



# *Just for You*

*Jet Mykles*



## **Just For You**

**Copyright © October 2009 by Jet Mykles**

All rights reserved. This copy is intended for the purchaser of this e-book ONLY. No part of this e-book may be reproduced, scanned, or distributed in any printed or electronic form without prior written permission from Loose Id LLC. Please do not participate in or encourage piracy of copyrighted materials in violation of the author's rights. Purchase only authorized editions.

ISBN 978-1-60737-446-6

Available in PDF, HTML, Microsoft Reader, and Mobi

Editor: Jana J. Hanson

Cover Artist: P. L. Nunn

Printed in the United States of America

**Loose Id.**

Published by

Loose Id LLC

870 Market St, Suite 1201

San Francisco CA 94102-2907

[www.loose-id.com](http://www.loose-id.com)

This e-book is a work of fiction. While reference might be made to actual historical events or existing locations, the names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events, or locales is entirely coincidental.

## **Warning**

This e-book contains sexually explicit scenes and adult language and may be considered offensive to some readers. Loose Id LLC's e-books are for sale to adults ONLY, as defined by the laws of the country in which you made your purchase. Please store your files wisely, where they cannot be accessed by under-aged readers.

\* \* \* \* \*

DISCLAIMER: Please do not try any new sexual practice, especially those that might be found in our BDSM/fetish titles without the guidance of an experienced practitioner. Neither Loose Id LLC nor its authors will be responsible for any loss, harm, injury or death resulting from use of the information contained in any of its titles.

## About this Title

**Genre:** LGBT Erotic Contemporary

Justin falls for Kevin the instant they pass each other on a sidewalk. Only, Kevin's not gay. The higher ups at Kevin's company *are* gay, however, and Kevin's accidental meeting with Justin gives him an idea how to get around his controlling female supervisor. If he can gain access to the top men at an exclusive gay club, he might be able to finally share his ideas.

Justin instantly agrees to be his date, despite the obvious heartbreak that's headed his way for going out with a straight man. At the club, Kevin gets a chance to meet the company owner, Victor Chen, and the man seems interested...both in his ideas and his date.

Kevin can't deny his attraction to Justin, but he's not gay. Right? He should step aside and let Justin have a chance to date Victor, who's gorgeous, rich, and shares Justin's interest in fashion. Despite his internal struggles, he really wants to explore their growing bond. Justin is certainly game, but a part of him knows they can't have a future together. Is there more to their instant attraction than either suspect?

***Publisher's Note:*** *This book contains explicit sexual content, graphic language, and situations that some readers may find objectionable: Anal play/intercourse, male/male sexual practices.*

## Chapter One

“...and then I...” Justin stopped dead in his tracks in the middle of the sidewalk, forcing two chatting women to split up to go around him. Ignoring their mild glares as they passed, he stared blindly over the plastic lid of his coffee cup, wondering if he'd just seen what he thought he'd seen.

Ahead, Frank kept walking a few steps before realizing he was alone. He spun, the spikes of his highlighted hair refusing to move in the mild breeze that kept the sunny street somewhat cool. “Hey?”

Justin heard him but couldn't be bothered to acknowledge the words. He snapped around, eagerly searching for... *Oh yes!* The hind view of the vision of loveliness that had just passed by him. Slightly rumpled charcoal slacks loosely framed a fine little derriere, and an equally rumpled ice gray button-down dress shirt draped slim shoulders. Waved hair the color of good French Roast almost brushed said shoulders.

“Justin, what are you...?”

Barely hearing his friend, Justin raced back down the sidewalk, nearly spilling his coffee in his rush to catch up to a wet dream come to life. He almost ran over a guy on Rollerblades and just avoided getting wrapped up in a microdog's leash, but he finally made it to the vision's side. He reached out to wrap a hand around an arm. Nice, he thought, feeling the biceps. Slim but firm.

Said vision halted and twisted his graceful neck over and up to face Justin.

*Oh. My. God!* Innocently seductive brown eyes kind of focused on Justin from beneath sinfully full black lashes. Confused eyes blinked up at him, positively enchanting. Elegant and sleek, just like the rest of him. Latino somewhere in his lineage, judging by facial features and gold skin tone. There was a childlike purity in that face even though he had to be in his midtwenties, at least. Justin wanted to devour the generous lips that parted in surprise.

"I've just fallen in love with you," Justin declared, cradling his coffee cup to his chest as he kept hold on the vision's arm. "What is your name, and *please* tell me you're gay?"

"Justin!" Frank caught up with him, grabbing the wrist of the hand that had a grip on the vision's arm. Frank tugged, but Justin wouldn't let go. "Justin, please, you're annoying the nice man."

Justin blinked at the dumbstruck object of his attention as the breeze puffed a lock of shiny dark hair across the man's brow. "Nice man, please tell me your name so I know who to dream about tonight."

"Justin!" Frank scolded, prying at his fingers.

Reluctantly, since the vision didn't seem to be responding in kind, Justin let Frank remove his hand. But he kept eye contact.

"Please excuse him," Frank said, yanking Justin away. "He's not right in the head."

"How can I be in the face of such beauty?" Justin protested, stumbling backward as Frank tugged.

Said beauty blinked slowly, his gorgeous pink lips still parted in shock.

"I work down the street at Juster's. It's a men's boutique." Justin wanted to cry. "Come find me, Prince Charming. Please!"

The vision blinked again, closed his mouth, and turned away.

Justin sobbed dramatically, watching a fine ass in shapeless slacks retreat. "There goes the love of my *life*."

Frank snorted, forcibly turning Justin toward the intersection so he wouldn't have to drag him anymore. "You're a complete nutcase."

Justin sighed and sipped his coffee. "I know. But you gotta go with your instincts, right?"

"Your instincts are going to get you killed one of these days."

Justin waved his hand and avoided a group of chatting businessmen. "I've gotten beat up over it before. That's nothing new." He hummed dreamily as they stopped to wait for the light. "But he was pretty, wasn't he?"

"He was that," Frank admitted, pressing the Walk button.

Justin glanced back, but the vision was long gone. "Not gay, though, huh?"

"Not in the least."

"Damn."

\* \* \* \* \*

Kevin returned to his cubicle, still bemused by what had just happened. He'd left to blow off a little steam with an afternoon walk. He certainly hadn't expected to be hit on. By a guy, no less!

Raoul got up from his chair in the next cubicle just as Kevin sat down. Immediately Kevin was reminded of the reason he'd left. Some of his amusement died.

"She's gone," Raoul told him, keeping his voice low. The three people in the neighboring cubicles were all on their side and could be trusted, but beyond that was sketchy.

"Gee." Kevin checked his watch. "Three o'clock. Must be nice."

Stacie pushed her chair close. "She's going to"—she made quote signs in the air with her fingers—"work from home."

All three of them snorted at that.

Kevin shook his head. "The woman never listens." Staring blankly at his monitor, he balled his fists. "I *know* we could get that second installation if she'd just present the idea to either Greg or Victor."

"Fat chance. She's way too scared of how it went last time."

Kevin waved a hand in the air. "We've fixed those problems. We've gone way beyond that. Besides, if we just *talked* to the customer..."

"Please," Stacie scoffed, "remember what happened the last time she talked to a customer?"

Snarling soundlessly, Kevin slumped back his chair.

Raoul leaned on the low cubicle wall and shrugged. "What can we do?"

Kevin grimaced. "Unless we can get to Greg—"

"Which we can't."

"—or Victor—"

"Yeah, right."

"—nothing."

Stacie patted his shoulder before wheeling back to her keyboard.

Raoul gave him a sharp look and glanced at the drawers of Kevin's desk. He raised his brows, then shrugged, before disappearing around the corner into his own little space.

Kevin knew what the look was for.

He stared at the second drawer of his metallic desk. Inside was the possible answer to their problems, but only if he had the balls to go through with it. *No one else does*. It was an invitation that a friend had given him to an exclusive party at a popular local club. Kevin was not into the clubbing scene, but it was a sure bet that at least two of the three men Kevin needed to talk to would be there. The club was high-class and rumored to be *the* place. For homosexuals. Which both Greg Hanson and Victor Chen were.

Kevin Fuller, however, was not.



Kevin blinked, the coincidence crashing into him. He wanted to go to a gay club. He'd just been hit on by an obviously gay guy. Kismet?

## Chapter Two

Justin sighed dramatically, but no one was around to hear. Both Frank and Nancy had stopped paying attention anyway. He'd been playing the martyr for two days now, ever since he'd met his Prince Charming. He'd never forgive Frank for dragging him away. Not that Frank was at all bothered by this fact. Justin's not-to-be-forgiven list for Frank was a mile long, and they remained best friends and business partners.

He sullenly took shirt after shirt off the clothes rack, collecting them from the dressing room to take back out front. It was busy work he didn't need to do, but he had to keep going, keep living without his prince. He'd even tried going down that street every day at the same time, but his vision had not chosen to reappear.

He wished he'd gotten to hear the man's voice. Surely it'd be as gorgeous as the rest of the tight little package. Did his dream work out? Hopefully he was a swimmer or a runner. Justin liked a lean build on a guy.

"Justin?" Frank's voice called from the front.

"What?"

"Someone's here to see you."

Justin sighed again. Probably that banker again. He kept checking in on Justin despite the fact that he was all paid up. Frank thought the guy was sweet on Justin, and unfortunately, Justin agreed. The banker, however, was nowhere near as cute as his dream man from the sidewalk. Resigned, he put the shirts back on the pile, smoothed his tight, brightly painted T-shirt, combed a hand through his hair, and stepped out front.

The squeal that erupted from his throat was supremely undignified, but he couldn't have quashed it if he tried.

His dream man had arrived! And looked all yummy in a purple pin-striped dress shirt and unrumped khakis.

Completely disregarding Frank's laughter, Justin rushed forward and grabbed Prince Charming's hands, twined their fingers, and holding tight, brought all four hands up between them. He gazed into the loveliest face ever and disregarded the wary beginnings of fear that rounded those gorgeous dark eyes. "This time, I am *not* letting you go without learning your name!"

Caught between terror and amusement, the vision's thick dark brows crowded his hairline underneath coffee-colored bangs. Luckily, this time he found his voice. "Kevin. I-I'm Kevin."

"Kevin." Justin fluttered his eyes happily. His vision spoke in a lovely tenor. "Such a beautiful name. I've been utterly incapable of naming you since I saw you. I'm Justin. Oh wait, you know that. Justin Tolliver." He squeezed those hands, wonderfully warm and smooth. "Whatever can I do for you? You name it, it's done."

Kevin stared uneasily at their hands, but Justin refused to let go. "I, uh, I'd like to ask you a favor."

"If it involves spending time with you, done. If it involves any sexual contact whatsoever, even more done."

Kevin blinked, still gaping. He tugged at his hands. "I, uh, don't want you to get the wrong impression. I'm not, uh..."

Justin's heart sank. "You're going to tell me you're not gay, aren't you?"

Kevin bit his bottom lip and nodded.

"Damn." Justin dropped their hands down to waist level but kept their fingers entwined, despite Kevin's desperate look. "Are you sure about that?"

Kevin laughed. It was a nervous laugh, but it was a laugh. He even flushed a little, which was damn adorable. "I'm pretty sure."

Happy to have made his Prince Charming smile, Justin beamed. “Well, all right, but forgive me if I carry hope.” He squeezed Kevin's hands, acknowledging that he still held them. “What can I do for you, my sweet?”

“I'd, uh, like to ask you a favor.”

Justin dearly wished Kevin would drop the “uh” from his vocabulary, but he'd address that later. He nodded. “And I agreed. What is this favor, my pretty?”

Kevin grimaced, taking a step backward. Now their hands, still interlocked, were suspended between them. “Stop calling me pet names, please.”

“Is that the favor?”

Kevin laughed and firmly tugged, freeing his hands. He took another step back for good measure and bumped into one of the wire-frame mannequins. “No.” He caught the mannequin and turned to set it back upright. “The favor is a bit more complicated.”

Bereft of Kevin's touch, Justin leaned against a display case of men's jewelry, spreading one of his ringed hands on the glass top. “You have but to ask, my lovely Kevin. But I warn you, if it involves anything illegal, I *insist* on being repaid with sex.”

Behind him, Frank snorted. Justin was pretty sure he heard Nancy giggle.

Kevin's lovely brown eyes and intriguing plump lips both opened wide in shock. Again. Then, to Justin's utter delight, he burst out in a full-belly laugh.

Justin beamed. Kevin had a gorgeous, full laugh, bright as a child's. He was loosening up beautifully, losing his nervousness. Justin knew the phenomenon that he was, and he used it well.

Kevin recovered, but the mirth stayed in the curves at the corners of his lips. He glanced over at the cash register where Frank and Nancy were openly watching.

Justin waved at them. “Pay them no mind. What can I do for you?”

Kevin bit his lip. He really was going to have to stop doing that, because it just made Justin want to nibble it for him. "Can we talk about it over dinner?"

Justin knew his eyes lit up. "You're asking me out?"

"No! Not like that. It's just, the favor, I'd feel bad if I didn't explain."

"Sounds intriguing. Also sounds like a date." He leered as Kevin sputtered. "You can already guess that I put out, yeah?"

Kevin chuckled. "You've got a one-track mind."

"Yes, sir, and you're the home station, my sweet."

"I'm really not gay."

Justin nodded. "I heard you." He smiled. "So, when are you taking me to dinner to discuss this favor?"

\* \* \* \* \*

Justin studied him as he nibbled on a narrow slice of garlic bread. To Kevin, the pose seemed vaguely feminine, but Justin somehow managed to pull it off. "So, let me get this straight. Your supervisor is a queen bitch who won't let you get anywhere and keeps screwing up your projects, but she's the one with the access to the big boys, so they don't *know* she's the problem. You need to get around her to them, and you can't do that at the office. So you need to get to the head honchos *outside* of the office. And these guys are gay."

Kevin nodded, digging into his ravioli. "Right so far."

"You've managed to grab hold of an invitation to this exclusive club for gay men, and you want me to go with you. As your date."

Kevin nodded.

"And you insist that you're not gay?"

He suppressed a chuckle. "Yes, I insist." Despite his dating preferences, this was proving to be the most fun he'd had at a dinner in ages. Maybe ever. Justin was a riot, even with his constant flirting. Kevin had outgoing friends, but Justin put them all to shame. The man was comfortable in his own skin

and unapologetic about himself, not that he had anything Kevin saw to apologize for. He was outrageously funny and quite charming, not to mention gorgeous. Two-toned blond hair that Kevin was pretty sure resulted from a stylist and not nature draped his neck and brushed just past his broad shoulders. Eyes that looked more like emeralds than any Kevin had ever seen were surrounded by long, dark brown lashes under arched—probably plucked—brows of the same color. With chiseled facial features, including a long, straight nose and a strong, square chin, he could have been a model. Kevin may prefer women, but Justin was in a class of his own with an androgynous beauty that some men have.

Justin sighed, setting what was left of the garlic bread on the side of his plate and picking up his fork to stir up his linguine. “You do realize that by going to this club, everyone you work with will assume you're gay?”

“Yeah, I know.” He reached for his wine. “I just figured I'd tell them I was experimenting.”

“Or bisexual.”

Kevin shrugged. “Whatever.”

“And that doesn't bug you?”

“Not really. I don't socialize much with anyone at work anyway. Who cares if they think I'm gay?”

Justin nodded thoughtfully. He raised a forkful of pasta to his mouth and grinned impishly. “Want to experiment for real?”

Kevin was proud that he only choked a little on his wine. He grinned as he wiped his mouth. “No, thanks.”

“Spoilsport.” Justin pouted, shoving noodles into his mouth. He thought while he chewed. “Why not just go alone?”

“Uh...” Kevin set his glass down and stared at it like the red depths held the answers. “I'm, uh, not much into clubbing. I'd rather have a guide.”

He looked up in time to see one corner of Justin's mouth curl. “A guide.”

"Yeah."

"And you thought I'd fit the bill?"

"Well..." He lost his nerve, then concentrated on his food again. "Yeah. You seemed like the type."

"Hmm."

"No offense."

"None taken." Justin paused to chew another forkful of his pasta before resuming the conversation. "You really think this will work?"

"I do. I've heard that they're pretty open about new ideas. I just need to get close to them and mention some. But every time I've tried, Angela's there."

"And she's damn sure not going to be at the club."

"Exactly."

Justin narrowed his eyes and pointed his empty fork at Kevin. "Unless she's really a man in drag."

Kevin laughed. "No. I'm pretty sure she's a woman."

"Well, okay then." Justin kept eating, using his knife to force slippery pasta onto his fork. "You know, in order to make it convincing, we'd have to touch like we're dating. Maybe even kiss."

Kevin shrugged. "I don't mind if you don't."

Silverware clattered on plate as Justin dropped his fork and sat up straight. "Mind?" His hand fluttered in front of his chin, keeping time with his eyelashes. "Are you insane?" The hand came to rest at the base of his neck. "I'm *dying* to taste you."

Amused, Kevin helped Justin dab at some of the sauce that had spattered the tablecloth. He was kind of amazed that the idea of kissing Justin didn't upset him. If he were honest, Justin's lips were quite intriguing. "I still like girls." Always had. Never been attracted to a guy. Present company didn't count, because thinking the man was gorgeous didn't equal being attracted. That meant he wasn't gay, right?

Justin sniffed as he picked up his fork again. "Freak."

Kevin laughed aloud.

Justin smiled. "Do you know anything about this place?"

"The club? No. Just that it's exclusively gay men. I heard about the problems they had with the women trying to get in a few months ago. Have you been there?"

"Why? Just because I'm gay I'll know all the clubs in town?"

"Sorry." He picked up his own fork again. "Didn't mean to offend you, I..."

"Just kidding, Kevin. As it happens, I do know this place." He dabbed at the corner of his mouth with his napkin. "You should enjoy the back rooms."

Kevin froze, fork halfway to his mouth. Ravioli dribbled off it as he stared in horror at Justin. Did he mean...? Kevin had heard stories about the famous back rooms of gay clubs where men were having sex all over the place.

Justin let him suffer for a full minute before bursting out laughing. "Relax, Kevin. I'm joking." Chuckling, he wiped at his eyes. "It's not that kind of place." Amused, he sipped his wine, waiting for Kevin to scoop up another forkful before adding: "The fuck rooms are upstairs, and they cost big-time."

Unrepentant, he kept laughing as Kevin struggled to chew and swallow his food. "No joke?"

"No joke." Merry eyes regarded him over the rim of Justin's glass. "But don't worry. You won't have to go up there if you don't want to. I'll protect you."

"Thank God."

"Although if you *wanted*..."

Kevin's warning look said it all.

Justin nodded, holding a hand palm out in surrender. "Understood. I shall do my level best to keep you safe and your innocence intact." Still smiling, he carefully set down his glass. "It is a trendy place. No offense, but do you have the wardrobe for this?"



“Wardrobe?”

“You'd need to dress the part.”

“Uh...” Kevin frowned. “Dress how?”

“Have you ever gone to a club?”

Kevin squirmed in his chair, surfing ravioli around his plate rather than look at Justin. “Not really. Not one like this.”

“So I really *will* need to protect you.” Before Kevin could digest the warm tone in his voice, Justin set his elbows on either side of his plate so he could lace his fingers and aim a demonic grin over them. “Oh, honey, please let me dress you.”

“Excuse me?”

“Let me pick out your clothes.” He tilted his head and batted his eyes. “Of course, I'd be happy to help you into and out of them if you'd like.”

“No, thanks, I can get dressed myself.”

“Pooh.”

“But you're probably right about the clothes.”

“So you'll let me pick something out for you?”

“Sure. I trust you.”

Justin blinked, almost serious for a moment. “You do?”

Kevin picked up his wineglass again. “Strangely, yeah.”

Justin got a pained look on his features. “Does that mean I can't molest your innocence?”

“Hey? I'm not exactly a virgin, y'know.”

Leering, Justin tilted his head forward until his eyes were almost hidden behind his eyelashes. “Ever had a guy fuck your ass or sucked a cock?”

This time, Kevin did choke. It took him a few minutes to recover. “No.”

Justin nodded, unrepentant. “Virgin.”

“Have you no shame?”

“I don't believe in it.”

That Kevin could believe. They ate for a moment in silence. “So will you do this for me?”

Justin leaned back in his seat, dangling his wineglass between elegant fingers. “What do I get out of this?”

“I'm sure you could meet a lot of rich guys.”

One brow arched. “Are you implying that I can be bought?”

“Uh...”

Justin waved it off. “Save it. It's true. I'm a slut. For attention, at least. And there will be *lots* of attention.” He sighed. “It's tempting, except that I'll be your date.”

“I don't mind if you get some numbers on the sly.”

Long fingers spread over Justin's heart in mock distress. “Now I'm a heartless slut.”

Kevin smiled. “You're free to tell them that I'm not giving you all that you want.”

“Well *that* would be the truth.”

“Exactly.”

Justin contemplated his wine. “I don't know.”

Kevin recognized the ploy now and just smiled. “What can I give you, except for my virgin ass?”

Justin set down his glass and leaned into the table, his voice hushed and his picture-perfect features lit by the candle between them. “You could let me suck your cock.”

Kevin's eyes went wide. To his amazement, he got a crystal clear image in his head of those beautiful lips wrapped around his dick. There was no doubt in his mind that Justin would excel at that particular task. No doubt in his

dick either, which started to stir at the thought. *Quit it!* “Let's not go there either.”

Justin sighed heavily, letting his head hang forward. His loose, almost gold hair nearly draped his pasta. Nearly but not quite. With another sigh, he drew himself up, pouting. “I suppose it's not a big deal for me.” He reached for the wine bottle and proceeded to expertly refill both of their glasses. “I get to go to a swanky party at a club that all my friends are dying to get in to, with most certainly the best-looking man there. And I get to dress you. And kiss you.”

“If needed.” He let the “best-looking man” comment go, figuring Justin would surely change his mind when he got to the club.

He cocked an eyebrow at Kevin. “And if I insist on the kissing?”

Kevin contemplated it as he studied Justin's face. Should he worry that the idea actually kind of appealed? “With tongue?”

Justin shivered, his eyes going slumberous. “Oh yes.”

Kevin put on his own wicked smile. “Why not?”

Justin squirmed like a puppy about to get a treat. “That's almost worth it all right there!” He picked up his wineglass and held it for a toast. “You've got me for another date, honey.”

Kevin lifted his own glass to clink it with Justin's.

Justin's banter filled most of the rest of the dinner, and he told Kevin what he'd heard about the club. Turned out he knew more than Kevin, which actually made Kevin feel better about the whole deal. Justin really could be a good guide in this. Why he trusted this man he'd just met, he didn't know, but he did.

Kevin was slightly alarmed when, as he was driving away from the restaurant, Justin insisted that he needed to get his hair cut. “Why?”

“Oh please, sweetie. You're gorgeous, don't get me wrong, but the curls must be controlled a bit.” He fingered one of those curls, the side of his hand

brushing the top of Kevin's shoulder. "Any gay man worth his salt would laugh his ass off. At me."

"At you?"

"Yes. For letting you out like that. No self-respecting boyfriend would let his squeeze look like this."

"That doesn't make sense."

"Doesn't have to make sense, darling, just believe me that it's true. Think about those men at work you're trying to impress. Is there one hair out of place on any of them?"

Kevin thought about it. "No. They're pretty sharp dressers."

"Of course they are."

"Oh come on. Not all gay men are fashionistas."

"If they're not, they're suppressing. Even bears and leathermen have their own sense of style."

Kevin was torn between laughing and grumbling. He resisted the urge to reach up and pull at his bangs.

Justin kept up the banter until they reached the curb before his apartment building. It was a rather dark and quiet. A few people hung out in and around the minimall at the corner, but no one was out on this part of the street. In front of Justin's place, the only light was provided by windows and the lamp over the entrance.

Justin stared at his building for a moment as Kevin put the car in park. He pursed his lips a bit, then sighed softly. "Well, thank you for a lovely dinner, Kevin," Justin said, unbuckling his seat belt. "When do we go shopping? We don't have much time before Saturday."

Kevin thought, drumming his fingers on the steering wheel. It was Wednesday now. He was of the opinion that they had plenty of time, but obviously he was wrong. "Tomorrow? After work?"

Justin traced his upper lip with the pad of one finger. Kevin marveled at the shape of his lip. Like a girl's almost but...not. "All right. I think I know just the outfit right at the shop, and I can get Manny next door to stay late to do your hair."

Kevin winced, tugging at his bangs.

Justin laughed and reached out to pull his hand down. "Don't fret it, sweetheart. After I'm done with you, those men you've been trying to get to notice you will be fawning all over you."

"I just want to talk to them, not date them."

"Attention is attention, and you shall have it." Justin tugged on his wrist. "Kevin?"

"Yeah?"

"Can we practice that kiss now?"

Kevin smiled, thankful that the dark of the car should hide the flush to his skin. "One-track mind."

Justin nodded. Some of his golden hair fell in his face, and he used his free hand to comb it back. "Come on, now, if we've been dating, then we've got to make it look convincing."

"We haven't been dating for long. In fact, we should probably keep our story to having met on Monday like we did."

Justin scrunched up his nose. "Spoilsport." He huffed. "But you wouldn't have gotten a second date with me without so much as a kiss."

Kevin raised an eyebrow. "Really?"

"If this was for real? Certainly."

"So it's just like with a girl."

"No. A guy is much more of a sure thing, just so long as you cater to his needs." He fluttered his eyelashes.

Amused, Kevin heaved a pale imitation of Justin's martyred sigh. "Well, I guess."

Justin slapped his arm. "Rat!" The same hand slid up Kevin's shoulder and wrapped around the back of his neck. "Come here."

Kevin leaned in, startled despite that he knew it was coming. Startled because the move was rather natural.

"Don't worry, my lovely," Justin murmured, eyes half-lidded. "I'm not going to hurt you."

That's not what I'm afraid of, Kevin thought as Justin's lips brushed his. Once, twice, a third time lingering a breath longer. He closed his eyes and concentrated on the press of skin to skin. Soft. Nice. *No different than kissing a girl*. Except it was. He was hard-pressed to figure out how exactly, but it was.

"Stop thinking so hard," Justin murmured, his breath scented by the peppermint he'd taken from the host's podium back at the restaurant. His other hand cupped Kevin's chin, his thumb pressing the point. "Open your mouth."

Kevin did, and Justin's tongue slid in, smooth as butter. It found Kevin's and teased, coaxing it to wake up and play. When Kevin complied, Justin sighed and angled his head a little more to completely seal their lips. It was a long, slow exploration, and it was Kevin who eventually pulled back. He was pretty sure Justin would've let it go on for much longer, which surprised him. He wouldn't have thought that a guy would linger over kissing. He never really had before, unless the girl seemed to like it.

Justin melted against the back of his seat, eyes closed, lashes fanned over his cheeks. His fingers fell lifeless from Kevin's hair, and his hand landed on Kevin's knee. "That was exquisite," he sighed, a beatific smile on his face. His eyes opened halfway and focused on Kevin. "You're one hell of a kisser."

Smiling, Kevin reached up to thumb moisture from his lips. "Thanks." He resisted adding the *you're not so bad yourself*, sure Justin would take it the wrong way.

"You're sure you're not gay?"

Kevin nodded. "Pretty sure."

Justin pouted. "Of all the rotten luck. Oh well." He turned and opened his door. "Thank you for not squicking on the kiss."

"It's the least I can do to thank you."

One foot on the curb, Justin paused. "I can think of more you could do."

Kevin laughed. "Get out of here." He turned toward the steering wheel. The car was still running. "I'll see you at your shop tomorrow after work."

"I'll count the seconds."

## Chapter Three

“Kevin?”

“No pink.” He kept typing.

There was a hiss of fabric and a distinct *humph* that made Kevin look up from the monitor in front of him. Justin stood just inside the door to the back of the shop, articles of clothing in a multitude of colors dripping from his arms as he glared with attitude at Kevin. “That was *one* shirt, and I heard you *quite* clearly, you ass.”

Kevin smiled and turned back to the monitor.

He heard a fit of feminine giggles from Nancy, where she was arranging a mannequin in the shop's front window.

“Hush, you,” Justin grumped at her. Approaching footsteps and the *clack* of plastic hangers indicated Justin put the pile of clothing on the round padded seat just outside the dressing rooms. “Kevin?”

“Yeah?”

Another frustrated sigh. “You have to *look*.”

Obediently, he looked up, schooling his grin. It was too much *fun* to tweak Justin.

Justin held up two shirts, one shiny blue and one a bunch of different shades of green. “The blue's okay.” Justin turned it so he could inspect the front. “This would look nice with your coloring. Come try it on.”

Kevin gave him an arch look. “Do you want me to fix this or not?” He pointed at the monitor.

Justin blinked. “Is it fixable?”



Kevin smiled. "I think I'm almost done."

Nancy bounced to the counter, her crimson and black hair swaying around her little pixie face. "Oh man, you fixed it?"

They'd asked him a few questions about weirdness with the shop computer, and he'd started to fiddle with it while Justin put together endless outfits for him to try on. "Almost."

She beamed at Justin, her silver bangles clanging around her slim wrists as she raised her fingers to fold them coyly by her cheek. "Can we keep him?"

Justin stroked her hair, wondering eyes on the monitor. "I'm trying, kitten, but he insists that he's straight."

Nancy looked up at him. "Marry me, Kevin?"

He blinked at her.

She grinned. Then, "Ow!"

From his frown and the position of his hand, Kevin decided Justin must have yanked her hair. "Back off, Miss Thing!"

Nancy backed away, her hand to her head as she pouted. "Hey! You just said he's straight."

"Doesn't matter." Justin grabbed hold of Kevin's arm. "He's still mine."

Nancy pouted. "That's so not fair."

Kevin rolled his eyes, extracted his arm, and bent back over the keyboard. "Nancy, you're a bit young for me."

The seventeen-year-old groaned. "I won't tell if you don't."

Kevin froze, eyes saucered and staring at her. Even if she weren't jailbait, she was almost ten years younger than he was. He'd never been attracted to younger women anyway.

She blew him a kiss with heavily glossed lips.

Justin laughed and pulled at his arm. "Come with me before she gets you involved in statutory rape." He flipped his hand at Nancy. "Go finish your displays, child."

Nancy grimaced, then smiled and flounced back to her disturbingly headless mannequin.

Kevin recovered as Justin hauled him toward the dressing room. "You're all nuts," he muttered.

"Didn't I warn you about that?" Justin mused, pushing him through the door. "Silly me."

## Chapter Four

“Stop fiddling with it.”

Kevin dropped his hand from his too-short hair and grumbled as he got out of the car. He traded keys for ticket with the valet and walked around the rear of the vehicle to the curb.

Justin met him there, calm and collected. “And stop grouching.” He grabbed the collar of Kevin's new blue silk shirt and adjusted it, unbuttoning the buttons that Kevin had fastened on the sly. “You look wonderful,” Justin assured him, smoothing a hand over the simple silver chain encircling Kevin's neck.

Kevin pulled in a deep breath. He wasn't so sure. His shiny, blousy blue silk shirt was far more understated than Justin's green suede vest and skintight black pants. Still, it was flashier than anything he'd ever worn. Truthfully, he didn't mind the shirt so much, but he hated the pants Justin had put him in. Not as tight as Justin's, they were far more formfitting than anything he'd ever worn outside of a swimming pool. He did like the boots, though. They were kind of classy with pointed toes. Not something he would have picked out for himself, but they were cool. The inch-high heels were something he was still getting used to, though.

Justin combed fingers through the longer hair over Kevin's eyes, and Kevin resisted reaching up to rub the fuzz everywhere but on top of his head. His hair had never been so short. As a kid, his mother had always kept it chin length because she liked his curls, and he'd never really thought to cut it differently. His neck and ears felt naked.

Justin's fingers slid down to cradle his cheek and angle his head for a kiss. That kind of worried Kevin. Not the kiss itself, but the fact that he didn't mind. All through shopping over the last few days, Justin had kept touching and kissing him, insisting that he was just getting Kevin used to the attention. Well, Kevin was now far too used to it. Even kind of liked it.

Quit it, he told himself. He put on a smile for Justin, who met it, then slid his hand down Kevin's arm to tangle their fingers together. Together, they walked toward the club.

Kevin was profoundly relieved to see that Justin was correct about their clothing. He'd been worried they were going too flashy. He needn't have. They were far from the most outlandish couple approaching the flared black columns that flanked the well-lit entrance to Beltane. They were surrounded by smart-looking male couples, some draped over each other and others holding hands. Kevin's natural humor took over, and he smiled as he relaxed. They didn't stick out like sore thumbs after all. They blended perfectly. Justin hadn't steered him wrong.

"Ah, that's what I like to see," Justin purred, leaning in close. "I was beginning to wonder if you were going to smile."

Which made Kevin's smile grow. He hoped he wasn't blushing.

They joined one of two lines waiting to get in, this one marked for those with invitations. The other line was much longer, filled with men who watched the entrance avidly and a few who argued with the bouncers who kept them behind the green velvet ropes.

"Oh my God," Justin murmured.

"What?"

Justin shook his head and reached forward to tap the shoulder of a short, slim man in front of them. The man turned, revealing the face of an angel with lots of bright purple makeup.

"I knew it!" Justin's hand flew to the base of his throat. "Robert Nigel! Is that shirt in your new line? Because it's to *die* for!"

The man in purple looked slightly irritated and wary at first, but a smile bloomed under Justin's flowering praise. Although Kevin had never heard the name, he decided that Robert Nigel must be a fashion designer or something.

"It is," said Robert, batting mascaraed eyes over cheeks that shone with glitter. "Just finished it last week."

"Stunning, simply stunning. Whose pattern is that, if you don't mind my asking?"

The little man with the long, shiny black hair turned to face them fully. "Are you a designer?"

Justin flapped his hand, rolling his eyes. "Lord, I wish. But no, I came into the game far too late."

"Honey, it's never too late!"

Kevin exchanged a smile with the purple-clad man's date as Robert and Justin began to chatter. Just as they arrived at the front of the line, Robert pulled Justin away to one of the better-lit areas, the better to show off something about the shirt's geometric design.

Robert's date, an attractive but rather normal-looking brunet with glasses, leaned in toward Kevin. "Your date's quite a looker."

Kevin couldn't help his grin. "So's yours."

"And, Lord, don't they know it!" The man chuckled. He held out his hand. "I don't think I've seen you here before. I'm Lyle."

Kevin took his hand and shook it. "Kevin."

Lyle handed his invitation to a suit-clad bouncer but turned to Kevin as it was inspected. "First time here?"

"Yes."

Lyle studied him with gentle hazel eyes. "You just come out?"

Kevin ducked his head but laughed, falling into his role for the night. "Is it that obvious?"

Lyle grinned, taking his invitation back and stepping aside for Kevin. "You have that 'deer in the headlights' look about you."

Kevin handed his invitation to the bouncer. When he turned back, Lyle was looking at Robert and Justin, whose squeals could be heard from twenty feet away, even over the thumping music spilling from the door. "Did you come out for him?"

Kevin studied Justin, watched the languid sway of his hips and the gleam of his light brown and golden hair as the pair approached. "Yeah." He turned back to retrieve his invitation.

Lyle and Kevin stepped toward the entrance and to the side and waited for the return of their dates. "I don't blame you one bit."

"Thanks."

"You just start dating?"

Kevin nodded, pulling his hand down when it reached up for the hair that was no longer at his nape. "Just this week."

Lyle laughed. "Well, bringing him here will certainly impress him."

Kevin just smiled as Justin and Robert returned.

"Here now, are you talking about us?" Justin accused, linking his arm with Kevin's.

Lyle took his date's hand and kissed it. "Just remarking on how lucky we are, right, Kevin?"

Kevin smiled up at Justin, playing his part to the hilt and kind of enjoying it. "Right."

Justin blinked down at him, those green eyes searching his face. Putting on a grin, he leaned down to brush his lips with Kevin's. "You angel, you."

"How sweet," Robert purred.

Lyle addressed his date. "Robby, shall we lead our new friends inside?"

The purple-clad man tittered. "By all means, let's."

They walked into the room that seemed too small to contain the crowd within. It wasn't a wide-open warehouse like Kevin had expected. It looked more like an upscale country club—complete with fireplaces and art on the walls—that just happened to acquire a rave party somewhere. The disco ball and the strobe lights didn't go with the fake flames behind the fireplace grills nor the classy wood paneling on the walls, and the polished bulbs of frosted sconces provided too much ambient light for it to really feel like a dance hall. But no one seemed to mind. Men filled the area, talking, drinking, and dancing. There were two bar areas Kevin could spot; both matched the country-club atmosphere with lots of good, solid wood and a mirrored wall of booze behind them. At least three wide openings led to other rooms, one showing a staircase. Kevin made note of the avenue toward the upper reaches so he could avoid it.

He and Justin stayed at a table by one of the fireplaces with their two new friends for a while. Kevin was amazed at the men who made sure to come by and speak to the designer. He'd have to satisfy his curiosity and ask Justin about him later. As for Justin, he seemed to be tickled pink to talk to the man. Kevin was happy to let him have the moment. The night was young, and he was in no particular rush to hunt for his quarry, although he did keep an eye out for the men he was looking for.

Eventually, however, Robby—as he preferred to be called—dragged Lyle onto the dance floor, taking his onlookers with him.

Justin bounced in his chair and leaned over to lay an enthusiastic kiss on Kevin's cheek. "This is fabulous! I'm having a great time!"

"I'm glad."

"This is such a cool place. Everything I've always heard and more." He hummed happily, sipping his martini. "But down to business." He set down his drink and scanned the crowd. "Have you seen any of your targets?"

Kevin had to smile at Justin's superspy excitement. "Some. Greg Hanson is the blond in the red over by the bar. Terry White is in that group playing poker, the bald black guy. And Victor Chen is the short Asian holding court over there." He pointed to a raised dais near the dance floor.

"The little one in white?"

"Yeah." It was hard to miss him since he was seated on a tall chair in a raised area of the room under soft, recessed lighting. A photographer couldn't have positioned him more perfectly as a focus of attention.

A whistle spilled from Justin's lips. "Oh my, Victor's a doll."

Kevin wasn't sure what to make of the surge in his heart at the sound of appreciation in Justin's voice. "He's famous for it, at least in our company."

"*That* guy's a programmer?"

Kevin laughed. "Doesn't look it, does he?"

"Not at all."

"He doesn't do much coding these days. He's more into running the company now. But the fact that he was a programmer—that they all were—makes it better to talk to them."

"How old is he?"

"Early thirties, I think. He was featured in the *Fortune* five hundred a few years ago."

Justin nodded, not taking his eyes off Victor.

Kevin couldn't blame him. Victor was, in a word, lovely, just like a porcelain doll. Barely five feet two with a round, cherubic face, he looked more like a child than a chief executive officer. Kevin wasn't sure if he was Japanese or Chinese, but he was pretty sure it was one of those. His petite beauty bordered on feminine, and he moved with the poise of a dancer. No one ever pegged him as an egghead since he looked much more like a boy toy.

Kevin sipped his own drink. "Don't be fooled by his looks. It's well-known that people who disregard him learn to regret it later."



"Uses his advantage, huh?"

"Said to have perfected the art. He likes to catch people off guard."

"Smart."

"Scary smart, from what I've heard."

"Is he the one you want to meet?"

Kevin thought about it and couldn't quell his inner shiver. "No. I think Greg Hanson or Terry White will be able to help me more."

Justin eyed him. "Why not Victor?"

Kevin frowned, watching the man in white entice a partner to the dance floor. No, make that *two* partners, both of whom were clearly entranced. "I just..." He shook his head. "No."

Justin studied him for a moment, then shrugged. "Okay, it's your game. So, shall we go talk to Greg Hanson?"

\* \* \* \* \*

Justin wasn't fooled. Victor Chen was the one Kevin needed to impress. He'd had the feeling when Kevin first pointed him out, and the feeling was justified when they did finally start to talk to Greg Hanson. Oh, he had no doubt that Greg could help Kevin, and although he was drunk, the blond man with the neat little mustache seemed amenable. Once Justin forged ahead and introduced himself and his date, Kevin handled the conversation wonderfully. With his subtle, boy-next-door charm, he didn't have to jump in immediately with his ideas. He started casually and quite deftly brought the conversation around to business. Justin was proud of him. But by the way Greg talked and by the way he referred to Victor, the little man was the one who was calling all the shots.

Justin kept an eye on Victor while Kevin and Greg talked. The man held court for a bevy of blonds. *He likes blonds*. Justin tossed his head and got the beginning of an idea.

*Oh what the hell.* He leaned into Kevin and waited for a lull in the conversation. "You want another drink?"

Kevin smiled at him, brown eyes sparkling. "No, I'm good."

*Yes, I'm sure you are.* He smoothed a hand in a big circle over Kevin's silk-clad back. "I'm going to get one."

Kevin nodded. "You need cash?"

"No, I'm all right." Justin reached out to caress Kevin's smooth cheek before smiling at Greg and heading for the bar.

This will be good, he told himself. After all, Kevin wasn't gay. Heart-stopping kisses aside, Justin just didn't do it for him, and Justin should face the facts. He had no doubt that Kevin liked him and that they could be friends, but never more than that. *Victor, however...* Victor was quite Justin's type; Justin looked to be his. There was nothing wrong with making a connection for himself and Kevin both in one fell swoop.

Justin ordered a drink at the bar nearest Victor and searched for his opening. As fate would have it, the opening came to him.

Victor, glowing and sparkling from a trip on the dance floor, approached the bar himself and ordered a spritzer.

*Here goes nothing.* Justin sidled up to him, nursing his martini. "Victor Chen."

Slanted black eyes surrounded by kohl and long, thick lashes turned up at him. They blinked slowly. "That's me." The eyes took a quick perusal of Justin from nose to crotch and slowly back up as a little pink tongue darted out to wet already glossy lips. "Do I know you?"

Justin shook his head, deliberately posing. His vest complied to fall open, exposing his newly waxed bare chest. "No. But my date works for you."

"Oh? Who is your date?"

"Kevin Fuller."

Victor accepted his drink from the bartender and held it in two graceful hands as he turned to fully face Justin. He sipped thoughtfully. "He works in product."

Justin smiled and nodded. "That he does."

Victor giggled, a vastly charming and clearly calculated sound. "I didn't know he was gay."

Justin matched the laugh. "Neither did he, until recently." Justin batted his eyes and brought fingers up to brush the chunky gold chain resting on his collarbone. "I had to pleasure of showing him the way."

Victor laughed, his smile lighting up his face. "Did you now? Lucky you. Or rather"—another long perusal of Justin's lean frame—"lucky him."

It was too easy. Justin was rather proud of himself as he sank into a vapid conversation with Victor. His new good friend Robby even showed up, and the three of them had a delightful time talking clothing.

\* \* \* \* \*

Greg glanced over Kevin's shoulder and laughed. "Don't look now, but you'd better rescue your date from Victor."

"Huh?"

Frowning, Kevin turned the way Greg indicated and saw Justin leaning on a small, high table. Victor was perched on a tall chair right beside him with Robby seated across from him and the three of them looked very chummy. Victor's fingers trailed lightly over Justin's bare biceps.

Kevin's blood ran cold, and he couldn't have explained why. "What the heck?"

"I'm serious. You need to go rescue him. He's exactly Victor's type."

Kevin straightened. Just about to take a step, he realized that he was about to leave one of the most productive conversations of his career. "Greg, I..."

Greg laughed and stood. “Go, go. I’m going to e-mail you an invite to the product meeting this week. We can talk about that idea of yours.” He held up Kevin’s card between two fingers. “I’ve got your address.”

Kevin smiled. He liked Greg. He also believed Greg would help him. His gamble on tonight had worked. “Thanks!” He stepped away from the table, and his euphoria dimmed. Now to figure out what the ditzy blond thought he was doing.

Without thinking too much about it, he stepped up to the table between Justin and Victor. Rather naturally, he slid his arm around Justin’s slim waist and tilted his head up to kiss Justin’s jaw. “Here you are.”

Justin blinked down at him, his surprise showing for a brief second before he dropped his arm around Kevin’s shoulders and squeezed. “Hello, my sweet!” He gestured with his free hand, turning Kevin toward Victor. “Have you met Victor Chen?”

Kevin couldn’t be rude—rather, more rude than he’d already been—so he unwound his arm from Justin’s waist and extended his hand toward the CEO of Chen-sang Incorporated. The man could make or break him, and Kevin tried hard to remember that fact. “We haven’t met, sir, but I work in product development.”

Victor’s eyes narrowed, and in Kevin’s opinion, his grin was evil. But he extended his hand and touched Kevin’s. He didn’t shake. It was a very feminine thing, a trait of women he avoided like the plague. He’d always preferred tomboys over girly girls. “So Justin tells me. Congratulations on coming out of the closet.”

Kevin smiled and rewrapped his arm around Justin’s waist. “Thanks.”

“How did you two meet?”

“Well...” Justin started.

“He nearly attacked me on the sidewalk.”

“I did *not* attack you!”

"You damn near tackled me."

"You're exaggerating."

Kevin snorted. "I'm not. I believe the words were 'I've just fallen in love with you. What is your name, and *please* tell me you're gay?'"

Justin gaped at him. "You remember exactly what I said?"

"It was a unique moment in my life."

"Oh, that's beautiful!" Robby giggled, clapping his hands.

Kevin spoke to Robby rather than look at Victor's calculating gaze. "His friend dragged him away from me, and he called back with the name of his shop."

"Well, I had to take the chance." Justin sniffed. "*He* was speechless."

"Can you blame me? *Look* at him." He looked up at Justin. "I was struck dumb by his beauty."

He heard Robby sigh but was far more interested in the way Justin's eyes melted. No doubt Justin thought he was hamming it up for the boss. Thing was, he wasn't really. *Huh, have I had too much to drink?* Nah, he'd only had two beers, and the remnants of the second remained in the bottle he'd left on Greg's table. Maybe the lights and the party atmosphere were getting to him.

He smiled and finished for Victor. "The sight haunted me. I just had to go back and find him."

Robby sighed. "That's effin' *beautiful!*"

"Yes. It is," Victor agreed dryly. "And when was this?"

Might as well stick with the truth. "Monday."

"This *just* happened?"

"Yep."

"And before this you were heterosexual?"

Kevin shifted slightly. "Yeah, but I'd never met a man who *did* it for me."

If Victor's smile hadn't been demonic before, it was now. "So you haven't had sex."

*Shit. Probably should have drawn that out a bit.* He looked down at the table. "Well, uh..."

The arm around his shoulder gathered him to Justin's chest, pressing his nose into the warm suede of his vest. "There's high hopes for tonight." He felt lips pressed to the top of his head.

He was blushing. He knew it. He could feel it. Seemed there was some blood for his cheeks with the rest of it rushing south to his crotch. Interesting. "Yeah."

Victor laughed. "Yes, well, enjoy it, Fuller. The sex *is* a telling factor." He hopped down from his chair. "If you'll excuse me. It was *very* nice to meet you, Justin. Robby." With a practiced flip of his silky black hair, he turned and left.

Kevin, embarrassed beyond measure, pulled back from Justin but kept staring at the table.

Robby chuckled. "Don't worry about it, Kevin. I'm sure Justin will take *good* care of you."

Something happened between them, but Kevin didn't see it. He just flushed darker. Sex with Justin just didn't seem like that bad of a proposition. How *weird* was that?

Robby and Justin spoke briefly; then the designer left. They were alone at their table for the moment, isolated by the throbbing music surrounding them.

"You okay?" Justin murmured in his ear.

"Could we...go?"

A hand rubbed soothing circles on his back. "Kevin, don't let Victor bother you. He was just teasing. There's nothing for you to worry about, after all."

Kevin nodded. Swallowed. "Can we go anyway?"

Justin squeezed his shoulder. "Could you stand a dance?"

"Why can't we go?"

“Because if we go, then he knows he got to you. If we stay and dance, then we show that we're serious.”

Kevin thought about this. “Okay.” He glanced at the dance floor. “But I've never danced with a guy before.”

Justin waved the concern aside, threaded their fingers together, and led the way to the gyrating cluster of men on a polished wooden floor. “Don't fret it, sweetie.” He pointed up, indicating the slow song. “This is easy. Just hold me and revolve.”

Kevin chuckled, stepping into Justin's arms. All around them, other pairs of men were similarly entwined. It was weird having his arms up around Justin's neck, so he slid them around his waist instead. Sighing, he laid his cheek on Justin's shoulder. Felt kind of nice, actually. “Sorry.”

“Sorry? About what, sweetcakes?”

“I just ruined your chances with Victor.”

Justin chuckled, rubbing his cheek against Kevin's temple. “Sweetheart, I'm *your* date.”

“I know, but... He's rich, y'know?”

“I gather. I think that shirt alone would pay my rent for a few months.”

“He was totally into you, and I blew it for you.”

“Don't worry about it.”

“We could fake a fight. I could leave in a huff.”

“And leave me stranded.”

“Ha! Like you'd have a problem getting a ride home.”

“Whatever do you mean?”

The innocent light didn't fool Kevin. “How many numbers have you collected tonight?”

“What?”

“Don't play innocent with me. How many?”

“A few.”

Kevin snorted.

Justin laughed. “I have not asked anyone for their number tonight. Scout's honor.”

“But you've got at least a dozen, just the same.”

“Only four.”

“Only?”

“I've been blatantly obvious that I'm with you, honey.”

“Is Victor's number in there?”

Pause. “Yes.”

Instinct had Kevin hugging Justin a little closer on hearing that news. When he realized it, it bothered him. Why did it bother him? Why did it matter?

The song ended. Avoiding Justin's eyes, he pulled from Justin's arms. “Can we go?”

“Sure.”

Kevin nodded, turned, and led the way toward the entrance.



## Chapter Five

They were quiet as Kevin drove the dark, winding road that led down the hill from the club. Justin hummed to himself for a few moments, then started fiddling with Kevin's iPod until he found something he liked.

Why did it bother me? Kevin kept asking himself. Because it had. He couldn't deny that seeing Victor close to Justin had made him nervous. Nervous enough to overlook the night's primary objective and Justin's possible side benefit. He had no right to keep Justin from a chance with Victor. *Am I really jealous?* The thought was preposterous, wasn't it?

Not really. If he were finally honest with himself, Kevin would admit that he was attracted to Justin. He'd always been perfectly comfortable finding other men attractive, but he'd never wanted to date one. Never got beyond a passing consideration of what it would be like to kiss one. But Justin was different. Kevin *liked* him. Had to be his personality. Justin reminded Kevin of his mom. She could walk into a room and command it effortlessly in three seconds flat, without anyone begrudging her lead. Kevin's sister had inherited the same trait to a slightly lesser degree. Kevin and his brother were more like his dad. All three of them had been described more than once as "quietly dependable." Passive, even. In most things, he was content to let others lead even if he did manage to subtly guide things along the way.

He sighed when they reached the highway.

"You're going to hurt yourself thinking so hard."

Kevin startled and glanced over to see Justin staring out the windshield, smiling slightly.

"Relax." Justin met Kevin's glance with a wink. "You handled everything great back there. Don't worry about it. What did Greg end up saying?"

"Greg? Oh, he liked my ideas. He's going to invite me to this week's product meeting."

"See? That's great. And now when you have to meet Victor again, you'll have a personal edge. I doubt Angela has that."

Kevin snorted. "Yeah, he can ask about the gorgeous blond that he tried to steal from me."

Justin beamed at him, seeming to cast his own light in the darkened car. "Exactly! You'll have something to talk about."

He laughed. "Should I give him your number? Just in case you wuss out and don't call him."

"No. And I'll have you know that I do *not* wuss out. You should know better than that by now."

"Yeah, I guess I do."

They drove a bit more in silence, Kevin still battling his thoughts. Things were so *easy* with Justin. He wasn't even bringing up Kevin's jealousy when he could *totally* use it to his advantage in his constant flirting.

They were nearing the turnoff to Justin's, and a mild panic tried to close Kevin's throat. "Thank you for helping me."

"You're welcome."

This was it. Once he dropped Justin off, there was really no reason to talk to him again. That bugged. "Hey, um..."

"Yes?"

"Could I...? I mean, if I went out again as...?" Jeez, there was no elegant way to say it.

Justin laughed, propping an elbow on the console between them. "Are you trying to ask if I'd be your boyfriend if you have to go out again to impress your bosses?"

Kevin knew he was blushing and thanked that the streets were relatively dark. "Said that way it sounds bad."

"Not at all. And I would be happy to see you again, Kevin." Long fingers brushed his arm. "Under *any* circumstances."

Kevin sighed, smiling. "Me too. I mean, I've had a lot of fun this last week."

"Me too."

They lapsed into a weird silence that lasted until Kevin pulled up to Justin's building.

Unlike the other nights, Justin immediately unbuckled his seat belt and opened the door. "Okay. Well, you know my number if you need me. And you know where I work."

"Yeah."

Justin stepped out onto the curb, turned, and stuck his head back in. "Thanks, Kevin."

Kevin stared into green eyes made black by inadequate lighting. Wasn't he going to ask for a kiss? "Hey, thank you."

Justin grinned, brushed fingers to his lips, and waved them at Kevin. "Night." He shut the door and beat a hasty retreat up his stairs.

Feeling bereft, Kevin watched him go. "No kiss?" he asked the air. Then he turned to his steering wheel. "Of course, no kiss, imbecile. You're straight. Why do you want to kiss a guy?" He pulled out into the street. "Maybe because you're not as straight as you think. After all, when's the last time you were on a date, much less slept with a woman? Months?" He stopped at a red light and slumped forward with a tiny moan. "And it must be bad if you're sitting here talking to yourself!"

\* \* \* \* \*

Justin leaned his back against the inside of his front door and tore at his hair, finally releasing the minor scream he'd been holding back since getting in the car with Kevin.

Few things had ever been as hard for Justin as keeping his cool during that drive. He kept it light and friendly when what he'd *wanted* to do was lean over, pop open Kevin's pants, and find out if his cock tasted anywhere near as good as his tongue. He wanted to beg, bribe, or force Kevin out of that car and into his bed and have his way with him. Or let Kevin do him. Justin didn't care how, just so long as someone's cock slid into someone's willing ass at some point during the night. He hadn't wanted another man's body this much in *years*. Why, oh *why*, when he'd been surrounded by a veritable smorgasbord of hot bodies, had he only wanted the single one who was straight?

Whimpering, he staggered forward, crossing the dark living room into his bedroom. He fell on the bed without bothering with the lights, gathering pillows underneath him to collect another, louder scream.

Four measly phone numbers thrust into his unwilling hands and pockets was a travesty, especially since each one of the men had to be somewhat wealthy or connected to have gotten into Beltane in the first place. He should have had to shut off his cell phone for the anxious, pining calls he was receiving. He should be getting laid. Instead, he lay here by himself, pining over a guy. Who was *straight*!

Pathetic.

He rolled onto his back, pouting at the ceiling as he toed off his low boots and listened to the thump on the floor.

He should have kissed him. He should have gotten one face suck out of Kevin before he let the man drive out of his life. But Justin knew himself too well. If he'd so much as touched those lips, he would have ended up begging. Not that he was above begging, but he generally only liked to do it when it might yield positive results. Despite promising moments during the night and the previous week, he was pretty sure Kevin was not gay. Curious, maybe. But not gay.

"Damn it!"

Grumbling, he reached down and unbuttoned his tight pants. Since the line of the garment would have been ruined if he'd worn briefs, he'd worn a thong. It wasn't quite a simple matter to extract himself from it without taking off the pants, but he managed to get his cock, hard and angry, to spring out from its confines. He groaned when it hit the air, slapping his belly and the bottom hem of his vest. Sliding open the vest with one hand, he wrapped the other firmly around his upright flesh and squeezed.

"If only it could be you, Kevin," he murmured, pulling.

He pushed open his fly a little more to give him some room, then concentrated on jerking off to ease the excitement that had been brewing all night. Kevin's big brown eyes. Kevin's soft, smiling mouth. Kevin's silky skin. Kevin stunning in blue silk. Kevin acting jealous because Victor stood too close to Justin.

He moaned. That last was nearly too much. If he were less of a realist, he'd have taken that one as a sign. If Kevin had playacted that jealousy, then he was a damn fine actor and deserved an award for his performance!

The boil began in his balls. He spat on his palm and set to bringing himself off. He couldn't prolong this. Not thinking of Kevin. Not when it was fresh. But he couldn't erase the picture of Kevin in his head if he tried. Kevin's lips around his cock. The same lips parted in pleasure as Justin slid his cock into Kevin's hot, tight body.

That did it. He came on his bare belly, groaning Kevin's name.

## Chapter Six

Kevin woke to morning wood. He'd taken care of the one last night before he'd gone to bed. This one was new. Sprouted, no doubt, from the sexy dream in which Justin's body was draped over his back as Justin's cock was sunk deep in his ass.

He groaned and reached down to grip himself. He actually kind of knew what it felt like to be taken up the ass. He'd had a girlfriend once who really got off on fingering him. She'd even taken a small vibrator, maybe an inch around, and fucked him with it. He'd been surprised then at how good it felt. Especially when she managed to hit just the right spot. The thought of a full-grown man's cock embedded deep in his ass was a tad alarming but not altogether unappealing.

To prove it to himself, he rolled over, kicking off the sheets. He brought his knees up and spread them wide. He grabbed the lube he kept in the nightstand for jerking off and poured some onto his fingers. Very carefully, he reached behind and slid wet fingers down the crack of his ass to tease his hole. He tensed at his own touch, closed his eyes, and made himself relax. He prodded gently at his puckered opening, then a bit more forcefully, and finally pushed a finger inside himself. Surprised to feel his own body sucking at his fingers, he moaned at the tingle that put in his cock. He pumped the finger carefully, rolling his balls with his other hand. His cock he let dangle for the moment, torturing himself. He pushed another finger in. It burned a little, stretching the tight ring of muscle, but he remembered that from before. He knew it from the articles he'd read with tips on how to get women to enjoy anal sex. He waited; he relaxed; he probed gently; and pretty soon, it felt much better. He added a

third finger. That one took a bit more work, but not as much as he thought. He was in knuckles-deep, and it felt *good*. He didn't even have to move all that much. He started rocking his hips while keeping his hand kind of still, and oh man, that worked! He released his balls since they were pretty drawn up anyway and dragged his free hand up his cock. He circled the head with thumb and forefinger and was shocked when his back bowed and lightning exploded in his groin. Cum splattered his sheets, and some combination of his fingers tensing or his ass clutching just drew it out and kept him coming.

He lay panting afterward, letting his fingers gently ease out of his body. He tried his best to keep that blank feeling, to just let it go. But he couldn't.

If fingers felt that good...

"Shit!" He was *so* not doing this. He was *not* becoming obsessed with a guy. Okay, maybe in the dark of last night after the party, still riding the high of it, that was excusable. But in the light of morning too? What the fuck?

He pushed from the bed and stomped into the bathroom to wipe himself off and wash his hands. He stared at his reflection in the mirror. "What the *hell* are you thinking?"

But that was the trouble. He wasn't thinking. There was no rational thought involved. He just *wanted*, and he wanted Justin more than he'd wanted any woman he'd ever been with.

Clutching the edge of the counter, he let his head hang forward. "Dude. You are so screwed."

Unable to deny that proclamation, he heaved another sigh and turned to twist on the shower.

\* \* \* \* \*

"So now what?"

"I don't know!" Justin dug the heels of his palms into his eyeballs and shifted from foot to foot as he stood behind the high counter in the shop. It was Monday morning, and he'd not heard a word from Kevin since he'd stepped

from his car. Sunday alone had been a torture, but he hadn't felt up to talking to anyone.

He heard Nancy moving about the shop. "And you didn't even kiss him one more time?"

Justin groaned, tearing at the hair at his temples. "I thought it would be better."

"Would have been better to drag him upstairs and show him what it's *really* like to be gay."

Justin's groan turned into a pathetic whimper.

"Oh stop it, both of you," Frank spoke up from off to Justin's right. "Did he say he'd call you?"

"Maybe."

"If he needs a boyfriend again?"

"Yes."

"Fuck this." Justin startled, looking up as Frank's palm hit the counter beside him. "Forget him. He's just stringing you along to get you to help out with his bosses."

Justin glared. "Well, yeah. That was kind of the point."

"Exactly. But he's got no right to make you want him. You deserve better than to be someone's pretend boyfriend."

"It's not like it's his fault. *I'm* the one who's making too much out of it."

"All the more reason to move on with your life. We need to go out tonight and find you a *real* man."

"No."

"Why not? There's always The Arch."

Justin sighed, leaning forward again on the counter. "I'm not going to The Arch." Not that he'd never been to the main gay meat market in town. He had. Many times. "I don't feel like it."



“Justin.”

“Stop. Just let me wallow in it for a few days like a true drama queen.” He turned a grin up at Frank and winked. “You can't cheat me out of my drama.”

Frank rolled his eyes and threw up his hands. “Fine. I give up.”

## Chapter Seven

Kevin stared at the workflow schematic on the screen in front of him. He'd *been* staring at it for the past twenty minutes. He couldn't concentrate worth shit. His dream from this morning—again about Justin and sex—kept taking over his thoughts, making him squirm. More than once he had to reach down to adjust his slacks over a perking boner. Better stop that. But how? Did he really want to be gay? He wasn't stupid, and he wasn't in denial. At least, he didn't think so. He'd heard plenty of stories about guys who were gay who spent years or even their whole lives denying it, being miserable. He wasn't miserable. He hadn't previously thought he was missing out on anything. Okay, he didn't get out much and didn't have much of a social or sex life to speak of, but he wasn't profoundly unhappy. If he was denying being gay, shouldn't that be more of what he felt like?

Raoul walked up to lean on the edge of his cubicle. “Join me outside for a smoke?”

Kevin knew that look. “Sure.” He hit the Lock key for his computer, stood, and followed the other man outside. He didn't smoke, but his office buddy obviously wanted to talk. He could guess about what.

He was right. No sooner were they standing in the shade of one of the trees in the little smoking courtyard outside than Raoul turned to him. “So you're gay now?” he asked, amusement coloring his voice as he extracted a pack of Marlboros and a lighter from his pocket.

Kevin smiled, leaning in the shade of the building against one of the tall planters that lined the courtyard. “You heard?”

“Are you kidding? Deena couldn't wait to ask me about you this morning.”

Deena was in HR. "How'd she find out?"

"I guess Greg Hanson's secretary talks. Says he asked if she knew anything about you."

"Gotta love the rumor mill." So Greg had thought enough about him to ask about him. That was promising.

"Did you go to the gay club Saturday night?"

"I did."

"And you were with a guy? As your date?"

"Yep."

"So, what, you're gay now?"

Kevin shrugged. "Yes and no."

"What the hell does that mean?"

"I went to the party." No way he was telling Raoul about the dream.

"And you took the guy from the street?"

He'd run the idea by Raoul, of course, wanting to know if the other man had thought it would work. Obviously Raoul had not believed he'd go through with it, even when confronted with the invitation. "Yeah. Justin."

"And it actually worked?"

"It went great. I spent a lot of time talking to Greg Hanson. He's inviting me to the product meeting this week."

Raoul's face lit up. "No shit! And he was asking about you. That's awesome, man." He clapped Kevin on the shoulder with the hand that wasn't holding the lit cigarette. "That's definite progress! The bitch won't know what hit her."

"Yeah."

"So what's wrong?"

"Victor Chen hit on my date."

Raoul coughed a laugh. "What?"

Kevin smiled. "Yeah. I guess Justin's his type."

"Oh, man, what happened?"

Kevin shrugged, staring at the pavement. "Nothing much, but they were talking for a while." He was reluctant to tell his friend how he'd intervened between Victor and Justin. Raoul was a good work friend, but he wasn't a bosom buddy, and Kevin wanted his head straight about all that before talking it over with anyone but Glenn and Rachel, his two best friends. Maybe he should call them tonight.

"Did this Justin guy talk you up?"

"Yeah, he did. He was great. I'm not sure I could have walked up to Greg or Victor without him."

"Lucky find, that."

"Yeah."

"He and Victor hook up?"

"No. Justin didn't feel right about it because he was my date."

"Oh, man, that's twisted." Raoul stood looking at the sun, smoking thoughtfully. "I wish I had your balls, man. I would never have gone to that party and pretended to come out."

*Pretended. Yeah.* "Your wife might have had something to say about that."

Raoul chuckled. "She might." He stubbed out his smoke. "I gotta give you credit, man. This is very cool. I hope you know what you got yourself into, though. Everyone thinks you're queer now."

Kevin shrugged. "I don't mind. When I'm ready, I can just say I was experimenting." At least, that was the plan. Wasn't it?

Raoul led the way inside. "Let's go to lunch after that conference call tomorrow. I want to hear all about what happened."

No one else mentioned anything for the rest of the day. Aside from the e-mail invite from Greg and the brief talk with Raoul, it was business as usual.

He heard Angela walk by talking a few times, but nothing directly from her that wasn't perfectly normal.

That night, Kevin stared at his phone. He was torn between calling Justin or his friends. He wanted to call the former, but what would he say? He couldn't see talking on the phone for long. He wasn't exactly a phone person, a fact former girlfriends had lamented. Although, with Justin, who knew? Calling the latter meant explaining everything that had gone on in the past week and possibly facing his feelings, and he was reluctant to do that as well. He should eventually, but not...tonight.

He ended up abandoning the phone altogether and lying on his bed watching television until he fell asleep.

\* \* \* \* \*

Angela showed up at his cubicle late Thursday just as Kevin was starting to gather his notes. As always, her business suit was crisp and a tad too much for their more casual dress office. But then, maybe Kevin wasn't dressed upscale enough for the meeting upstairs? He'd soon find out.

"Greg's invited you to the product meeting," she said coolly.

"Yes."

"I wasn't aware that you knew each other."

He concentrated on his papers rather than meeting her gaze. It wasn't important to him to gloat. "We just met."

"How convenient. Well, come."

He followed her out of their office toward the elevator, feeling the waves of resentment rolling off her.

"If I had known that you were going to be invited, we could have compared notes yesterday." She switched her leather-bound folder from arm to arm, staring up at the beeping numbers rather than at him. "I hope you know enough about the project overall. It might be best, though, if you let me do the talking."

He didn't respond to her glance with more than a smile. She didn't scare him. He knew what she wanted him to say, knew the line she wanted him to toe. *She* knew that he didn't agree with it. He'd never called her an idiot to her face, but she couldn't be entirely ignorant of the sentiment of most of the people who worked for her. She'd ruled with an iron fist because no one else had access to those in charge. That had just changed.

The meeting on the fifth floor wasn't large, but the conference room was. Kevin was impressed with the layout. A glass wall faced outside, and another partitioned the room from the wood-paneled hallway. There was even a tiny kitchenette in one corner, mostly hidden behind a gorgeous Asian folding screen. A gold Chinese dragon twisted in and around itself on the wall behind the head of the table.

Greg greeted Kevin and Angela personally and gestured them into seats beside him. Victor Chen sat at the head of the table, looking deceptively casual in a pale yellow dress shirt and gray slacks. Ten others from related departments wandered into the room, many of whom Kevin recognized, few of whom he'd ever spoken to before.

For the first item on the agenda, Greg introduced a concept that the product group had been bandying about for nearly a year. He got to a certain point, then mentioned that Kevin had ideas about it. All eyes, including the cool assessment of Victor Chen, turned to Kevin as Greg introduced him. Kevin geared himself, then spoke, avoiding the daggers he was sure Angela glared at him as he blatantly spoke of ideas she had shot down.

He thought he handled himself rather well. He knew that what he proposed was sound, backed by research and tests that he, Raoul, and a few of their coworkers had tried to introduce to Angela. He spoke with the confidence of his group and very carefully avoided singling Angela out as an obstacle. The way he presented it, she could very well have been part of the team's findings.

The meeting ended on a positive note. Kevin found out about a few new client prospects he hadn't known about, ones that might benefit from the ideas

he'd presented. Their unique business processes were discussed, and Victor himself asked Kevin if he thought a solution was possible. It was great. It was the type of stuff he'd been waiting to present for a year now, one of the reasons he'd joined the company in the first place. And here he was presenting to the owner of the company himself.

Victor left for another appointment immediately after the meeting broke up, but others lingered. Greg congratulated Kevin, and another VP asked him to elaborate on a few points he'd made. Angela hovered, helping to answer some of the questions. He let her, knowing she was seething inside. She wasn't going to make herself look bad by cutting him down when he'd obviously done well.

Everything else aside, it looked like his ploy had worked. *Thank you, Justin.*

\* \* \* \* \*

Feeling good about himself, he called Justin that night and told him how the meeting went.

"I owe it all to you."

Justin snorted. "Don't be stupid. I was nothing. You and your team at work did all the hard stuff. I was just eye candy."

"You were a lot more than that. Still, thanks."

"You're very welcome. I'm glad it's working out. How did your supervisor take it?"

"She didn't talk to me. She went off to lick her wounds. There's not much she could do anyway. If Greg and Victor think it'll work, she'll have to go with it."

"You think she'll make trouble for you?"

"She'll probably try, but I don't think she can do anything."

"That's good. You watch out for yourself just the same."

"I will." Kevin waited, but Justin didn't ask the question he'd expected, namely when would they see each other again. What do you want? he asked himself. What do you want? He wanted to see Justin, that's what. "Hey."

"Hmmm?"

"Why don't you come over here tomorrow night? I'll fix dinner."

"You cook?"

"I'm pretty good at it."

"*Really?*"

"Yep. My mom insisted. You like seafood?"

"Love it."

"I make a mean blackened salmon."

"Well, this I've got to see."

"Cool. How's eight sound?"

"Sounds great."

Kevin gave Justin directions to his town house. "I should probably hang up and get some shut-eye."

"Me too. See you tomorrow."

"Tomorrow." He hung up and stared at the phone.

What the hell had he just done?



## Chapter Eight

Distracted by trying to rearrange the words on the monitor before him, Kevin answered the phone without looking at the number. "This is Kevin."

"Mr. Fuller?"

Now he glanced at the number. That was one of the executive extensions. "Yes?"

"This is Kathy Baker, Mr. Chen's assistant. He asked me to call and find out if you're available to meet him in his office."

Kevin blinked. "Uh, of course. Right now?"

"If you're available, yes."

"I'll be right up."

"That would be marvelous. I'll tell him. Thank you."

Kevin hung up, gaping. What did Victor want to talk to him about? He stood. His cubicle buddies were either not there or on the phone, so he didn't speak to anyone. Didn't think he should wait. I'll tell them later, he assured himself as he made his way to the elevators. When Angela found out about this, she was going to have kittens! She'd barely spoken two words to him yesterday, no doubt still trying to figure out how to handle what he'd done. He glanced toward her office, but it was dark. She took every other Friday off. *Too bad. So sad.*

When he got to Victor's office, Kathy let him in. Greg sat with Victor at a little round table beside the massive designer desk, both in crisp dress shirts with their ties loose. Two laptops were open on the table, with a lot of notes

and papers scattered between. Neither man stood as Kathy left Kevin at the door.

“Kevin, good”—Greg looked up from his laptop and waved—“come in.”

Victor glanced up as Kevin stopped beside them. In the office, he looked much more like a programmer than he had at the club. The little bits of makeup and the artful tease to his hair were gone. The cool assessment in those exotic dark eyes remained, making Kevin feel like a bug in front of a curious scientist.

“We were discussing the new prospects that were brought up in the product meeting, and Greg feels some of your ideas have merit.” Victor gestured with his chin at the chair to Greg's other side. “We decided that it would be better and faster if we discussed them with you directly.”

*Oh-kay!* “Sure.” Kevin sat as Greg rearranged the laptops so that all three of them could see.

The next two and a half hours passed in a blur. They filled Kevin in on the details, and he saw where his new specs could be a good fit. When they were done explaining, he started talking, using the pad of legal paper to draw out a sketch. Victor shot question after question at him. Despite a few intense looks, Kevin didn't get the sense that Victor was trying to shoot him down. Victor's rapier-sharp mind was about finding flaws, and he did find a few. But between the three of them, they talked out what was wrong and started coming up with a workable solution for what could have been a problem client. They even came up with a brand-new idea for a spin-off module for their main product. At one point, Greg stood and started drawing on the whiteboard.

“Should we order in?” Victor asked about a half hour after that.

Kevin looked up from the notes before him, startled. A quick glance at the laptop clock showed that it was six o'clock. *Justin!* “Oh shit. Uh, could you excuse me?” He stood, groping in his pocket for his phone. “I've got to make a call.”

“Are we keeping you from a date?”

Kevin met Victor's black eyes. “Actually, yeah. I was supposed to make dinner for Justin tonight.”

Victor's brow arched. “Do you mind canceling and staying later?”

“Well, uh, I guess I can ask him for a rain check. It's too late to start cooking now anyway.”

Greg raised both eyebrows at him. “You cook?”

“Hey,” Kevin protested, heading for the exit, “I'm a very good cook.”

Greg chuckled.

Kevin opened the door. “Excuse me. I'll be right back.”

He stepped outside Victor's door to find the reception area empty. Kathy must have already gone home.

“What's up?” Justin answered.

“I'm sorry, I need to ask for a rain check.”

“Hmmm.”

“Serious. I got called into a meeting with Victor and Greg.” He glanced over his shoulder, but neither man could hear through the closed door. “It's great! We're talking out my idea.”

“That's awesome, Kevin.” He sounded genuinely pleased.

“I'm really sorry. Can we postpone until tomorrow?”

“It's okay, Kevin, if you've gotta work, you've gotta work.”

“Hey. I do want to see you. I'm serious.” He was. “Tomorrow night.”

Justin sighed. “Why don't you call me tomorrow?”

“Okay. Hey.”

“What?”

“Thanks again.”

“You're welcome.”

“Wait.” Victor's voice was loud enough that Justin must have heard it. Kevin sure jumped, spinning to find the small man standing in the doorway. “Is Justin still on the phone?”

“Justin, you there?”

“Yes.”

Kevin nodded.

Victor took two steps toward him. Sitting at the table in the room behind him, Greg stared at his back, mildly curious.

“Let me make it up to you,” Victor said, smiling. “If Justin can wait another hour, I'll take us all out to dinner at Chez Nous.”

“Did he say Chez Nous?” Justin asked.

Kevin was having trouble processing the offer, let alone the place he'd never heard of. “'Shay new'?” he asked Victor.

Who smiled and nodded.

“Yeah, that's what he said.”

Victor probably heard Justin's squeal. “Shit, I'm sorry. But really? That place is...guh!”

Kevin had to aim a smile Victor's way. “I think Justin would like to go, yeah.”

Victor laughed. “It is settled. I'll make reservations for eight. He can meet us here?”

“With twinkling bells on!” Justin assured him. “Just give me directions.”

Kevin chuckled. “Thanks. Give me a minute to give him directions.”

Victor nodded and headed back into his office.

“I take it you like this place?” Kevin couldn't help teasing.

“Are you fucking kidding me? It's the *best* French cuisine in town, and you have to be on a waiting list to get reservations. My friends will *die* to know that I just got in like that.”

“Cool.”

“Kevin, this is awesome. You don't mind, do you?”

“Mind? No.” French food wasn't especially his thing, but he had nothing against it. “Why would I?”

“Well, we'd have to pretend again.”

“Don't worry about it.” Truthfully, he was looking forward to seeing Justin. “You got a pen to write this down?”

## Chapter Nine

Justin was clearly in his element at the swanky French restaurant. So was Victor. They ordered food drowning in decadent sauces and had a lengthy discussion over which wine to choose. They took it upon themselves to order for both Kevin and Greg, both of whom gave in graciously.

“How long have you known him?” Greg asked while the other two were deeply embroiled in their wine discussion.

“Justin? Not long. Almost two weeks.”

“He's your first boyfriend?”

He glanced at Justin, but neither he nor Victor was paying any attention to Greg's low voice. “Yeah. Does it show?”

Greg laughed. “Nah. He's definitely something else.” They shared a laugh. “What made you decide to take the plunge?”

Kevin slowly decimated a soft bread roll. Shrugged. “Guess I got tired of holding it back.”

“I hear you. I came out right after college. Got sick of pretending with women.” He smoothed his neat mustache with thumb and forefinger. “My dad still doesn't know what to make of me, and I make my mom uncomfortable, but they've settled into it.”

God, not only had he not called his friends this past week, Kevin hadn't called his family either. He made a mental note to call his mom and sisters and tell them what was going on. It wasn't likely they'd hear anything, but he'd rather not take the chance that they caught the news from anyone but him. “Do you have anyone now?”

"Oh no." Greg laughed, sitting back in his chair. "I've a few special friends, but for the most part, I'm footloose and fancy-free. There are too many men out there for the sampling."

"And I'm sure there's a bevy just *dying* to sample you," Justin put in, propping his chin on his palm and batting his eyes at Greg.

"You know it, gorgeous. If it wasn't for my friend Kevin here, I might even take a shot at you."

Justin chuckled, not missing a beat as he reached over to squeeze Kevin's hand. "Sorry, I'm taken."

"Is it serious, then?" Victor asked, waving for the newly arrived waiter to let Justin sample the wine. "You two? It's quite soon to be so settled."

They all watched Justin swirl, then sip the wine. He closed his eyes with a happy smile, then nodded at the waiter to pour for the rest of them. "Soon, perhaps, but I know I'm not quite ready to share Kevin yet." Green eyes met Kevin's, and the loving look certainly *looked* real. "There's far too much to find out."

"But you've just met."

Justin sipped his wine, gracing Victor with a lazy look. "Sometimes it just happens that way."

Victor studied him, then Kevin, then shook his head. "I can't understand it. I've only ever committed myself to one man, and that proved to be a dismal failure."

Justin laughed. "When was this? In the cradle? You're too young to be so jaded."

Victor smiled coyly. "I am older than you may think."

"May I ask?"

"You may. I'm thirty-six."

Justin sat back, assessing. "Really? You don't look a day over, maybe, twenty-six."

Kevin wasn't sure how Victor managed to pull off that almost innocent look. Maybe it was those long eyelashes brushing gently smoothed cheeks. "Thank you."

Justin kept up the conversation. "So you had this commitment when you were in your twenties?"

"I did. We lasted for three years before he decided he couldn't compete with my business." He raised a hand to delicately push silky black hair back from his eyes. "I was much more serious then."

Greg started laughing, keying Kevin and Justin in on the joke. They all shared a laugh.

Then Victor focused on Justin again. "And you, my lovely? May I ask how old you are?"

Justin batted his eyes. "You may. I will be thirty-one in February. Pisces."

Kevin managed to hide his own surprise. Justin was six years older than he was? He would have thought they were closer to the same age.

Victor raised his glass. "You do not look it."

Justin clinked his glass with Victor's. "Dirty thoughts and nasty ways will keep you young."

"Ah. So you have skeletons in your closet?"

"Honey, they're the *only* thing in the closet. Everything else about me is open and free." He sighed happily. "Actually, I exaggerate. I happen to be a serial monogamist."

Victor glanced at Kevin. "Oh?"

Justin shrugged. "I can't help it. I see something good, and I want to keep it." He, too, glanced at Kevin, but he kept his gaze steady. "I'm not very good at sharing."

He couldn't have said why he did it, but Kevin impulsively picked up Justin's hand. Squeezing it, he kissed Justin's knuckles, never taking his eyes from those captivating green eyes. Because of that, he saw the spark of



surprise that melted into heated desire. What are you doing? he asked himself. Was this just a show for the boss? Really? Or was it just because it felt good to put that look in Justin's eyes?

The appetizers arrived, and Justin deftly steered the conversation back to Victor by asking him about his time in France, which he'd mentioned during the wine conversation. Victor allowed himself to be led, and monopolized the time talking about his travels. Not that it was boring. Far from it. He'd been around the world and even spent extended time in other countries, including his parents' native China. He drew Greg into sharing narration about when they had met. It turned out that they had once been lovers, who had decided very quickly that they made better business together. Kevin could do nothing but admire these men who had started as eggheads and had gone on to be successful playboys. He couldn't see how it was bad to follow in their footsteps, at least in business. Didn't much matter that they were gay. In fact, wasn't that better? They didn't have all the family and marriage ties that men got into with women. Relationships with men just seemed easier.

They'd all piled into Greg's Lexus for the drive to the restaurant, so they were still together when he brought them back to the darkened office parking lot two hours later. Kevin and Justin piled out of the backseat, but Victor remained inside.

"You sure you don't want to come?" Greg asked, addressing Justin from the driver's window.

Kevin stepped up beside the taller man and slid his hand into Justin's.

"Oh no." Justin laughed, squeezing Kevin's fingers. "I'm not nearly up for The Arch tonight."

Victor leaned from the passenger seat, nearly draping over Greg's side. "But the night is young."

Kevin hadn't previously known what The Arch was, but they'd told him that it was another popular club in the local gay scene. This one, he was told,

was far more wild than Beltane, since it was open to the public. He was grateful to Justin for getting them out of going.

Justin slid an arm around his shoulders, pulling him close. "And I've got all the young man I need right here."

Wow. That was a biting look Kevin got from Victor. Quick but palpable. "All right. Your loss." He sat back in the passenger seat and faced forward.

Greg glanced at him, then back out the window. "See you, Monday, Kev. Later, Justin." With smiling nod, he drove off.

Justin, keeping his arm around his shoulders, turned Kevin toward his car. "*Trust* me," he murmured with a laugh, "you do *not* want to go to The Arch."

"Meat market?"

"To say the very least."

"You go there often?"

Justin pinched his arm.

"Ow!"

"That's what you get for assuming I'm a ho." Although he let his arm slip from Kevin's shoulders, Kevin heard the teasing note in his voice.

"I didn't say you were a ho."

Justin pulled his keys from his pocket and hit the button on the key fob. "Hmph."

Kevin watched as Justin opened his door. "Did you mean what you said before?"

"Which before was that?"

"The serial monogamy thing?"

Justin froze. Then laughed. "Well...yeah."

Kevin shoved his hands into the deep pockets of his slacks. "I'm not, uh, messing you up, am I? This pretending thing? I mean, you could have gone out and had fun with Victor and Greg if you wanted."

Justin faced him. "That wouldn't be fair to you."

He shrugged. "You've got a real life. It's not fair to *you* to have to keep playing along with mine." He couldn't quite meet Justin's gaze. Those green eyes, even in the darkened parking lot, would see more than they should. "I'm just saying if it gets to be too much, just let me know. We could 'break up.'"

He watched Justin's feet shift as he moved to lean on the frame of his car. "Trying to get rid of me so soon?"

"No. It's not that. You've been great. Fabulous, about this whole thing. I just don't want it to be a problem for you."

A hand smoothed the side of his head, fingers brushing the shorn hair behind his ear. "So far, you've taken me to an exclusive club I could have never gotten in and to a restaurant I could never have afforded. And you fixed my shop's mangy computer." He chuckled. "I think I've been compensated."

Kevin laughed, embarrassed. "Yeah, well...okay." Finally, he peeked up and was warmed by Justin's smile. "I'd still like to make you dinner to thank you personally."

Justin nodded. "I'd like that."

They stared, out of words. For the second time that night, Kevin put aside misgivings and worries and acted on instinct. He took the one step that separated them and reached up to bracket Justin's long face with his hands. Ignoring the surprise that opened Justin's mouth, he concentrated on bringing those very kissable lips to his own.

The kiss was brief and chaste, except for a swipe of his tongue over Justin's bottom lip. It was the limit of his bravery. He stepped back, hands and eyes dropping. "I'll call you." He turned and headed for the entrance to the

covered employees' lot, thankful when the darkness swallowed him up and he could pretend he didn't feel Justin watching him.

## Chapter Ten

The sound of his cell phone turned Justin's hazy attention away from the classic cartoons vamping on the television past the foot of his bed. Yawning, he fumbled for his cell. The name on the caller ID threw him for a loop. "Kevin?"

"Hi."

"Hi. To what do I owe this honor?"

Hesitation. "Uh, can I...?" Dead silence.

"Kevin, you there?"

"Yeah, I...uh, you working today?"

"Nope."

"You at home?"

"Yep." He stretched, moaning a little. "I'm sleeping in. The rich food last night did me in."

"Sorry if I woke you."

"That's okay. I was watching cartoons."

A short laugh burst over the connection. "Can I bring you breakfast?"

He blinked. "Breakfast?"

"Yeah. Bagels, doughnuts, you name it. There's a great bakery down the street that makes excellent croissants."

"Only women and gay men eat croissants, Kevin."

"Yeah. They're good."

What. The. Hell? "They sound good." He spoke very carefully, refusing to jump to conclusions.

“So? The croissants? Filled or plain butter?”

Was he serious? “Both?”

“You got it. I’ll see you in twenty minutes.” He hung up.

Justin stared at his phone. “That could not have just happened,” he told it.

It didn’t reply.

He scooted to the side of the bed and stood as he dialed Frank, who would have just opened up the shop.

“You’re up early.”

“Kevin just called me. He wants to come over.”

“You guys make plans for today?”

“No. Shit, Frank, I could be wrong, but I think he was flirting.”

“Oh really?”

“And he kissed me last night!”

“What?”

“I know!” Justin pulled his hair as he stormed into the bathroom. “I *don’t* know! My gay hell, what do I do?”

“Do you think you turned him?”

“Oh gads, do you think so?”

“Oh, honey, I don’t know!” Frank sounded as frantic as he was. “What did he say?”

Justin grabbed a brush and applied it to his hair. “He offered to bring me breakfast.”

“*What?*”

“I know! I told him I was sleeping in; then he offered to bring me breakfast! Croissants!”

“Oh sweet Mary, Jesus, and Joseph, he’s seen the light. He wants your ass! Are you clean?”

Justin gagged. “Fuck, Frankie, I haven't been this scared since *high* school!”

“Don't be scared. Be happy. You're going to fuck that sweet ass.”

Justin's knees buckled, and he crumpled to the furry yellow bath mat that lay before his bathroom counter. He thumped his forehead lightly on the cabinet. “Do you think it's real?”

“His ass?”

“You bitch. What he's doing. *Is* he doing this?”

“I don't know, honey. What do you think?”

“I don't know.”

“Calm down. Take a deep breath. Take a shower. Let the man with the croissants into your apartment in a bit and just see where things go.”

“You think?”

“I do.”

“I love you.”

“I love you too. Good luck. And *call* me later!”

## Chapter Eleven

Kevin held the pink box full of pastries on his lap and stared at the center of his steering wheel. "Are you really going to do this?"

Neither the box nor his steering wheel answered. Fuckers.

"Right." He got out of the car and forced his wobbly knees to support him as he made his way up to the front door of the complex. Thus far he'd only picked Justin up at the curb. He'd never gone in. But after yet another night of dreaming of Justin, of waking with a woody from hell and fingering himself, he just refused to take it anymore. His own actions after dinner the previous night showed him the arrangement of his thoughts. He'd kissed Justin; he'd liked it; why deny that he wanted more? Why dwell on it, right?

He found Justin's name in the list of tenants and pushed the button.

"Kevin?" Even over the scratchy speaker, Justin's voice sounded sexy.

"It's me."

"Come on up." The door beside the speaker buzzed. "Take the staircase to your left. Number twenty-two."

He pulled the door open and walked through a brief, spare entryway into an open courtyard. The apartments were arranged around a courtyard on two floors. A dry, cracked fountain filled with leaves and debris dominated the courtyard among flowing magnolia trees. All the front doors opened in outdoor hallways, shrouded by the full trees. He climbed the staircase to the left and looked for number twenty-two.

Finding the door cracked when he got there, he pushed it open. "You decent?"



“Only barely,” came the muffled reply from somewhere inside.

Kevin's heart raced. His mouth was dry. His head spun. He felt like he was going to throw up at any moment, and he was torn between horror and hysterical laughter at the realization. He'd never been this nervous about a date.

Was this a date? More like a booty call. He hoped. *Oh God!*

The main room of Justin's apartment was cluttered with an overabundance of furniture. There were too many little tables. White walls barely visible behind tons of pictures and artwork over light tan furniture burdened with pillows and spare clothing. Heavy burgundy curtains held back the sunlight from the window beside the front door, so that when Kevin shut the door, the only illumination came from the hanging light above the little dinette to the right and a splash of light from the doorway that looked to lead down a short hallway.

Kevin stepped toward that opening. Warm, moist air with a vaguely sweet scent wafted from there, hinting Justin was in the shower. And wasn't that a nice image to think of? “Where are you?”

“Here.”

He started, spinning toward the small kitchen.

Justin stood up behind the counter, brandishing a coffee bean grinder and coffee beans. “Kona blend?” he asked, beaming. “It's authentic from the islands. Frank and I got it on our trip to Hawaii earlier this year.”

He looked delicious. Frosted blond hair was still damp, so it looked a deep golden brown where it clung wetly to Justin's sculpted cheeks and neck. Big green eyes flashed over the grin that melted Kevin's heart. He was bare from the waist up, so Kevin got his first good look at the smooth perfection of a nearly hairless chest, broad shoulders, and smoothly tapered waist. Kevin could just see the tied waistband of his blue lounge pants.

“Kevin?” Justin shook the bag of beans. “Coffee?”

“Yeah. Sure.”

The urge to purge dissolved, and Kevin's mouth watered. Anxiety faded in the presence of Justin's easy charm and languid beauty. Suddenly this seemed a lot easier than Kevin had thought.

Justin nodded and set the grinder on the countertop. “You can put the box on the table.” He poured beans into the top of the machine. “Stereo's behind you if you want music.”

Kevin set the pink box down and glanced behind him to locate the stereo. Music might be good.

The grinder whirred.

Kevin looked at Justin again, now at his profile. Long arms, long legs, long neck. He could have played one of the *Lord of the Rings* elves with his tall elegance.

He kept watching Justin, openly and unashamed. Justin most decidedly did *not* look at him while he finished grinding coffee, then filled the coffee pot. He looked...*nervous*? For whatever reason, that was really hot.

“Justin?”

“Do the croissants need to be heated up?”

Kevin stepped toward Justin, blocking the narrow entrance to the kitchen. “Justin?”

Justin swallowed, Adam's apple bobbing, then faced him. That gorgeous face was blatantly bright and cheerful. “Yes?”

Kevin took another step, scenting the damp spice of what must have been the soap Justin used. “Kiss me?”

A full-body tremor took Justin, and he fell back, barely catching his hands on the edge of the far counter. “Oh God, Kevin...”

Heartened by the response, Kevin closed the distance, stepped into Justin's body, and pressed his belly into the man's groin. Rather than scare him, the heat of a half-hard cock didn't turn him off. Just the opposite. He slid

his hands up the satin skin of Justin's chest and, tilting his head, offered his lips. "Please."

Justin caught his hands and held him away. Heavy breath flared his nostrils, and Kevin felt the tremble in his hands. "Kevin, what are you doing?"

"Trying to kiss you."

"Why?"

"Because I want to."

"Kevin, you can't play with me like this."

"I'm not playing. I want to touch you." He licked his lips. "I want to taste you. I-I want to be with you."

Justin's jaw dropped as anxious green eyes searched Kevin's face. Something interesting stirred against Kevin's belly.

"What happened to not being gay?"

"You."

"All of a sudden?"

"Most of the last week or so."

"You've just up and decided that you're gay now?"

"I don't know what I've decided. Except that I want you."

"Want me how?"

"How? Everything."

Justin shook his head, a small groan trembling in his throat. "Say the words, Kevin. I can't afford to be mistaken on this one."

Kevin looked down at their hands, still held between them by Justin's iron grip. He bent his neck and brushed his lips over the fingers surrounding his wrists. "I couldn't stop thinking about you last night. I was pissed off the night at the club when you didn't want to kiss me good-bye. I was pissed at myself last night for not letting the kiss go on longer. I jacked off thinking of you both last night and this morning." He bit gently on a knuckle that started to

unbend. "I want to know what it's like for real. With you." He sucked the tip of Justin's index finger into his mouth.

Justin groaned, his fingers going lax.

Kevin freed his hands. He used one to grasp Justin's wrist, to keep the finger in his mouth. The other he placed, fingers spread, on Justin's chest. He turned his eyes up so he could meet Justin's gaze.

Something crystallized in those emerald depths. The tremors in Justin's body stopped. His other hand slid down Kevin's side, gripped his waist to pull him snug against a growing erection. "Be sure," he told Kevin, sliding his finger farther into Kevin's mouth.

Kevin nodded, swirling his tongue around the digit.

"Be very sure," Justin continued, gently pushing another finger between Kevin's lips. He thrust them slowly in and out.

Kevin got the picture, closed his eyes, and moaned.

"I want to fuck you, Kevin. I want to slide my cock into that sweet, tight ass of yours and lose myself."

Kevin dug his nails into Justin's chest and pressed closer so Justin could feel his arousal. *You're not scaring me off.* But he appreciated Justin's trying.

"If we do this, that's what'll happen. Me, inside you. You sure that's what you want?"

Kevin bit the fingers in his mouth to still them, then teased the tips with his tongue as he opened his eyes to meet Justin's once again. He released the fingers and sucked back until they were out of his mouth. "Yes."

Wet fingers gripped his jaw, roughly angling his head to receive the slam of Justin's lips on his. Kevin groaned, melting into Justin. His mouth opened readily under the assault, and he eagerly sucked in Justin's tongue. Justin's arms went around him, clutching him close. Kevin pushed his arms around Justin's neck and tried to get even closer.

He grunted protest when Justin broke free. "God, Kevin!"

Kevin applied hungry, wet kisses to the sharp lines of Justin's collarbone.

Fingers gripped his hair to cradle his face into the fold of Justin's neck. "I hope you really mean this, because I don't think I can stop now."

"Don't stop. Fuck me."

Another groan. Justin shoved him back but grabbed his arm. Kevin stumbled as he was hauled down the short hallway into Justin's bedroom.

The bed was huge. One of those California kings where the mattress and the box spring were each a foot and a half thick before the added layer of padding. The whole thing was covered in mussed ivory sheets, a gold and green bedspread, and tons of pillows of every size.

That was all Kevin had time to notice. Justin spun him around and backed him up against the bed, taking his mouth back in a kiss. He gave himself willingly to it and toed off his sneakers while Justin tore at his T-shirt. The kiss broke on a gasp as Justin pulled the T-shirt up and off. Then the taller man actually lifted him up to sit on the bed.

"Want you so much," Justin purred, nimble hands at the buttons of Kevin's fly. "I'm gonna make you feel so good."

"Yeah." Kevin leaned back and lifted up so Justin could drag his pants and boxers down. His cock sprang free and slapped his belly. He hissed at the pleasure of it.

"So gorgeous," Justin assured him, bending to kiss the inside of his thigh, just above his knee.

He spread his legs to make more room.

Justin trailed soft, dry kisses up the inside of his leg. Nuzzled the bend of leg into groin, his hair softly caressing Kevin's balls and shaft.

"Oh God, Justin," Kevin moaned, propping back on one elbow so he could reach down to comb his fingers through that beautiful golden hair.

A wet tongue lapped at his balls, and he cried out. Justin's hands on his thighs pushed them apart, and he bent in. One of his testicles was sucked into a hot mouth, and Kevin fell back with an all-body moan.

Justin dragged his tongue up Kevin's shaft. One hand circled the base and aimed it up. Kevin looked down just in time to see Justin purse his lips over the head and sink slowly down. His eyes were closed, and he looked like he was in pure heaven as he twisted his neck and sucked.

Kevin saw stars. "God, Justin, God." He rambled, unable to concentrate on exactly what Justin was doing, just able to know that whatever it was set fire to his skin and made all kinds of things ache. He reached down to thread fingers in Justin's hair.

"Justin, it's been too long. I'm not gonna... I can't..."

Justin popped the cock out of his mouth and jacked it with his hand, wetly, tenderly teasing the head with lips and tongue.

"Oh damn!" Kevin tensed, folding into himself. Cum splattered his belly as Justin milked him.

He collapsed back on the bed, eyes happily closed. "Oh, man, Justin, that was..."

"Are we done?"

Kevin blinked and raised his head. All he could see of Justin was head, shoulders, and the hands that bracketed Kevin's hips. Kevin's melted brain couldn't read the look on his face. "Done?"

"If you want to stop here..."

"Hell no! Do you?"

"No but..."

Kevin growled. "I'm serious, Justin. I *want* you to fuck me."

Justin shut his eyes and smiled. "That's what I like to hear."

Kevin pushed at his head. "Then get up and do it already."

Justin laughed, straightening. "You're ready?"

Kevin was distracted by the sight of Justin's cock bobbing before him. It was long and lean and pale like the rest of him. And there was no hair! That was seriously hot!

Justin reached down to wrap a hand around himself and pulled forward so the skin nearly covered the head. "You want this?"

Kevin licked his lips. "Yes."

"Want to taste?"

"Later. Fuck me first."

"Oh, baby, I'm so in love with you!"

Really? Kevin thought but didn't voice it. Sex. This was about sex.

He watched as Justin turned and snatched a condom and a bottle of lube from an open nightstand drawer. He got a wicked idea as Justin opened the condom and grabbed the bottle. Justin watched curiously, Kevin poured some liquid onto his fingers. As Justin rolled on the condom, Kevin lay back, spread his legs, and spread lube over and around his hole.

Justin froze, mesmerized by what Kevin was doing. "Kevin?"

He went ahead and pushed two fingers in, ignoring the little bite of pain. "Yeah."

"That something you do all the time?"

"Sometimes."

"You're kidding."

"No." He sighed, arching a little when he hit a good spot. "It feels good."

"Oh, you fucking tease." Justin slapped his thigh. "Roll over."

Kevin took his fingers out and complied, crawling a little farther toward the middle of the mattress to give Justin some room to climb aboard.

That gorgeous slim body draped over his back, just like in his dreams. Well, almost. In the dreams, Justin was inside him. “You still think you're not gay?” Justin rumbled.

Kevin cried out softly as Justin dragged the head of his cock down Kevin's crack. Closer to the dream. “I'm—God!—having my doubts.”

The head of Justin's cock probed his opening. “You should.”

Kevin twisted his head, searching for Justin's lips. “Fuck me.”

Lips brushed his as Justin's cock pushed in, the head popping past the entrance.

Kevin winced.

“You okay?”

Dark pleasure rushed after the bite of pain. “Yeah. More.”

Justin's hand smoothed his chest; the other braced on the mattress beside one of Kevin's hands. “Easy, gorgeous. We've got plenty of time.”

“But I... Oh, man!” Justin's cock felt so much bigger, so much better than fingers. It was just the right size, warm, and hard with a yield to his squeeze. *Perfect.*

“Sensitive,” Justin murmured, nuzzling his neck. “I think you were made for this, Kevin.”

Kevin lost words. They didn't quite make sense anymore, and he didn't care to try. There was pain, but that just kind of ramped up the shuddering pleasure, making it more real in the comparison. He fell down on his elbows, trembling as the slightly different angle let Justin slide in a bit faster. He groped and found Justin's hand braced on the bed beside his shoulder, laced their fingers together with the sheets.

“So hot.” Justin's voice was chocolate velvet, pouring over his skin, pouring into Kevin's body. He hilted and stopped moving. “So tight. God, Kevin, you're amazing.”



Kevin whimpered, twisting his hips. He was full. He was uncomfortable, but that was part of it. He needed Justin to *move*.

Justin pulled out slowly, and Kevin nearly wept at the beautiful agony of it. *This* was his dream! He wished he could communicate how gorgeous this was, how right it felt. Instead he rocked his hips, urging Justin.

"You make such pretty sounds, Kevin," Justin told him, insufferably calm. Didn't he feel it? Wasn't this as painfully exciting for him?

"Fuck!" He found a word as Justin pushed back in. "More!" He keened when Justin pulled out. "Harder."

"You sure?"

"Oh please. Please, God, Justin, fuck me, Justin, God, please!" He was babbling, but he didn't care. He wanted this more than anything. He needed Justin to stop being careful. He needed Justin to do him like it was meant to be done.

His words had the desired effect. Justin grumbled. He grabbed Kevin's hip and held him steady for a good, steady pounding.

\* \* \* \* \*

*God!* Justin nearly cried from the brutal pleasure of it. Kevin's tight ass throttled him and made it nearly impossible for him to maintain any control. With Kevin mewling like a fucking lion cub, writhing and crying out for more, Justin was helpless but to do just that.

Kevin was loving it. Kevin was one of the most responsive lovers Justin had ever fucked. Justin reached around to grip his half-hard cock, and Kevin screamed into the pillow like Justin was killing him. The sound would have scared Justin if Kevin's sweet, strong body hadn't writhed so nicely, if Kevin's fingers hadn't clutched desperately at Justin's, if Kevin's dick weren't getting hard.

*Oh God!* Justin whimpered, trying to last, trying to draw this out. This was the best fuck of his life, and he did *not* want it to end. Who knew if Kevin would come to his senses and this would be it.

"Sweet Kevin," he murmured; the intoxicating aroma of sweat and sex covered Kevin's back and made Justin drunk as he nuzzled Kevin's neck. "God." He opened his mouth onto the soft nape of his lover's neck and sucked.

"Oh shit, yeah!" Kevin cried out.

Justin latched on. He couldn't hold back. Not when every sense, every cell of his body, was intent on sinking into the body in his arms. He sucked Kevin's neck, pumped his cock, and rammed his ass, giving him the pounding that he'd been begging for.

"Ah, Justin!"

The little devil came again, spilling hot spunk over Justin's fingers. It was too much for Justin. Groaning into Kevin's neck, he came, fitting his groin against smooth, clenching buttocks as Kevin's body squeezed him dry.

\* \* \* \* \*

Kevin lay underneath Justin as they both relearned how to breathe. He kept his eyes closed and his arms flung over his head, going over what just happened. *I just fucked a guy.* Rather, he'd just let a guy fuck him. Shamelessly begged for it, actually. And he'd enjoyed it. Tremendously. He hadn't come twice in such rapid succession like that since his marathon afternoon wank sessions during summer vacations from high school when his parents were sure not to be home all day. Certainly never with a partner.

*Damn. I'm gay.* He thought about that. Did it bug him? Not on a deep, visceral level. But he didn't *feel* gay. Given what he'd just done, that, of course, sounded ridiculous, but shouldn't the events over the last week and just now have rocked his world as a stunning revelation? It hadn't. Yes, the sex was great, but he didn't feel like he was suddenly living a new life.

“Jesus,” Justin groaned, pushing up to his elbows. “Quit thinking so hard.”

Kevin opened his mouth to protest, but his response fizzled into a soft sigh of pleasure as Justin pulled carefully out of his body. *Man, that feels good!*

Justin brushed his lips over the back of Kevin's shoulder. “You're not allowed to think after sex.” He sat back on his heels between Kevin's spread thighs.

Kevin twisted his neck to look back. “Oh?”

Damn, Justin was fine! All sweaty and flushed, his hair tousled in odd curls, partly dry and partly sweaty. His emerald eyes were at half-mast as he watched his own hands stroke over Kevin's butt. He nodded. “It's a rule.”

Kevin shuddered as a wet thumb stroked over his hole. “It is not.”

“It's a gay thing.”

He laughed. “It is not!”

Justin smirked. “How would you know?” He smacked one side of Kevin's butt lightly. “You're newly gay. It's my job to teach you the rules.” He edged back off the bed. Kevin was happy to see that his legs weren't quite steady.

Kevin rolled onto his side. “Why do I get the feeling you'll be making up these rules as we go along?”

Justin snickered. “Because you're a very smart man.” He busied himself with removing the condom and tying it off.

Kevin watched, fascinated. *Shit, that was just inside me!* His ass clenched at the thought.

Justin stepped into the bathroom. Water sounded briefly. Then he leaned in the doorway. “Want breakfast now?”

“Yeah.” Food was an excellent idea. The sex had calmed the queasiness in his stomach.

He sat up. Justin was there to offer a hand. He took it and stood into Justin's embrace. Smiling, he wound his arms around Justin's waist and looked up as Justin's arms twined about his neck.

Justin dropped a quick kiss on his lips. "You okay?"

The weird squish of lube in the crack of his ass monopolized his attention. "Yeah."

"Good. I was afraid you'd run."

Kevin kissed him, gladly sucking in Justin's tongue when it tapped for entrance. "I can barely walk, much less run."

Justin kept his lips hovering just over Kevin's. "Want me to bring the coffee and croissants in here?"

Gently, Kevin pushed Justin away. "No. I hate crumbs in bed."

Justin drew a tally mark in the air. "Good point to know."

Kevin stepped toward the door, then stopped and looked down at himself. "But first, a quick trip to the head."

Justin chuckled and dropped a kiss on his shoulder as he passed. "I'll meet you in the kitchen."

This is too easy, Kevin told himself as he washed smeared fluids from his belly and groin. There was no awkwardness between him and Justin. If anything, he felt more comfortable with the man now. *Maybe I'm in shock.* He laughed at the notion.

Justin stood dissecting a croissant at the kitchen counter when Kevin entered. "How do you take your coffee?"

"Black."

Justin stuck a huge piece of flaky treat into his mouth and chewed while he poured a cup for Kevin.

Kevin sat at the table, wincing at the feel of the hard, cold seat underneath his rather tender posterior. He twisted, sitting more on the side of his ass than the center, leaning on the table.

Justin laughed, setting the coffee cup in front of him. "Sore?"

Kevin blushed. "A little."

Justin sat, sublimely unconcerned with the temperature of the chair as he continued to pick apart the croissant. "Was I too rough?"

Kevin picked out a cream cheese-filled pastry. "No." He couldn't help the ridiculous grin that took his lips. "You could've been rougher."

He bit into his breakfast as Justin leaned on the table, closer.

"I could have been rougher?" he asked slyly. "Methinks you are a born bottom, my lovely."

Kevin quirked an eyebrow but stared into his coffee as he answered. "I didn't hear you complaining."

"Oh heavens no! I knew you were a dream from the moment I saw you." Justin reached over to trail a finger down Kevin's bare arm. "I just didn't know how much."

Kevin sipped, still feeling the burn in his cheeks.

"You're taking this rather calmly."

Kevin shrugged.

"It's very brave of you. Most straight men wouldn't, shall we say, embrace the experience so readily."

Kevin smiled and shrugged, shoving another bite of pastry into his mouth.

"What got you to call me?"

Sucking cream cheese from his thumb, he switched his attention to Justin's chest and admired the smooth skin over toned muscle. He eyed one brown nipple, wondering if Justin's was as sensitive as his own. "I couldn't stop thinking about you. It was getting distracting."

The fingers continued to lightly caress Kevin's shoulder. "Do tell."

"That, and Victor's way too into you."

Justin cocked a brow. "Jealousy?"

"I guess so, yeah."

"And that brought on the anal curiosity?"

Kevin laughed. He set down his coffee and grabbed the hand that was teasing his skin. Bringing those long fingers to his lips. "That's an old thing. I had a girlfriend once who liked to finger me."

"Smart girl." Justin moved his chair closer and leaned in to brush his fingers over Kevin's shoulder. "It's all tight and warm in there."

Laughing softly, Kevin twisted away. "Hey, I'm eating."

"Watching you finger yourself was hot," Justin assured him, scooting closer. His hand dropped under the table to smooth up Kevin's thigh. "Took me completely off guard."

Kevin arched his neck to give Justin room to nuzzle. He sighed as Justin's tongue lapped over his pulse. "Uh, Justin?"

"Yeah?"

"Nice as this is, I don't think I'm up for another round just yet."

Justin chuckled, the breeze of his breath cooling the saliva his affection left behind on Kevin's skin. "No worries. Me neither. Not just yet." He pulled back and propped one elbow on the table so his fingers were level with Kevin's chin. He watched his forefinger trace Kevin's jaw. "Stay with me today?"

"You want to teach me more about gay sex?"

Justin's smile was like the sun dawning over the horizon. "I feel it's my duty."

Kevin nodded in mock seriousness. "Yeah. Better I know from the start."

"Absolutely." Justin kissed him then, heading off another bite of croissant.

Kevin sighed into it and let his worries go. No sense crying over spilled milk.

## Chapter Twelve

“What's the big deal?”

Glenn looked at him like he had two heads. “You're joking, right?”

“No.”

The blond man pulled off his thick-rimmed glasses and rubbed his eyes for a moment before addressing Kevin's question. They'd been friends through most of college and after, so Kevin recognized that a “serious talk” was coming. “You're telling us you had sex with a guy?”

Kevin sat back with a sigh. “Yes.”

“And you don't think it's a big deal?”

He toyed a thumbnail along the pocked edge of the cement picnic table. They sat underneath their favorite tree in the park across from Glenn and Rachel's apartment building. “I don't think it *should* be a big deal.”

Glenn just stared at him.

Rachel climbed up so she could sit cross-legged on the top of the table, sort of putting herself between them. Or above them. “Okay, you're right. Being all PC and everything, it shouldn't be a big deal. But come on, Kev, be real. This is a *big* deal.”

“I didn't really mean to sleep with him.” Okay, this weekend he had, but that was built off a week of trying not to.

Rachel's hand was gentle on his shoulder. “Why did you?”

He shrugged. “I wanted to. I *liked* it.”

Could Glenn's eyes get any wider? “How long has this been going on?”

“What? Me and him? I told you, just this weekend.”

“Don't be stupid. You know what I mean.”

“I'm afraid I don't.”

“Fine. How long have you wanted to sleep with a guy?”

Kevin looked up, head tilted. “Don't worry, Glenn; your virtue's always been safe with me.”

Rachel giggled.

Glenn glared at her, quickly pinching her thigh before returning his attention to Kevin. “That wasn't my worry.”

“Enlighten me.”

“How long have you been gay?”

“See, that's just the thing. I don't feel gay.”

Two blank looks met that statement.

“You'll have to explain that one,” Rachel told him.

“I don't *feel* any different. I slept with a guy, but it doesn't feel much different than when I've dated girls before. Well, except...”

“Except?”

He sighed. “Except this feels like more. I *really* like him. I like spending time with him, sex aside. I don't know. I guess I'm gay. Maybe I always have been.”

“But you've dated girls.”

“And I *like* girls. That's what's confusing.”

“What is it about this guy that's different?”

“I don't know. He's great. He's gorgeous and funny. He acts like a total queen, but he's not really. I'm with him, and everything just kind of falls into place. It's weird.” He glanced up at Rachel's sympathetic brown eyes. “It's nice.”

She smiled, as she'd done so many times in the past. They, too, had been friends through college, friends before they'd met Glenn. Kevin had been with



both of them during the rough initial stages of their relationship. He'd happily stood by them when they'd gotten married just a year ago. Rachel had been his best friend and confidant, but they'd never dated. Not that he didn't think she was beautiful. She was. Underneath the mop of curly brown hair that she could never get tamed, she had an adorable oval face and big brown eyes to drown in.

He chuckled. "Oh hell, maybe I have always been gay."

Glenn squirmed but tried to hide it. Kevin didn't lie when he said Glenn's virtue had been safe. It had. Glenn was good-looking enough in that barely jock way. He had nice blue eyes, and he cleaned up well. But Kevin had seen him naked a number of times and never felt the slightest urge to jump him.

"Does it bother you?" Rachel asked gently. "The gay thing?"

"I don't know."

Glenn perched his glasses back on his nose. "I'm having a hard time processing this, Kev. I thought your scheme to pretend you were gay to get closer to your bosses was harebrained enough."

Rachel swatted Kevin's head. "And thanks so much for calling to let us know you actually went *through* with it."

Glen would not be sidetracked. "Yeah. But this...?"

"Sorry I didn't call." Kevin pouted, rubbing at his head. "But I...just lost track of time."

"Or were scared to tell us?"

"I've been preoccupied." He scowled at Glenn, not willing to concede that he had been kind of scared. "What really bugs you? That I'm probably coming out, or that you might have a gay friend?"

Glenn glared.

Rachel stroked Kevin's shoulder. "Okay, stop. That's not fair. You've kind of taken us off guard here."

He leaned forward, forearms on the cement table. "I know. I'm sorry."

"You know we're always here for you, man," Glenn said, catching Kevin's gaze to make sure he knew he was serious, "but we're your friends, and we've got to ask. Are you *sure* you know what you're doing?"

"I'm pretty sure I don't know what I'm doing," Kevin admitted, folding his hands and staring at his thumbnail. "But I am sure that I want to spend more time with Justin."

Rachel patted his back. "Then you should do that. Can we meet him?"

Kevin looked at Glenn, who managed a smile and a shrug. "Hell yes, we've got to meet this guy who turned you queer."

Rachel slapped the top of his head. "And *you* will behave, or else your own sex life will be in trouble."

Glenn snorted, smoothing back his hair. "Yeah, like you could go that long without."

"Ever heard of toys, big boy?"

"I have, and I know where you keep them all."

Laughing, Kevin listened to his friends bicker. Oh yeah, Justin was going to love them.

## Chapter Thirteen

Justin opened the door to Kevin's worried face. He smiled, automatically seeking to ease. "What a surprise. I thought you were working late?"

"I was. I did." Kevin's fists clenched and unclenched at his sides. His tie was loose, and his hair tousled on top, which assured Justin that Kevin's fingers had worked both places. "Can I come in?"

Justin stepped back to give Kevin room to pass by him. In the almost month they'd been dating—okay, a few odd nights of sex and another very steamy weekend—he'd given up on seeing Kevin on weeknights. Kevin's new popularity at work had cut drastically into his free time and had taken him out of town two weekends, so Justin really hadn't seen him much since they'd first slept together. Having Kevin show up unexpected on his doorstep on a Wednesday night did funny things to his heart, not to mention his cock. He was abundantly happy to have Kevin with him, but he was determined not to show it *too* much.

Kevin stopped in the middle of the room, his eyes on the hall to the bedroom. The tails of his dress shirt spilled haphazardly over the belted waistband of his slacks. To Justin, he looked like he could have been freshly fucked, except that there was no flush to his skin. On the contrary, he looked a little pale. He swallowed hard, then turned around. Those big eyes showed lots of white. No, that was panic, not afterglow.

Justin shut the door. "What's wrong?"

"What are you doing this weekend?"

"This weekend? Other than working at the shop, nothing. Why?"

“Oh.” His gaze dropped, and fingers came up to comb in his hair. “Maybe that's it. Yeah, he'd buy that.”

Justin stepped forward but stopped himself from reaching up to save Kevin's curls. The short, stylish cut had grown out some, and Justin wouldn't admit it to Kevin, but he kind of liked it better. “He'd buy what?”

Kevin bit his lip. “Victor asked me, asked us”—he pointed to Justin, then back to himself—“to come spend the weekend at his house.”

Justin waited, but no more came out of Kevin's mouth. “What?”

Kevin nodded. “I know. It's weird. I'm still trying to figure out how this happened.”

“Sit down, and tell me what you know.”

Kevin dropped into the couch, elbows on his knees, head in his hands. “I was meeting with Victor and Greg, going over the stuff from this weekend, nothing new.”

Nodding, Justin sat carefully on the couch beside him, peering at what he could see of Kevin's profile. “Okay.” He'd heard much about this project. Most of it went in one ear and out the other when Kevin tried to explain, but he knew it was important. He also knew Kevin was doing a good job and might get a promotion soon because of it.

Kevin threw up his head, staring blindly ahead. “They asked how you were, and I told them you were fine, but that we hadn't seen much of each other because I'd been out of town and working late. That's when Greg told Victor that he should invite us to the weekend party.”

“What kind of party?”

“I'm not sure.” Dark eyes dropped down to contemplate the worn patch in the knee of Justin's jeans. “He says he's having people over to his beach house this weekend. Like ten or so. That he does it occasionally. Greg will be there too.” Finally, Kevin looked at him. “The *weekend*.”

Justin pursed his lips. “I see. Did he say who would be there?”

“Other than Greg, no. He just said friends.” Kevin's eyes were big and panicked when he turned them up to peer at Justin. “Is he inviting us to what I *think* he's inviting us to?”

Justin couldn't help a small smile. “What do you think it is? A big gay orgy?”

If he didn't miss his guess, Kevin was too afraid to nod.

A laugh slipped out. “How should I know?”

“You're supposed to know all things gay.”

Justin felt his eyebrows shoot up. Did Kevin even know what he was saying? “I hate to break it to you, but it looks like your Victor Chen makes his own rules.”

Kevin groaned, falling back onto the couch. “I'm so fucked.”

Justin chortled. “Sounds like you could be.”

An anxious, slightly clammy hand gripped Justin's wrist. “Justin, no matter what we've done, no matter how much I liked it—and I *did*, I *do* like it—I'm *not* interested in doing it with anyone else. Especially not a whole group of anyone elses!”

Inside Justin's chest, something warm and gooey enveloped his heart. Despite the weird vibe Justin got from Kevin about their relationship, he got the very clear impression that Kevin had no problem with what they did alone together. It was the outside world he was having issues with, and Justin tried to respect that. He schooled his reaction, though. He turned his wrist so he could twine his fingers with Kevin's and brought his other palm into the mix to cover Kevin's knuckles. “What did you tell them?”

“Them?”

“About this weekend.”

“Oh. I told them I'd have to ask you.”

“And if I say no?”

Kevin squeezed, frowning. “Victor didn't entertain that possibility.”

Justin squeezed back. "Well, there you are. If I don't go, then you don't have to go. Since we're a couple, you wouldn't want to go without me, would you? You just tell them I had a prior engagement this weekend." Besides, he wasn't sure he wanted to share Kevin anyway.

Kevin blinked. "Would that work?"

Justin let his hands slide away. "Why wouldn't it?"

Kevin's hand remained on his knee. "He'd buy that?"

Justin made so bold as to reach up to smooth a hand over Kevin's shoulder. He tried very hard not to take comfort in how easy it was between the two of them. He knew it couldn't last. Kevin was way too twitchy. Other than a few dinners and the one night at Beltane, they'd yet to go out in public together. Justin still hadn't met the friends Kevin kept saying he should meet, and his family members were just characters in the occasional story. But it was early. Besides, they had trouble keeping their hands off each other still. "Despite what you may believe, not *all* gay men are required to participate in orgies." He hoped his personal knowledge of such things did not show on his face.

Before Justin's eyes, Kevin started to relax. He swallowed, and less of the whites of his eyes were visible. His skin was even a tad warmer. As Kevin's mind slowed, Justin slid his free hand up and down his arm in a supposedly warming gesture. Truth, he really wanted to ruck up the dress shirt some more. The hint of smooth skin in the open V above his loose tie was distracting. What could he say? The "tousled salaryman" look did it for him.

Then Kevin smiled, and Justin's cock started to take notice. "Have you?"

"Have I what?"

"Participated in an orgy?"

He overdid his astonishment, slapping Kevin's shoulder. "Why, Mr. Fuller! How dare you ask such a thing."

Kevin grinned. "I'll assume that's a yes."

“Were we not just discussing your fear of such things?”

Slowly, Kevin sat up. “Yeah. But now we're talking about you.”

Justin scooted back out of range, into the corner of the couch. He tossed his head in mock affront. “I plead the Fifth.”

To his utmost delight, Justin watched Kevin turn and crawl the short distance between them. Heartbeat picking up, he sank lower into the cushions as Kevin came to stop on all fours above him. His tie fell forward to drape Justin's chest. “Tell me about it.”

“About what?”

Dark eyes hooded, and that luscious mouth kicked up in a half grin. “Your orgies.”

He placed his fingertips to the base of his throat and dropped open his mouth in pretended surprise. “*My* orgies?”

Kevin adjusted so he was straddling Justin's hips, which freed his hands to roam Justin's T-shirt. “How many?”

“I don't know what you're talking about.”

“Come on, how many guys have you taken at once?”

“Have I... Hey!” He grabbed at Kevin's wrist when Kevin pinched his nipples. But he didn't slap the hands away. He wasn't a fool. “What kind of slut do you take me to be?”

Kevin stilled, his palms pressing on either side of Justin's chest. He searched Justin's face for a long moment, and Justin couldn't describe it as anything but a look of wonder. “One hell of a sexy slut,” Kevin murmured, leaning in.

Their lips touched, and Justin exhaled on a soft moan. This wasn't fair. He could take Kevin's curiosity and his uncertainty and maybe leave that eventually. After all, both of those would pass. But if Kevin was going to actually turn on the seduction, his heart was in serious jeopardy. He opened

under Kevin's gentle assault, sighing when a tongue slid in to tangle with his. His own hands discovered the warmed polyester of Kevin's slacks.

Then the kiss was gone, although Kevin stayed close enough that his breath wafted over Justin's lips. "Tell me."

Justin smiled, slipping his hands up under Kevin's shirt to find skin. "No."

This time, when Kevin pinched his nipple, he hissed but didn't make a move to stop it. "Two? Three? Eight?"

He slipped his hand into the back of Kevin's slacks. It was a tight fit because of the belt, but his fingers managed to skim the top curve of one ass cheek. "What happened to four through seven?"

Abruptly, Kevin shifted his hips so his cock could brush Justin's. Both of them gasped.

"Did they love it?" He groaned, sliding his hands to Justin's sides as he ground down. "Could they get enough of touching you?"

Justin wasn't fond of the track of this conversation, despite enjoying the results. Kevin didn't need to know his sordid history. Not yet, at least. So he angled his head up so he could capture Kevin's lips. When the other avoided him, he growled, bringing both hands up to grab hold of Kevin's head to force the kiss.

An adorable whimper spilled from Kevin's throat, accompanied by a full-body shudder Justin recognized from their times together. Surrender. He knew that Kevin was his for the taking. But he fought the urge to take over. Perversely, he wanted Kevin to lead. He was *not* going to be accused of taking advantage at some later date.

Perhaps Kevin eventually got the picture. He squirmed above Justin, devouring him, losing patience. Finally, he yanked out of the kiss. Justin gasped, momentarily disoriented as Kevin scrambled over him, down his body. He centered in and raised his head to watch Kevin plant himself over his thighs, attacking the button fly of his jeans.



“Kevin, wait...”

“No.”

The old, worn buttons melted apart, and Kevin's *meep* of delight told of his pleasure at the lack of underwear. Justin held his breath as Kevin shoved his fly open, then grabbed his cock. The breath whooshed from his lungs when Kevin licked him from base to tip and then sucked the crown into his mouth.

“Oh, shit. Kev.” He probably should stop Kevin. In their times together, they'd not yet gotten to Kevin giving a blowjob. Evidently, Kevin was up for exploring tonight. His technique was a bit rough, with a prevalent threat of teeth, but Justin's throat refused to utter the words to stop him. The hands he put down to try to pull Kevin away ended up threading in his hair just to encourage him to slow down.

They both sighed when Kevin took Justin in as far as he could, the back of his throat squeezing together with the fist he had wrapped around the base. Slowly, Kevin pulled his head up, leaving behind a shining film of saliva. Eyes closed in apparent bliss, he pursed his lips over the head and used his tongue right underneath the flared rim to drive all sane thought from Justin's head.

“Fuck! You...” Justin grabbed at the edges of the couch, mortified to feel the tingly start of orgasm boil in his balls. *Way* too soon.

Grinning wetly, Kevin slid his lips back down, then sucked up. Glorious suction and a clever, agile tongue more than made up for the occasional scrape of teeth and hesitant rhythm.

“If you want me to—ah!—fuck you, you'd better stop.”

Kevin froze, his swollen pink lips around the head of Justin's cock. Justin was quite sure he could have gone blind happily if that image were burned in his retinas for the rest of his life. Then the lips popped off, and Kevin met his gaze. “Can I fuck you?”

Only Kevin's grip at the base of his cock kept Justin from coming on the spot. He still shuddered.

Kevin saw the shudder. Smiled. “Let me fuck you,” he suggested, more sure of himself as he pulled his fist up Justin's wet shaft. He tickled the tip with his tongue. “That's okay, right?”

Oh my, Kevin *was* in the mood for experimentation tonight.

Knowing he'd lost—or won, depending on how one looked at it—Justin let his head thump on the arm of the couch behind him, baring his throat. “Make me come first.”

The mouth was back, with determination. Kevin brought his fist into play.

“It's...Kevin... Now!” It was all he could manage for warning.

To his credit, Kevin tried to swallow. Justin's body convulsed, and his cock shot into the warm, wet confines of Kevin's mouth. The explosion of coming muddled his senses, so he lost track of exactly what happened, but when he could again concentrate, he found most of his cum on his lower belly with the rest of it dripping out of Kevin's astonished mouth. He chuckled, reaching down to thumb some of it from the corner of those gorgeous lips.

Kevin peeked at him, embarrassed. “Sorry. It wasn't like I expected.”

Justin couldn't smother his smile. “It's quite all right. God, you're gorgeous.”

Wiping his own mouth, Kevin knelt up. “Don't move.” He pointed at Justin to make sure his order was heard. Then he got up and left down the hallway.

Justin sighed, raising a forearm to cover his eyes. What the *hell* was he doing? Better yet, what the hell was Kevin doing? He was about as straight as a rainbow, but his earlier panic about the situation at Victor's had been genuine. Was it just the threat of group sex that threw him off-kilter? Or the fact that it was his boss? Did Kevin know what he was doing?

He certainly seemed to when he returned. His shirt and tie hung open to reveal his smooth, bare chest. He handed Justin a damp washcloth and tossed the bottle of lube and two condoms—Justin's eyebrows flared up on seeing

that—on the coffee table. While Justin wiped cum from his belly and groin, Kevin toed out of his shoes and attacked his belt.

Justin chuckled. “My, my. Eager to get at my ass?”

Kevin paused, fly open, an appealing bulge in his tighty whities. “It's okay, isn't it?”

“Oh, it's okay.” Justin tossed the cloth into a bowl on the table—those candies were old anyway. “Just remarking on your eagerness.”

His belt jangled as Kevin let his pants drop. “Shouldn't I be?”

“Leave those.” Justin's words shot from his lips when Kevin started to tug at the knot of his tie.

“Huh?”

Justin sat forward to pull his jeans off his feet. “Leave the shirt and tie.”

“Why?”

Justin lay back, dropping his jeans on the floor and pulling his knees up and open. “I like it.” He grinned at Kevin's goofy confusion. “The socks too.”

“You're kidding?”

“Nope.” He reached for the lube.

Kevin knelt on the couch as Justin popped the cap. “Why?”

Before Justin could pour lube on his fingers, Kevin took the bottle from him. “Hello? Does it surprise you that I have a clothing fetish?”

Kevin laughed, lubing his own fingers. He couldn't know how adorably sexy he was, kneeling half-naked between Justin's thighs. His cock thrust up from a dark, springy patch of hair, its purple-red flush a dark contrast to the smooth, paler skin of his belly. A scattering of dark hairs covered the thighs Justin could just about see. The shirt and tie hung loose about his neck and shoulders, making it seem like he'd just had to stop working to come and fuck Justin. *What a pleasant thought.*

"I suppose not." Capping the lube, he leaned over briefly to set it on the coffee table. His shirt pulled aside for just a few seconds to reveal one dusky brown nipple. He returned to his position and sat on his heels while pushing one of Justin's knees up. He paused. "Wow."

"What?"

For a few seconds, he just looked.

"What?"

He shook his head, lowering his wet hand toward Justin's opening. "Don't take this the wrong way, but I didn't expect to find this particular view sexy."

Before Justin could begin to take affront, two of Kevin's fingertips were tracing around his hole, spreading lube. His spent cock tingled with pleasure. "And now?"

"Now?" Kevin glanced up as those fingertips started to push inside Justin. "I find *you* very sexy."

*Oh God, he's killing me.* Justin shut his eyes to hide the emotion that was sure to pour out of them if he kept them aimed at Kevin. "Well"—he tried for flippant, but the quality of his voice was far too breathy to manage it—"I'm flattered."

Kevin said no more as he pushed two fingers in, rather sure of Justin's ability to accommodate him. All right, he was correct that Justin was quite used to being breached. "Have you...*ngh!*" Justin rolled his hips when Kevin twisted and crooked his fingers inside. "Have you done this before?"

"With girls?"

"I think we—oh—established that you haven't with men."

Kevin chuckled. "I mentioned the girlfriend who liked to finger me?"

Nodding, Justin slowly fucked himself on those fingers. He did enjoy being filled.

"She loved anal sex."

"And whatever happened to this lovely creature?"

Kevin laughed. "Nina wasn't so great outside the bedroom. I think she's some hotshot lawyer now."

"Mmmm. Still, something to be said about...adventurous women."

Eyes closed, he moved with Kevin's slow preparation, aware he was on display and that Kevin was watching. He couldn't watch back. If he did, Kevin would see a depth of feeling Justin was sure neither of them wanted to confront at the moment.

"You ready?" Kevin finally asked in a murmur.

"Oh yes."

Fingers pulled out, and Justin couldn't help the sigh of disappointment.

"You want to stay like this? Or on your knees?"

Justin opened his eyes. Kevin's attention was on the condom in his hands. He pulled his knee up and started to turn over. "On my knees." No way he should face Kevin right now.

No comment as he adjusted. By the time he was in place, a pillow tucked up under his neck and shoulders, Kevin had the condom on. Gentle hands smoothed over his ass and pulled his cheeks apart.

"Oh man," Kevin breathed, edging closer. His thumb rubbed over Justin's opening; then his sheathed cock was there.

Justin arched, pushing back with a moan as Kevin slid slowly home with very little resistance.

"Fuck." Kevin spoke into Justin's spine, draped over Justin's back, the open lapels of his shirt brushing Justin's sides. "Oh God."

Justin pressed his face into his pillow to squelch any words that might spill from his lips. With Kevin inside him, draped over him, kissing the skin of his back with a reverence, it was too much. He was not used to so much emotion during sex.

Kevin pulled out and pushed in. "God, Justin, you feel...amazing." Restless hands slid over his back and sides as Kevin ground in as far as he could go. His hips snapped, pushing a groan from Justin. "Are you okay?"

*Oh God!* "I'm fine." Kevin's concern tore open his heart. "Fuck me," Justin growled, sure that the flurry of activity would distract him. "*Hard.*"

Kevin took him at his word. Fingers digging into Justin's waist, he set into good, honest-to-God *fucking*. Justin bit into his pillow, moaning uncontrollably as Kevin pistoned into him, his cock beautifully punishing the sensitive spots inside. Justin's cock wasn't going to fill, still spent, but tingled in response to the gorgeous, dark pleasure burning from his ass all the way up his spine.

"Justin, I..."

"Do it," he growled, aware of Kevin's need, practically feeling the other man's orgasm building. "Come in me, baby."

"Fuck!" Strong fingers bit into Justin's shoulder, yanking him bodily back onto Kevin's cock. Kevin cried out, hips snapping, cock pulsing.

Justin sank into the couch under Kevin's weight as the other man melted on top of him. He shivered in pleasure as he listened to Kevin's heavy breathing and felt him shudder.

Lips pressed the back of his shoulder. "Justin, that was amazing."

He purred, stretching carefully so that he didn't dislodge Kevin's softening cock. "I'm glad you enjoyed it."

He startled when Kevin pulled at him, manhandled him over onto his side against the back of the couch, and squirmed up to lie facing him. Justin had to put an arm around his waist to keep him from falling to the floor, but Kevin hardly noticed. He focused on Justin's face. "You enjoyed it?"

Back in control of his emotions, Justin showed Kevin a smile. "Very much."

Relief melted into satisfaction and glowed through the sheen of sweat that covered Kevin's face. He reached up to kiss Justin, which threatened to burst that dam of emotions that Justin had just brought back under control.

Justin forced himself to laugh. "We should get that condom off of you." He laughed again when Kevin held his head so that he could barely pull away his lips to speak.

"In a minute." He ate at Justin's mouth with a determination that made Justin wonder yet again what the hell he was thinking. This didn't feel...temporary. Did Kevin realize that? Or was Justin seeing something that wasn't there?

Finally, Kevin released him. Slowly. Reluctantly? He pulled back with a sigh, his eyes averted. "Okay, I need get this thing off now."

They both chuckled as he rolled awkwardly off the couch.

"Hey, I owe you a dinner. Wanna go get something to eat?"

Justin checked the clock. Nine o'clock. He would have guessed it was later. "I already ate, but"—he watched Kevin's ass flash as the tail of his shirt fluttered—"I'd be happy to keep you company."

"Great." Kevin threw a grin over his shoulder as he headed for the bathroom. "I'll go first in the bathroom."

Groaning, Justin sat up. He wasn't used to feeling this off in a relationship. Especially temporary ones. He usually knew where he stood. But with Kevin, he didn't have a clue.

"Don't fall in love," he warned himself, picking up his jeans and standing.

*Too late.*

## Chapter Fourteen

Justin certainly did not expect to see Victor Chen walk into his shop the next day.

Alone in the front of the store with Frank taking inventory in the back, he was ringing up a customer. Victor walked in all in pale tangerine that shouldn't have looked so good on him, but it did. Tight pants and a flowing silk shirt, open about a third of the way down his chest. Not that Justin believed Victor could look other than good. That smooth Chinese perfection offset with something genetic that wasn't Asian made him flawlessly gorgeous. Unfortunately, he was well aware of this fact.

He spied Justin and smiled, walking toward the counter without ever glancing at the merchandise. Justin rang up his customer and exchanged pleasantries as he handed the man his bags. Victor smiled at the man, then watched him until he walked out of the shop. As the customer had been the only one during a slow time of the day, Justin was now alone with Victor. Suddenly, his spacious shop seemed much smaller.

Smiling, he came out from behind the counter. "Victor. To what do I owe this surprise?"

Gold and gems flashed on Victor's slim fingers as he reached up to perch his sunglasses on top of his head. "I came to find out what it would take to get you and Kevin to my house for the weekend."

Alarm bells rang in Justin's head, but he struggled not to show it under that sharp gaze. *Stall*. "This weekend?"

"Didn't Kevin tell you?"



“Oh yes. This *weekend*. Yes, he told me. Unfortunately”—he waved his hand to indicate their surroundings—“I need to man the shop this weekend.”

Victor's blank gaze around the place he and Frank had created did not win him favors in Justin's heart. “Don't you have employees who could work for you?”

“Well, yes, but they're off this weekend.”

“All of them?”

“Fraid so.”

Frank chose that moment to emerge from the back of the store. He looked up from the clipboard in his hands and stopped to see both Justin's and Victor's eyes on him.

Before Justin could speak, Victor strode toward him, hand extended. “Hello. My name is Victor Chen. You work with Justin?”

“I”—Frank glanced at Justin before taking Victor's hand—“uh, Frank. Yes, I'm his partner.”

Justin widened his eyes, but he couldn't figure out what signals to send to Frank. What the heck was Victor doing?

Victor was turned so he could just see Justin out of the corner of his eye, but he kept his attention on Frank. “His partner? Excellent. I'd like to make you a proposition.”

Frank blinked down at the shorter man, showing his confusion. “Excuse me?”

Victor laughed. “I work with Kevin, Justin's...friend. You know Kevin?”

“We've met.”

“Ah, good. I'd like for Justin and Kevin to come to my house for the weekend, but they've declined because Justin has to work.”

Dying inside, Justin could only watch in horror.

To his credit, Frank gave nothing away. "The weekends are our busiest time. And we are short this weekend."

*Bless you!* Justin made a mental note to do something special for Frank.

Victor nodded. "I understand." He stepped back and again looked around the shop. "What if I gave you a check to cover your average intake for a weekend?"

"What?" Both Justin and Frank gaped at the small man.

Who met their shock with a calm smile. "I'll give you a check, right now, to cover your average intake for a weekend." He widened his smile toward Frank. "So you, too, could take a few days off."

"Why would you do that?"

That smile turned on Justin and changed a little. Or maybe it didn't. But it seemed to Justin it was a touch more predatory. "Have you heard of Luis Sanchez?"

Justin froze as Victor's hand lifted to come to rest on the top of a rack of clothes. It couldn't be chance that the shirts hanging there happened to be designed by the very man Victor had mentioned. Justin nodded. "I have."

"He's a friend of mine. He'll be there this weekend."

*What gate of gay hell is this?* "You know Luis Sanchez?"

"I met him at a fund-raiser when he was still new to fashion. I helped to finance one of his first lines."

Justin swallowed. "That's...amazing."

"He's often looking for help. Or"—yet again, that black gaze circled the shop—"places to showcase his work."

If Victor had stabbed him in the heart, he couldn't have killed Justin more effectively. Now he *had* to go. Justin could feel the waves of excitement and panic pouring off Frank and struggled to keep his own elation in check.

"Are you saying...?"

"I'm saying that you *really* must come to my party this weekend."

\* \* \* \* \*

Kevin had no sooner crossed the threshold of Justin's shop than the man himself was rushing forward to take him into his arms.

"Don't be mad," Justin breathed into his skull, pressing him close.

Kevin struggled to breathe as he brought his arms up around Justin. "Mad?"

"Oh God." He swayed as Justin rocked him side to side, squeezing tight. "Please, please, *please* don't be mad. I couldn't help it."

He slid his hands down to Justin's waist and tried to push away. "Couldn't help what?"

He gasped, dizzy, as Justin yanked his head back. That beautiful, anxious face hovered over his, green eyes full of worry. "Kiss me first."

"What...?"

Justin dived at him, cutting off any words with an anxious, devouring openmouthed kiss. Kevin struggled for a second, then gave in, deciding it might just be faster. Besides, it wasn't ever a bad thing to kiss Justin.

With a small whimper and a lingering swipe of his tongue, Justin finally released Kevin, stepping back to let him breathe. "Please don't be mad."

Kevin raised his fingers to trace his bottom lip, certain it was swollen and suspecting that the mash of teeth might just have cut the inside. "Mad about what? What's the emergency? I came straight from work, just like you asked."

Only then did he see Frank by the counter, watching with big eyes.

Justin messed with a neatly folded stack of shirts on a shelf unit beside him. "We, uh, had a visitor today."

"Okay."

"Victor."

"Victor." He glanced at Frank. "Wait, *my* Victor?"

Justin swallowed. "Yes."

"What was he doing here?"

"Looking for me, apparently."

A cold feeling squeezed Kevin's heart. "What for?"

"He *really* wants us at this party this weekend."

Kevin took the three steps to get to Justin's side and took the other man's arm to force them face-to-face. Green eyes met his reluctantly. "Out with it."

Justin bit his lip. Nodded. "He asked what it would take to get me, us, there. I told him I had to work. He offered to give us a check to cover our average income for the weekend."

It was Kevin's eyes that went wide now. "What?"

Justin exchanged an anxious glance with Frank. "Then he said that Luis Sanchez was going to be there." His eyes lit up, and he grabbed Kevin's elbows. "Do you know who that *is*?"

He had a feeling he didn't want to know. "No."

Justin released him and lunged at a display of colorful hanging shirts. "*These* are Luis Sanchez." He took a few more steps to indicate a row of hanging pants. "*These* are Luis Sanchez."

"A designer?"

"A genius!"

Kevin was beginning to understand Justin's earlier panic. "You said we'd go."

Justin faced him, clear agony written over his expressive features. "I had to."

Kevin dropped his gaze, nodding. "Yeah. I see that."

Justin was back at his side, his fingers digging into Kevin's upper arms. "Kevin, I know you didn't want to go. I'm so sorry. But it'll be fine, won't it?"

Long-fingered hands cupped his jaw, turned his face up. Generous lips smiled. “I *promise* to protect you from the bad gay men.”

Laughter burst from Kevin's lips before he knew he'd found the statement funny. Justin's face lit up with a devious leer, and that just made him laugh harder.

“You nut.”

“*Your* nut,” Justin assured him, brushing his lips over Kevin's forehead. “Please say you're not mad.”

He slipped his arms around Justin's waist. “I'm not mad.”

“Really?”

“Really.”

Justin cuddled him close, and he rested his cheek on the taller man's chest to enjoy the embrace. He opened his eyes to see a relieved smile on Frank's face. Justin's friend was excited too.

That cold feeling around Kevin's heart made itself known again. What the hell was Victor up to?

## Chapter Fifteen

Who knew that fashion had its own language? Kevin certainly had never realized it, but then, he'd never really cared. Before Justin, he bought his suits at department stores, mainly from the clearance rack. His size hadn't changed since college, and if he needed something special, he took his mom, one of his sisters, or Rachel with him. He would never have dreamed that there was a whole world of men's fashion and that anyone would take it so seriously.

But then, he'd never met anyone quite like Luis Sanchez.

The man was the archetype of the gay male, complete with perfectly tanned skin, frosted black hair, fine clothing, and even a slight lisp. Within moments of meeting him, Kevin had been declared “quaint” and very “boy next door,” then pretty much dismissed. Justin, he seemed to like. Perhaps a bit too much. But Victor managed to keep a little distance between Luis and Justin. Trouble was, he filled that distance himself. He was right there between Luis and Justin in his breezy lemon linen—Kevin only knew the precise color because it was mentioned—keeping the discussion lively in a way Kevin could never do.

Victor's place turned out to be a showplace in Malibu. Five acres of land filled with a huge house, trees, a spacious, manicured lawn, and a pool to die for. During the tour, Justin managed to get Victor to admit that his money originally came from this family and that he had enough other investments. Chen-sang Inc. wasn't his only income. Just his favorite.

*Gorgeous and rich. Shares a common ground with Justin. Seems to want Justin. Is openly gay.* Kevin mentally ticked off Victor's strong points. *And me?*

He had to think about it. Hard. *Shit*. He couldn't come up with one good reason why Justin should want him over Victor. How depressing.

The “party” was, not surprisingly, all men, including Greg and Terry from work. Kevin had only seen Terry briefly before he'd disappeared into the house with a man Kevin had just met. Greg seemed perfectly happy to keep up his private conversation with a good-looking, dark-skinned young man as they both loitered in the shallow end of the pool. Eight men in total: he and Justin; two seeming couples; and Victor and Luis, who were decidedly *not* a couple. It didn't seem like a good mixture to Kevin. Okay, there were two other very attractive men in the house, but they worked the kitchen and house for Victor, so they didn't count. Did they?

Seated with Justin, Luis, and Victor at a table under a cream and green umbrella, Kevin tried not to show his boredom as he sipped at a rum and Coke. Thankful it wasn't the orgy he'd feared, he wondered how long he'd have to put up with the Luis talk. To be honest, he didn't like Luis at all. He thought the man was shallow and bitchy at best. But he'd be good for Justin. Justin wanted this. This man could help him. Kevin wouldn't ruin that for him. He watched the birds in the trees behind the designer and hoped his sunglasses made it look like his attention was on the other man.

“Whatever happened to that last assistant of yours?” Victor asked, sipping his drink. “Didn't you just get rid of him?”

“Oh *lawd*,” Luis lamented, dropping his face into his hands with a weeping sound. “Nathaniel. No, he's still with me. Such potential and *such* a disappointment. I don't know how long we'll last.” He raised his head to shake his head at Justin. “Don't *ever* hire someone because you want to get into their pants. It *never* works.”

“God no,” Justin agreed. “I worked for a costume designer once—straight—”

“No!”

"Yes." Justin rolled his eyes. "I should have known then. But he kept hiring these bimbos who didn't know what they were doing."

Luis nodded. "Exactly my point."

Victor chuckled. "So do you have any ideas of who could replace him?"

Luis put his face back in his hands. "None. I'm on my own."

Victor exchanged a loaded glance with Justin, smiling.

*God.* Kevin sucked down the dregs of his drink. *He just landed Justin a job.* Okay, maybe not immediately, but the opening was there. They just had to make Luis see it. And Justin would, naturally. Who wouldn't want to hire Justin? *That's what this weekend is about. Victor really is after Justin.* That was the only explanation. Why else would he work so hard to get Justin here? Not just to help him out of the goodness of his own heart. Oh no, Victor needed to get something in return. He'd engineered an entire weekend just to steal away Kevin's boyfriend. Well, the man he thought was Kevin's boyfriend. Although, after a month of sex whenever they could get it, did that make Justin Kevin's boyfriend? Rachel kept asking Kevin the same question, but he never really answered.

Didn't Justin deserve better than that?

Kevin was in a right funk, and Victor and Justin weren't any closer to clueing Luis in on hiring Justin when the girls found them. The unmistakable chatter of female voices reached the patio before their owners. Surprised, Kevin swung around just in time to see three bikinied women step out of the house. Blue, pink, and green Lycra barely covered sleekly tanned, distinctly feminine curves. Two brunettes and one blonde. One of the brunettes was small and looked enough like Victor that she could be his twin. She led her friends on a beeline for the patio table and came to a stop beside Victor.

"I hope you don't mind us crashing your party," the one who looked like Victor said, pushing her sunglasses up on top of her head as she bent to brush



her lips over his cheek. Once seen, the shape of her eyes made her look less like Victor, but only a little. "But our plans for the weekend fell through."

He smiled up at her. "I don't mind. I think you know almost everyone."

"Thank you, love." Grinning, she sidled behind him to exchange air kisses with Luis. "It'll be a relief to talk to some men who aren't just out to get into our pants."

Victor chuckled as her friends added their agreement. "Justin, Kevin, this is my sister Kat and her friends, Gina and Paulette." He indicated the blonde and the brunette, respectively, who were making their own greetings with Luis.

Kat shook hands with Justin, then stopped beside Kevin, her hand out. "So nice to meet you."

Gina was a hugger. When she'd squeezed Justin, she wrapped her arms around Kevin's shoulders, drowning him in the scent of jasmine and cocoa butter. He swallowed, willing his cock to behave.

"These were my *favorite* models." Luis sighed wistfully, still holding Paulette's hand. "I'll never forgive you girls for leaving me."

"Oh please," Kat scoffed, seating herself in the chair beside Kevin. "You know you prefer menswear. Fondling women just wasn't ever your thing, love."

Luis giggled. "Too true. And how is your line coming?"

She glared at him as she set her drink on the table, a Jack on ice, if Kevin didn't miss his guess. "You know very well it's slow going, you evil man."

Luis was all wide-eyed innocence. "What? Me?"

"You *could* have helped me."

"I could do no such thing. Not after you stabbed me in the back, you bitch!"

A story of intrigue followed that Kevin couldn't hope to track. Something about another designer and a big show and a primo male model, but that was about all he could glean. Again, Justin easily joined the discussion, though, fitting right in. He even seemed to know most of the names mentioned. So

Kevin feigned interest as he tried to ignore the woman sitting beside him. Hard to do when she was so loud and abrasive. No shy flower this. She was a ballsy broad with an abundance of charm to smooth her rough edges.

She was exactly the type of woman all his girlfriends had been.

After another round of drinks was delivered, Kat finally turned to Kevin, pausing only to wrap glossed lips around the tip of her straw to take a sip before asking, "So, Kevin, what are you into? Something tells me it's not fashion. Computers?"

"I work for Chen-sang," he assured her quickly, then gestured at Justin. "But Justin owns a men's shop."

"Oh?" She perked up and leaned toward Justin. "Where's your shop?"

Kevin had to bite back a groan. Her leaning brought her small but very nice and nearly naked breasts quite close to his shoulder. Holding his breath, he glanced up.

Victor was watching him. That small smile wasn't remotely friendly. Had he noticed Kevin's reaction to Kat?

*Shit.*

\* \* \* \* \*

"Pretty, aren't they?"

Justin kept brushing his hair while watching Kevin's reflection. The other man, lying on the bed, lowered his arm and turned his head. "Huh?"

He kept his expression bland. "The girls. Pretty, aren't they?"

Kevin gave him a tired smile. "You noticed?"

Justin rolled his eyes. "They're not my type, but yeah, I noticed."

They were enjoying a little bit of a rest since the party had broken up to change for dinner. Kevin was obviously relieved. It had not escaped his notice that Kevin had been uncomfortable, but it had been beyond Justin's skills to draw him into the conversation. Truthfully, he'd been struggling to maintain

his part. How disappointing to find that Luis was everything Justin disliked about the stereotypical fashion designers and gay men. Such a common bitch underneath all the glitter. Still, wouldn't do to let Luis know it. But he *sure* as hell wasn't going to work that hard to get the assistant position Victor seemed to be priming him for.

He turned around, brush in hand, to watch Kevin close his eyes again. Neither had he been blind to the effect of the women on his so-called boyfriend. Kat, in particular, had taken an instant liking to him that set Justin's teeth on edge. "Are you all right?"

Kevin blinked. "What? Yeah, I'm fine. Why?"

Justin ran a thumb over the bristles of the brush. "I know you weren't exactly into the whole thing with Luis earlier. He's a bit...much, isn't he?"

Kevin laughed. "*That's* an understatement."

"Yeah." Justin pushed out a short laugh. "Then Kat attached herself to your arm. Under normal circumstances, you might have been able to take advantage of that."

Kevin shrugged. "Hey, I'm the one passing myself off as gay." His eyes shot open, and he stared at the ceiling. "Wait, I mean..."

Justin turned back to the mirror, trying to ignore the stab to his heart. "I know what you mean."

Kevin sat up, swinging his legs over the side of the bed. "No, wait, that came out wrong."

Since his hair was already brushed, Justin tweaked at his waves with his fingers for something to do. "No. It didn't."

Kevin frowned at Justin's back. "What's that supposed to mean?"

"Nothing."

Silence. Kevin's shoulders slumped, and his gaze dropped to the rug. He was going to let it go.

Seeing the defeat, Justin couldn't. Not this time. Slamming the brush down, he spun around again. "Why are we here?"

Kevin jumped. "You wanted to come and meet Luis Sanchez."

"Not that. Why are we *really* here? Are we still trying to fool your boss?"

Kevin's gaze crept up only as high as Justin's chest. What was that? Was he guilty? Sad? What? "We're acting like a couple."

"That's it. We're *acting*. Why?" He took a step toward the bed and asked one of the questions he'd been letting slide. "*Are* we a couple?"

No words came to Kevin's defense, only a look of wide-eyed panic.

Justin fought to breathe through a closing throat. "She found you attractive, you know."

"What?"

"Kat. She was all over you."

Kevin frowned. "She was not."

"If she didn't think you were gay, she'd have you in a second." Needing the other man to give him some clue, he watched Kevin's face closely. Is that what he wanted? Is that why the guilt?

Frowning, Kevin turned aside. "Kind of like you and Victor?"

Justin blinked. "What?"

Those dark eyes met his briefly, full of hurt. "Victor wants you so bad, it's pathetic." He yanked the hem of his polo from the waistband of his slacks. "Let's face it, *that's* why we're here. Victor rounded up a famous fashion designer to lure you here to his house, where he could show off all that he has." He stood, bunching up his shirt. "Are you impressed?"

Justin leaned back against the dresser, perversely mollified by the fit of jealousy. He'd take the show of emotion where he could get it at this point. "It shouldn't matter."

Kevin stalked to where his bag sat on a straight chair by the desk. "What shouldn't?"

"It shouldn't matter what he parades in front of me. I'm here with you."

"Yeah. And I'm such a great catch. I can't even decide if I'm gay or not." Even as Justin admired the smooth expanse of Kevin's back, he recognized the jerky movements of anger. "He's rich, he's gorgeous, and he's way into you. He can get you into places I can't. He knows what he wants, and it's you. I don't see why you want to pretend with me."

Justin couldn't tell if the red he saw was anger or something else, but he saw it. He heard Kevin loud and clear and didn't like it one bit.

Kevin made it to the bathroom with some random clothes in hand, but when he tried to close the door, Justin blocked the way.

"Is that it, then?" He loomed over the smaller man, forcing Kevin a step back.

"Is what, what?" His butt bumped the sink counter.

Justin shrugged, letting his anger—yeah, it was anger—show by lowering his brows, although he felt eerily calm. "That's it? You're done with me?"

Kevin's gaze melted away as he hugged clothing to his chest for defense. "I don't see what you'd want with me."

"Obviously. So you've decided we're done?"

A small shake of the head. "I didn't say that."

"Sure you did. You just all but told me to go after Victor."

Kevin's shoulders slumped. "Y-you should."

Growling, Justin stepped into his space, slapping his hands on the counter to either side of Kevin. Dark eyes remained shielded behind darker lashes. "What do *you* want, Kevin?"

A weak frown twisted those gorgeous lips down. "Back off."

"No. What do you want? I deserve to know." He spread one palm high in the middle of Kevin's chest. The heart within hammered so hard that it was a wonder he couldn't hear it. "Do you want me? Because I'm here, baby. I'm yours."

Kevin's lips opened. No sound emerged.

A part of Justin wanted to relent, but a bigger part of him had to make this point. They could *not* go on like this. He stood up but didn't back off. "Or should we use this weekend to let your boss know that we're not a couple?" It was the last thing that he wanted, but he had to hear the words from Kevin. *I love you, damn it.* But he kept those words to himself. He'd come as close as he could without any reassurance from Kevin. "We can let Victor know that we just called it quits. You can drift back into a normal life."

Kevin swallowed. "If that's what you want."

Justin resisted the urge to wrap his hand around Kevin's throat. "Oh no. I'm not making that decision. This is your party. I'm here, and I'm committed to being with you and only you."

Kevin's whole body shuddered as his eyes slammed shut.

"Talk to me, Kev. This half relationship isn't doing either one of us any good. We're going to have to figure it out eventually."

Nothing. Kevin's jaw worked and tension strummed through his limbs, but he barely moved.

"Damn it." He gripped Kevin's jaw and forced his face up. "Say something."

Tortured eyes met his as soft pink lips fell open. "Fuck me."

Justin gasped softly, his eyes widening in surprise. His first instinct was to do just that and damn working things out. Kevin wanted him *now*, and that's all that was important, right? But no, isn't that what always happened? Is that why they'd never managed to have a decent talk about what was going on between them? *I love you*, hammered at his throat, ached to get out, but he couldn't. He *needed* to know what was going on inside that passive little brain.

His eyes narrowed right back down. Against his better judgment, he pressed his lips to Kevin's and opened so their tongues twined for a moment. Kevin melted, his mouth opening in beautiful surrender. Then Justin stepped back, putting distance between them with his hand on Kevin's chest. "Oh no. You're not getting out of it that easily." He backed toward the door, amazed at just how hard that was. "You need to decide what you want. If the answer's right, *then* we'll fuck."

He left Kevin standing in the bathroom, clutching his clothing.

"I'll see you at dinner," Justin called before he left the room.

He staggered once the door was closed, swallowing the lump in his throat. I will not cry, he promised himself. Whatever happens, it needs to be his decision. At least until Justin's resolve broke. Which it might. The thought that he might have had the last of Kevin's kisses was depressing. Taking a deep breath, he tossed his hair back and swallowed his tears. *Come on, Kevin. Give me something.*

Before he could make it to the top landing of the staircase leading down to the vaulted living room, then to the patio area, he heard Victor call his name. Glancing around a corner, he saw the little man standing in an open doorway at the end of the hall. He must have seen Justin pass by.

Victor waved him closer. "Justin, come. Luis had samples of his new line delivered just now."

No matter what he thought of Luis, the man fashioned some *damn* fine clothes. Anticipation helped him to quell the squeeze to his heart so that he was able to put on a passable smile by the time he reached the room.

Victor's room.

Or rather, suite. Justin entered a small parlor done in white and faded peach, with doors that he could see led to a bedroom, a bathroom, and what looked to be a droolworthy walk-in closet. The relatively plain couch and chairs in the first room were covered with fabric, tissue paper, and garment bags.

Luis stood in the midst of organized chaos directing a young man who hadn't been at the house earlier. "Don't put that there, you twit!"

The brunet in a frilly blue poet's blouse ducked to avoid being hit. Unfortunately, the duck caused him to trail two tailored jackets on the pristine white carpet.

Turning red, Luis screamed, hands to his mouth.

Justin rushed forward to pluck one of the jackets from the beleaguered youth's hands. He smiled at the look of gratitude he received. "Let me help you with that."

His help was gratefully accepted, and between them, he and the boy—Nathaniel, who he decided couldn't be much over eighteen, if that—arranged clothing over Victor's furniture. Luis fretted and fussed and even swatted Nathaniel on his pert little rump a few times. Victor stood to the side pouring and delivering a drink first to Luis, then to Justin.

"Thank you." Justin had tuned out Luis, preferring to admire the clothing. Such perfection. Two silk suits, a bolero jacket, five different shirts, and two tunics were laid out before him in a gay panoply of color.

"These are prototypes, you understand." Luis sniffed, coming to stand beside him. "But I do like the mauve, don't you?"

"I do. But this..." Justin wiped his hand on his slacks, then leaned forward. "May I?" he asked, hesitating although he'd been the one to drape a translucent blue tunic on the chair.

"Please, please. I'd like your opinion."

Justin shut his eyes briefly and managed to quell a whimper of happiness. Whatever else happened this weekend, *this* almost made it worth it.



## Chapter Sixteen

*I should just go home.* Kevin almost decided it standing under the spray of warm water in Victor's red- and orange-tiled shower. *I should just go home and let Victor have Justin. It's going to happen anyway.*

But damn it, he wasn't ready to give up. No, that's not right. He didn't *want* to give up. There must be something about him for Justin to be with him in the first place, right? It couldn't just be a novel experience. Nothing was worth just that, right? If it were just that, Justin would have hooked up with someone back at Beltane or would have just called it quits long before coming this weekend. He wouldn't have hesitated to hook up with Victor. There must be something about Kevin he liked. And he certainly liked spending time with Justin. He wasn't at all ready for it to end.

But what could he do? How could he possibly compete with all that Victor had to offer?

He was still mulling it over when he left the room after dressing in slacks and another polo for dinner. Victor's manservant Bay met him at the bottom of the stairs. The man was probably around Victor's age and was also of Asian descent, although Kevin thought he was probably Korean instead of Chinese. Hell, maybe he was both. Either way, he was on the tall side, slender, and quite pleasant to look at. Kevin wasn't at all surprised that Victor surrounded himself with pretty men.

Bay greeted him with a smile. "Hello, sir." He turned and gestured toward the short hallway behind him. "Dinner is available in the dining room, buffet-style, and tables have been set up on the patio. Mr. Chen sends his apologies, but he is entertaining Mr. Sanchez in his room upstairs and may not be down

for a while. Your Mr. Tolliver is with them.” He turned to gesture toward the patio. “The others have started. Please, help yourself. Daniel is available for drinks.”

Kevin froze, staring at Bay's pleasant face. “Justin's upstairs with Victor?”

“Yes, sir.” Still smiling, Bay gave him a half bow, then wandered back into the kitchen.

Kevin glanced back up the way he came. Justin was in Victor's room. Luis was with them, which meant they were probably still talking about clothes. Should he go up and join them? With every fiber of his being, he did *not* want Justin in Victor's room, even if they weren't alone. But he didn't belong in that talk about clothes. If he intruded, it'd probably be a repeat of Luis's dismissal of him earlier.

Might as well eat, he decided, crossing into the minimalist dining room. What could happen, right? Victor wouldn't be rude to his guests, would he? Except, wasn't it rude for the host not to be there for dinner?

*God, I haven't felt this confused since high school.* And that had been hellish. Four years of anonymity when he couldn't get noticed to save his life. Four years spent behind a computer screen because the only attention he could find was online. College had been better, but mainly because of Glenn and Rachel and a few other friends who had brought him out of his shell and taught him he did have something to offer, including a few headstrong women who had felt it their duty to sexually educate the virgin. He'd managed to grow, gained some confidence, but inside, he was still that insecure boy.

Deciding not to worry, Kevin surveyed the two tables laden with stainless-steel food warmers and colorful platters of food. A window into the kitchen served as a bar on the third with Daniel, whom Kevin had met earlier, serving drinks to Greg and Sanjay, his friend for the weekend. The last wall was floor-to-ceiling window and sliding doors leading out to another deck that overlooked the pool patio. A brief glance outside showed Terry and Mason, Terry's lover/friend, seated at one of the two tables.

Greg patted his shoulder as he passed by. "Come join us when you've fixed your plate."

Smiling, Kevin nodded and watched them go. I can do this, Kevin decided, spearing a piece of seared ahi on a long fork. He'd make nice with Victor's other guests, then talk to Justin later. *And if he's not down here by the time I finish eating, I'm going up there.*

"You *must* try the yellowtail," Kat suggested, appearing at his elbow.

He jumped, shying away as she reached across him to snatch up a small chunk of fish from the platter beside the chicken.

She beamed up at him as she popped it in her mouth. "It's to *die* for."

"I'll have to try it."

A subtle cloud of orchid scent wafted from her skin, or maybe from her wet hair. All makeup from earlier had been washed away, which he thought made her look younger and prettier. In lieu of the bikini, she now wore a skimpy half T-shirt that showed off her flat belly and tiny pink shorts.

"I am simply *addicted* to fish. I was almost vegan during my modeling years, but I've given it up. Still, I haven't quite worked my way back to beef. Although, one day I'm going to have prime rib again." She stuck with him as he passed down the table and nattered on about Victor's cook who, it seemed, used to be a dorm mate of hers.

"You still drinking Bacardi and Coke?" she asked, turning toward the drinks as he dosed his salad greens with balsamic dressing.

"Uh, you don't have to get my drink."

"No worries. My so-called friends have abandoned me. Can you believe it?" He watched her back as she crossed the room. Or rather, watched her ass sway in those tiny shorts. "They decided they did want to go to pick up some guys after all." She shook her head and grinned over her shoulder at him. "Hope you don't mind that I latch onto you."

Stuck, he took their plates and she their drinks as they stepped onto the deck. He was glad to have the company of the other men and tried not to be aware of how close she sat to him. Six of them around the table: Greg and his date, Terry and his date, Kevin, and Kat. He squirmed and hoped that Justin didn't come out to find the seating arrangements.

"So, Kevin." Kat licked her fork clean of her first bite of fish. "Victor tells me you're newly gay?"

Startled, he gaped at her.

She laughed. "I'm sorry; did I put you on the spot?"

He glanced at Greg, who was watching avidly. "Uh, sorta."

"Is it a secret? I would think that now you're out, you'd be relieved." She reached over to pat his hand. "Are you having a tough time of it with your family, is that it?" He couldn't tell if her sympathetic tone was real or not.

"Uh no. That's not it. I'm doing okay. It's just...still new to me."

"I hear you." She chuckled, attention back on her plate. "Although, I can't say I blame you for coming out if Justin was the bait." She whistled. "Even in a group full of beautiful gay men, he's something. If I were a guy, I'd do him in a heartbeat." A giggle. "Less." Turning back around, she grinned at the men with her. "Of course, I'm *sure* if I was a gay man, I'd be a total ho."

"And you aren't now, darling?" Terry teased.

She slapped his arm. "Bitch!" She laughed. "But then, you're right. Unfortunately, all the good dick is gay dick."

Sanjay hooted. "How would you know that?"

She leered at him. "I've managed to seduce a few stray queers in my time." A sigh. "Trouble is, you've gotta give *really* good head to make 'em mellow enough to even touch a pussy. Much less *look* at it."

All the other men erupted with that one.

Grinning, Kat turned a sultry look on Kevin. "But you don't have a problem with pussy, do you, Kevin? Or was that one of the reasons you crossed

over to the other side?” She cocked her head to the side, now-dry black hair slipping over her shoulder. “Afraid the big, bad pussy would swallow you up whole? Or couldn't stand cunnilingus anymore?”

If Justin could have Victor, Kevin was pretty sure he could have Kat. He knew he was usually clueless, but the signals she was giving by constantly touching him and leaning into him were obvious. She was exactly like some of his former girlfriends, the ones who had decided on him and not let him go.

He felt his cheeks flush but managed to rally with a comeback. “Nah. Really it was this undying need to have a cock up my ass.”

Her mouth and eyes rounded for a second before she threw her head back and laughed. He glanced at Greg, whose shoulders shook with mirth as he winked.

The conversation deteriorated from there. Growing up with an open-minded mother and a headstrong sisters, Kevin was no stranger to bawdy conversations with women. Once he got his bearings with Kat, he gave as good as he got.

## Chapter Seventeen

*I should have fucked him.* Hindsight, Justin admitted, was definitely 20/20. He stood unseen in the darkness of the living room, sipping his cosmopolitan as he watched the gathering on the patio through the open glass doors. Kevin seemed to be having a grand time of it with one straight woman and four gay men. The six of them were clearly well into their cups, sitting in the gorgeous night with only the pool lamp and some lit tiki torches for illumination, since the moon had decided to hide her face for the night.

Justin was alone for the moment. Luis had taken his beleaguered little boy toy off to the room they would share for the night, and Victor was changing for dinner. Although he had enjoyed the private showing, Justin was glad to be free of them for a while. His estimation of Luis kept sinking lower and lower. The man was too high maintenance to endure for long. He was obviously feeling Justin out as a possibility to work as one of his assistants. Victor kept pushing that. At this point, Justin was in a pissy enough mood that he wasn't sure he even wanted to accept. But he couldn't be sure if all his pique was directed at Luis. A lot of it remained on Kevin's head.

What *was* it about Kevin? Except for their first fateful meeting, Kevin had instigated every step of their relationship, and still Justin felt like he was the one doing the pursuing. Still, Justin had *let* his partner lead the way. Mainly because he couldn't figure out where Kevin wanted to go. *If* he wanted to go. He'd finally come to the conclusion that Kevin was a master of avoidance and of getting away with everything that he could. His innocent act had been honed to perfection, and Justin wasn't even sure Kevin was aware of his mastery.

And yet, Kevin was the one sitting there laughing, well into his drunk. Victor's sister was painfully obvious in her attempts to get his attention. Was this what it had always been like? Justin had thrown himself at Kevin too, at first. Perhaps it was just the man's modus operandi, and Justin just happened to be the only man caught in the web? A way for Kevin to explore his curiosity? Justin wished he had met Kevin's friends, the ones he claimed to have known for years. Maybe they could have given some insight.

Dejected, Justin tossed back his drink and, carefully setting down his glass, contemplated another. Maybe if he got good and drunk, things would be better. They wouldn't, he knew better, but another drink wouldn't hurt.

Decided, he turned and stopped. Blinked to find only Victor standing on the second to last step of the stairs. His white clothing shone in the half-light surrounding them, but his hair was just a darker shadow among many.

Justin put on a smile and held up his glass. "I was just going to get another drink?"

Victor caressed the curved slope of the banister. "Have you eaten?"

"Not hungry."

They stared at one another. Alone for the first time, Justin thought. Now *this* was a man who knew what he wanted and stopped at nothing to get it. Justin didn't disagree with Kevin's earlier assessment that Victor had lured him here. He read the desire in Victor's eyes very clearly. Normally, if Kevin weren't in the equation, he and Victor would already know each other intimately. Might even have gotten over each other already.

Laughter drifted in from the patio. Victor descended the last two steps so he could see the gathering outside. He shook his head. "What is it about him?"

Justin found his own eyes back on Kevin. "Excuse me?"

"Your Kevin. He's an appealing man. It's difficult not to like him."

"This is true."

Victor drifted closer. Maybe to get a better view. Maybe to be nearer to Justin. "I'm sorry I didn't see it before. I would have promoted him to customer liaison long before this. There aren't many techs who can speak in terms the computer illiterate can understand without seeming condescending. He certainly has a...*way* about him."

Justin stepped back when Victor got too close, hiding a proud smile. If nothing else, they'd gotten Kevin the attention at work that he'd initially wanted. *Something* good had come of their relationship. "He does have that." Glass in hand, he walked through the open arch into the dining room. Rows of bottles were arranged on the shelf of the window opening into the kitchen. Without turning on a light, Justin located the vodka and triple sec.

"There's a refrigerator by your left leg," Victor told him, following. As Justin bent to retrieve juice, he propped himself up against one of the tables pushed to the side and cast his attention back to the gathering outside. "But I do not understand the romantic devotion to him."

Justin stood. "You mean me?"

"I mean you. And them." He gestured at them. "If he weren't taken, Greg would have made a move on him already."

Justin's brow rose. *That* he had not been aware of. "Aren't he and Sanjay...?"

"Yes, but it's not a serious relationship. They both know that."

"Oh. What about Terry?"

"Mason is a fling, nothing more."

*Lovely.* So he had a straight woman and four gay men who were not necessarily attached fawning on him. That just made it worse. Suppressing a scowl, he busied himself with pouring liquid into a shaker, including enough for two drinks.

Victor chuckled. "Everyone seems to want to be with him, and yet he does nothing that I can see to foster attention. Can you explain it to me?"



Hardly, since he couldn't explain it himself. "He's just a likable guy, I guess."

"Perhaps." Victor sauntered up to his side just as he was pouring into the two waiting martini glasses. "I prefer more aggressive men, myself."

So do I, usually, Justin admitted to himself. So why the hell was he pining for Kevin? "Do you?"

Victor stepped close, catching Justin's hand before he could lift his drink. Again they stared at one another, the tension between them palpable. The hair over Victor's pale face was a shining, inky slash over slanted eyes, and just as mysterious. "I want you."

Justin had been around the block enough to know that look, that touch, that statement, should have curled his toes and prodded his cock awake. As it was, he felt the simmer but not the fire. Not willing to show that to Victor, he tilted his head to the side, allowing one corner of his mouth to curl up. "Direct."

Victor twisted his hand so their fingers intertwined. "I thought it about time. We've danced around this long enough."

"Have we?" Justin reached over their linked hands to pick up his drink. He downed half the cosmo in one slurp.

Victor took a step closer, resting his free hand on Justin's hip. "I find you wildly attractive, and I don't think you're immune to me. What must I do to have you?"

It really was true about him. Once he'd committed himself to someone, he just couldn't react to another. The one he wanted, for better or worse, was Kevin. Realizing this, he stepped back and tugged at his hand. "You've already done quite enough."

With a flick of his free hand, Victor dashed Justin's glass from his fingers, sending it crashing to the hardwood floor.

Justin watched it go. "That's a wast—"

"Forget it." Victor slid a hand around his neck, forcing them face-to-face. Justin resisted just enough to keep his face out of reach of those kissable lips. "Kiss me."

"No."

"Will you give up this farce of a relationship with Kevin or not?"

Justin wet his lips and stepped back, freeing himself. "It's not a farce. I think I'm in love with him." How often had he said those words? How often had he meant it? He'd been accused of falling in love too easily, but that never stopped him. Those other times hadn't felt like this.

Victor gave him space but pinned him with his eyes. "You can't be serious."

"I am."

"Do you really believe he's turned gay for you?"

"I have evidence to support that, yes."

"I don't care how many times he's kissed you or how many times you've gone out, that doesn't make him gay."

Justin wanted his glass back. He needed a prop, and his hands in his pockets just weren't cutting it. But the second glass was on the shelf behind Victor, and he wasn't going to get close to the other man. "What about having sex with him?"

Victor's ire jolted over that speed bump. "You expect me to believe that?"

"I don't care what you believe. It's true." He sat heavily in one of the sturdy straight chairs that stood at the end of one of the tables. From this angle, he still couldn't see the patio, but another shriek of feminine laughter reached his ears. Justin sighed, and his gaze fell to the broken glass on the floor. He wished he had more alcohol in his system so he could fall under Victor's spell with an excuse. Or maybe he should just give in, go outside, and let Kevin off the hook. Why was he acting like such a girl?

Victor pulled another chair in front of him and sat. "All right. Even if he's slept with you, that doesn't mean he's committed to a relationship with a man."

Justin froze, face and body, in an effort not to show Victor how close to the heart of the matter he'd come. He wasn't sure he was successful.

"You and I know there is more to being what we are than just sex."

There was nothing to say to that, so Justin didn't.

Delicate fingers reached out to trace his jaw, trailed up, and tangled in the loose hair behind his ear. Victor managed to get their lips a breath away from each other before Justin pulled back.

But not free. "Don't."

"Don't fight me," Victor breathed, remarkably seductive in the half-light. "Let me be what we both know you need."

Their lips met. Justin knew it was wrong but lost time for action in wondering *why* exactly it was wrong. Kevin couldn't make a decision. Kevin couldn't even say that he really wanted him. Why was it wrong for him to enjoy someone who *did* openly want him? Not only that, someone who shared his lifestyle, who understood his goals, and who had connections he could dearly use for his life. Victor was ever so clearly the better choice for Justin, and he was a hell of a kisser to boot.

But...it just wasn't there.

Justin drew back, gently but firmly fighting Victor's hold. He wrapped his fingers around a delicate wrist to extricate Victor's hand from his hair.

A frustrated growl burst from Victor's throat as he pulled his hands free. "Is he worth it?"

"I'll have to find out."

"What about the people out there? You saw them. He could have any one of them."

He nodded. "Yes. I did. Did you put your sister up to it?"

Pause, then truth. "I merely mentioned that he was, until recently, quite straight."

Justin nodded again. Stood.

"Justin..."

He shook off Victor's grab at his arm. "If you don't mind, I think the alcohol has gone to my head. I'm going to bed."

Victor stood. "Come to mine."

"No. Thank you."

## Chapter Eighteen

Kevin heard the glass break inside but was pretty sure his table companions didn't. He glanced toward the door. The angle was off, and it was too dark inside to see who was inside. After no one emerged for a few minutes, he started to wonder. A check of his watch showed it was later than he had intended to wait for Justin to appear. He should have gone to find him before dark had fallen, but Kat and Greg had taken turns talking him out of it and refilling his glass with the smooth, expensive rum that they were now all drinking straight over ice.

He blinked, trying to focus his slightly blurry vision, waiting for the back door to open. When it didn't, he stood.

Kat caught his arm. "Where are you going?"

If he mentioned Justin, she'd try to stop him again. Spread his hand over his belly and gave her a drunken smile. "Gotta pee."

She nodded, but he felt both hers and Greg's eyes on his back as he crossed the bricks to the door. He put some lurch in his step for them. Yes, he was well buzzed, but he wasn't drunk yet. He suspected that they'd been coached to keep him outside, and he'd let them for fear of what he'd find. But enough was enough.

He made it to the door and froze. There he stood watching Justin and Victor kiss in the darkness. I should have gone to find him sooner, he told himself, oddly detached as Victor's mouth opened under Justin's. Justin's hands remained passive, but there was no mistaking the lip-on-lip action. Kevin knew what that kiss felt like, knew it was divine. Evidently he'd lost his

right to feel it. That must be why his heart was wilting. The fact that they looked good together in the shadows didn't help any.

When Justin pulled back, Kevin ducked away from the glass doorway, unwilling to be seen. Trying to be quiet, he backed up a few steps and barely managed to suppress a yelp when he bumped into someone. Whirling, he found Kat behind him, head tilted curiously.

"What are you doing?"

A glance behind her showed no more than a passing interest from the men at the table. "I, uh..." He kept his voice low and put a few more steps between him and the door. "I..." Emotion closed his windpipe, and the alcohol in his system kept him from recovering. He blinked rapidly to ease the burning in his eyes. "I..."

"Are you okay? What did you see?"

"No!" He grabbed her arm when she would have passed him, then dropped it as though her skin burned him. "I mean, nothing. There's nothing... No one's in there."

She frowned at him, then turned back to the door anyway.

Rather than try to stop her again, Kevin faced the hedges at the far side of the patio and fled toward them. He had to get away. Now. He had to...

"Kevin?"

He ignored Greg's call.

"Kevin, wait!"

The sound of Kat's voice sped his steps. He ducked around a hedge and fled down a narrow garden path. Cool night air felt odd on his cheeks until he reached up to discover tears tracking down them. *Shit. Idiot. What are you crying for?* He'd known it was temporary. He'd known things couldn't last with Justin. What the hell had he done falling in love? He stopped between two overhanging trees and stared blankly at the pebbled path ahead of him. Had he fallen in love? Well *now* was a stupid time to figure it out.

Kat caught up to him, grabbing his arm as she came around in front of him. "Kevin, are you...?" She stopped when she saw his face, her jaw dropping. "Oh, man, what did you *see*?"

He shook his head and walked around her. The fresh night air felt good, even if he did seem to be sucking too much of it into his lungs. "Nothing."

"Bullshit. No one was there when I looked. What did you see? Who was there?"

So they must have gone upstairs. Wonderful. He would have thought Justin would have more class than to have sex with Victor while Kevin was there. But remembering the look on Justin's face that afternoon, maybe he was pissed off enough to make a point. *Damn it.*

"Kevin!"

He stopped, not bothered when she bumped into his back. *Wait.* He looked back the way he'd come. *That's not right. Justin wouldn't do that.*

Kat planted herself in front of him and took hold of both of his arms. "All right, stop right now, and tell me what you saw."

He blinked at her. "They were kissing." And Justin's hands weren't involved. Which was odd, because every time Justin kissed Kevin, his hands were holding on to something. A groper, that one, not that Kevin minded.

"Who?" She grimaced and knocked the side of her head. "Scratch that, stupid question. Are you sure they were kissing?"

Tugging at the fringe of hair over his brow, he struggled to think. "Yeah." What *had* he seen? They were definitely kissing, but maybe it was one-sided?

Kat stepped closer, one hand sliding up to rest on his shoulder. "Kevin, are you really that upset?"

It took a few seconds for her question to register. "What?"

She searched his face, clearly seeing something she hadn't expected. "You *are* upset."

He pulled his head away when she would have reached up to thumb at his tears. "Of course I'm upset. Your brother—my *boss*—is after my boyfriend."

Mouth open, she shook her head slightly. "Well damn. He really *is* your boyfriend."

"What?"

"Victor doesn't think you're serious. He thinks you're faking being gay."

Cold fear gripped his heart, and he struggled not to let it show in his face. "He does?"

She laughed, backing up a step and letting her arms drop. "Oh, boy, did he get this one wrong."

"What do you mean?"

She waved a hand. "This whole weekend was a setup. He wants Justin."

"Well, duh. That's obvious."

"Except he thinks that the two of you are pretending to be a couple."

"We're not." Okay, he thought they were, but evidently his heart had a mind of its own. Justin's outburst earlier suggested similar feelings. Which made him think about that kiss again. What had he actually seen?

A hand waved in front of his face made him jump. Kat laughed. "Hello?"

"Sorry, I was..." He shook his head and spun. "I need to go find Justin."

"Wait!" She raced to plant herself in front him again and didn't allow him to evade her. "Wait, Kevin, just a minute."

*What's Victor doing while I wait?* "What?"

"Are you sure this is what you want to do?"

"What are you talking about?"

"Justin's the only guy you've ever been with, right? Are you sure you're not just playing him for curiosity?"

Struck, he backed up a step.



She advanced. "Not that I blame you. He's hot. But is it really a guy that you want." She licked her lips to bring his attention to him. "Don't you prefer women?"

*Don't I?* That's what he'd been telling himself. That's what he'd known all his life. Soft lips, soft breasts, soft, wet sex. That's what he liked. Wasn't it?

She stepped into him, letting her breasts brush his chest as she raised her arms to drape his shoulders. "Why don't you just let Victor make his moves on Justin, and you and I can explore things, huh?"

That would be the sensible thing to do. Let Justin be with Victor. Let Victor ply him with expensive things and golden opportunities. He deserved it.

There was just one problem.

"I love him."

"What?"

Despite his earlier thoughts, hearing the words from his mouth was as much a surprise to him as to her. "I love Justin."

Her mouth dropped, and he used her distraction to lift her arms from his shoulders.

"Kevin." She made another attempt to stop him by spreading her hand over his heart. "I've known a lot of gay men in my life, and none of them ever just *turned* gay all of a sudden. It's not something you choose. It's something you *are*."

He nodded, plucking her hand from his person. "Which is probably why I've never been in love before."

Leaving her there on the path, he filled his head with new resolution and stalked back up the path. Greg and Terry both called to him as he passed by the table, but he just waved at them, not even looking. He was a man on a mission, and no one was going to stop him now.

## Chapter Nineteen

"You can't leave it like this."

With Victor at his heels, Justin stopped at the door to the room he and Kevin had been given. "Can't I?"

"No." Again, Victor's white clothing shone in the single dim light that lit the hallway. Some of the loose buttons of his shirt had fallen—or been pried—loose to expose much of his smooth, hairless chest. The beautifully sculpted lines of his face were clear, and every ounce of that charm and appeal battered at Justin's defenses. "I can't believe that you would pass me by for *him*."

Justin had dealt with men who just wouldn't take no for an answer before, but he didn't want to offend Victor, so that made things more difficult. He didn't feel like he could just tell the persistent little man to fuck off, for fear of getting Kevin in trouble. *Ha, still looking out for him, are you?* Stupid heart. "Give it a rest, Victor. I've told you that I'm in love with Kevin. What more do you want?"

"You said you *think* you're in love with him." Victor followed Justin into the room. "Which means you are confused."

Flicking on the light, Justin shook his head. "That's not what it means."

"It is. I can give you so much more. What about Luis's offer?"

"What offer?"

"You know he will offer you a position as his assistant. I will see to it."

Justin sighed. "Look, I appreciate what you've done. I appreciate the opportunity, and I don't know how I can thank you"—well, he had an idea of

what Victor wanted as thanks, but he wasn't going to do that—"but enough's enough."

"No."

"Yes. Why are you wasting this much energy on me?"

Startled, he backed up against the wall when Victor barreled into him. "Because I *know* you. There aren't many men like you." Firm hands slid up his chest to curl around his neck. "I crave men like you, and I will *not* stand by and see you waste your time with someone who will discard you like a used toy."

"Whoa." Justin was both touched and alarmed by Victor's intensity. He gripped the man's shoulders to keep some distance between them as he stared at the bald emotion in the smaller man's eyes.

"It's a mistake. He may be curious, but he won't stay with you. He will use you, then throw you away."

Suddenly, it dawned on him. "Victor, just who are you mistaking me for?"

Slanted eyes blinked, some of the intensity melting to confusion. "What?"

"I'm flattered by the attention, really, and I think you're a great guy, but I think you're seeing someone else when you look at me. You don't know me well enough for all this."

With an angry expulsion of air between his teeth, Victor snatched his hands down and backed up. "You know nothing."

Justin stayed with his back against the wall. "That's kind of my point. I don't really know you, and you don't really know anything about me. It doesn't make sense that you're being this insistent."

"I know you are a beautiful man. A *gay* man." Victor stared at the window, and Justin got the impression he *was* seeing someone else in his head. "You deserve someone who will appreciate you for what you are and not as some"—he waved his hand in the air—"novelty."

Although he'd had similar thoughts, Justin just couldn't believe Kevin would be that callous toward him. Perhaps it was the romantic in him. But he was pretty sure Victor was talking about another situation altogether. "I don't think what Kevin and I have, regardless of what it is, is any of your business."

Victor spread his hands out to either side, palms open wide. "Look at what I can offer you. My house, my money, my friends, all yours for the taking."

"I've got a feeling you've had a few too many takers in the past," Justin murmured. "Maybe not so many givers?"

Victor rolled his eyes, dropping his arms to slap the sides of his thighs. "Please, I have everything I could possibly need. More than enough. Which is why I can offer it. To you."

Justin shook his head, stopping Victor from stepping back toward him. "Not me."

"Because of Kevin." It wasn't a question.

"Yes."

Fists clenched at Victor's sides. "You're a fool."

"No doubt."

Something passed over Victor's face, an emotion Justin couldn't quite pin down. It wasn't anger, but there was a bit of that in it. It wasn't quite desperation either. Maybe pain? Loneliness?

Before he could decide how to deal with it, rapid footsteps sounded from the vicinity of the staircase down the hall from the open door. "Justin!"

Justin's heart leaped at the sound of Kevin's shout.

Victor glared at the door. "No."

He could no longer worry about Victor. Kevin was looking for him and sounded like he was getting farther away. He rushed for the door, holding both sides as he looked up and down the hallway. "Kevin?"

"Justin?" Kevin's voice sounded from the vicinity of Victor's bedroom, then running footsteps headed his way.

Kevin rounded the corner with Kat at his heels. Justin chose to overlook her presence when Kevin's face lit up, and he raced to wrap his arms around Justin's chest. They stumbled back into the room, and Justin had to wrap himself around Kevin in order to keep them upright.

"God, Justin, please don't do it." The words were muffled because Kevin's face was pressed into his neck.

"Huh?"

"Don't leave me. God, please don't leave me. I'm sorry. I was stupid before. I love you."

He could have killed Kevin for saying it in a drunken, desperate rush rather than with the reverence the words deserved. But he chose not to be picky. "Kevin..."

"Please tell me you haven't decided on Victor. I mean, I understand if you want to, he's a much better choice than I am—"

Justin gasped when Kevin pulled back enough to tilt his face up. That he'd been crying was obvious, as was the fact that he'd been drinking. But Justin could see in his eyes that he wasn't *that* drunk. Maybe just enough for certain thoughts to have come clear.

"But I love you so much. I've never felt like this for *anyone* before. It was just so *different* with a guy..."

"Shhhh." Justin smoothed a hand over Kevin's cheek, stopping any more words with his thumb to Kevin's lips. He'd allowed their audience to see enough. Any other confessions were his and his alone to hear. He smiled at the man in his arms. "I know."

"Do you?"

"We'll see." Unable to resist, Justin leaned in to press his lips to Kevin's. A muffled yelp of surprise burst from his throat when Kevin surged up at him, opening his mouth for a rabid, demanding kiss.

"Come on." The sound of Kat's soft murmur brought him back to his senses.

Pulling his head up and out of Kevin's reach, Justin looked up to find Kat trying to pull her brother from the room. He stood stock-still, however, watching Justin and Kevin. That look was on his face again, but this time Justin saw the longing together with the desperate pain.

Perhaps sensing something, Kevin twisted his head to look at Victor while keeping his body pressed close to Justin's. The strained expression smoothed to Victor's more normal, cool gaze. He glared at Kevin. After a brief, heavy silence, he shook his head. "I hope you are serious."

Kevin's fingers dug into Justin's back. "I am."

Victor met Justin's gaze again. "You believe him?"

He slid his fingers into Kevin's hair, pressing the man's head to the side of his neck. They just *fit* together. "Yeah."

Victor rolled his eyes and spun away from them while flipping his hand. "You deserve each other."

When Victor left, Kat remained behind for a moment, smiling. "He turned me down," she told Justin with a grin. "Just make sure he doesn't forget that." Then she, too, left them, closing the door behind her.

"Wow. You...omph!" Justin stumbled backward at Kevin's shove. Only Kevin's hold kept him upright as the smaller man walked him toward the bed. He laughed when his back hit the mattress. "Hey, wait."

Kevin landed on top of him, all hands and lips as he attacked Justin's clothes. "No."

"Wait." His shirt bunched up under his armpits, which exposed his skin to Kevin's velvety tongue. "Maybe we should leave."

Kevin paused. His head came up; his eyes focused on Justin. "You think he's that mad?"

"Probably."

A frown. "Did I ruin it? Did you want to go with him?"

He sank his fingers into Kevin's hair and yanked the other man's face closer. "God no."

Kevin resisted the kiss, an earnest look in his eyes. "I meant it, you know. I love you. I really do. I've been..."

"I love you too." The words had to come out, for better or for worse. "We can figure out the rest later."

His love's grin was like the sun breaking through the clouds. "Yeah."

He dived at Justin, and their lips fused, mouths opening, teeth clashing as their tongues twined. Justin's hands got busy with Kevin's shirt, searching for skin.

"Should we leave?" Kevin gasped, sitting up so he could rip off the shirt.

Laughing, Justin fumbled at the waistband of his slacks. "Probably."

Kevin shifted as the pants fell open, and he crawled back down the bed so he could get out of them. "Can we fuck first?"

Justin laughed, sitting up to address his own pants. "Absolutely."

As he got naked, Kevin retrieved the lube from his bag. They fell back, naked and grappling, on top of the earth brown duvet cover. Justin got the idea of what Kevin wanted when the younger man rolled under him and pressed the bottle of lube into his hand. Adjusting to his knees without losing their kiss, Justin managed to squirt lube onto his fingers as Kevin brought his knees up and spread them. He wrapped his dry hand around Kevin's dick, then probed underneath his balls with the wet one, searching, then finding the clutching little hole that promptly sucked in his fingers.

"Justin," Kevin mewled, head falling back. "God, Justin, fuck me."

A request that simply shouldn't be disobeyed. Sliding his wet hand over his own shaft for good measure, Justin shifted again, pushed back one of Kevin's knees to open him, aimed, and...

He groaned. "Condom."

Kevin caught his arm. "No." Their eyes met. "Fuck me."

"But..."

"Don't care. We're clean."

He was, but they'd never discussed it. "Kevin."

"Don't *care*. I want you inside me, like that, now."

Oh, they'd discuss it later. Abandoning everything but his need for this man, Justin aimed again and pushed home.

Dark heat wrapped around his cock, forcing him to concentrate so he didn't immediately spurt. He hadn't gone bareback ever, so this was an entirely new experience for him. Kevin didn't help his control one bit with the desperate clutching at his back or the sexy whimpering. His face and chest flushed red, and his cock throbbed angry purple. "Justinjustinjustinjustin..." He repeated the name as a litany; his eyes rolled back into his head; his neck arched to the side. Justin pumped into him, slowly and shallowly at first, then picking up speed and depth when Kevin rocked into him.

"Fuck, Kev..." He gripped the duvet beneath Kevin, his hips pistoning relentlessly to drive his cock in and out of Kevin's body. "I can't...ah!" He lost the battle all at once. His hips snapped, and he was coming in a wash of heat.

"God, yes." Kevin's hand worked furiously on his own cock. The flush to his neck and shoulders was a display that he was very near.

As his climax simmered, Justin leaned in to bite the exposed curve of Kevin's neck. His lover howled, arching up into him as thick jets of cum coated both of their bellies.

Licking the wound that he might have brought to Kevin's skin, Justin sank down atop his now-still lover. Breathing hard, Kevin brought his damp hands up and around Justin's torso and crossed them over his back.

They stayed like that for a few moments before Justin realized that what he thought was slight moaning was actually Kevin speaking. "So sorry." He pressed his cheek to Justin's. "I almost lost you for being stupid. I'm sorry."



Justin rolled them to their sides, still languid from a stunning orgasm. "It's okay," he murmured, keeping Kevin close. "We'll work it out."

They were quiet for a few moments until the ragged sound of their breathing tapered.

"We should probably get dressed and leave."

Kevin nodded, but that was his only movement. "Yeah. In a minute."

"Yeah." Justin shut his eyes, warning himself that he could only do this for a short time.

## Chapter Twenty

Sunshine on his face woke Kevin. Blinking through the fuzz from last night's drinking, he snatched his head up to look around. "Shit. We slept in."

Beneath him, Justin stirred, which brought home a few very pertinent facts to Kevin. First, he was curled up at Justin's side and had used the other man as a pillow for at least some of the morning. Second, they'd slept together—actually slept—for the first time. Third, he was in love. Grinning at the last, he watched Justin's torso twist as his far arm stretched out and his neck arched. Then those gorgeous green eyes pried open and blinked into focus.

"Hey."

Justin frowned, blinked again, then glanced around them. "Shit."

Kevin laughed, spreading his palm on Justin's bare chest. "Yeah."

He watched it dawn on Justin how they were positioned, because all of a sudden, warmth flooded those mobile features. A hand slid up Kevin's bare back as a smile curled generous lips. "We overslept."

He just couldn't seem to get enough of looking at Justin's face. "Yeah."

Justin chuckled. "You okay?"

"Yeah." He laughed softly, aware he was speaking in monotone. "You're beautiful."

That made Justin laugh harder. "I'm not a girl, you know."

"I know it." He shook his head. "Doesn't change the fact."

Humming happily, Justin reached up to cup Kevin's jaw. "I think I'm going to like this new side of you."

He leaned toward those smiling lips, then got a taste of his own mouth. With a grimace, he drew back. "I'd kiss you, but my mouth tastes awful."

The hand on his jaw slid back into his hair so it could draw him down. "Kiss me anyway."

Their lips met, but he kept his closed. It was nice anyway. When he pulled back, his eyes opened to meet Justin's again. "I love you."

The body beneath him squirmed happily. "Oh and I *do* love you. But"—he lifted his head to nuzzle the stubble on Kevin's chin—"much as I adore this cuddling and would *love* to take advantage of the pole you've got poking my side, we should probably get up and get going." His head dropped back with a sigh. "I'm surprised Victor hasn't tossed us out yet."

Kevin echoed Justin's sigh then, after brushing their lips together once more, he pushed up to sit. A glance at the bedside clock told him it was almost ten. "Jeez, he even let us sleep in."

The mattress bounced as Justin scrambled to his side. "The others must have talked him down." He stood, the sheets slipping away from his naked skin. "Or I wasn't as important as we thought."

Ogling the sleek lines of Justin's body, Kevin shook his head. "That can't be true."

Justin caught him looking and batted his eyes. "Oh you *are* precious. I must get you somewhere where I can enjoy this newfound sentiment."

Amused, Kevin stood so he could clean up and get dressed. He was more than willing to lavish Justin with praise if that's what he needed. It was easy now that he allowed himself to feel. Kind of a relief.

They danced around each other in the bathroom while giggling like children as they used every opportunity to steal a quick caress or cop a feel. Kevin had only managed to half quell his hard-on by the time he was pulling on his jeans and groaned when he had to tuck himself away.

Justin pressed up against the back of his right shoulder. “Just a little while, sugar; then I'll take care of that for you.” He patted Kevin's crotch.

Kevin groaned. “You are *not* helping.”

Chuckling, Justin turned to the bed, where his bag lay fully packed. Kevin's was on the floor beside it, also packed. “I think that's it.” He reached up to gather his hair back into a ponytail. “You ready to go?”

When Kevin didn't immediately respond, Justin turned. Kevin frowned at him. “You sure about this?”

“About what?”

“About me.” He shook his head. “Victor is a much better catch than me.”

Justin grinned and sauntered close. “I'm very sure.” He slid his hands up Kevin's arms. “You're the one I had to chase after just one glance, remember.”

Kevin couldn't help the smile that curled the corners of his lips. He tried to quell it. “But he's got all these contacts in fashion and...”

His words stopped when long fingers pressed his lips. “I can get my own contacts. Remember Robby from Beltane? I've talked to him a few times since then.”

“Really? You didn't tell me that.”

“Yeah, well”—he slid his arms around Kevin to draw him close—“talking hasn't exactly been our strong point.” He kissed the tip of Kevin's nose. “We should work on that.”

He put his arms around Justin's waist and nodded. “Yeah. We should.”

“As for your question”—he nuzzled Kevin's temple—“*yes*, I'm very sure I want you and not Victor.”

Their lips found each other for a lazy kiss that made Kevin's toes curl in his Doc Martens.

“We gotta go,” he breathed, letting Justin hear his impatience.

“I hear you.”

They grabbed their bags, then exchanged a glance and a deep breath before Justin led the way from the room. They didn't hear anyone until they were halfway down the stairs, but voices in the dining room accompanied with the *clink* of forks on plates indicated that breakfast might still be going on. By silent consent, they tried to sneak past the open arch to the front door.

"*There* they are." Kat's voice froze them when Kevin had almost sneaked past. "Where do you two think you're going?"

Justin slunk guiltily back so he could poke his head in the opening with Kevin.

Kat sat with Victor, Greg, and Luis. The plates before them were mostly empty. Only Greg was eating, but he looked to be almost done. The rest were clearly lounging with mimosas.

Kat waved them in with a smile. "Come here, you two. Have some breakfast."

Kevin met Victor's cool gaze. "Uh, actually, we thought we should probably leave."

Those dark, slanted eyes switched to Justin. "Don't be ridiculous." He gestured toward two empty seats. "At least have breakfast."

Kevin looked to Greg, who nodded with a smile. Still, he hovered. "I don't know..."

Victor would hear none of it. "Please, sit. We have much to discuss."

"We do?"

"Yes."

He exchanged a glance with Justin, who shrugged. Leaving their bags sitting just inside the room, they both took seats at the table. Kevin didn't miss the fact that Justin took the seat between Victor and him. Didn't look like Victor missed it either.

Bay appeared as if summoned by magic to ask what type of omelet they would like as he set a fresh basket of pastries in the middle of the table with a

fresh pitcher of orange juice. Conversation was limited to the fare on hand while Bay left and those at the table refilled their plates. When Justin asked after them, they found out that the others were either lounging in the sun outside or had wandered down to the garden.

Victor waited until their omelets had been served before addressing the elephant in the room. "So. I don't think you two should leave. The weekend has only begun."

Kevin froze.

"We thought it best," Justin replied smoothly, "considering what happened last night."

"Yes. Last night." Victor brushed crumbs from the tablecloth beside him. "A misunderstanding on my part." He exchanged glances with his sister, who couldn't—or wouldn't—suppress her grin. "I apologize for that."

"Besides"—Kat leaned on the table—"it seems to have brought the two of you closer together."

If Kevin didn't miss his guess, she was taking some amount of credit for that. He blushed.

Justin's hand slid over his where it rested between them on the table. "Love is a beautiful thing."

Kat gave Victor a significant look, which just made him scowl.

"So Kevin's job is safe?" Justin asked Victor directly.

"His job was never in jeopardy," came the calm reply. "That would be illegal and unethical."

Justin cocked his head with an oh-come-on look.

Victor shrugged. "Believe me or not, it's true. Kevin obviously has some sort of mystical appeal for people to like him so much. I would be a fool to lose that."

Justin chuckled.

Kevin frowned. "Mystical appeal?"

Justin squeezed his hand. "I'll explain later."

Finally Luis piped up. "So we're all made up now? Can I talk to Justin again?"

Victor rolled his eyes. "I never said you couldn't talk to Justin."

"Well, if you were going to have a bitchy fit about him, I wasn't likely to get a word in edgewise, was I?"

Justin cracked up, which made Kevin jump. But the laughing was infectious, and Kat and Greg were caught in it. Victor shook his head and smiled.

Luis waited out the laughter impatiently, then pounced on Justin again, demanding—well, to Kevin's eyes—that Justin come to his loft during the next week. He claimed they had "much to discuss." Justin agreed, but Kevin noted that he didn't actually agree too much, and he managed to open the invitation to include Frank as well. Frank'll die, Kevin thought with a smile.

Victor didn't fight them when, after breakfast, Kevin and Justin decided to leave anyway. He did follow them out the front door when Kevin's car was brought around.

Kevin stood, keys in hand, nervously watching Victor step close to Justin at the passenger-side door.

Victor ignored him, eyes only for Justin. "I'm disappointed."

Serene, Justin smiled down at him. "I'm sorry."

Victor nodded. "You have all my contact information. If you change your mind."

Justin held out his hand for a shake. "Maybe we can all go to dinner sometime."

Victor grimaced at his hand, then took it for a proper shake.

Kevin felt like a rabbit in a fox's sights when Victor turned to him. "I am watching you." He stepped closer. "You must be good to him."

Odd request. Still, Kevin nodded. "That won't be a problem."

Victor nodded. "We have a meeting on Tuesday. I expect you'll be prepared."

"Yes, sir."

With that, and one last lingering look for Justin, Victor waved and walked inside.

Not wanting to delay any longer, Kevin rushed around the car and jumped into the driver's seat. "Boy. Has he ever got it bad for you."

Justin, a pensive look on his face, slipped his sunglasses on. "Yeah. It seems that way."

Letting the engine idle, Kevin watched Justin. "No second thoughts?"

A smile curled those lips. "None." He tilted his head to look at Kevin over the rims of his sunglasses. "You?"

Kevin couldn't help his answering smile. "Not a one."

"You're okay with being gay now?"

"Yes." Impulse found his hand grabbing Justin's to bring it to his lips. "Just for you."

 THE END 



## Other Loose Id(R) Titles by Jet Mykles

*Fox and Dragon*  
*One for the Team*  
*Snagged*  
*Sursein Judgment*  
*Tech Support*

### **The DARK ELVES Series**

*Taken*  
*Mastered*  
*Dissent*  
*Salvation*  
*Discovery*

### **The HEAVEN SENT Series**

*Heaven*  
*Purgatory*  
*Hell*  
*Faith*  
*Genesis*  
*Revelations*

### **INTERLUDES**

(featuring characters from the *Heaven Sent* series)

*Pretty Red Ribbon*  
*Sexy Spring Surprise*  
*Fiesty Little Firecracker*  
*Sly Spectral Trick*

### **The LEASHED Series**

*“Leashed 1: Two for One Deal”*

Part of the anthology *Howl*, With Raine Weaver and Jeigh Lynn

*Leashed 2: More Than a Bargain*

*Leashed 3: The Lion’s Share*

*“Spiritual Noelle” (A Sister “Leashed” Story)*

Part of the anthology *Rated: X-mas*, With Rachel Bo and Barbara Karmazin

## Jet Mykles

Jet's been writing sex stories back as far as junior high. Back then, the stories involved her favorite pop icons of the time but she soon extended beyond that realm into making up characters of her own. To this day, she hasn't stopped writing sex, although her knowledge on the subject has vastly improved.

An ardent fan of fantasy and science fiction sagas, Jet prefers to live in a world of imagination where dragons are real, elves are commonplace, vampires are just people with special diets and lycanthropes live next door. In her own mind, she's the spunky heroine who gets the best of everyone and always attracts the lean, muscular lads. She aids this fantasy with visuals created through her other obsession: 3D graphic art. In this area, as in writing, Jet's self-taught and thoroughly entranced, and now occasionally uses this art to illustrate her stories, or her stories to expand upon her art.

In real life, Jet is a self-proclaimed hermit, living in southern California with her life partner. She has a bachelor's degree in acting, but her loathing of auditions has kept her out of the limelight. So she turned to computers and currently works in product management for a software company, because even in real life, she can't help but want to create something out of nothing.