



Lust Bites

GAY UNTIL GRADUATION

Kim Dare

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Gay Until Graduation

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

G-A-Y

GAY UNTIL GRADUATION

Kim Dare

Dedication

To everyone who gave in to the inevitable — and loved every minute of it.

Chapter One

Six months until graduation

"He didn't..." Spencer's eyes opened very wide.

Baxter Phillips tore his gaze away from his friend for a moment, and spared a glance for the guy with all the gossip.

Jimmy nodded and quickly tossed back the last of his beer. "He dropped out last week. Got a proper job and everything," he informed them.

"Bloody hell!"

Baxter turned his attention back to Spencer. His eyes were still huge with shock, his lips remained slightly parted as he tried to take it in. Shocked and confused was a very good look on him.

As Jimmy wandered off to get another pint and find more people who hadn't heard about Tony's sudden departure from the university via his girlfriend's impending visit to the maternity ward, Baxter resumed his usual occupation—that of trying not to spend all his time staring at his friend.

"I can't believe he got her pregnant," Spencer said, running his hand through his hair and pushing the messy black curls out of his face for a moment. "He can't have! I mean, seriously, how did he...?"

Baxter held back a smile as he risked raising his gaze and admiring his friend rather than his beer for a few moments. "I'd assume he did it the usual way, although I'll happily defer to the bi guy at the table in this case."

Spencer shook his head rapidly, sending glossy black strands swirling around his head again. "Not anymore I'm not!"

Baxter took a sip of his beer, barely resisting the temptation to reach out and push Spencer's hair out of his eyes for him. "You're not what?"

"I'm not going to be bi any more. Tony screws girls—look where it got him. No more girls until after graduation."

Baxter glanced at Spencer's half full glass. He hadn't thought his friend had *that* much to drink. "You can't seriously believe that you're capable of staying celibate for the next six months."

"Hell, no!" Spencer gave a theatrical shudder at the thought. "I'll just be gay until graduation."

Baxter nodded. Spencer wasn't a man who coped well with any sort of rules about what he could and couldn't do. His latest great idea would probably last for all of another half a pint or so.

"Aren't you supposed to be meeting Judy later?" he asked.

Spencer gave the matter deep and considerable thought for all of three seconds. Before Baxter realised what Spencer intended to do, before he could make any attempt at damage limitation, Spencer had his mobile phone out of his pocket and to his ear.

"Hi, Judy!"

Baxter closed his eyes and then covered them with his hand for good measure as he pictured the inevitable fall out.

"No, I'm not going to be able to make it," Spencer said into the handset.

Baxter risked a peek out between his fingers.

"I've decided I'm going to be gay until graduation."

It was like watching that moment in a slasher movie when he knew someone was going to get cut into little tiny bits, but he couldn't quite convince himself to look away.

"What?" Spencer frowned. "No, that has nothing to do with it. Have you heard about Tony?"

Baxter strained his hearing, but all he managed to catch was a murmur on the other end of the line. He couldn't make out Judy's actual response.

"Yeah." Spencer glanced across at him. For a moment, Baxter couldn't quite place the expression in his friend's eyes. Then Spencer grinned. "Got to go."

He hung up and stared at Baxter across the table in their quiet little corner of the Students' Union.

Baxter held back a sigh. "Oh, God. What are you planning now?"

Spencer's thoughtful expression merged back into a grin. "You know, you're really hot when you do the whole disapproving thing."

Baxter shook his head. "No."

Spencer blinked at him, his eyes all innocent above an unbelievably mischievous grin.

"You can't say no, I haven't asked you anything yet."

"No!" Baxter repeated.

"Judy thinks we'd make a cute couple."

"I don't do cute," Baxter said. "And I don't do drunken idiots who pick teams based on the chances of their lover getting knocked up either," he added for good measure.

"You don't do cute," Spencer agreed, as if Baxter hadn't said anything after that. "You do leather."

Baxter abruptly stopped trying to work out why the hell Judy even had an opinion on which guy her sometimes-boyfriend would make a cute couple with and gave the conversation his complete attention. "What?"

"You don't do cute," Spencer repeated. "You do leather. Harry saw you three weeks ago in Andrew's Cross – said you were on your knees for some body-builder dominant wearing leather chaps and bugger all else."

Oh, dear lord... "And?" Baxter said, with as much unconcern as he could muster.

"And he saw you getting whipped by some blond guy too. Harry said he watched you half the night, and you loved every minute of what those guys did to you."

"I'm going to kill him," Baxter whispered, more to himself than Spencer.

"The body-builder or the blond?"

"I'm going to kill Harry!" Baxter said. First, he was going to throttle him for playing voyeur to it all, and then he was going to was to patch him up, just so he could kill him all over again for rushing off to tell Spencer about it the first chance he got.

"Submission's nothing to be ashamed of."

Baxter took a deep breath and let it out very slowly.

"You should have told us you were into it. We go down to Andrew's Cross every other weekend."

Baxter stared across the table at his friend. He did the same – on all those weekends he knew his friends weren't going to be there, except for last weekend, when Spencer had insisted Baxter go to a local club with him instead. Somehow that didn't seem like a mildly annoying coincidence any more.

"I like my privacy," he said, still wondering how the hell Harry had managed to turn up on the wrong week in the first place.

Spencer tilted his head on the side. "You got screwed in front of a whole club full of guys. Sounds like you're more of an exhibitionist than a shrinking violet to me."

Baxter counted to ten, very slowly. It didn't help.

"Come back to my room."

"No."

"Okay."

Baxter hesitated. That was far too easy. And Spencer was still smiling.

"No," Baxter repeated, just in case his previous answer hadn't been completely clear.

"I know — you said that already."

Spencer casually turned his attention to the room.

Baxter shifted a little uncomfortably in his seat. Just because he had no intention of ever screwing Spencer or submitting to him or anything else, that was no reason for Spencer to give up without even making the slightest effort to change his mind. That was just bloody well insulting.

"Dance with me."

When Baxter looked up, Spencer's attention was firmly back on him. "What?"

"If you won't let me screw you or master you, the least you can do is let me cop a feel during a slow song."

Baxter shook his head. "I don't dance." And if Spencer really hadn't given up on the idea of them getting together, he wasn't going to risk sitting at the table with him, let alone doing anything else with him. He got up to leave.

Spencer got up too. "You don't have to dance. You can just stand still while I rub up against you in time to the music," he offered.

"No," Baxter repeated, trying not to imagine what that would feel like, trying to convince his cock not to rise to the occasion.

Survival instinct finally kicked in and pointed him straight to the exit behind Spencer. He tried to step around his friend, but somehow Spencer was right in front of him again, and he only succeeded in stepping within his friend's reach.

With a heartfelt sigh, he disentangled himself from Spencer's hands and made another attempt to step past him. "You're drunk, and you're making an idiot out of yourself."

Except when he looked into Spencer's eyes, it wasn't alcohol that made them sparkle. Dominance, determination and lust did that. It was everything Baxter had always wanted to see in his friend's expression.

"No." Baxter wasn't even sure what he was saying no to right now, only that it had to be said before things got entirely out of hand.

Spencer stepped closer. He was a good couple of inches shorter than Baxter, but it was hard to remember that his friend was physically smaller than him when he saw that look on his face. It was hard to remember that Spencer was just like any other guy – that he could be moved out of his way just as easily as any other guy.

"Dance with me."

Baxter stared down into brilliant blue eyes. The refusal died on his lips. It hadn't been a question anyway. It had been a clear order and it called to the part of Baxter that had wanted to submit to Spencer since the first moment he saw him.

Smiling and clearly sensing success, Spencer took him by the wrists and led him onto the dance floor in the middle of the room, without another word.

"I'm only out as gay here – not as anything else," Baxter said, although he doubted it would make the slightest bit of difference to whatever happened next.

As far as he understood Spencer's view of the world, it was based on the simple idea that reality, consequences and repercussions were things that happened to other people. But Spencer stared up at him for a moment, a slight frown between his dark eyebrows, as if he was actually taking notice of what Baxter said and adjusting his plans accordingly.

The dominant nodded. His grip slid from Baxter's wrists down to his hands. Stepping forward, he guided Baxter's hands behind him and put them to rest on the small of his back.

"You ever been tied up with a guy's belt?" he whispered in Baxter's ear, softly enough that he didn't worry anyone else would overhear them.

Baxter nodded, knowing he wasn't in control enough of his reactions around Spencer to lie about anything right then.

"From this moment, your hands are bound to my belt. They don't leave that strip of leather without my permission. Understand?"

"I never agreed to submit to you," Baxter reminded him.

"Don't worry, darling," Spencer said with an easy smile. "It's still early – there's plenty of time for you to do that later. Right now, all you have to do is keep your hands from wandering away from where your master put them."

As he spoke, Spencer's own hands trailed up Baxter's arms and slipped behind his neck.

"Your hair's too short," he observed as he tried to thread his fingers into the strands right at the back. He slid his hands further up the back of his head so he could grip the longer strands. "That's better."

The grip was tight. Baxter didn't doubt he'd be in trouble, not to mention sporting a bald patch, if he tried to turn too suddenly. But there was more control in the touch than he expected.

"I don't submit to you," Baxter reminded them both.

"But, you want to, don't you, darling?" Spencer whispered in his ear. One of his hands slid down between them. Spencer settled his palm on Baxter's crotch and squeezed his erection through his jeans.

There was no point denying the blatantly obvious. Baxter wanted to submit. He'd wanted to submit to Spencer for so long, it was hard to remember a time when he'd actually wanted to submit to anyone else, rather than just settle for submitting to other guys in an attempt to keep his sanity while he fantasised about his friend.

"I want to, but I'm not going to," Baxter said, very firmly.

"Why not?" Spencer said, for all the world sounding genuinely curious.

"Because you're far more trouble than you're worth," Baxter said, doing his very best not to come in the middle of the dance floor as Spencer continued to fondle him through his jeans.

"Don't you want to belong to me until graduation?" Spencer asked, as his fingers caressed the line of his erection in time to the music they swayed to.

"What?" Baxter quickly cleared his throat, wishing like hell that his voice hadn't picked that moment to return to soprano.

Spencer grinned.

"Belong to me. Exclusive. One on one. Collared and cuffed. Mine to do whatever I want with. Follow my orders. Obey my commands. Belong to me until graduation."

"You're insane," Baxter whispered.

"I'm the best dominant you'll ever submit to," Spencer said.

"You can't even manage to turn up to your lectures on time. Why the hell should I hand my whole damn life over to you?" Baxter demanded, trying like hell to keep his brain both above his belt and in some form of working order.

"Because, right now, you can't imagine *not* belonging to me. Can you, darling?"

Baxter blinked down at him.

"If you don't submit to me, you'll regret it for the rest of your life."

"And I'll regret it for just as long if I do submit to you," Baxter said. But there wasn't any force behind his words. He'd known from the start that if Spencer ever really showed an interest in receiving his submission, he'd get it. He'd been sure enough of that to find the idea of belonging to him as terrifying as it was erotic.

Spencer stroked his cheek with surprising gentleness. When Baxter looked back at him, there was a strange expression in his gaze. He'd seen it there a few times over the last couple of weeks – a strange mixture of curiosity and confusion, as if there was something about Baxter that worried Spencer more than a dominant would ever admit.

As their eyes met, Spencer's smile grew back into a grin.

"We're not going to have any trouble sticking to people who can't get pregnant for the next few months, are we?" Spencer whispered in his ear.

Baxter swallowed. "I never have had any trouble with that. Gay, not bi, remember?"

"We're not going to have any trouble just sticking to each other, are we?" Spencer rephrased, his tone of voice making it quite clear how little he approved of word games.

Baxter shook his head, careful not to tug too hard against the hand that had moved from his cheek back to grip his hair. Mentally rolling his eyes at himself, he gave in to the inevitable. "No trouble," he admitted.

Spencer only had to give the order for him to remain faithful to him, and Baxter knew he'd follow it. If Spencer would follow his own rule, that was a very different matter. Baxter looked down at the smaller man. He might be just about capable of remaining faithful to one man for a week or two. Anything longer than that would be a miracle.

"We're going back to my place now."

Baxter nodded. His hands still where Spencer ordered him to place them on the back of his belt. When Spencer took a step back, Baxter stepped forward so his hands didn't slip.

"Good boy."

Sliding both hands into Baxter's hair, Spencer pulled him down for a kiss. No preliminaries. The moment their lips met, Spencer's tongue was pushing past his lips, demanding entry into his mouth while his fingers tightened in his hair, making sure Baxter stayed exactly where he wanted him.

As easily as that, Spencer laid his claim to him.

He actually growled when Baxter tried to straighten up just the merest fraction of an inch in an instinctive effort to stop Spencer turning them into a tangled mass of collapsed limbs right there in the middle of the dance floor.

Biting back a responding whimper, Baxter gave up and let Spencer worry about keeping them balanced, he let Spencer take over worrying about everything for a while. Helplessly keeping his hands where they were, Baxter just parted his lips and let the dominant take whatever he wanted from him.

"Get a room!"

Spencer broke the kiss and let go of Baxter's hair. Out of the corner of his eye, Baxter saw him holding up two fingers to the guy who'd so kindly offered them his advice from behind the bar.

"My room," Spencer announced. Reaching behind him, Spencer touched Baxter's wrists and nodded his permission to remove his hands from his belt.

Baxter dropped his hands to his sides, only to have Spencer grab one of his wrists and practically drag him out of the bar by it.

Outside, Spencer grinned at him over his shoulder. "They don't think you're submissive. They just think I'm impatient to get you somewhere reasonably private where I can screw you. They're right."

In what felt like moments, Spencer had tugged him up the stairs and into his room in the student halls, just across the road from the Union. The second he slammed the door closed behind them, Spencer pushed Baxter's larger frame back against the woodwork.

Baxter collapsed against the door, trying to catch his breath and round up a few stray brain cells. As he watched, Spencer took a few steps backwards into the room. He was always so damn confident about stupid things like that—as if he didn't need to look where he was going because nothing would ever dare to get in his way.

Spencer looked him up and down, assessing Baxter's body as if he already owned it and now merely needed to decide what would be the most fun game to play with his new toy.

"I'm going to strip you down, tie your hands to the headboard with my belt and screw you. If you don't do exactly as I say, I'll spank you—hard," he announced. "You have a problem with any of that?"

This was his chance. Baxter saw it in his friend's eyes. This was his chance to say no for real. Spencer was giving him the chance on purpose. All he had to do was step forward and take it. Spencer might pout in that particular way only a young dominant man could manage, but Baxter had no doubt his friend would accept whatever answer he gave right then.

Baxter recited a string of silent curses inside his head, as he watched his chance slip away and still found himself unable to say the word he'd been repeating all night just one more time.

"No problem," he said in the end.

He'd had his warning, had his chance. Spencer evidently didn't intend to waste any more time on that part of the proceedings. He was tugging Baxter's t-shirt over his head, before Baxter even had time to register that Spencer had moved.

Grabbing the waistband of his jeans, Spencer pulled him across the room by a fist full of denim and pushed him down onto the bed. Baxter landed in an untidy sprawl, trying to break his own fall and simultaneously catch Spencer when it looked like he would crash on top of him. But somehow, Spencer kept his balance.

Hands immediately tugged at Baxter's shoes, tossing them aside before they scrabbled at his jeans and dragged them down his legs. Fingernails scratched at his thighs as Spencer yanked impatiently at the material. He heard material rip, but had no idea which bit of his clothing had fallen victim to his dominant's haste. By the time Spencer was tossing the last of his clothing aside, Baxter was still staring up at the dominant and trying to get his bearings.

The moment he had Baxter naked, Spencer was straddling his body, deftly pinning his hands onto the mattress above his head as if he had been doing that all his life. He glared down at him, eyes sparking with the desire to possess, to control. Baxter stared back, trapped by the look in the other man's eyes as much as his grip on his wrists.

He'd been imagining what submitting to Spencer would be like for so long, his mind just wouldn't accept it was really happening. Inside his head, Baxter had knelt perfectly composed at his new master's feet. The little bit of training he had picked up had been enough to show Spencer that he was serious about submitting to him. In his fantasies, he'd been amazing—quickly proving that he could follow any order Spencer gave him without hesitation. In his imagination he'd done more than simply scramble to keep up with current events.

When Spencer transferred both of Baxter's wrists to rest under one of his hands, he cooperated, but it was hardly the perfect display of submission he'd hoped to achieve. Spencer's free hand caught him under the chin and held his face still so he could take his mouth again. Even with something as simple as a kiss, it quickly became all about trying to keep up, about trying to guess what would please Spencer only to find that his friend had already moved on to something else while he'd been trying to work everything out.

Ending the kiss as suddenly as he started it, Spencer left him open mouthed and gasping for breath. Letting go of his wrists, Spencer leant back a fraction and studied him for a moment, apparently judging if Baxter understood he no longer had any right to move his hands without explicit permission. He nodded his satisfaction when Baxter remained motionless.

Trying not to feel a rush of pleasure at the idea he'd pleased his dominant, even in such a minor way, Baxter watched the smaller man tug his belt out of its loops and test the leather between his fingers. "From now on, every time you see this belt, you're going to remember how much you love to feel me tying you up with it."

Baxter nodded, sure that the very real possibility he'd get a hard on every time he saw it would only encourage his friend to wear it more and more often. He swallowed several times as he realised that Spencer would probably be teasing him with that strip of leather long after he'd given up any inclination to play at being gay until graduation, long after he'd got bored with the idea of being Baxter's master.

Even if he wasn't capable of the sort of long-term mastery Baxter longed for, he quickly realised that his suspicions about Spencer were true. He sure as hell knew what he was doing while he was in a scene. Once he'd ordered Baxter to offer his wrists to the slats in the headboard, it only took him a few seconds to roll him over and have him tied securely in place, face down on the bed with the belt rendering his hands useless.

Spencer's own hands immediately dropped down to trail over Baxter's backside, palming the cheeks as his thumbs slid between the round globes to brush against his hole.

"Sweet," Spencer whispered, apparently to himself.

Baxter rested his forehead on the pillow and bit his bottom lip as Spencer's hands continued to play over his skin, running over his back and down his legs but inevitably coming back to squeeze and tease his buttocks. Suddenly one of the hands lifted from his skin and came back down sharply against the fullest, roundest part of the muscle.

Baxter gasped, every fibre in his body knotting with tension.

Spencer seemed to notice that, even more unexpectedly, it made him pause. "Baxter?"

It was a question that demanded a response – an honest confession from a submissive to his dominant. Baxter still hesitated.

"If I wanted you to stay mute I'd have gagged you," Spencer said.

"You said you'd spank me if I did something wrong," Baxter reminded him, as neutrally as possible.

"I will," Spencer said. "And that spanking will hurt. But a little tap to warm you up before we screw – that's different. You like that sort of spanking, don't you?"

Baxter swallowed.

"Don't you?" Spencer pushed, so confident that he'd read his new submissive perfectly.

Baxter wanted to lie so much right then. Just once, he wanted Spencer to think he knew everything about everything and to find out he was wrong. Bound to his friend's bed, having given up all control over what would happen next, he wanted Spencer to feel just a touch of the uncertainty that swirled inside him.

But if he denied it, Spencer might not spank him again. It was too big a loss to risk.

"I just need to be told which I'm getting," he admitted to the pillow.

Spencer stroked his fingers back and forth over the skin on his backside where he'd struck him, as if giving the idea considerable thought. For a moment, he didn't seem sure what to do next. It was exactly what he wanted Spencer to feel, but it felt so wrong in reality.

"Don't let me think I deserve to be punished if you don't mean it," Baxter whispered, unable to let Spencer worry over something when a bit of embarrassing honesty from him could fix everything.

"I'm spanking you just because I want to," Spencer said slowly, as if he was working out each word as he spoke. "Because you belong to me and I want to see your arse get all red and hot under my hand."

Baxter nodded his understanding, wrapping himself up in the comfort the words offered him and letting them ease his uncertainty. "Thank you."

No reply was forthcoming. He just felt Spencer's weight shift on the bed behind him. A moment later, hands caressed his sides, coaxing him up off the mattress so he could get his knees under his body and offer himself to his temporary master properly. In position, he braced himself for what he expected would be a much harder blow, but lips touched the skin Spencer had struck, as if in apology.

Baxter squirmed, confused and trying to look over his shoulder so he could see what was going on.

Spencer's hand slapped the other buttock. "A reminder to stay still and not wriggle without permission," he said.

Baxter took a deep breath and let it out very slowly as he nodded his understanding. Spencer's hands started to palm his skin again. Every now and again, his hand would land a smack, but it was impossible to work out when the next one would land or where. One moment the hands would be stroking and squeezing. The next a rush of air would herald a cupped palm and a slap would fill the room. All Baxter could do was exist in the moment—enjoy every moment without worrying about what had gone before or what would come next.

"You're blushing beautifully for me, aren't you?" Spencer observed, as the spansks stopped and silence filled the room.

Baxter couldn't work out if the dominant was talking to himself or his new submissive. He didn't know if he was required to answer or not. Either way, he didn't doubt

what Spencer said was true. His friend had built up the heat in his backside until he was half sure one more slap would induce spontaneous submissive combustion.

Without warning a spanking hot hand reached between his legs and wrapped around his aching shaft. He thrust helplessly against Spencer's palm. His friend chuckled as his other, cooler hand stroked over his heated buttocks.

Baxter tried to push back against the soothing cool of his friend's left palm and forward into the heat of his right. All he succeeded in doing was squirming in Spencer's grip as his hands pulled at the belt wrapped around the bed frame.

"Enough of that."

It took a moment for the words to sink in. Baxter struggled to fall still, holding his breath and tensing every muscle in his body in an effort to follow his friend's order and please his dominant.

Spencer squeezed his cock, idly playing with the length in his hand until Baxter thought he would go insane.

"Have you been trained not to come without permission?" Spencer asked.

Baxter hesitated. "Nothing formal," he said.

"That apply to everything?"

Baxter nodded, his forehead rubbing against the pillow with the movement, not sure if that would find favour or not, but not able to come up with anything but the truth right then.

"Good," Spencer said, more to himself than anyone else if Baxter was any judge. "You don't follow anyone else's rules when you're with me."

Not sure what else to do, Baxter nodded again.

The hand wrapped around his cock gripped tighter, until Spencer's hold on him was almost painful and damn near perfect.

"And you don't move without my permission."

"Right," Baxter said.

Both of Spencer's hands left him. For a few seconds there was nothing. Lacking permission to look over his shoulder, Baxter remained in the position Spencer had put him in, head down, arse up. All he could do was wait, his breath catching in his throat as he felt the connection he'd felt built with the other man falter.

Without warning, something cold and slippery dripped against his hole. Baxter jerked forward.

Barely a fraction of a second later, a sharp slap against already reddened flesh echoed through the room. Baxter whimpered as he tried to remember that while Spencer hadn't given him permission move, he hadn't given him permission to come from nothing more than a spanking either.

"A reminder that I ordered you to stay still," Spencer told him, quite casually, as he began to make tiny fingertip circles against Baxter's hole, spreading the lube and making it damn near impossible to follow the order to stay still.

One finger and then another slid into him. He tensed every muscle in his body in an effort to remain motionless while the fingers spread the lube inside him.

"Relax for me," Spencer ordered.

"You can either have still or you can have relaxed," Baxter ground out, knowing there was no way in hell he could follow both orders. "Make up your mind."

Spencer laughed.

Baxter had heard dominants laugh in scenes before, but it had always sounded harsh—it had always been at some other poor sod's expense. Spencer's burst of laughter seemed nothing more than an overflow of happiness with the world.

Baxter found himself smiling in response as he cautiously relaxed a fraction. Spencer made no complaint when he helplessly pushed back a little against his fingers, proving quite conclusively that he really couldn't obey both orders at the same time.

Spencer's hands left him again. A condom wrapper ripped. Slick latex pressed against his hole.

He whimpered, pushing back against the gentle contact. Spencer hushed him, but he didn't make him wait. His friend thrust forward, burying himself to the hilt in one smooth motion, his shaft stretching Baxter open even further than his fingers had.

Every bit of air rushed out of Baxter's lungs. Spencer's hands returned to his buttocks, palming the sensitive flesh and making him squirm as he waited for Baxter to relax properly around him. He pushed back in encouragement but Spencer just squeezed his buttocks tighter in response.

Just when Baxter thought he might lose his mind altogether, Spencer finally seemed to decide he was willing to declare Baxter ready. He rocked back and thrust sharply forward.

Within seconds his rhythm doubled over and over again until he was pounding into him. It felt as if Spencer's control had been used up in waiting for Baxter to be truly ready for him. He murmured his approval of it all as Spencer rode him hard and fast, his fingers biting into his sides as he held Baxter steady to receive his cock.

"You have five seconds in which you're allowed to come," he ground out.

Baxter moaned as Spencer ploughed into him again, setting his prostate on fire with each movement.

"Five."

Another thrust rocked him forward so hard, Baxter's head almost hit into the headboard. He gasped and tried to steady himself again on his elbows.

"Four."

He'd been trying so frantically not to come, he couldn't seem to flip the switch back the other way. He gasped for breath, desperately trying to come before his time ran out, sure that there was no way in hell Spencer would give him another chance to get off that night.

"Three."

Spencer's hand came down sharply on his right buttock as he plunged forward again. Baxter whimpered, unable to cope with the perfect touch of pain mingling with his pleasure right then.

"Two."

Another thrust hit his prostate. Another smack landed on his upturned arse.

Baxter tossed back his head, letting out a yell as he came. All control lost, all knowledge of anything other than that perfect moment of bliss fading away from his consciousness, he hung suspended in a perfect moment of submissive pleasure.

"One."

Spencer pushed into him again as he jerked and came deep inside Baxter, barely managing that extra second of control as Baxter clenched around his cock, dragging Spencer's orgasm out of him too.

The smaller man collapsed over his back as he buried himself inside him one last time, not even bothering to try and support his own weight as he rested against Baxter's body.

He could feel every movement as Spencer sucked air into his lungs and tried to get his breath back. Baxter let his eyes drop closed as he relished that connection with the dominant, savouring it all the more because he doubted he would have another chance to feel that sort of sleepy contentment radiating from his friend again.

Very slowly, Spencer began to move away from him. But even then, he didn't seem to be in any rush to give Baxter permission to move too. He left Baxter on the bed, resting on his knees and elbows while he straightened up his clothes and dispensed with the condom.

Still shaky with the desire to submit and the after-glow swirling inside him, Baxter wasn't entirely sure he wouldn't make a fool of himself with his clumsiness if he did try to move right then. He rested his forehead on his forearms and just concentrated on existing for one moment after another. That was all he felt capable of doing without a direct order from his friend.

Eventually, Spencer turned his attention to the belt around Baxter's wrists and the decision of if he was ready to move or not was taken out of his hands. His dominant expected him to move. Somehow he had to find a way to live up to Spencer's expectations.

The dominant undid the leather and inspected the skin that had born the brunt of Baxter's helpless wriggling. His thumb ran back and forth over the reddened skin. Baxter held his breath, waiting for his verdict.

Spencer eventually nodded his acceptance of the marks. "You can move."

Baxter sat back on his heels, cautiously stretching to work some of the stiffness out of his muscles as a rush of pleasure at Spencer's acceptance ran through him. His head swirled a little. He took a deep breath and tried not to let Spencer see it took him longer than it took his dominant to make his brain work properly after a scene.

He'd left a sticky patch in the middle of his friend's bed. He was used to clubs and cages and crosses. Beds were somewhat out of his regular experience. He wasn't entirely sure if he was supposed to apologise or not.

Spencer didn't seem bothered. He arranged himself comfortably on the other side of the narrow bed, leaning a pillow against the wall behind his back and stretching his legs out along side Baxter.

"I'll get you a collar tomorrow."

"Sure, if that's what you want." Baxter twisted clumsily around and got his knees out from under him so he could swing his legs over the side of the bed.

His backside burst into flame as it touched the mattress, sending more and more endorphins and adrenaline through his body. He closed his eyes for a moment and tried his best to ignore the overload of sensations in favour of forcing his brain to remember certain things – things like, the idea Spencer would really collar him was nothing to worry about.

In all probability, Spencer would have forgotten about that by the morning. Baxter knew that. It didn't make it any easier to like it.

"What do you think you're doing?"

"Going home," Baxter said. Going to get some space in which to work out how the hell all this just happened and give himself a good talking to about remembering just who he was dealing with and why this could never happen again. Once, could be written off as a minor mistake on both their parts. If it happened twice, he might fall into the trap of starting to believe Spencer's idle promises.

He looked around the room for his clothes and spotted them over by the door.

"I didn't give you permission to leave my bed."

Baxter looked over his shoulder. Spencer still rested back on the pillow. He made no move to reach out and physically stop him from doing whatever he wanted. Baxter met his eyes and he knew why. Spencer didn't need to. He belonged to his friend. In Spencer's eyes, the matter of obedience to his new master's commands was already settled.

"Perhaps we should set some ground rules," Baxter said.

"Fine. Rule one. You want to leave my bed, you ask for my permission. Don't expect to get it on a regular basis unless you're late for a lecture or need to take a leak."

"Spence..."

He met his friend's eyes. "You're mine," Spencer stated very firmly, eyes flashing when he said it.

Baxter stared at him for several long seconds, waiting for the logical part of his brain to click in and tell him the words he needed to say in order to make it clear that it wasn't as simple as Spencer demanding that he belong to him. No logical thoughts appeared in his brain. No thoughts at all seemed eager to step forward and make themselves known.

This was why he didn't go to kink clubs unless he was damn sure Spencer wasn't going to be there. Spencer always had had a way of making him forget why logic was a good idea.

Closing his eyes, Baxter sighed and just gave in to the inevitable. He nodded his agreement.

For better or worse, he was Spencer's until graduation.

Chapter Two

Three months until graduation

“How many of these damn leaflets are they going to throw at us?”

Baxter glanced at the Master’s degree brochure as Spencer flung it in the general direction of the waste paper bin in the corner of their room.

“You never think about it? Staying on to do your Master’s, I mean?”

Spencer made a disbelieving sound in the back of his throat. “There is nothing on this planet that could tempt me to spend one more minute trapped in this place.”

Baxter kept his back to his friend, pretending to sort through some of his revision notes, pretending he wasn’t the one who kept leaving those Master’s Degree adverts where Spencer was sure to find them. It was a long shot that keeping Spencer in the university would keep him interested in him, but after three months, it was still the best he could come up with.

“Has it really been that bad?” he asked.

Spencer sighed and flung himself on the bed in a mess of long beautiful limbs. “I’m never going to study anything ever again. My head’s going to explode if I try to force another equation into it.”

Baxter stared across the room at him for a few moments. His fingers went instinctively to his collar – not to his real collar, but the thin strip of leather Spencer had given him a few days after that.

It wasn’t a real collar, but it could pass without notice when he went out in public. It was something he could wear all the time – Spencer had been very clear about that. There would be no excuses accepted for him not wearing it all the time.

Meanwhile, his real collar lay in Spencer’s toy box, where it had lain for far too long. His master hadn’t been inclined to indulge in a great deal of formal play since their revision for their exams began in earnest.

Baxter dropped his gaze. That would have been so much easier to accept if there was any hope things could return to normal once the revision stress was over. As it was... Baxter gave a mental sigh and pushed idle fantasies aside.

It was pointless to wish things could be different. Three months were three months. All he could do was make the best of them. Walking across the room, he sat on the bed next to the man he'd come to think of as his master.

Spencer sighed again. He looked so exhausted, so stressed out. Baxter immediately felt guilty for wishing his master had more time to play out the type of scenes he'd been used to in the clubs. Baxter's fingertips went to the makeshift collar. It might not have been a thick piece of leather, but it was always there.

Even when Spencer was too busy to play, he was still a better master than any man he'd met in the clubs. Belonging to him was still better than sneaking off to the clubs and wasting his time with strangers.

Baxter stared down at his friend's face for a long time. A good submissive served his master. He put his master first. He didn't complain or pout because he wasn't getting whipped often enough. Not knowing what else he could do to make things easier for his master right then, Baxter reached forward put his hand on his master's belt in simple offering.

Some of Spencer's sleepiness seemed to leave him. "Don't you have a tutorial to get to?"

Spencer had rules about things like that. Baxter wasn't allowed to miss classes in order to submit to his master's whims. Baxter shook his head, not above lying about something as unimportant as a tutorial in order to spend a little extra time with his master before it was too late.

"It will relax you before your lecture," he offered, hoping like hell he wouldn't be turned away, that there was *something* he could do for his master.

Spencer nodded, but he made no move to take control of the action. He lay passive as Baxter undid his belt—the same belt his master had worn damn near every day since that first night. The dominant co-operated far enough to lift his hips off the mattress so Baxter could pull his jeans and boxers down a little way, but that was it.

After months of exploring with his hands and lips, Baxter knew his master's body perfectly. It had never occurred to him when he played in the clubs, but he'd come to love worshiping a body he was familiar with. Having a different man's skin pass under his lips every other weekend couldn't compare to knowing exactly what the man he was submitting to loved. Baxter wrapped his fist around Spencer's soft length and guided the tip to his lips as he bowed his head over his master's lap.

Slow long licks over the head drew a sleepy sigh from Spencer as he slowly began to relax under his submissive's ministrations. Baxter pressed a kiss to the glans as he looked up. Spencer's head rested back on the pillow surrounded by a cloud of dark waves. His lips parted as Baxter took him into his mouth. Eyes closed, he looked dreamy, almost otherworldly.

Baxter kept his eyes on Spencer's face as he took him deeper past his lips, caressing the hardening shaft with his tongue as he let it slip into and out of his mouth. He let the suction build slowly, easing Spencer into his pleasure as gradually as he could, hoping to make his lover's enjoyment last a little longer.

When Spencer was on edge, he would demand hard and fast. His hand would fist in Baxter's hair as he thrust deep into his mouth. Orders would replace the pleased little murmurs that escaped from Spencer's throat and there would be little he could do for his master except swallow as he spilled into his mouth.

Now, just when he hung on the edge of it all, was Baxter's only real chance to make it good for the other man—to try to make it better for him than any other submissive ever could. He pulled back until only the very tip of Spencer's cock rested between his lips. Wrapping his fist more snugly around the length, he flicked his tongue against that sensitive little spot where his master's foreskin joined his cock.

Spencer gasped, forcing his head back into the pillow as he levered himself up off the bed and pushed his way deeper into Baxter's mouth. A hand fumbled at the back of Baxter's hair and latched on to the blond strands, left to grow a little longer for that exact purpose.

Baxter stilled, immediately handing the little bit of control Spencer had given him back to his master without complaint. But no order came. Spencer fell still again. Baxter stared up at him, a frown gathering between his brows. It didn't make any sense, but

eventually he had to admit to himself that even after all the times he had gone down on Spencer, he was still capable of completely misreading his master's body.

He began to bob his head again, stroking the vein on the underside of Spencer's cock with his tongue on each ascent. Spencer's hand stayed on the back of his head, but he remained passive, content to let Baxter do as he pleased right up to the point where he spilled into Baxter's mouth.

Caught off guard, Baxter quickly swallowed around Spencer's shaft, as he desperately tried to work out what he had done wrong. He let Spencer soften in his mouth, unwilling to break his tenuous connection with the other man, until his master blinked his eyes open and looked down at him. Baxter looked quickly away.

Boredom was a terrible thing to see in any dominant's eyes. In Spencer's eyes it would be heart breaking. Obviously university wouldn't be the only thing Spencer was looking forward to moving on from once he graduated. A collared submissive might be useful when he didn't have the time or the inclination to go out and find a better option, but Spencer had always thrived on variety. Three months of the same submissive offering the same things was obviously quite enough for him.

When Spencer took his hand off the back of his head, Baxter let his shaft slip from between his lips. As he straightened up his master's clothes, he kept his eyes firmly on his task. But, as he finished, he wasn't sure what to do with himself.

"I'm not the only one who's stressed, am I?" Spencer asked.

Baxter's confusion led him to look up. He followed his master's gaze back to his own fly. For once, sucking Spencer off hadn't got him hard and desperate to be allowed to come too. "Sorry," he mumbled.

Spencer shook his head, brushing aside the apology. "You're studying too hard. At this rate, you're going to give yourself a nervous breakdown before we graduate."

Baxter shrugged. "I'm fine." And it wasn't his lectures that were stressing him out.

"No!" Spencer held up a finger an inch from Baxter's nose. "No excuses. You're to do as your master says. No making yourself ill."

Baxter's lips twitched into small smile. Even if he was quickly losing interest, the surprising protective streak that he'd discovered in Spencer was still there. His master still gave a damn about him, in his own way.

"You've got a lecture in half an hour," Baxter reminded him, eager to change the subject.

"Cancelled. Prof got the flu. Rest with me." It was an order, not a request.

Baxter glanced up and met his master's eyes. He let out a breath as he saw none of the emotions he'd worried about filling his master's eyes. Spencer reached out and threaded his fingers into Baxter's hair and pulled him forward until his only choices were to lay down or topple flat on his face.

He stretched out next to his master, pleased with the reminder that there was one thing he could always rely on his master finding him useful for.

Spencer didn't like sleeping on his own. He'd made that quite clear ever since that first night. Humans weren't designed to sleep without company. Baxter belonged to him and that meant he'd better bloody well be in that bed when his master went to sleep each night – or there would be hell to pay next time he set eyes on him.

Baxter settled himself on his stomach and quickly fell still in a position he knew would please Spencer. His master didn't approve of anyone wriggling in bed – and it had quickly become clear that went for those times he'd damn near taken the skin of his backside with his hand or a crop or with anything else. Wriggling when he didn't even have that excuse would not go down well with his master.

Just as Baxter expected, Spencer was soon sliding one leg over his and nudging him until he cooperated and spread his legs to let Spencer's knee rest between his.

A moment later an arm was flung over his back. Spencer's head was soon resting on his back, right between his shoulder blades. Sleeping in Spencer's bed was like sleeping in a complicated piece of sentient bondage – one that swore at you if you attempted to move more than it approved of. Nothing could rest on top of Spencer – not an arm, or a hand. Not even a fingertip. Spencer slept on top. Damn near literally most of the time.

Baxter smiled a little as his master fell still, already lying half on top of him. As tired as he was, he couldn't keep his eyes open. The heat from his master's body soaked through his clothes. The solid mass of Spencer's weight pressing down on him, coaxed him to relax the way nothing else ever could.

With a soft little sigh, Baxter let sleep wash over him.

* * * *

"You've got a lecture in half an hour."

Baxter closed his eyes a little tighter.

"I know you're awake." His master sounded quite amused by the fact Baxter would ever think he could fool him into thinking otherwise.

"That flu's really going around," Baxter mumbled.

"You're sick?" Spencer's hand pressed against the side of his neck, looking for a raised temperature. "I knew there was something wrong —"

"I'm fine," Baxter said quickly.

"Oh, you mean your prof's down with it too?" Spencer asked, his fingers lingering and stroking his neck now he wasn't looking for a temperature.

Baxter nodded his lie into his pillow.

"Roll over." Spencer pulled away just far enough so Baxter could wriggle onto his back.

Baxter met his gaze for a moment. His master stared down at him with a strange look in his eyes. He certainly didn't look bored, but there was something off about his expression.

"All this will be over soon."

Baxter turned his attention to the ceiling. Not trusting himself to speak, he merely nodded again.

Spencer's fingers slid through his hair. Baxter glanced very briefly at his master, trying to fathom out what order the gesture represented and failing. Spencer didn't add a verbal directive to it. Baxter could only conclude that it was an idle gesture.

"The time will go quicker than you think. All this will just be a memory and we can both get back to the real world. Three months we can be real people again."

Baxter nodded. Real people. Not students. Not masters and submissives. Real people. Reality sucked.

Spencer seemed to fall back into his sleepy mood. He rested his head on his submissive's chest without demanding a verbal answer from him.

Baxter turned his head aside on the pillow and looked around the room they'd shared ever since that night Spencer collared him. Spencer obviously couldn't wait to move out of it, but Baxter would have been lying if he said he felt the same.

He loved that room. He loved studying at one desk to the strangely reassuring theme of his master swearing at his course books on the other side of the room. He loved the fact that ever since they moved into the same room, one of the twin beds had turned into a storage space for junk, because Spencer insisted they always slept in the other bed together.

He loved belonging to Spencer. He loved Spencer. And that was the real problem, wasn't it? It wasn't lectures or exam stress or anything else. The problem was, he was in love with a man whose only interest in him lay in the fact he couldn't get pregnant. The problem was, he was in love with a man who only intended to be gay until graduation.

Baxter closed his eyes and bit his lip, safe out of Spencer's field of vision while the other man's head rested against his chest. A glance at the clock soon proved that his lecture was half over somewhere on the other side of the campus. Right then, Baxter couldn't bring himself to care.

He had Spencer until graduation. He wasn't going to waste his time studying.

Chapter Three

Six weeks until graduation

"No more studying. No more exams. No more lectures or tutorials or any of this. It's going to be great."

"Great," Baxter echoed. He should have been used to agreeing with Spencer when he said things like that. But it still hurt. Every single damn time, it killed a little something inside him to have to agree with his master when he wished away the little bit of time they had left.

Spencer tucked a knuckle under his cheek and made him look towards his master. His eyes were very serious.

"It's going to be fine," Spencer said.

Baxter nodded. "I know." It would be fine. He would be fine. If he repeated the words often enough then perhaps...

"...fear of freedom."

Baxter blinked, realising he'd tuned out on his master for a moment. "What?"

"I said they call it fear of freedom. Retirement. Redundancy. Graduation. Release from prison. Big things – big changes. There's nothing wrong with admitting you're freaked out about suddenly being set free."

Being set free? It was a bloody stupid thing to call being disowned by your master. Baxter stared straight ahead over Spencer's shoulder and across to the wall behind him, not quite able to take in the rest of what Spencer was saying to him.

Of course he loved belonging to a master, but it wasn't as if he didn't know how to look after himself. He wasn't a helpless sort of submissive. He made a point of keeping just enough control of just enough of the decisions he needed to make to know he would be able to take up the slack Spencer left behind when he walked out of his life.

Baxter turned back to his master. Spencer was studying him very carefully. He was wearing that same strange expression Baxter had noticed on him more and more often the closer they got to their exams.

Suddenly the idea that Spencer was only keeping him collared until graduation, because it was convenient to have a submissive on hand when he was too stressed about exams to hit the clubs, wasn't the worst option.

Right then, it seemed horribly possible that Spencer was keeping him around from some sense of guilt that he'd turned his friend into some pathetic little fool who couldn't survive without a dominant's leadership.

"I asked Dr. Tennant about it and —"

"You asked your psychology professor about it?" Baxter cut in, forgetting all his manners as his brain spun out of control.

Spencer frowned, obviously not impressed at an interruption spoiling his chain of thought. "That's what I just said. I —"

Baxter took a step back from Spencer, leaving his master standing by the desk as he retreated into the centre of their room. "You told a complete stranger that I —" he shook his head, as if clearing the thought out of his brain would mean it hadn't happened.

"Sit down."

"I told you I'm not out about this at the university," Baxter said, making no move to do as he was told.

"I know. That's why I've spent the last months bending over freaking backwards to make sure I don't out you," Spencer snapped. "I didn't tell her I was talking about you. And I didn't say anything about anyone being a submissive." By the time he was finished, Spencer was right in front of him and patently furious with the accusation.

Baxter ran his hand through his hair trying to make his brain work as thoughts ran over each other in a jumbled mess.

Spencer caught hold of his wrist and held it still to stop him fidgeting. "I just told her that a friend of my was freaked out about us graduating and —"

"I don't cling where I'm not wanted," Baxter blurted out.

"What?"

"I know the deal. It all ends the moment we graduate. You don't have to worry I'm going to turn into some sort of stalker and you don't need to pass me off onto a damn shrink." Each word was a little louder than the last—each one snapped a little more harshly.

For the first time in Baxter's memory, Spencer was speechless for two whole seconds in a row. "What the hell are you talking about?"

Baxter tried to regain his wrist, but Spencer kept a tight hold on it.

"Answer me," his master demanded.

"I'm not afraid of freedom," Baxter snapped. "And I'm not afraid of having to find a new master."

The grip around his wrist turned white knuckled. Spencer's fingers bit into his skin. "What did you say?"

Baxter met his master's eyes and he realised that part of the scenario obviously hadn't actually occurred to Spencer until that exact moment. "You go back to screwing as many girls and as many guys as possible. I go back to looking for a master who wants me to belong to him for more than a few months. What did you think I'd do after graduation, Spence? Spend the rest of my life waiting around for you to get bored enough to want to screw me again?"

Spencer's eyes narrowed as Baxter laid the second half of the equation out for him, suddenly desperate to share some of the pain he'd been keeping inside for weeks.

The grip on his wrist didn't let up. "You're telling me I've been thinking myself in circles trying to work out ways to make you less stressed about graduating and the only reason you're wound up is because you're trying to find a way to break up with me?" Spencer demanded.

"Grow up!" Baxter bit out. "You don't get to have a tantrum just because you're not the only one who thinks past graduation."

"I am your master. I can bloody well react however I please at the idea you're planning a life with another man while wearing my collar."

"Like you give a damn!"

"I have *never* given you reason to think I don't."

"You said you were only screwing me because you wanted a submissive who couldn't get pregnant," Baxter flung at him.

"I did not say that."

"I've been running the same damn sentence over and over in my head for the past six months, Spence—I bloody well know what you said," Baxter shouted, his frustration at the whole situation finally getting the better of him.

He tried to turn away from his master, but Spencer didn't loosen his grip. Instead, he caught hold of his other wrist as he twisted away so his arms wrapped around Baxter from behind and he was able to hold each of his submissive's wrists in an equally unyielding grip.

Baxter was bigger and stronger than his master, but he still knew who would win. In spite of everything, he couldn't bring himself to put any real effort into pushing his master away, not when he wanted nothing more than for Spencer to hold onto him forever.

"Let me go," he demanded, just for form's sake.

"You don't mean that," Spencer said.

Out of the corner of his eye, Baxter saw his master's expression falter and morph into a smile. Then Spencer let out a little chuckle, as if there was anything funny about the situation. "You really don't mean that... You just don't ever want me to let you go, do you?" he whispered in Baxter's ear. "*That's* what all this is about, isn't it?"

Baxter stopped his half hearted attempt at freeing himself from Spencer's grip. He stared straight ahead, frozen within Spencer's hold. He took a deep breath before he finally broke the silence that had settled over the room.

"You don't get to do that," he said, his voice hollow.

"What?"

"You can tie me up. And you can turn me over your knee. You can screw me. You can take a whip to me. You're a dominant. I belong to you. You can do whatever you want with me. But you don't get to laugh at the fact I'm in love with you."

"What the—" Spencer spun him around to face him.

Baxter stared straight into his master's eyes. "Not even you get to take that sort of cheap shot at me," he said.

"Is that what you think I'm doing?" Spencer asked, his voice suddenly icy.

Baxter dropped his gaze. Maybe Spencer was right. He was a joke. What else could a man who fell in love with someone in this situation be? He lifted his hand and touched the thin strip of leather at his neck.

"You should take this back now," he said. There was no point trying to cling onto any bit of what they'd shared any more.

"What?"

"Take it back," Baxter said. He cleared his throat. "The collar. You should take it back."

"No."

Baxter shrugged, unable to really care about such a tiny detail right then. He was just so damn tired of it all. "Whatever. It's not like I'd ever be able to say no to you anyway." If Spencer crooked his finger, he'd run straight back to his master's heel—just as he had for months. And if Spencer didn't call him back... Baxter shrugged to himself. Whatever happened between them had always been Spencer's choice from the start.

"And you think that's all we are—all this has ever been? You think you're just some sort of convenient fuck?" Spencer demanded.

"Oh, no!" Baxter said, unable to keep his tone polite and cling onto the things he knew he had to remember in order to stay safe and sane inside his own head at the same time. "I'm convenient *and* I can't get knocked up. Let's not forget my most important attraction."

"I never said—" Spencer cut himself off as he began to pace around the small room. After stepping around Baxter several times, he glared at him. Pulling a chair away from the desk and back out of line of his pacing he pointed to it. "Sit."

Baxter didn't bother to argue. He sat. Spencer went back to pacing, taking several turns up and down the room before he stopped in front of Baxter, staring down at him as if trying to work out a huge and complicated conundrum.

"You've thought that since the start? You let me do that to you? You let me treat you that way?"

Baxter gave a half laugh. "No one *lets* you do anything, Spence. You do whatever the hell you want, and the world just deals with it."

He looked up, just in time to see Spencer look away. He caught sight of a strange expression in his friend's eyes, but it was gone before he could place it.

"Spence?"

His master said nothing. Baxter shifted in his chair. Spencer tensed, but there was no command to stop fidgeting. Spencer seemed too lost in his own thoughts to truly care right

then. That was just wrong. Spencer was never too busy to make sure Baxter was following his rules.

Baxter stood up, sure that would get a reaction. There was still no reprimand. His master just stared into space.

Baxter's hand automatically went to the collar still wrapped around his neck, looking for reassurance there when it seemed his master wouldn't offer it himself.

"You don't need my permission to take it off."

"Of course I do," Baxter said.

"That would only be true if you'd consented to wear it in the first place," his master told him

"Spence?" Baxter put a hand on his arm and pulled him around to face him.

Spencer met his eyes. He'd seen him angry, but he'd never seen Spencer that coldly furious before. Worse than that even, was the hurt that couldn't quite be hidden behind the anger. Baxter stared down at him, not knowing what to say.

"If you were just dragged along by the current, if you never wanted any of this with me, then the collar means nothing. There's nothing stopping you taking it off any time you want. You don't belong to me—you never have," Spencer said, the hurt creeping into his voice as well as his eyes.

"I belong to you," Baxter said. That had never even been up for debate. He belonged to Spencer. The only question was if the dominant wanted to recognise that or not.

Spencer tried to pull his arm out of his hold, but Baxter couldn't let go of him.

"I belong to you. I've belonged to you for almost six months. You can't just dismiss that as if it never happened." Even if they didn't have a future, they had a past. He couldn't lose that as well.

"Belonging to someone means making a choice, it means making a commitment to him," Spencer told him. The words were said without hesitation, but Spencer's usual confidence in everything he said wasn't really there. "If you were just following my rules because it was easier than standing up to me, then—"

"Hah!" Baxter covered his mouth with his free hand and shook his head. In spite of everything else and the world falling apart around them, he was still not quite able to believe Spencer said that.

Spencer glared up at him.

"Following your rules isn't the easy choice, Spence — its bloody hard work."

Spencer didn't meet his eyes. "I never heard you complain."

"Of course not," Baxter said. "I meant it when I said I wanted this — I meant it when I said I was in love with you."

"You didn't want to belong to me," Spencer said. And Baxter knew they were both thinking back to that first night when he'd tried his damndest to walk away while he still had a chance.

There was no going back now. All he could do was keep pushing forward and hope that if he caught a glimpse of a light at the end of the tunnel they were crawling through, it wouldn't be an oncoming train.

"I never wanted to lose you," Baxter whispered.

Spencer frowned and said nothing.

"I knew you'd walk away sooner or later. You're not the kind of guy who stays around —"

"What the —! I made a bigger commitment to you after one kiss than I've ever made to anyone in my whole life," Spencer said. "Don't you dare throw that back in my face now!"

Baxter looked down. "I remember — you promised you'd be gay until graduation."

"Graduation was six months away!" Spencer protested. "Do you have any idea how long that is for someone who barely dates the same person three times in a row? Graduation was a bloody well awesomely complimentary lower limit."

"A what?"

"At least until graduation," Spencer snapped. "If I said anything at all, I said I was going to be gay *at least* until graduation."

"You —" The blood all rushed out of Baxter's head. His mind spun.

"Sit!"

The order came just in time. Baxter sat before he fell. "You never said at least," he said, staring up at his master.

"Yes, I did."

Baxter tried to make sense of the idea. He knew what his master had said, although it was always pretty pointless arguing about facts with Spencer.

Facts didn't matter anyway. If Spencer had *meant* at least then...

He met his master's eyes. "I didn't remember you saying at least," he whispered.

"And if you did remember?" Spencer asked. His eyes narrowed. "If you know that I meant at least until graduation?"

Baxter blinked at him.

"Would you have *let* me claim ownership of you then?"

The air lodged in Baxter's throat.

"Permanent ownership," Spencer said.

"I..."

"If I said I never had any intention of letting you go – would you let me do whatever I wanted with you then?"

"You're not, I mean..."

"Don't argue with your master. I wouldn't have quit screwing my way around the campus if I didn't give a damn about you. And I sure as hell wouldn't have spent the last couple of weeks worrying that you were having a nervous break-down if I wasn't head over heels in –" He cut himself off and just glared down at Baxter.

Baxter swallowed and stared blankly back up at him.

"Silly little fool," his master whispered, affection suddenly pushing all the other things out of his voice as he stepped forward and stood between Baxter's knees.

"Yes," Baxter agreed, leaning forward until his head rested against his master's body.

"You deserve to be thoroughly thrashed for talking about us that way, for saying your master doesn't care about you," Spencer informed him. "Not because you belong to me and we'll get off on it, but because I am your master and that sort of behaviour is entirely unacceptable."

Baxter nodded into Spencer's chest. His master never forgot. Play, punishment or praise, he never forgot to tell Baxter exactly why he would get spanked or whipped or anything else.

Spencer never forgot if Baxter told him something was important.

"You're a good master."

"True," Spencer said briskly, as if he'd never doubted that for a moment. As if he hadn't had his own very quiet version of a panic attack when Baxter's accusations made him

doubt everything in the whole world. "But while flattery might mean I let you come under other circumstances, it doesn't do you a damn bit of good right now. Save it until after you've paid your penance."

Penance, not punishment. Baxter nodded against Spencer's shirt and waited to hear which of his privileges he was about to lose and for how long.

"It would be very irresponsible of your master to make you pay a penance while you were still working so hard on your exams," Spencer said, as his fingers stroked through his submissive's hair.

Baxter made no comment.

"But the moment you finish your last exam, you're going into chastity." Baxter closed his eyes, waiting to hear the worst of it.

"And you're going to stay that way until after the graduation ceremony."

Baxter nodded his understanding as he held back a whimper. Four weeks.

"That's a lower limit by the way. *At least* until that the graduation ceremony. Learn your lesson quickly or I just might decide to keep you locked up and frustrated for years."

Years sounded good – as long as they didn't have anything to do with paying that particular penance. Baxter nodded anyway.

Spencer stepped back a few paces and looked him up and down.

Baxter's mind might not have had time to process what the hell was going on, but his body was far quicker on the uptake. His master wanted to keep him. That was the only thing his body needed to know. Baxter was already painfully hard. Spencer smiled.

Naked. Bound. Exposed. There wasn't a single position Baxter could think of that Spencer hadn't seen him in. And he'd loved every one of them. But right then, the simple fact that Spencer could notice how much he enjoyed the images of a future that his master painted in his head was too much for him.

Heat rushed to his cheeks just as quickly as his hands rushed to cover his tenting fly.

"No."

Spencer didn't reach out to stop him. Once more completely confident in his control of the situation, his master knew damn well that he didn't need to reach out. An order was more than sufficient.

"Hands by your sides," Spencer said.

Baxter closed his eyes for a moment, trying to find the strength to do that. Knuckles touched under his chin, telling him to tilt his head back and look at his master. He blinked his eyes open.

“Shall I repeat my order?”

Baxter shook his head. If he had to take the punishment for needing to be told twice, he knew he could do that without any problem. But the thought of displeasing Spencer right then was untenable.

“Go on then,” Spencer said, more gently than Baxter expected, keeping his fingers under his chin, even though he didn’t need to, in order to make Baxter stay in the position he’d put him in.

Very slowly, Baxter managed to move his hands aside.

“Good,” Spencer allowed. “Now, you’re going to do exactly as I say. If you’re good, you’ll be allowed to come every day until your last exam – that’s fourteen orgasms. You won’t be coming out of that chastity any time soon once you’re in it – so I suggest you be very good and take advantage of your master’s generosity.”

Baxter nodded.

Spencer stepped back a few paces and just stared down at him.

“Show me.”

Baxter hesitated.

“Show me what you were trying to hide from your master,” Spencer ordered.

Baxter met his eyes. He hadn’t seen that sort of dominance shining in them for quite some time. An eyebrow quirked. Baxter remembered that he had an order to follow. He undid the top button on his fly.

“Nice and slowly for me,” Spencer specified.

Baxter leant back in his chair and slowly undid the zip. The sound of every metal tooth seemed to reverberate around the room. Spencer’s eyes never left his crotch. He was so focused, it was hard to remember that this wasn’t the first time Spencer had seen him naked. If it was possible, Baxter felt himself get even harder under his master’s assessment.

“Keep going.”

Baxter hooked his fingers into the waistband of his jeans and his boxers at the same time.

“Just the jeans first.”

Altering his grip, Baxter wriggled his jeans down his hips until his cock sprung free from the denim and stood to attention under the thin cotton boxers.

“Stroke yourself through the fabric,” Spencer ordered, already well into his dominant stride again.

Baxter stared down at his cock. There was already a wet mark where pre-cum was seeping into the fabric.

He rubbed his thumb over the spot.

“Properly,” Spencer demanded, obviously enjoying himself now.

Baxter slid his hand down the fabric rubbing his palm against his shaft. He couldn’t hold back his moan. Between both of them studying like crazy and his cock’s refusal co-operate even when his master seemed to have the time and the inclination to return any favours Baxter provided for him, he felt like he hadn’t come in years.

A few strokes through the fabric had pre-cum leaking steadily from the tip.

“Slip your hand inside and play with your cock for me.”

Baxter’s hand operated on its own – a good thing since his brain wasn’t at all up to speed with current events. Spencer rarely asked him to put on a show, but he knew that his master had noticed how being in that position made him feel vulnerable.

Offering his own body pleasure while giving nothing to his master made him want to squirm uncomfortably in his chair, even when the other side of him was desperate to thrust into his hand. Knowing how much Spencer hated to see anyone fidget made him fight to stay as still as possible in spite of the war raging inside him.

He glanced up to his master’s eyes, hoping to see that Spencer was pleased with him.

Spencer gave him a little nod of approval. “Boxers off.”

Slowly, clumsily, he took his hand out of his boxers and pushed them down his legs, exposing his cock for his master’s inspection.

“Hands back by your sides,” Spencer ordered.

He did as he was told, clenching his hands into fists in an effort to keep them motionless.

It felt like a lifetime before Spencer offered him another command.

“Pull your shirt up – let me see more of you.”

Baxter rucked his t-shirt up, exposing his abs. Spencer's eyes flickered all over his body, claiming possession of every part of him.

"Stroke your cock. Don't come."

Baxter's hand wrapped around his cock and set a rhythm of slow, firm strokes all the way along the length. He glanced up at his master, trying to work out if what he was doing was still pleasing him.

For a few minutes, Spencer seemed fascinated with watching the tip of Baxter's cock disappear and reappear from the tight channel of his fingers. Out of nowhere, he lost interest. Turning away from the scene he'd set up, he walked over to Baxter's desk and started to look through his files.

Baxter hesitated.

"I didn't give you permission to stop. Just because I have my back to you, that doesn't mean I don't know exactly what you're doing – and not doing."

Baxter's hand set to work again, stroking the length and coaxing himself closer and closer to an edge he knew he wasn't allowed to fall over.

Spencer flicked through some of his files and his note books. "Are you up to date?"

"I..."

"Simple question – are you up to date on all your courses or not?"

"Yes."

"But you have been slacking off, haven't you?"

"I thought..."

"That you needed to make the most of the time you had left with your master?"

Spencer asked, turning back towards him.

"Yes," Baxter admitted.

"You'd best either start studying very hard – or start praying, because you're more than capable of getting a first class honours degree. If you don't do that just because you weren't paying attention when I told you that I wanted you to belong to me *at least* until graduation, all hell is going to break loose, and you'll be right in the middle of it. Any questions?"

Baxter shook his head.

"I still haven't given you permission to stop."

“Stop?”

Spencer stepped forward. “It’s true what they say, you just can’t leave a submissive to do a master’s job.”

Before Baxter could work out what was going on, Spencer had brushed his static fist aside and replaced it with his own. Baxter gasped, thrusting up into the tighter hold.

Spencer’s grip tightened even further, until it was damn near painful. “When I want you to move, I’ll tell you to.”

Baxter bit his lip, holding back a moan – not sure if he wanted to moan in pleasure, or pain, or a perfect combination of both. “Sorry.”

Spencer kept him struggling to stay still for several long seconds, before he began coating his cock with quick, perfect strokes. Baxter tensed every muscle in his body trying to remain motionless the way his master demanded.

All too quickly, it was too much. “Spence?”

His master met his eyes and held them. His hand kept going as he damn near dared Baxter to come without his permission right then.

At the very last moment, Spencer released his hold. Baxter gasped for breath, still staring up at his master, unable to look away.

“Good,” his master allowed. “I might let you come yet.”

He turned away and Baxter closed his eyes, fighting for control.

“Strip.”

Baxter blinked his eyes open to see Spencer right in front of him, staring down at him again. He fumbled at his clothes. They were all askew and half off already. His brain couldn’t quite work out what to do with them in that state.

It took forever, scrabbling under Spencer’s watchful gaze, to toss them on the floor.

“Stand up.”

Baxter pulled himself to his feet.

Spencer damn near knocked him back down as his body hit his. Baxter caught hold of the smaller man, just about keeping them both on their feet. For once, Spencer made no objection to his submissive fidgeting without permission in an effort to keep them balanced. He allowed Baxter to wrap his arms around him and hold him close in return.

His master pressed hard against him, his hands everywhere, his mouth covering Baxter's and stealing the oxygen from his lungs and the thoughts from his head. Baxter just let go of every thought in his mind and gave control of everything he had, everything he was, over to his master in a way that had been impossible when his head was full of panic at the thought of losing him when they graduated.

They collapsed back onto the bed in a tangle of limbs. Spencer knelt above his body. Deftly catching Baxter's wrists in his hands, Spencer pinned him to the bed and stared down at him.

"Don't move."

Within seconds he had the handcuffs out of the bedside draw and wrapped around Baxter's wrists, making the order irrelevant. A moment later Spencer was tearing his own clothes off so he could climb back onto the bed, lube in hand.

There were times when, against all of Baxter's expectations as he stumbled into his relationship with Spencer, his master could be slow and tender and treat his submissive as if he was made from crystal.

This night wasn't one of those nights. His master's fingers were quickly lodged inside him, stretching him open as fast as his body would accept.

Baxter squirmed around his fingers. Spencer didn't even waste time telling him not to. His fingers crooked and rubbed against his prostate, but Baxter was under no illusions—his pleasure was secondary to speed right then. For once, Spencer seemed as desperate as he felt. The moment his fingers left him, the tip of Spencer's cock was covered in latex and pressed against his hole. Then of all the stupid things to do, Spencer fell still.

"Please," Baxter whispered. "Need. Spence! Please." He writhed under his master, pulling at the cuffs, straining to squirm his way onto his master's cock. Spencer studied him for an insanely long time, as if he wanted to be perfectly sure Baxter was frantic before he gave him anything at all.

Finally Spencer pushed forward, burying himself in Baxter's body with one slow, smooth thrust. Baxter groaned his pleasure as Spencer demanded he rest his ankles on his master's shoulders and make himself completely accessible to his thrusts.

His master had always had limited patience for limited flexibility. Spencer leant forward, pushing Baxter's knees back towards his shoulders as he brought their lips together as if there was nothing the least unreasonable about that position.

Baxter parted his lips, inviting his master to deepen the kiss. Spencer growled his pleasure against Baxter's mouth before he pulled back breaking the kiss to stare down at him, possession and pride warring in his eyes.

When he finally set his chosen rhythm for the night, Spencer pounded into him, as if he was as desperate to come, and to make his lover come, as Baxter felt. Each thrust sent shockwaves of pleasure through Baxter's body. The moment Spencer slid one hand between them and tugged at his cock, it was all over.

He clenched tight around his master's shaft, begging a simultaneous orgasm out of him. With a triumphant yell, Spencer gave him exactly what he wanted, coming inside him in a series of deep, hard thrusts.

Collapsing against Baxter's body as every ounce of tension drained from his body, Spencer's movements merged with his submissive's as they both fought to recover their breath and regain their sanity together.

Very slowly, Spencer seemed to pull enough energy together to move. He leant back a bit and stared down into Baxter's eyes.

Baxter stared back. He hadn't seen that complete confidence, that complete sense of being in control of the whole world in Spencer's eyes for a long time. "You were really worried about me," he realised.

Spencer shrugged. Pulling away, he turned to dispense with the condom. Unless Baxter was very much mistaken, a touch of colour rose to his master's cheeks.

Baxter frowned slightly, wondering why the guy who never got embarrassed about anything should blush at being a nice guy, at being a good master.

"Okay – so I'm in love with you too. As if that wasn't bloody obvious without me needing to say it."

Baxter smiled at his master's profile. That was the side of Spencer that had been missing for the last few weeks. It was only then that it occurred to him that Spencer had been trying his damndest to be what he thought was being a nice guy through that whole time. Vanilla flavoured niceness didn't suit him half as well as good dominance did.

"You needn't look so damn smug about it all," Spencer told him. "I get enough of that off Judy."

"Judy?"

Spencer made a distinctly unimpressed noise in the back of his throat as he turned around and made himself comfortable next to Baxter's still bound body.

"That night when I phoned her to tell her I was giving up girls until graduation, do you know what she said — *Oh, I always thought you would once you and Baxter stop denying the blatantly bloody obvious. Congratulations, you guys will make a cute couple.*"

Baxter saw the annoyance in Spencer's eyes and bit back his amusement.

"And now she has the bloody cheek to take the credit for us getting together."

Light headed with sheer happiness with the world, Baxter tried to cough to hide a chuckle. It didn't work.

Spencer leant up on one elbow and glared down at him. "I get the credit for us," he stated very firmly. "Not Judy."

Baxter quickly nodded his acceptance of that.

"And not you either — all you did that first night was keep going on about how it was a bad idea. This was all my doing," Spencer said, stroking the makeshift collar with his fingertips and sounding very pleased with himself indeed.

"It was a good idea," Baxter admitted.

"Damn right it was. I don't have bad ideas." He studied that statement as his fingers trailed idly over Baxter's body.

Baxter didn't need to examine it to see the basic flaw. Spencer had bad ideas, really, really bad ideas, all the time. He considered one of his main duties as Spencer's submissive was to talk his master out of the more foolhardy, illegal and most likely to be caught during stunts.

"I do occasionally have ideas that have unexpected consequences," Spencer allowed, his lips twitching into a self-mocking smile, apparently against his will. "Genius isn't always predictable."

Baxter did grin at that.

Spencer grinned back.

“Yeah, well. Either way, you’d best get used to it, darling — you’re going to have to put it with it until *long* past graduation.”

About the Author

Kim is 25 years old, from a small town in South Wales.

After writing for years, Kim is finally editing some of the stories to share with the rest of the world. Kim writes both male/male and male/female stories that range from the dark and paranormal right through to the lighter, funnier side of life.

The only thing every story contains is a happy ever after for the two (or more!) characters that deserve it most. Oh, and kinky sex – there's always plenty of that too – but Kim takes no responsibility for any of that. It's all the characters' fault. Honest...

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