk and four sealed boxes of skin mags, but not one kid resembled those on my corkboard. I wondered how many of the boys in my photo gallery were still alive.

Martinez paged through a fresh copy of *Bound and Fagged*. "This kid has a cucumber shoved up his..."

He swallowed hard and I extracted the magazine from him. Some things you never get

used to. I never get used to kids being tortured, animals being tortured and old people either. I'd never seen *Bound and Fagged* before and a quick Internet search showed nothing. We were still tracking the barcodes for them and the order sheets tucked inside the boxes. I glanced down at my cell phone as it buzzed a second time. An unfamiliar number.

"Bi bim man doo?"

I laughed and Martinez moved away from my desk. I watched him pick up the coffee pot and sniff. I wondered whether he'd actually drink it. It was warm, but it was two-days old.

It bugged me that we got the shitty coffee in our unit. Homicide got the best in the branch. I knew, because I stole cups of it regularly.

Careful to keep my voice low, I murmured, "Lucky?"

"Yeah."

Neither of us said anything for a moment. I tried to remember the last time I had anything resembling a romantic evening. I kind of liked the pitching sensation in my stomach. Or maybe I was just hungry again.

"You really want Korean food, because I do know a great place."

"Of course I do." I let my voice drop further. "Mr. Hot Ass."

He paused and I *swear* I heard the smile in his voice.

“What time do you get off work tonight?”

“Around eight.”

“How about we meet?”

“Where?” I was aware of Martinez hovering and I lowered my voice some more.

“Shin on Wilcox. You know it?”

“Nope, but I’ll find it.”

“See you at eight thirty. Bring plenty of rubbers.”

I ended the call, watching Martinez pour himself some coffee. He sipped the inky fluid. “Mm...fresh,” he said.

* * * *

I looked at the phone in my hand for a long time. Jim had been surprised, but I noted, pleased to hear from me. Jim. He didn’t look like a Jim. I got up from my desk and looked outside the window. I had so much work to do, a trip coming up to Dubai. Damage control. I had to take care of my big clients. I hated taking care of my big clients.

The street was quiet. It took me a while to get used to the quiet. In New York, you got noise. I’d lived in the Village and all you got was noise. Now, I heard everything, every sound. And right now, I could hear nothing. This was a good

neighborhood. A former mayor lived across the street. A couple of actors. One of them kept listing his house, then yanking it off the market. The postman was walking down the street with his swag. Enough. I had work to do.

I turned around again and surveyed my office. I spent all my time here. The painting on the wall in front of me was crooked. I straightened it. Christ, it was just a date. Why was I so nervous? I glanced at the painting again, this time really seeing it. Two figures were on a bed, the man behind, dominant, fucking the kneeling, crouched figure below. You had to look hard to see the penis of the man being fucked. To the casual observer, it was still an erotic, perhaps shocking piece. To the collector, it was a priceless piece of homosexual art salvaged from the destruction of the ancient city of Pompeii.

When I looked at it, all I could think was how badly I wanted Jim to fuck me this way.

* * * *

Interview Room Two was where the action wasn't. We were forced to give up any ideas of asking our teenaged perp any questions. His mother had lawyered up and in spite of hefty fines and the nature of the crime, I was betting she'd be allowed to take him home before the day was over.

"Connected," Martinez said.

"She must be blowing the entire force," Burke said. "How come she missed me?"

"You got two women and nobody's givin' you any?" Kennedy asked. "That's just wrong!"

"First comes love, then comes marriage...then comes the gag reflex," Martinez said. "Who's up for cocktails?"

"As long as it's some place cheep and cheerful," Burke said. "How about the Silver Spoon?"

I was ready to blow off the crew, which wouldn't be too hard since no two guys wanted to go the same place. Tomorrow I'd make it up to them. My Loo on the other hand, was harder to shake off.

"Cannon, a word, please," he said.

So much for blowing off the crew. I'd have to tell them everything now.

"We're going to Musso and Frank's for drinks. Meet you there," Martinez said, making the decision for all of us. I nodded and slipped into the Loo's office.

Spud Murphy was a beefy Australian on his second marriage to a female DEA officer. I loved him socially, often hating him in the office.

"Beautiful job today." He paused. US Customs officials said the money under the kitchen will probably total around six million dollars."

"Wow." My mind braked. "Wait. How did Customs get involved?"

He smiled. "Marked notes. All from a bank heist in New York about four years ago. It was a big one, sixteen million dollars."

"So...what? The family's been living on the money and squandered around ten mill?"

"They haven't squandered. They're might be more hiding places. You were right. We take out a wad and there's more beside it. They've probably had a hell of a time getting rid of it and that's how they got into guns."

"Crime doesn't pay, eh?"

Spud sighed. Yep, me and my quirky sense of humor.

"The Federal Reserve bank is counting the cash, which we keep finding. In the meantime, I have another assignment, but nothing I can talk about right now. Any blow-back for you on what went down?"

"None."

"Good, good." He ran his thumbs against the hard lines of his desk. "There's a big...press conference in about an hour. I would normally love to show you off...flash my Big Four in front of the cameras...but we're onto something hot. I need to keep you under the radar."

"No problem with me."

I went home, showered, changed into *A and F* jeans and shirt and I pocketed some condoms. I have a cool place on Havenhurst Drive in WeHo. It's the left half of a duplex. My previous next-door neighbor abandoned his large gray cat, Ash, and I fed him, pretended I hated him and Ash came and went as he pleased. As soon as he sensed I was in the kitchen, he dropped in from the window, blinked at me and nosed around for food.

Shaking out some dry food on a saucer, I ruffled the fur on his head and he purred. That was as far as we went in the bonding arena. I discovered early that Ash liked shrimp tails and occasionally I'd splurge and buy him a few shrimp, but when he started coming home smelling of incense, I knew he'd found someone else to nurture him, but still, he always came back. Somehow, the men in my life always did.

I picked up my keys, locked up and strolled to the Mustang out front. I took a deep breath. I could smell wood smoke from somebody's fireplace. I shook my head. Next, *I'd* be the one thinking about Netflix and popcorn.

Heading up to Hollywood Boulevard, I found parking and walked into the oldest restaurant in town. They made the best Bloody Mary's, everyone knew that. One drink and I'd be on my way.

We jawed about the bust, talked about the old granny and how pissed she was when we removed all her guns.

I listened with half an ear and split, aware of Martinez's hot stare.

I ran up to Wilcox and found Shin. I kind of liked the gong in the doorway and resisted the childish urge to bang it. I liked the dark ambience. I liked the varnished wood tables and black banquettes. It had a red, sexy vibe. The jellyfish tank was a neat touch, I thought.

Lucky came over to me, looking elegant in a black silk shirt and black pants. Shit. He was hotter than I remembered.

I felt like a goddamn, under-dressed mook.

He held out his hand and we shook. I liked the feel of his skin, already getting a boner. Good thing I liked my food, or else we'd be looking for some place to fuck, fast.

We slid into a booth, facing each other.

"What would you like to drink?" he asked.

I like bottom boys who top in public. I licked my lips.

"I'll have a Bloody Mary, thanks."

"Me, too."

Our gymslip of a waitress disappeared.

"You want me to order?" he asked.

"Sure. As long as you order what I want."

He laughed. "You like Kim Chi fried rice?"

"Yeah, I do."

He waited until our drinks came back and he ordered a bunch of food that sounded like a lot for two.

"We're going to eat all that?" I asked, as the waitress opened the grill in the middle of our table. It was clean and although it was hot, I liked that it was smokeless.

She darted away.

"We'll eat some here...some...later."

"Later." I picked up my red-lacquered chopsticks. Suddenly, I wanted to fuck him. I wanted to be naked in bed with him, flogging him four ways from Sunday. I wanted to handcuff him to bedposts so I could tease him with my tongue and fuck him until I allowed him to come.

"Here are your drinks."

The waitress deposited the cool-looking square tumblers and I picked out the celery and chewed.

"Do you lick the icing off your cake before you eat anything else?" he asked.

"Yeah. I've been known to do that."

"You like cruising?"

I looked him right in the eye. "Yeah. Do you?"

He nodded. "You won't believe it, but you're the first guy I've asked on a date."

"You're right. I don't believe you."

He looked disappointed. "It's true."

I wanted to roll my eyes. Instead I said, "You're Italian, right?"

He smiled, the light coming back to his eyes.

"I like Italians." It struck me as weird that the Korean I once dated liked Italian food and now I was with an Italian who liked Korean food.

"Initially from New York. Came out here a couple of years ago."

"You like it?" I asked.

He shrugged. "I deal with it. Business is good. Plenty of...fun. I meet some hot guys. I've seen you at the gym. Almost got you alone one day."

"Really?" I sipped my drink. "You should have said something."

He shrugged. "There's a right time for everything."

The waitress returned and I was dazzled by her offerings. I liked how well presented everything was and Lucky started cooking the Spencer steak and the spicy chicken. We went from awkward chatter to a serious discussion of sniffing farts under the bedcovers and I discovered that Lucky had a wonderful sense of humor.

He asked for the rest of our food to go and then requested two chocolate cake shots.

They were sublime.

He gave me an address as the check came and he paid in cash. He lived on McCadden and I thought for a moment, *what the fuck am I doing?*

I wasn't normally the type to go home with a guy. I didn't sleep over. I didn't spill my secrets. Suddenly, I found myself wanting to do all three. Or maybe it was the chocolate shots talking.

"See you there," I said. My cock and I, we could hardly wait.

I saw his sleek, black BMW pull into the driveway and crawl all the way down a shrub-lined entrance to a garage at the end of the drive. I cut the engine and sat for a long time outside the house. The neighborhood, the old Larchmont district, was one of the oldest in Hollywood. Old-time movie stars built the neighborhood, which still had stately homes, art-deco streetlamps and abundance of rolling green lawns with barely a fence or gate in sight.

For long moments, I wrestled with my conscience. Go or stay? I had a bad feeling about entering the house. I didn't think he'd chain me into a cupboard and gag me with a leather ball, but he seemed...*too good to be true*.

He came to the door and beckoned me in. I sighed, stepped out of the car and walked up the smooth, pristine, flower-lined path.

Indicating that I should walk by him, I did and he closed the door behind me. It was an amazing house, well-decorated, warm and it screamed money.

I stared at the painting on the wall above the huge, brown suede sofa. I tried tearing my gaze from it. I couldn't. It wasn't a painting, actually. It was a photograph of a pond illuminated by moonlight between forest trees. It was a beautiful, haunting picture. I recognized it from a brief stint in an art-theft unit in Italy.

The piece hadn't been stolen, the owner was afraid it would be and it had been used in our training program.

"It's a Steichen, isn't it?" I asked.

Lucky nodded and handed me a liqueur glass.

"Have some Schnapps...you constantly surprise me. You know art?"

I shrugged.

"This is an unusual piece to be familiar with," he said. His tone edged on being accusatory.

I was trying to figure out what kind of work Lucky did to own a photo that was one of the most expensive pieces in the world. Its price tag was around three million dollars.

Discreetly sniffing the clear liquid, I took a tentative sip and detected no nasty chemicals.

"This is wonderful, Lucky." I smacked my lips. "Is it...cherry Schnapps?"

"Very good. Yes, a nice one, gift from a grateful client. So tell me, how do you know this picture?"

I shrugged. "I studied art for a while." *This is true...hope he doesn't ask more.*

"Really." The look on his face was so incredulous, I felt I had to keep it low-key.

"It was a passing...phase. It's called *The Pond*, right?"

He inclined his head in acknowledgment.

"It appears to be a color photo, but according to what I learned, it was taken in 1904, three years before color photography began."

Lucky's face lit up. "He used a light-enhancing gum to convey the use of color. Exquisite, isn't it?"

I knew this fact, and I also knew that only three copies of it existed in the entire world, but I didn't let on.

"There are only two other copies in the world," he said. "And those are in museums. Come, sit with me."

"Are you an art dealer?"

He smiled. "Yes, I am." He laughed then, waving his glass around. "I have some amazing pieces I can't bring myself to sell." His face fell for a moment. "These are tough times, as you know. Real estate is suffering, but nobody wants to talk about how the art world is suffering. I'm forced to sell magnificent pieces to Arab nations...they have the money, but not always the...appreciation for great beauty."

"That's too bad. But you'll hang onto this gem?"

His smile turned enigmatic. "Maybe."

He sat on a chaise, not the comfy sofa, and I perched next to him, not exactly comfortable, but not ready to dash out the door either.

I was surprised when he put his mouth on mine and started kissing me. I was even more surprised that I wanted to kiss him back. I couldn't remember the last time I'd made out with a guy and in spite of an urge to flee, I felt myself giving into his hot and tasty tongue. I was thinking about that wonderful, accommodating ass of his.

His hand moved to unbutton my jeans. I had been hard for him on and off all night and I leaned back...uncomfortable until I realized I wanted this. I didn't care where we fucked. I had to have him.

And then I saw it. He wanted me to see it...a curtain on the opposite wall lifted to reveal the most erotic painting I'd ever seen in my life. Lit to perfection, it was very old, I could tell. A man lounged against a column, a serious expression on his face. Beside him on the ground was a colorful basket of fruit. From the folds of his short tunic protruded the biggest, most massive, uncut cock I'd ever seen in my life. Anatomically out of proportion with the rest of his body, something about the loving, reverential detail to his cock and balls had me ready to fuck in an instant. I wanted *him* to fuck me. I wanted that enormous cock inside me, and as Lucky's mouth descended over

mine, I felt that this sex god was directing him from the canvas.

I could practically hear his words, *Yeah, suck his cock.*

Lucky's tongue flicked at my leaking slit and he raised his head. "That piece comes from Pompeii. The ancient Italians...my ancestors, were a horny bunch." He grinned. "We still are."

"Who is he?" I rasped as Lucky's lips closed over my cock head again.

He came off my cock again.

"Priapus, the god of fertility."

I couldn't speak as Lucky shoved my black boxer briefs aside and crooked a finger over my shaft, sliding it down like a cock ring and going berserk with his mouth once more. He sucked me all the way down to the base and then took his mouth away again. I almost screamed in frustration.

He knelt on the floor, between my legs, took a mouthful of Schnapps and spat it on my cock. The alcohol burned my cock head briefly, but he began licking it up so fast, stroking the base with a firm grip that I was soon writhing around the place, trying to get my cock all the way in his mouth. The heat was still there, but it was an incredible sensation...hot, warm, wet and then he did it again. He spat the liqueur on me and I almost came in his face.

“No, you don’t,” he growled, plunging his mouth back on me and I fucked his hungry face until I came.

“Come to bed with me,” he said, stroking my balls and my thighs.

I stared at the cock god on the wall. I knew I had to get out of here before I told him this was the best fucking blowjob I’d ever had in my life.

CHAPTER THREE

Jim left my house and although I put on a good show about it, I was pissed. I never showed anyone my best art. He'd been turned on by my sex god, but Jim was a closet case so bad, intimacy with another man sent him running.

My phone rang. It was my brother.

"Meet me at the Beverly Hills Café."

It was two o'clock in the morning.

"No, I wanna get some sleep."

"You okay?" he asked me. "Don't tell me you're going LA on me, needing shuteye by midnight."

"I had a long day, Louis."

"Nah. Something's goin' on. You okay?"

I hesitated a fraction too long.

"Oh, man...you met somebody."

"No."

"Yes."

I laughed then. "Okay, yes."

"Is he an asshole?"

"Probably."

"Ah, so he's a great lay?"

"The best."

I stared at the painting on the wall of the two men fucking. I was going to make Jim fuck me in this room, under the painting...yes, I was.

"Okay, bro. Listen, meet me. Don't brood. I know how you get."

"No."

"Yes."

We both laughed.

"I'm on my way," I said.

* * * *

I was in a bad mood when I rolled up to work at six o'clock the next morning. Lucky had been more than okay about me not staying. He'd given me a kiss to remember and I drove off, narrowly missing a frightened possum snacking on something in the middle of the road.

Lucky was getting to me. He was too hot and yet, so fucking cool. He was getting to me and I had an urge to text him, to say something. I clamped down on the urge. And then the fucker called me.

"Hey, you're up early," he said.

"So are you."

"Yeah...well...I had a good time. I want you to come to dinner with me tonight. You feel like fucking me some place today?"

I laughed. "Some place?"

"Yeah, fuck me hot, fast and dirty...like you don't know me and then we'll have dinner tonight."

Shit! I'm hard already. "Where?"

"Carwash."

"The carwash? Are you kidding me?"

"I never kid about getting fucked. Listen, you know the place on Santa Monica Boulevard where you wash your own car?"

"Uh...that retro-looking place? Yeah." I couldn't help thinking this was a little too public, a little too exposed when he surprised me once again.

"I'll be running the soap on my car and I want you to just take me from behind. Just stick that beautiful cock into me and let me get on with my work. Maybe we'll be seen...but I doubt it. All that soap and water...and we'll be away from the street."

"What time?" *Christ, am I drooling?*

"How about a nooner?"

I laughed and he hung up. I walked around all morning, trying to keep my cock in check, knowing I was about to go through a debriefing on another drug bust. I struggled to keep my mind on things.

All I could think about was fun with soap.

My Loo stopped me outside the john and inclined his head. I followed him in, thinking how much I'd like to nail Lucky in a john.

Cut that out, I told myself as he switched on taps and unzipped his fly. *He's right at home.* He pointed his medium-size wang into the urinal, missing a little. I could always tell when he'd been in here. He marked his turf like a demented dog. He was distressed, I could tell.

"Which of your team members do you trust the most?" he asked me.

"Burke," I said, without flinching.

"What about Martinez?"

I blew out a sigh. It wasn't that I didn't trust Martinez. It was just that I didn't handpick him. I'd been given him. I'd requested Burke and Henney. They were my first choices. Martinez was the team member I had the most trouble with in the beginning. After an initial struggle for power, he worked out fine.

"He was forced on me," I said as *Spud* zipped up his pants. "He wasn't my choice, but he's working out great. He's a team player. He—"

"Do you trust him?"

I considered the question. "Yeah...I trust him, but..." I shrugged. "I dunno, *Spud*. I like all the guys. I like my team. We're solid."

What the hell is going on here?

"But you trust Burke more."

“Yeah. He might be an asshole to women, but he’s a standup guy on the force. What gives?”

“Bring him to the meeting. Twelve o’clock, my office.”

Shit. There goes my nooner.

I called Lucky, who didn’t pick up. I left him a message, asking for a rain check. Ten seconds later, he returned my call.

“My ass is waiting for you. Name the time.”

“Five,” I said and grabbed Burke for our meeting.

It wasn’t unusual for only a couple of the SRT to be invited into the preliminary meeting for a bust, but as team leader, my policy had always been to include all four team members from the outset. It felt disingenuous not to include Martinez and Henneidy, but neither of them was around. This was my alibi.

Burke didn’t think it was unusual either. He was busy juggling ladies and nurses’ aids on his cell phone. He didn’t give his full attention to the meeting until we were in the Loo’s office, the shades drawn.

There were six other guys in the office. The two heads of the Violent Crimes Unit, two investigators from the Westside Narcotics Enforcement Team and two US Customs officers.

“This is a new bust, a difficult bust,” *Spud* began, eyeing each one of us in turn. “I’ve invited

Cannon and Burke here, but they won't be involved in the initial phase of operations."

He paused and picked up a snow globe on his desk. It was from Disneyland. His five-year-old daughter put it there on a recent visit just before another big meeting. She'd said, *Daddy, I want you to remember to smile.*

The Loo wasn't smiling as the fake snow descended on the mini replica of the glittery, princess castle inside the happiest kingdom in the world.

"This will be a two-prong attack. The initial phase will be a drug buy set up by two undercover Feds. Not DEA, nobody local."

I leaned forward. I smelled a rat. A big one.

"This involves one of our own, which is never easy. This information is not to leave this room and assignments will be given according to the approach, as decided by the undercover agents."

Spud was furious, I could tell. This was so bad, it was something I knew we would never talk about socially.

He spat it all out then. "Sergeant Hennedy was seen entering a known drug den four nights ago. We picked up every word of him offering to sell five kilos of cocaine."

There was a moment of silence. *Hennedy!* I couldn't believe it. A few guys said exactly what I was thinking and *Spud* slammed down his

precious snow globe on his desk. I was surprised he didn't smash the damned thing.

"Unfortunately, it's true. The cocaine he was offering to sell was from a drug bust last month."

"I remember that," I said. "Did he get the gear?"

"No. We were able to transfer the drugs out of lockup before he could touch them."

Hennedy! Man, I felt robbed. I thought he was solid. My thoughts rambled and the Loo interrupted my mental tirade.

"Here's where Cannon and Burke come in. They set up the bust with SRT. Only this drug bust will be orchestrated in participation with the DEA, the FBI and LAPD. I don't have to tell you how bad it makes our department look when one of our guys turns dirty."

He looked right at me and I knew he was as dismayed as I was.

"Cannon, you will be given all the details of the bust. You bring your team in...all four of them. You do the bust. End of your participation...once you log in your haul. At that point, we wait for Hennedy to offer up those drugs to replace the five kilos already lost."

"You think he'll go for it?" I asked.

"He has to. From what I understand, he's already received the money for the five kilos he

thought he could get. He's in a bind. He has to deliver."

He licked his lips. "You might as well know, he's offered up the cache of Desert Eagles you found hidden in the walls at the Korean house yesterday."

I found myself with nothing to say. I pictured myself beating the shit out of him and one day, I probably would. My guns! He'd offered up the guns we'd gotten off the street and he was going to put them right back out there again.

"We didn't have time to set this up before," the Loo said. We got the drugs out of Lockup, but this time, we're ready."

His cell phone vibrated and he checked the readout as I asked when the bust would take place.

"Saturday night. We'll meet again. For now though, you're all dismissed."

Burke and I stumbled out of the office. I felt sick. Of all my team members, Henney struck me as the least likely to turn.

"You believe this shit?" Burke asked.

"Havin' a hard time with it," I admitted.

He nodded. "You must have told the Loo you trust me?"

I nodded.

"Why me? We're so different. We're not...close."

I smiled. "You sacrificed yourself for our country. That's something I can't overlook...you're a shitty husband, but a fucking fantastic cop."

He laughed. "Me and President Clinton, eh? Rotten spouses...good at our jobs."

"Yeah. Something like that." I hesitated. "You had *any* idea about Henney?"

"No. If anyone would be likely to turn, I'd have picked Martinez." His watch beeped. "Fuck. I gotta run home and take the sheets out of the washing machine."

I was a few minutes early for my carwash rendezvous. I sat in my car across the street on Santa Monica Boulevard for a few moments, feeling hot and sweaty, trying not to feel so burned up about Henney. I always thought I was a pretty good judge of character. It still didn't seem plausible that he was on the take, but I had to accept the truth. I rubbed my plastic sweat pants, the only things I thought suitable for a water-soaked sex date. I was Commando under them...but where was my hot man?

From where I was parked, I could see every single wash bay. Only one car was in there, a black GT Mustang. It was V-8, nice, tight piece of muscle. It was very similar to my car. I saw the

driver take his time with the soap and I marveled at how neat and clean the whole operation was.

I checked my watch, glanced back at the Mustang again. The driver was still at it. No sleek black BMW. No messages. Five-thirty came and went and at a quarter to six, I gave up as cars came and went. The guy with the Mustang was still there, really waxing the hell out of that puppy. Something felt off. It was a hell of a long time for anyone to still be hosing off his car. Something was definitely wrong. Yep. I was right.

In the same second I noticed the extra lights built into the grill and spotted the telltale, stubbly radio antenna built into trunk lid just ahead of the spoiler, the Mustang washer was now soaping his car all over again. I checked up and down the street.

He was a cop. Why was he here? I didn't see any other stakeout vehicles as I switched on the engine and drove away.

Now I was pissed. What was going on? Was I imagining things? Seeing things in the Mustang driver taking so long with his car? No, I didn't think I was. I checked up and down the street. I couldn't see a tail, but I pulled my cap down over my eyes and merged with the flow of traffic away from the carwash. I doubled back, parked on Fountain and sauntered down to the carwash, peering over the edge of the wall.

Black Mustang was gone. I gripped the wheel so hard my thumbnails left marks when I took them away. I was pissed at Lucky, pissed at myself. I wasn't being followed. Whoever the cop was, he was waiting for Lucky to show up. I was pretty certain of it.

So who the hell was Lucky, really? Just a good-looking, rich art dealer? I had no answers yet. Just a whole lot of stress.

There was only one way I was gonna feel a whole lot better.

I was gonna get laid.

My palms felt clammy as I entered Max's bar and pool hall from the alleyway off Curson. I wasn't exactly dressed for Max's, which was why I chose the back way. I could sense the usual frenzy of an orgy in full bloom, but I wasn't looking for an orgy. I paused a moment to allow my eyes to adjust to the darkness. I could smell sex in the air and listened to the hum of man-on-man happiness. I felt myself grinning. I saw a hot guy I knew bottomed in gay porn, but was a natural top, getting fucked by a brute with so many cock rings dangling from the end of his dick I wondered how they all fit in there. I guessed they fit in okay because the bottom looked glazed-eyed, his unfocused stare on some point in the middle distance.

Cock ring must have blown his wad because they both moaned.

"Fuck me," the bottom whimpered, looking at me, but another top obviously waiting his turn, pushed the cock ring wearer aside and took over. The expression on both their faces was better than what you see in gay porn. This was pure lust and I wanted some for myself, but I was looking for a little one-on-one, not tag team sport. I spotted a guy at the one and only pool table in this part of the joint. He was tall, blond and handsome. Not necessarily my type, but he had nice muscles, his skin looked smooth and I wanted to fuck.

He held a pool cue in his hand and my gaze went right to his cock. Looked like he was packing and I felt like fucking a very hot, hung bottom right now.

His nasty grin told me he wanted the same thing. He tossed the cue onto the table. Last time I'd been here, I'd fooled around with my ex, Will Tallman, right on the table. Shit. Why was thinking about him now?

I followed the blond into the restroom. Why we were here was a mystery until I realized he was locking the door. He dropped his jeans, kicking his feet out of them. I watched his cute bubble butt and when he turned around, his cock was as thick and juicy as I'd hoped. He put a leg over the vanity and I stared at his smooth, tasty-looking ass

and balls. As he stroked himself off, I knelt in front of him, running my tongue over his balls and lightly licking his hardening shaft.

“Oh...fuck...that’s...nice,” he murmured.

I liked the taste of his skin and kept sucking and licking. One of my favorite things to do is suck a man’s ass and balls as he jerks off for me. I pushed him back roughly and he slammed into the mirror. I lifted his legs apart and ran my tongue around his ass. He went berserk pulling on himself.

In that moment, fucking Will Tallman on the pool table came back to me. We’d been alone here one night, fooling around. I’d even fucked him with a cue. That was hot...he came so hard...

I stood as my new friend’s cock leaked like a sea. I swiped some of the fluid onto my fingertips and fed them to him.

He sucked my fingers and I bent forward and kissed him.

“Suit up and stick it in,” he said. I detected an accent, couldn’t pinpoint where he was from. I was guessing Sweden.

I dropped my plastic pants, rolled one on and gave his ass another quick tongue bath as he moaned like a dog in heat. I fucked him quickly. He was tight at first, his ass responding warmly to my intrusion. He kept jerking on himself and I was so turned on, I exploded hard and fast, as did

he. He had a mouth full of perfect teeth, which were an even bigger turn on.

I kissed his neck, trailing a trickle of sweat with my tongue.

"Nice," I whispered against his lips. I felt renewed, refreshed and more determined than ever not to even think about Lucky again.

* * * *

"Yo, Lucky."

I snapped back to attention. I was sitting at the table in the club, fidgeting. I felt bad for the first time since Louis and I hit LA. "Yo," my brother said again and nudged me. The cop was nervous and sweaty. It all felt off. I wanted to call the whole thing off. Get out of Dodge. This stupid prick Hennedy owed me money. I hated arguing about money.

He'd already spent what we'd given him. He was lucky Jim had put me in a good mood because I wasn't beyond taking Hennedy for a little scenic drive and capping him, leaving him for the coyotes out in the desert. I tried not to think about how I was missing getting reamed by new fuck buddy. I wondered if Jim was still waiting at the carwash for me.

"Look, we got a big hit," Hennedy said. "Like I told you, we got some great weapons."

I rolled my eyes. “Weapons. What about the drugs? You said you could put your hands on them and—”

He slid a black case toward me and Louis and I traded glances. He was the one who reached across and opened the snaps.

Fuck. I’d never seen such big guns.

“Desert Eagles. The most powerful handguns in the world.”

“Yeah, you mentioned them on the phone.”

Louis and I stared at them. Hearing about them was not the same as seeing them. My brother loved guns and he drooled over these ones.

I hated guns, but these babies were beautiful and a mighty decent peace offering.

My brother closed the case again and slid it toward me. “You take it.”

He glanced at Hennedy. “We’ll be waiting for your call.”

“I promise, you’ll get it. We’re expecting a drug bust...as soon as I know, you’ll know.” He drained his drink and smiled shakily as Louis and I got up from the table.

Outside the club, I put on my shades, pissed that I’d missed my date with Jim, wondering if I’d get a second chance with him, wondering if he’d gone looking for action someplace else. Fuck. I didn’t even want to *know* about that.

The sun in LA was hot, the weather humid. It was like being in Miami, for Christ's sake.

Man, I was in a bad mood. I wanted to call Jim, but until the cop was gone and far away from me, I wasn't gonna call anybody. I hated cops. Hated them.

* * * *

I pulled up my pants and left my blond Swede to clean up. Thank God he didn't go all Chatty Cathy on me and ask for a goddamn date. As I jumped back in the car, my cell phone rang.

It was the Loo.

"Meeting in my office in ten minutes."

"See you there," I said.

I changed into suit pants as I drove, shrugging into a shirt as I pulled into the station parking lot. I made it back in eight minutes, just enough time to check my weapons from the Korean bust and was pissed to see that the Desert Eagles were gone. Well, I knew it was going to happen, but this really cheesed me off. I went to the Loo's office, found nobody there and when I did a scout around, saw Burke coming out of the john.

"What's going on with this meeting?" I asked.

He shrugged. "*Spud's* kid fell off a ride at some amusement park. He's at the hospital. Didn't you get a message?"

My cell phone vibrated. A text, telling me the same thing Burke had just told me. The meeting was being postponed until the morning.

As I perused the dismal state of coffee in the office, I pondered ordering takeout and finishing up the skin mag hunt. I wished I was seeing Lucky, but reminded myself I wasn't going to think about him anymore.

I hunted through the cupboards above the sink and found a one-thousand year supply of ramen noodles, a canister of really cheap coffee and a roll of Tums. You needed Tums if you ate the noodles and drank the coffee in this joint.

My cell phone rang. It was Lucky.

"I am so sorry...let me make it up to you."

"Nah, I'm busy." *Shit! I sound like a nine-year-old girl!*

"Come on, babe...I'm sorry. I had a bad afternoon and I want to make it better. Dinner, my place. I'll order in from any place you say."

"Ago," I said.

"Cool. How soon can you be here?"

I closed the cupboards. "I'm leaving now."

CHAPTER FOUR

He opened the door naked.

"Wow," I said, my gaze fixed on his half-hard cock.

He laughed. "You like jello?"

"Jello? You promised me dinner from Ago."

"And you'll have it. I thought we'd start with a little...aperitif."

I reached out and gripped his cock as I kick shut the door behind me. His cock for starters wasn't a bad idea. "What's on the menu, apart from you?"

He squirmed. "Soft shell crab and seafood risotto. I got us a nice bottle of wine...shit, Jim. You have to do that?"

I bent and kissed his cock. I badly wanted to tell him my name wasn't Jim. "I want this."

"You can have it. I have jello shots lined up."

We got to his bedroom and man, it was fucking beautiful. Big bed with expensive sheets, big

screen TV. He had the takeout bags on a sideboard waiting and I was in the mood for some Italian.

I threw off my clothes and climbed on top of him on the bed. I saw the jello shots in paper cups on the bedside table. I kissed him and enjoyed the sensation of being naked in a nice big bed, our cocks raging for each other. He lay underneath me, his eyes glowing as I raised myself up, holding both our cocks in one hand, balancing myself with the other.

His skin smelled amazing. He always smelled clean and sexy. I wanted to fuck him four ways from Sunday. Our mouths met. He was ready and so was I. I knelt between his open thighs. I could smell the food and was ravenous as I picked up a jello shot. I scooped out a little. It was lime jello, and the tang hit my nose as I slid it onto two fingers and fed it to him. He gobbled it, looking into my eyes as I watched him.

I emptied the paper cup upside down on his cock head and licked all around his balls and up his shaft. He hissed his need and I lifted my head, plunging my mouth down over the shot and his hot cock underneath it. He cried out as I began sucking and slurping the jello, savoring his leaking, meaty cock. I swallowed a little, keeping some in my mouth.

“Oh man, that’s amazing.” He laughed. “Fuck!”

His cock tore down my throat and he came, clutching my head in his hands. I licked up every last drop of lime-flavored come.

Now I was ready for dinner.

He frowned. "What's that noise?"

Shit. It was my goddamn cell phone. I flew off the bed and checked my pants. Text message. *Meet me in my office. Now.*

"I gotta go," I said.

Lucky leaned over the edge of the bed and kissed my cock.

"I'll hold dinner if you like."

"I like."

He lay back on the bed and smiled. "You just blew my brains out."

I gave him a finger wave and left. I had a bad feeling about this. The Loo had said we'd meet in the morning. I tried calling him, but got his voice mail. I drove fast, hitting the station in eleven minutes. Burke pulled up behind me.

"You hear anything?" he asked me.

"I just got a text."

"Yeah," he said. "Me, too."

We entered the office and the same guys were waiting as the Loo walked in looking red-eyed.

"Let's take it to the conference room," he said.

We all followed him. The conference room had a bunch of desks, a white wall with a screen that

came down for slide shows and photo parades. The screen was down.

"How's your daughter?" somebody asked.

"She's fine. Broken leg. Already talking about riding her bike this weekend."

I could tell he was a lot more upset than he was letting on.

"We have to speed up this drug bust. Hennedy already passed on the weapons."

Spud pressed a couple of buttons on a remote control. The room went dark. On the screen, there was a pretty good photo of Hennedy going into a club with what I was certain was the case of Desert Eagles under his arm.

Inside the club, more photos were taken. They were clear, but dark.

"We know he has been liaising with two different guys," the Loo said. "We didn't know who they were until this afternoon, but they are two brothers from a longstanding TOC family."

TOC, or Traditional Organized Crime, was how we referred to the Mafia in police circles. The Loo clicked forward to another photo.

"The two youngest sons of the Natale family who've been busy mother fuckers since they landed in LA from New York three months ago."

The photo flicked to a new one of a good-looking, dark-haired man standing outside the same club.

“Meet Louis Natale, age thirty-three. As far as we know, mostly deals in drugs, bit of prostitution. He’s got a few whore houses operating, but the big king pin of the Natale operation is his little brother, Lucio Natale.”

The photo flicked over and there was my lover. Photo time stamp said five-thirty p.m. Shit. When he was supposed to be with me, he was doing a gun deal with Henney.

“He is a violent little prick,” the Loo went on. “One of the worst records we’ve ever seen.”

Three photos popped on the screen. The last one was of Lucky leaving the club with the gun case under his arm.

“He’s done some pretty rotten things to people who owe him. Henney is panicking, according to the trace we have on his cell and land lines.” The Loo paused.

“Lucio’s a sophisticated cat. Deals in high end art, which is a classy cover, but the art business is a front for his big-ticket drug sales.”

“If we know all this, why’s he still out on the streets?” Burke asked.

It was a fair question and *Spud* gave him an answer.

“No proof. The last time they got a tip on some artwork being transported from Italy to New York, it was supposed to be hiding several kilos of cocaine. He must have friends in very high places

because when the shipment arrived, the cocaine was missing. The cargo box had been tampered with...we found traces of cocaine in there, but nothing substantial. There's traces of cocaine on almost all the currency in circulation, sometimes money gets shipped, sometimes there's transference..." he paused. "Once Hennedy tells him he has the cocaine, he'll make a meeting with Natale and we step in."

Pressing more buttons, the lights came back on and I sat blinking like Blind Pew. My hot little bottom a tough Mafioso? I was having a hard time believing it. I was having a hard time believing everything today.

Shit. And I was supposed to go back and have dinner with him.

We all asked a few questions about the actual drug bust. They'd picked a notorious crack den down on National that needed cleaning up, but the huge haul of coke we were to find would be planted moments before we arrived.

"We're speeding up the drug bust to tomorrow morning. Everything's in place," the Loo said. "I want you to assemble your teams."

He handed me a sheaf of papers. "Call your men and begin your strategy. Same as last time, you go in the lead, you call for backup when you start finding stuff."

"What about the search warrant?"

"You'll have it before you get to the house. Whatever you do, act natural with Hennedy. As soon as he gets news of the bust, he's probably going to call Natale. Once he knows how much stuff he's got, there'll be another call."

"Which one does he deal with?" I asked.

"Lucio. I want you to lay it on nice and thick about how much coke is supposed to be involved. We've got a trace on Lucio's phone."

I swallowed hard.

"That happened as of tonight. We're watching him to see what he does with the guns. So far, he doesn't seem to have done anything. He's at home." The Loo checked his watch. "He's been under surveillance since about ten minutes ago. It took me longer to set up than I expected. So we do the bust at four a.m. I expect each unit here to be ready to roll at three-thirty."

This cannot be happening. By my reckoning, surveillance had begun on Lucky—Lucio—since a few minutes after I'd left his house.

Back at my desk, I went over the past two days' events in my mind. I had a hard time believing he was a violent Mafioso. I just didn't buy it. *Shit. My taste in men has really bottomed out...*

My cell phone rang. It was him. I let it go to voicemail. I couldn't call him at all. Not now there was a tap on his line. I heaved a sigh of relief I'd given him my private cell phone number and that

I'd never told him my name wasn't really Jim. I worried about the fact my private calls went to my business line. What if the number showed up on some report? I couldn't worry about that. I had work to do.

* * * *

Jim didn't pick up the phone. He let it go through to voicemail. I didn't leave a message. I lay on the sheets, debating what to do next. I was pissed. He was blowing me off, stupid bastard. We could have had something good. My phone rang and feeling guilty, I answered it, but it wasn't Jim. It was George, a little weasel who did odd jobs for my dad. We fooled around sometimes...when I let him come over for a little homo fun.

"Hey," George said.

"Hey, yourself."

"Got a job for you from the old man."

I blew out a sigh. I didn't really want to talk to George, but I had a ton of food and I still felt like fucking, so I invited him over.

"Cool, see you in a few."

I didn't know why I felt guilty inviting George over. I just did. I ended the call, took a shower and switched on the outside lights. I spotted a black Mustang across the road. It looked a lot like Jim's car, but I knew it wasn't. Huh.

George rounded the corner in his spanky-new Camaro. Working for my family paid off for him. I watched him get out and waited until he rang the bell before letting him in.

"Hey," he said, a shit-eating grin on his face. "I got something for you."

He walked across the threshold and I glanced outside before shutting the world away.

We walked into the living room and he handed me a piece of paper. He opened the food I'd brought out here to the coffee table and began spooning risotto onto a plate.

I stared at an image of Jim in the middle of the page.

"Where'd you get this?"

"Can't tell you much, but his name is Jack Cannon. The old man wants him whacked."

I hated when George talked like some TV wise ass when he was born and raised in Santa Monica.

"Why?"

George poured himself some wine.

"He's a cop. Not just an ordinary cop. Some high-flying SWAT-type guy."

Of course he was. Damn it.

George pointed to the page in my hand. "His address will be emailed to you. The old man wants the job done by tomorrow night."

"Why's he want him dead?"

“Because it embarrasses him to have his son fucking a pig.”

I swallowed hard.

“Get out of my house,” I said.

George shrugged. “You’re being watched,” he whispered in my ear as he walked out the door.

* * * *

I eyed my watch. A little after eleven. I had to galvanize my crew. I had to stay away from Lucio. Lucky. Shit. I missed him already. I called in Martinez and Hennedy as Burke began the prep work on our assault mission, using a doll’s house we kept in the office.

I went online and did a bit of research on Lucio Natale. None of it was pretty.

He was typical of the new breed TOC. He’d been raised well in New York City, went to college at Brown, studied Art, studied Law, got two degrees, distancing himself from his family. I wondered when and what brought him back into the family business when his art dealings must have brought him plenty of money.

I was surprised to read his marital status was *divorced*.

According to the FBI protocol on my screen, he was twenty-eight and for the last three years had been active in the Natale family business. He was

the last person to see his favorite uncle, Arkie Natale alive. According to the report, he and Arkie were closer than Lucio was to his own father, and yet, after the two men drove away from the family house after a wedding reception, Arkie had been found dead in his trunk. No witnesses, no reason...except that Lucio immediately took over Arkie's turf of the lower east side of Manhattan.

His family came from the beautiful Sicilian town of Castellammare del Golfo. Born there, he was three when his family moved to New York and his father started throwing his weight around. There was a photo of Louis Senior and he was still handsome. But Louis had a violent record, too, and a few missing people to his credit.

Lucio's second-known TOC assault was a knife attack on a restaurant owner who owed him money. He was arrested and charged, but this was later dropped when the victim disappeared. This was a familiar theme played over and over, real estate partners attacked, missing, a few winding up dead. In the art world, however, there were allegations of drug smuggling, but nothing substantial.

What was troubling was the allegation from his ex-wife that he'd terrorized her, tortured her cat, drowned her kittens and left other, severed animal parts on her front doorstep, in her house, even on her bed.

A nasty settlement meeting wound up with the mediator having his pinky finger severed and mailed to Lucio's ex-wife.

Eeww...gross.

I sat back in my chair and stared at the screen. I had somehow managed to find me a hot, hung, psychotic little thug. I reread it all. I still couldn't believe it. I just didn't understand how I never...*sensed* any of this in him, mind you, I didn't know him that well and pheromones had distracted me, but still...

Martinez and Henedy, who looked distracted, walked into the squad room.

"I brought the coffee and donuts," Martinez said.

"You know, I think I love you," Burke said.

Martinez looked him up and down. "Don't you got enough problems with two women? Now you want a man in the mix?"

"Fuck you," Burke said and we got down to business, planning our attack.

"We have a reliable tip about a huge haul of cocaine," I said, planting the seeds as the Loo requested. Henedy didn't react, but the second I shut the meeting down, I caught the gleam in his eye as he pulled his cell phone out of his pocket and walked down the hallway.

* * * *

I couldn't believe I hadn't noticed some of the details of Jim's—or should I say Jack Cannon's Mustang. I should have made him as a cop long before this, but I was hot for him and nothing else mattered.

Shit! A cop! I felt totally duped. I wondered if he knew who I was. No, he would never have come here. I thought for a moment...maybe he just found out and that's why he blew me off. Maybe I'm just imagining things.

Were my phone lines were being tapped? Probably. I peeked outside and saw that the Mustang was still there. All I knew was I wanted to fuck him more than I ever wanted to fuck anyone in my whole life.

This wasn't good. I looked across the room at the black case. Yeah, and I had me a bunch of big ol' guns.

I lifted the lid and picked one up. I wanted to fuck him one more time before I killed him. Get with him just one more time before I blew his brains out.

* * * *

We had three hours before lift-off so I went home, took a long, hot shower and drank a bunch of coffee, good coffee, not the crap they give us at the

station, and I stretched out on my bed in my white Calvins. I tried not to think about Lucio and how I wished I was tangling with him right now. His bed looked real comfy, too.

I heard the soft pa-ram-pa of feet in the kitchen. The cat was in the house. I got up, scratched his head, gave him some food and refilled my coffee cup. It was only then I noticed the strange thing on the end of my bed. I hadn't noticed it before. It was a severed rat's tail.

My body went cold. I knew Lucio couldn't have brought it here. He was under surveillance. He would have been seen. I told myself the cat did it, then I looked around, hoping not to find severed human fingers.

I tossed the tail into the garbage and by the time I got dressed in my assault gear, I was amped. I was obsessed with this man. It had to stop. I wanted to see him so badly, but knew that I couldn't. It was a bad feeling, this denial. I wanted him and I knew he wanted me. I powered up the Mustang and as I drove down my street, I passed a black Mustang, its driver pretending to be chatting on his cell phone.

I recognized him, even in this late hour as the guy who'd been washing his car earlier in the day. Shit. Who was he and why was he following me?

He didn't follow me as I threaded my way down and across several streets thanks to stupid

No Turn rules in my neighborhood after ten p.m. It was supposed to discourage cruising. It was just a pain in the ass.

At the supermarket, my crew arrived. Hennedy seemed subdued.

“You okay?” I asked him.

“Yeah, just tired.”

We rolled down to the meeting place, this time a few blocks off National. I cut the lights. We waited for the signal.

“You think Monroe is sleeping again?” Hennedy asked, which is what he always asked and we all laughed, easing the tension between us.

“You want a glazed?” he asked me, handing me the donut box. I took two. I knew my guys well enough that if I didn’t load up now, I’d never see the donuts again.

We waited, we ate and Burke entertained us with stories of pink baby clothes staining his underwear.

“Shit, you *are* gay,” Martinez said and suddenly, across the road, Monroe flashed the van lights.

We were on.

I jawed the rest of my remaining donut as we suited up and I glanced around. I was nervous. I felt like I was under scrutiny. A stupid feeling since I’d done nothing wrong except fall in love with the wrong guy.

Shaking my head, I tossed that thought aside. I was *not* in love. Not even close.

Pistone was in a weird mood when we got into the van.

“What’s with you?” I asked him. He was nervous.

“Took some Tylenol PM. Worst fucking headache of my life. I don’t know what the hell I’m doing.”

Nobody had told me exactly where we’d find the cocaine stash and I couldn’t exactly ask questions. Nobody called my cell and I realized I was on my own as we crashed into the front yard of the house on National. It reeked of urine the second we got near the doors. Burke and I went first and Martinez and Hennedy swarmed behind us.

The stench of piss and feces was something I knew I’d never forget. The place needed to be torched. It was unsalvageable.

“Don’t look in the bathroom,” Hennedy muttered. “They’ve even been crapping in the tub.”

We called in our backup. The stench got worse the further we went into the house.

“Dead body,” I muttered, kicking in a door.

A swarm of huge black flies hit us full in the face, as well as the stench of death.

"Shit!" Hennedy screamed and then everything happened fast.

Our backup units arrived. The Medical Examiner's office demanded we close the door on the dead body until he arrived, but I had a problem. I had to find the stashed cocaine.

Think, Jack. It's not going to be in a room with a dead body.

My team did a thorough job of searching, but Burke and I kept trading worried looks. No big bags of cocaine. Hennedy seemed upset.

"Where's the coke at?" he asked more than once and even though we found a decent stash of marijuana, bags of Oxy-Contin, what looked like less than a kilo of heroin, it was embarrassing, considering what we were supposed to find.

"Any ideas?" Burke asked me sotto voce as soon as we were alone.

"Somebody's taken it," was my immediate response.

"How? When?"

I shrugged. I hated this. I hated not knowing. A stoner sitting against the wall, his diapers showing just above the rise of his jeans had a syringe sticking out of his throat. His eyes opened in a sly way. *Shit!* I recognized him at once. Not wanting to give Carlos Melito away, I marveled at what a good undercover cop can do. The man deserved a fucking Academy Award.

“You okay there, amigo?” I asked. I winked at him. He winked back as I bent over him and he slumped, groaning to the floor. Under his smelly ass was the massive haul of cocaine I’d been looking for.

“Hello, nurse,” I said and beckoned for Burke.

CHAPTER SIX

I stopped at the gym. I was kidding myself that I wanted a workout. I wanted to fuck. I kept the Desert Eagle under my car seat and trotted into the gym, surprised that at four o'clock in the morning, it was busy as hell. This was the serious workout set, the people who woke themselves from deep sleep to keep their bodies tight and hard.

In the locker room, I saw two guys going at it. Man, I wanted some of that. One sexy, muscular dude on the bench was getting fucked, hard. He glanced at me.

"Lemme suck your cock."

"Sure," I said and flipped it out, his tongue reaching for it instantly. His hand gripped the shaft and I watched the way the guy doing him laid into him. The cocksucker groaned, his teeth grazing me for a second. We got a good rhythm going, the fucker reaching a hand between my

legs, snaking his index finger between my ass crack and then sucking on it.

The cocksucker wasn't bad at all and closed his eyes in bliss. The guy fucking him came with a grunt and pulled out, ripping his condom off to spew come all over the kid's chest, then licking it off. He bent forward wanting a taste of my cock, too.

They were both pretty good, but the first kid grabbed my cock. By the time I came, I splashed both their faces. Nothing like a come facial to get your day started.

The two men kissed each other. I sensed true love and left them to it. I was heading to the treadmill when my cell phone rang.

It was that runt, Henneidy. He sounded jubilant.

"I got the cocaine. I can get it to you this afternoon."

"Excellent. Call me as soon as you have it."

I ended the call and looked around for another friendly mouth. Screw it...maybe I'd get that workout after all.

* * * *

The Loo was quiet when we got back to the station. I went into his office.

"Did Melito look like he's been hittin' the drugs a little hard?" he asked me.

I thought about the little undercover officer from our raid. I liked Carlos. I hoped the syringe in the junkie's last refuge was an elaborate piece of acting, but I kept remembering his wife and three wonderful kids.

"Yeah," I said.

He nodded. "I'll get him pulled out." *Spud* ran his thumbs against the edge of his desk. He always did this when he was worried, had something to say and didn't know how to say it.

"What is it?" I asked.

"Hennedy made contact with Natale. I gotta tell you, there's something..." his voice trailed off.

"Weird about all this?"

He looked shocked.

"You think so, too?"

I shrugged. "I don't know. Maybe I just hate thinking of somebody like Hennedy turning out to be a worm."

"Yeah, maybe. Anyway, as soon as we hear that the drugs are gone from lockup, we'll jump into action." He glanced away from me and back again. "I'll keep you in the loop."

"You want my team involved in the takedown?"

"I don't know, to be honest." He stuck his fingers to his eyes. I rose and he didn't look up.

"Guess we're gonna need a new member of your team," he said.

"Yeah, I guess."

"You know what's weird? They've been watching Natale for weeks...I can't figure out how and when Hennedy got in touch with him."

"Didn't you say he was seen in a nightclub with him?"

The Loo nodded.

"Maybe it's one of those random things. Yeah, it sucks, but it happens."

"Yeah...it happens."

The Loo turned away and I asked after his little girl.

"She's fine." He turned his back on me completely, leaning against his leather headrest. "Go home and get some rest."

Rest. There's a billboard on La Cienega Boulevard, in the heart of the Beautiful People district. It says *You can rest when you're dead.*

I returned to my office and knowing there'd be no decent coffee...nothing...I walked up to Santa Monica Boulevard to the Seven-Eleven store and bought two giant cups of coffee and two jelly donuts.

The station was quiet when I got back. One of the officers up front had a TV on his desk. The show was *Cash Cab*, and I paused for a moment to watch the two tourists sitting in the back of a New York taxicab, surprised to find they were on the set of the freakiest, funniest game show ever.

I retreated to my office again, fired up the computer and started nosing around again. Something wasn't quite right and I meant to get to the bottom of it.

Right now.

* * * *

They call me Lucky for a reason. Good stuff just happens for me. I found out where he lived. It wasn't difficult. I was pissed as hell that he was a cop. *A cop!* I drove to his house and sat outside. I didn't see his fancy Mustang anywhere. I cut the lights and waited. I decided to park a few blocks away and walk over. The gun felt heavy at the back of my pants.

In the driveway, I hesitated. George had told me he lived in the guesthouse. I stepped past the main house, which was dark. There were motion-sensor lights on the side. I blew by as fast as I could, but nobody came out. I guess they were used to Jack Cannon coming home at all hours. It was five o'clock in the morning.

Where the fuck was he?

* * * *

I was all out of coffee and donuts. I couldn't do much, because everything was classified. I'd find a

fresh lead and get the same error code, Access Denied. So I called my ex, Will Tallman.

“Hey, Jack,” he said. “This is a nice surprise.”

“Will, I know you have access to certain files, certain...classified levels I don’t have.”

He was quiet.

“You there, Will?”

“What is it that you want to know?”

“About the Natale brothers.”

“Sorry. Can’t help you there.” He hung up on me.

I called back just in case I was dreaming things, but he didn’t pick up.

Okay, so the Natale brothers were tough and violent...*allegedly*. This was maddening. I had to find out what I could about Natale. I sloped down the hall, thinking I’d swipe some good coffee from Homicide.

The Loo’s office door was open. A file was on his desk. Where the hell was he? I stepped over, flipped the cover over and was shocked to see transcripts of phone conversations between the Natale brothers and...others.

I didn’t care if I got caught. I wanted to know what was going on. No, I *had* to know.

With shaky hands, I skimmed through the first couple of recorded conversations. Asshole! I ditched him for the night so he invited somebody else over for *my* risotto and soft shell crab. I

wondered who the replacement was and felt rage and a bubbling, futile jealousy roiling in my belly as I read another page, then another.

I was interested to read the conversation between the two Natale brothers from two days ago, where Lucio Natale admitted to having met a new guy. I was pretty sure he was talking about me.

The conversation seemed bittersweet, an innocuous conversation maybe, but something about it bothered me. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw the Loo coming and closed the file.

I quickly backed up to make it look like I'd just entered his office.

"You still here?" he asked, looking surprised.

"Yeah. I see you are, too. I was just on my way to Homicide to swipe some good coffee. You want some?"

He looked over his shoulder. "I've just been."

"Okay," I said and headed off to Homicide. I ran through the last transcript in my mind again. Why did it bother me so much? It was a big clue, my instincts kept screaming, but I couldn't think why.

I swiped the last of Homicide's coffee and switched off the empty pot, just to be polite. I was back at my desk sipping it, thinking about how to get around the classified status issue, when it hit me.

Suddenly, I knew what was wrong with the conversation between the two brothers. I wondered if anyone else would pick up on it, and decided probably nobody else cared like I did. I sipped my coffee, nursing my new realization like a newborn baby.

Light dawned and I went home. A new day full of danger and lies was about to begin.

* * * *

Jack had a nice cat, I had to give him that. He had a damned uncomfortable fucking bed, but it wouldn't be giving him problems for too much longer. I kept an ear out for him, wondering if he was some place fucking some hot ass and realized it was a shame I was gonna have to kill such an amazing lover who had such an amazing dick.

I yawned and scratched my chin. The cat meowed. I gave it some food. It ate, purring against my hand and I heard his footsteps.

He came to the door and I cocked my gun. What was I doing? I had questions. I wanted to talk. If I shot first, there'd be no way to ask questions later.

The footsteps stopped, but there was no key in the door.

Jack Cannon's cat lifted his face and looked at me as if to say, *Get used to it.*

The footsteps retreated and all was silent again.

* * * *

I wanted to talk to him. What the fuck should I do? I went home, but changed my mind. I had to find him. I was afraid to go near his house in case he still had a tail on him, but I could call him. I went back to my car and called him from the throwaway track phone I kept in the glove box.

He didn't pick up and the call went to voicemail. I didn't leave a message and felt the childish rage swell within me once again.

My other cell phone rang. It was a text.

Stork picked up the package.

Damn. Henneidy had wasted no time in getting the drugs out of lockup.

It was crazy, but I was suddenly really worried about Lucio Natale. I loved him. I hated him for lying to me, duping me...but hell, I'd lied to him, too.

I called the Loo. He answered on the second ring.

"Hey," I said. "I want to be in on the capture."

"No," he said. "Too risky. If Henneidy sees you, he could shoot."

I wondered if *Spud* knew about me and what this would do to our working relationship.

"Cannon, I know this sucks, the futility of waiting, but it's for the best. Look, my kid's had a complication, she's back in the hospital for more x-rays so I'm headed there now, okay?"

"Okay, sure. I'm sorry."

"Yeah, me too. Today of all days. You grab a workout or something. Why aren't you sleeping?"

I heard voices in his office. He ended our call with a curt, "Gotta go."

My phone rang again, this time it was Burke.

"He got the drugs."

"Yeah, I still don't believe it."

"Tell me about it. I know his whole family. I just don't get it. Heard anything about the raid, how it's gonna go down?"

"No, you?"

"Nope, nothing."

We said goodbye and I got into my car.

Think, Jack, think.

* * * *

Hennedy called me and said he had the dope. I was glad he had it this time, still wasn't sure I wouldn't kill him, just because he'd pissed me off so bad.

I invited him to the club at noon. My tail from outside was gone, not that I went in through the front way. I had George posted in a tree a few

doors down and said the Mustang had driven off about an hour ago.

“They were sniffing around your house, they figured you’d given them the slip.”

Yep, I had. Nothing like scaling a fence and stealing somebody else’s car.

I didn’t want to go back home. I actually liked being on Cannon’s bed. I liked the way his pillowcases smelled of him. I took a little catnap and waited, either to go meet Henney or to confront Cannon. Either was good. Whatever came first.

The cat came and lay beside me, purring. It was a damned sweet cat. I pointed the gun at its head and said, “Bang.”

He yawned and stretched, making me yawn, too. I closed my eyes and saw Jack Cannon, looking like he was ready to fuck.

* * * *

I paced the street outside my house. I wondered where the club was that he’d had the meeting with Henney. It had to be on Melrose or Santa Monica, but they were both big streets. I went back to the station. With the Loo at the hospital, I’d have a better chance of going through that file again.

It was bedlam when I arrived. Two rent boys picked up for soliciting at a bus stop. One of them was crying. I felt bad for both of them. Some men got paid a shit load of money to fuck on screen, guys like this got arrested and...into a downward spiral of drugs and prostitution.

The Loo's office was locked and I couldn't persuade his assistant to let me in. "I left my coffee cup in there," I said.

"Here, Cannon, use mine."

It had lipstick marks all over it. Since I made a big deal of wanting coffee, I swung by Homicide. Their coffee pot was cold.

What the fuck?

There was a piece of paper inside.

I took it out. It read, *Get your own damned coffee pot!* I knew the note was not meant for me and put it back in there. I headed to my office and found Burke and Martinez scrutinizing nasty mags again.

"Where's Henney?" I asked.

"Said he was going to the gym." Martinez yawned and stretched.

"Go home, get some rest," I said, sounding like the Loo.

"Nah...I like it in here."

We sat in peaceful silence as I got back online, looking for more answers to my questions.

* * * *

Hennedy was due in twenty minutes. I rolled off Cannon's bed. Man, it was like sleeping on a bed of rocks. I hobbled to the front door. It was bright and sunny outside and I had a ticket on the windshield when I finally reached my *borrowed* car. Street cleaning. I threw the ticket into the glove compartment and drove down to the club, feeling the grumpiest I had in a very long time.

I was certain I had a tail at first, but the driver made a turn. On Melrose, just off Formosa, I found parking, stuffed a bunch of coins in the meter and as an extra incentive to leave me alone, stuck the ticket back under the windshield wiper. I went into the club. In the early eighties, the club had been a very cool African-American owned, late night jazz retreat called Nucleus Nuance.

It had changed hands and styles a hundred different times since then. Louis and I had opted for an old-world Italian brasserie with red leather banquettes, live music on the weekends and classic Italian cooking. It was cool and dark inside and Louis greeted me. Two of the fish in the aquarium were dead and I pointed this out to a cocktail waitress.

"I'll get onto it," she said.

There were a few regulars and a couple of newbies. I made a point of greeting everybody. One guy seemed to be drunk already.

“Watch him,” I said to the bartender.

“He just lost his house in a foreclosure sale,” the bartender said and handed me a soda water.

I sipped the icy drink. “That’s too bad, but cut him off after this one.”

He nodded and I turned, looking around. Louis stood with me for a moment. He had his cell phone in his hand.

“Where do you want him to meet us?”

I knew he was talking about Henney. “Tell him to come to the back entrance and to meet us in back.”

Louis spoke into the cell phone and I retreated to my office, unlocking the door and switching on lights. I hated Henney and hated having to do business with him.

He came in with his bright blue plastic Pleasant Holidays bag a few seconds later and a few seconds after that, it all went to shit.

Cops appeared out of nowhere. Louis and I were arrested, Henney was arrested and I was mortified when I was led out in handcuffs.

Who the fuck ratted us out?

CHAPTER SEVEN

I watched the news from the TV in Homicide. Fuck them and their coffee issues. I had a few of my own. I poured myself a cup and saw the Natale brothers and Hennedy all carted out, the news abuzz with dirty cops, dirty mob kids...

They didn't have half their facts right, but I knew the truth of how far the corruption went in our precinct was probably no closer to the surface than it was this morning.

"It's all over," the Loo said, pouring himself a coffee. "They were all arrested, the coke's back in custody."

"What happens to the Natale brothers?"

"Being extradited for crimes back in New York. On their way back some time this afternoon."

He looked so happy I thanked him, finished my java and headed home. None of this made sense. I hesitated before I went to Lucio's neighborhood and parked a few blocks away.

There was no activity on his street. I felt conspicuous walking down it. He wasn't being watched anymore since he was locked up, but I still turned down the driveway of one of his neighbors. Soon, the cops would arrive and go through his house. All that fine art. That bed...that ass.

It took me a few minutes to reach his adjoining wall to his neighbors. I looked into his backyard and I heard a click. A gun cocking. Reaching for my own gun, I whirled around.

Shit!

"Lucky," I said, stunned. We had our guns pointed at each other's heads. I secured my stance, keeping my hand steady.

"What are you doing here, Jim? Or as you are known better, Jack Cannon?"

"How the fuck did you get out of jail?"

"I escaped."

That made me laugh.

He frowned. "What's so funny?"

"Escaped. Yeah, right."

"I had no choice. I have orders to shoot you."

"Really." I stared at the gun. *Shit. One of my Desert Eagles.*

"Yeah, really."

"So go ahead," I said. "Shoot."

He shook his head. "Fuck, I hate you."

"Not as much as I hate you. Do you know what an asshole you are?"

"Because I'm in the Mob?"

"No, dumbass, because you're not."

"What are you talking about, Jack?"

"I only ever fall for cops. I should have known. I never fall for assholes."

"So, you fell for an asshole? Should I be offended?"

I lowered my gun. A fraction of a second later he lowered his and we both raised them again, circling each other.

I snorted. "I'm the one who should be offended. This time I had to fall for *you*. A cop who's also an asshole."

"Shit, Jack."

"We're wasting time," I said.

He lowered his gun again. "How long have you known?"

"Not until this morning. I read a conversation with your alleged brother Louis and he talked about how you must be with a new guy. Your official bio says you're divorced, yet he never asked if you met a man or a woman, he just automatically knew...he assumed it was a man. So I knew there was something hinky about you."

"I could just shoot you."

"Yeah? Why? Because you want me to fuck you?"

"That and because I've never blown my cover before."

"Love's a bitch, ain't it?"

We stared at each other. I just had to go say the L word. I dragged him to me and our mouths collided. I pushed him against his neighbor's fence, held him by the throat and kissed him. We broke away from each other.

"Fuck me," he said.

"Not here. Come on."

"Where?"

"To the carwash."

"The carwash? You're joking. I've gotta pack and get outta here, Jack."

I frog marched him down the street, not that he was resisting. We got in my car and I drove us to the carwash.

"Who came over and fucked you and ate my risotto last night?" I asked him as soon as we hit a light.

"Nobody fucked me, but he did eat the food. You blew me off, remember?"

"Who was it?"

"George," he said.

"George who?"

"Pistone."

George was Sal Pistone's real first name. God, not Pistone. "Please tell me you haven't messed around with him."

"Of course I messed around with him. I was undercover. He bought the whole Mafioso thing...he was the one who told me my old man ordered a hit on you. Nobody knew about you, I was careful."

"Pistone wants me dead?"

"He doesn't like you."

"That hurts," I said and laughed. "How long have you known I was a cop?"

"Not until last night. Jack...you sure about the carwash?"

"Yeah. I'm fucking you with suds and soap. You owe me."

We rolled into the first bay that was open.

"So what happens now?" I asked him, slipping coins into the slot. Hot foam poured out of the water wand and as Lucio got out of the passenger side, I blasted him. He spluttered and coughed.

"Jesus, Jack."

"Get behind the car. So answer the question, what happens now?"

"I'm heading to London tonight. New assignment."

"Is that so?"

I blasted the car with reams of soap, moving the handheld wand behind Lucio.

"What's your real name?"

He grinned. "If you fuck me real good, I might tell you."

I pulled down his pants and blasted his ass with soap and water as he braced himself against the hood.

"You are a crazy mother fucker." He laughed.

I handed him the water wand. "Hold this, bitch. I got some business back here."

He gasped as my bare cock pressed against his tailbone.

"How many cops were in on this?" I asked him.

"A few."

"Is Henney really dirty?"

"Sorry to say, he really is."

I rolled on a rubber and sliced right into him. He leaned forward, soap and water going everywhere.

"Hey!" somebody yelled from the bay next door.

I gripped my man's hard hips and fucked him with short, savage strokes that seemed to ignite his own passions.

"Oh, Jack," he moaned. "Come to London with me."

I didn't respond.

"At least come visit me, and get laid."

"I could do that."

His head touched the hood, the water wand flying in the air, bouncing against the wall of the bay as I fucked his ass harder. Guys were watching. Let 'em watch.

“Jack...you will come to London...right?” he gasped.

I caught the wand and sent a blast of water right at his spasming cock. He came in surprise at the same moment I went off in his ass.

Pulling his back against my belly, I found the twitching pulse point in his throat with my lips and tongue. “Yeah, I’ll come to London. Somebody needs to teach your ass a lesson.”

Fuck, yeah.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

A. J. Llewellyn lives in California, but dreams of living in Hawaii. Frequent trips to all the islands, bags of Kona coffee in his fridge and a healthy collection of Hawaiian records keep this writer refueled. A. J. loves male/male erotica, has a passion for all animals (especially the dog, the cat and the turtle). A. J. believes that love is a song best sung out loud.

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