



— Homecoming —

A DETOUR
HOME

DEVON RHODES

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A Detour Home

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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*.

Homecoming

A DETOUR HOME

Devon Rhodes

Dedication

For Patric
No more texts at ungodly hours, I promise.

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F-150: Ford Motor Company

Chapter One

“This is going to be so cool!” Cameron exclaimed, his jaw slack with shock, eyes sparkling with surprise and growing excitement as he regarded his best friend’s smug face. “Wait.” His baby blue eyes narrowed. “You’d better not be joking.”

“Nope.” Jon grinned at Cam’s reaction, one he had been anticipating for hours—ever since he got the phone call from his Uncle Dave offering them jobs on his road crew for the summer. Apparently, he had a state highway repair contract to fulfil and needed more warm bodies.

Jon wasn’t under any illusions. He’d worked for his uncle the previous summer, and it was damn hard work, sometimes twelve-hour days, sometimes even more, all in the hot, humid Midwest weather. But it was great money, way more than any other job guys their age could get. And this year Cam could finally go, too, since Dave had a lucrative clause in the contract for finishing early and needed reliable help.

“It’ll be hard work,” he cautioned lightly, knowing Cam wouldn’t care.

“Who cares? Bring it on,” Cameron almost shouted, practically bouncing on the balls of his feet in that funny way he had. Jon watched him with enjoyment as he pumped his fist in the air a la Tiger Woods, then collapsed in a sprawl beside him on the couch.

“Wow, on our own together all summer! Drinking beer with the guys, staying at hotels, eating out.” Cam’s leg jostled his and Jon looked down absently to where they pressed together.

“Hey, look at you,” Jon observed with surprise, staring over at Cameron with new eyes. “Geez, your thighs are almost as big as mine.” He exaggerated somewhat, but Cam *had* filled out quite a bit when he hadn’t been looking.

Cam flushed. “Nah, not hardly.” He shrugged, avoiding Jon’s gaze, his own glued to where their legs rested side-by-side. Not only was Cameron almost two years younger than Jon, he’d always been very slightly built, a fact he constantly bemoaned. Jon seized the opportunity to build his friend’s confidence up.

“No, seriously. All this exercise is really starting to pay off. Which is a good thing, considering how hard we’re going to be working starting next week.” He was a bit relieved. He would never have told his best friend this, but privately, Jon had wondered if the job would be physically too much for Cam. He was twenty, but was constantly mistaken for a much younger teen.

Jon took a surreptitious, critical look up and down his friend’s body, feeling a familiar twinge of want which he ruthlessly quashed. They had just run home from the gym, so Cam’s shirt was off, being used as a rag as Cameron wiped his face. Very lean and only lightly muscled, there was nevertheless a strength and breadth to his frame that hadn’t been there last summer. Wow.

The repressed longing inside Jon swelled against its walls, causing his chest to literally ache. He’d always been half in love with Cameron, but now the sight of the physical maturation displayed for him ramped up those romantic notions with a healthy dose of pure lust. He struggled to continue the conversation normally as his cock began to thicken.

“You must’ve really been hitting the university weight room this year. Why didn’t you ever mention it to me?”

Cam shrugged again, looking uncomfortable, but before Jon could press, the sound of footsteps across the wood floors had the two boys turning towards the door.

“Hey, Dad! Guess what?” Cameron used a hand on Jon’s thigh to help propel himself up and off the couch. Jon still felt the press long after that fleeting touch. “Jon’s uncle offered me a job for the summer on his road crew!”

Mr. Lang frowned a bit, even as his eyes softened at the sight of his son’s exuberance. “Is that what you want to do with your summer, Cameron? It sounds like a tough job.” His eyes flicked up to meet Jon’s, and Jon could read the worry in them as well as the unspoken question.

Jon rose to his feet. “It’s hard work, but it pays really well. I think that Cam will do fine.” He stopped just behind Cameron, who was standing, almost quivering with tension, in front of his dad. A fond smile curved Jon’s lips as he read the anticipation in the tilt of Cam’s head, and he knew that Mr. Lang was on the receiving end of those huge begging, blue eyes, that look that made you want to hand Cam the world, just to make him happy.

"I really want to go, Dad." Despite his excitement, Cameron's voice emerged strong and steady, and Jon reflected with surprise that Cam really seemed to have changed over the past year. The old Cameron would have been pleading non-stop.

Mr. Lang gave Jon one last, long look before smiling at Cam.

"Yes!" Cam turned to Jon and gave him a quick thumping hug then turned to his dad and did the same. "This is going to be the best summer ever. Thanks, Dad."

Mr. Lang briefly hugged him back before pushing him away in mock disgust, wiping his hands down his trousers. "Go take a shower, Cameron. It'll be dinner time soon."

Cam gave Jon and his dad one last encompassing grin before he jogged down the hall towards the bathroom. Jon didn't bother trying to leave, knowing what was coming, that Mr. Lang would have all sorts of questions about the job. He didn't have to wait long.

"Do you really think he'll be able to do the work?"

"Yes, sir. He'll do great. I don't know if you've noticed, but he's really been working hard to improve his strength."

Mr. Lang sighed. "Yes, he has. It's become almost an obsession with him."

Jon noticed with some confusion that his answer seemed almost disapproving. Why would he not want his son to get stronger? He was about to open his mouth to ask then abruptly swallowed his question as Mr. Lang leant towards him, fixing him with a piercing look.

"I'm expecting you to treat Cameron right this summer. If I find out you didn't, I'll do my level best to make sure that your friendship stops right there."

What the fuck?!

Oh God, did Mr. Lang suspect how he felt for Cam? Did his partial hard-on show? Jon turned cold then hot as anger and defensive embarrassment washed over him in reaction to the unexpected confrontation with the man who was like a second dad to him. He must've looked as shocked as he felt, because the man's face softened a bit.

"It's not that I think badly of you, Jon. I'm just concerned about Cameron." He sighed again and turned towards the stairs. "Never mind, son, forget I said anything. I know that Cameron's safe with you." He left Jon reeling in confusion.

"Oh good, you're still here." Cam came back into the room, his dark, wet hair tousled haphazardly. A dozen rapid-fire questions left Jon no choice but to abandon his reflection upon the strange exchange as together the boys made plans for their summer of fun.

* * * *

"Ohhh," Cameron moaned, muscles aching that he never knew he had. He was smushed into a huge pickup truck with five other guys, including Jon, who had his arm along the back of seat behind him, providing welcome support for his neck. He was way more comfortable fitting against Jon than coming anywhere close to the jerk on his other side, so he half-consciously tucked himself into the perfect space under Jon's arm.

"You okay, bud?" Jon looked down at Cameron with a smirk, giving him a comforting squeeze before replacing his arm along the seat back. "Having fun yet?"

Cameron snorted. He had imagined one big long party and huge paycheques. The paycheques were huge, alright. Party? They worked from before dawn to almost dark, and shoved food in their faces before splitting a six-pack that felt more like taking a sleeping pill than partying. Then they fell exhausted into their motel room beds, falling asleep to the drone of the television.

Today, they were moving to a new base location, and rumour had it that the new motel had a pool. That sounded fantastic to Cameron, and he smiled a bit wearily, thinking that swimming might actually make it feel like summer vacation again. He pictured diving into the cool water as he closed his sun-fatigued eyes and unconsciously snuggled closer to Jon.

"Jesus, you fucking homos."

Cameron's eyes flew open as the taunting voice of Jon's cousin, Sid, stirred him from his half-asleep state. He flushed as he realised he was practically using Jon as a pillow, and tried to sit up as Jon flipped back, "Shut the fuck up, Sid."

"Christ, you're cuddling him like a fucking girl," Sid sneered, lip curled.

"He's tired, asshole, and it's not like we have a lot of room with your fat ass taking up half the back seat." Jon sounded pissed, and Cameron glanced up at him, worried. Jon was one of the most happy-go-lucky guys ever, and it was weird to hear him swearing and feel the tension in his body.

"Sorry," he offered to Jon as he finally managed to straighten up. Jon turned his frown on Cameron then the lines of his face eased.

"Nothin' to be sorry for, man. Don't sweat it. Sid's just a jack-off."

"Fuck you!"

"You wish!"

"Boys!" came Dave's roar from the front seat. "Both of you shut up! We're almost at the motel." His eyes glared at them in the rear-view mirror. "You'd best get over it, 'cause you three are gonna be sharing a room when we get there."

Jon gaped. "What?!"

"No fucking way!" Sid smacked the back of seat in front of him.

"Oh man," Cameron groaned. He couldn't think of anything worse than sharing a room with Psycho Sid for the next three weeks. But wonder of wonders, it did manage to get worse when they got to the motel.

"No rollaway." Dave handed out three key cards. "You're going to have to bunk up. Room two-oh-four. Pool's open 'til eleven. G'night, boys." He walked back towards the lobby.

"Bunk up, hell no," Sid challenged. "No way I'm sleeping with another fucking guy. Good thing you two are already fags. *You* can share the fucking bed." He grabbed his bag and took off, leaving Jon and Cameron looking after him.

"Sorry about him." Jon grimaced, and Cameron immediately needed to cheer him up and see him smile again. He'd been in Jon-withdrawal all school year long, with Jon at his out-of-state university while Cameron had been stuck back at the local college for the second year. With the bonus of this summer's job together, Cam was savouring every moment spent with Jon.

A funny fluttering hit him low at the thought of sharing a bed with Jon. Sharing a room was tough enough, seeing Jon changing his clothes daily, revealing that smoothly muscled frame, bare to his perusal. Accidentally, of course.

Accidentally my ass. That's why you're getting so good at looking through your lashes while pretending to sleep?

Cameron knew he loved Jon, had known it since he was still in high school, but Jon just thought of him as his best friend, his zany unofficial younger brother. And that was fine with

Cam. He didn't hold out any hope for more. Jon was just too experienced to want someone like him, who had never gotten up the courage to try much of anything yet, even though his co-worker, Marcus, had been getting more and more friendly the past few months, admiring Cameron's new, hard-earned physique.

He'd been working out like a fiend the past term, trying to give this wimpy body some definition at least. The flush of pleasure when Jon had actually noticed and commented earlier this summer had been hard to conceal, and he'd leapt at the opportunity to leave the room when his dad interrupted.

That had to have been the quickest shower jerk-off in history. He shifted from foot to foot, trying to keep from needing an instant replay.

"Whatever. You can't help it that you have a jerk for a cousin. But we get a *pool!*" Tired or not, his natural enthusiasm asserted itself as he poked Jon in the ribs, getting a grin in response. "C'mon, let's go get wet."

Chapter Two

If the hard work day hadn't managed to completely exhaust the boys, the swimming pool finished the job, and Jon and Cam dragged themselves back up to the room after playing in the water for so long that the heat of the day was just a memory.

Shivering and dripping in the air-conditioned chill of the hallway, Cam tried three times to get the key card to work before the green light finally flashed and they hurriedly pushed into the room. Sid was nowhere in sight, but his bag and clothes conspicuously covered the farthest of the two queen sized beds.

"Guess Sid's staked his claim. Good thing I don't take up too much room," Cam joked as his teeth chattered and goosebumps rode in waves over his skin. He darted ahead of Jon into the bathroom with a cheeky grin and quickly shed his swim trunks, but instead of hopping into the shower like he longed to, he began simply towelling himself off with a dry towel, kicking the soaked pool towel under the sink.

The sound of a throat clearing had him looking up at the open doorway at Jon, who stood there with a menu in his hand, eyes fixed somewhere behind his shoulder.

"I wanted to see whether you wanted pizza or pasta. Why aren't you in the shower yet? You look cold. I mean, your lips are almost blue."

Cameron was puzzled as to why Jon wasn't looking at him until he remembered he was standing there in absolutely nothing, with shrinkage no less. Trying to resist the urge to look down and see just how small his dick actually looked all shrivelled up from the cold, he knotted the towel around his waist.

"I was going to let you go first," he explained with a shrug.

"Nah, go on ahead. I know you won't take long. So what do you want for dinner?" Cameron felt a sense of relief that Jon was once again looking at him rather than through him.

He reached for the menu and, when Jon handed it over, Cam noticed that Jon seemed to have the opposite problem with his cock. He let his envious eyes run innocently over the impressive bulge outlined faithfully by the clinging material of Jon's wet shorts.

“Cam?”

Jon’s voice sounded distant as Cam’s eyes widened in amazement, watching the bulge grow in size and strain against the confining material.

“Cam!” Jon’s hands dropped in front of his erection, cutting off Cam’s view, and he blinked, attention back at present.

“Huh? Oh yeah. You want to share a pizza? And maybe a hot meatball sub or something?” He made sure he turned around before dropping the towel to step into the shower. A quick peek down at what remained of his cock had him sighing in resignation. Poor thing was trying to burrow inside him for warmth or something. No way he was going to let Jon get another look at his pitiful, huddled privates. He snorted as he adjusted the water.

“Figures you’re hung, must be a height thing. I don’t stand a chance, do I?” Cam called over the noise of the shower, trying not to let the comparison bother him as the warm water cascading over him finally started to penetrate the chill. He ripped the paper wrapping off the soap as he continued, “Marcus thinks my dick’s a decent size for my build, but I dunno. Wish it was thicker.”

No response from Jon. Must’ve gone to call the order in. Cam soaped up, enjoying the slide of his hands over his fit form. Finally this year, he had started looking less like a gangly, gawky, *skinny* kid and a bit more grown up. Maybe by the time he was almost twenty-two, like Jon, he’d finally look his age. Up to this point in his life, strangers routinely guessed at least a couple of years downward. When they were being kind.

Finally, he felt the sense of release as his cock and balls warmed up to the point where they gave up on clinging to his body and settled into a more normal state. He ran his soap-slicked hands over and around his thickening shaft, debating about a quick jack-off, but deciding against it since Jon was still waiting for his turn at the shower.

With a quick final rinse, Cam shut off the water and slid the shower curtain back and found, to his surprise, that Jon was still standing where he’d left him. “Oh hey, I thought you left.” He stepped out, bending over to snag the towel he’d dropped earlier and beginning to dry off. “Did you call in the order yet? I’m starved and sore and running on fumes. I just know I’m going to crash as soon as I lay down. I’d better eat before then, huh? Hey Jon?” Cameron frowned at Jon’s still form. “Man, you okay? You look like you’re asleep on your

feet. Here, why don't you climb in? I'll call the place." He tucked the towel back around his waist and grabbed the menu.

Jon jerked as if awakening from a trance, eyes snapping from the vicinity of Cam's chest up to his eyes, a strange, unreadable expression on his face.

Cam took a step closer, concerned. "Jon, what's wrong?"

"Nothing. Just...ready for my shower's all."

"Go ahead then. I'll order us some food. Say, we're not going to have to order anything for Sid, are we?" He couldn't stand the guy, but then again he *was* Jon's family.

"Oh, fuck no. He's a big boy, he can feed himself. Probably out drinking his dinner right now. Liquid bread." Jon sounded like himself for the first time since their return from the pool as he chuckled. He seemed to hesitate a moment with thumbs in his waistband, before finally shucking his shorts and climbing into the tub. Cam's frank observation confirmed his earlier speculation about the size of Jon's equipment.

Cam didn't think it was strange he was dwelling on his best friend's cock. After all, he and Marcus talked about little else. What guy wasn't curious about how he measured up against other guys? He and Marcus were just more honest about it than most. Cameron didn't understand why so many people were so prudish. Sure, he was deservedly self-conscious about his small build, but shy? Nope. Why bother? Only person it would affect would be himself.

It was such a relief to spend the summer with Jon in so many ways, not the least of which was Jon seemed to be the only person in his life who didn't treat him like a little kid. His parents, his teachers, all his other friends—most of whom now towered over him—none of them treated him with the unconscious acceptance that Jon had always shown him. It was a balm of sorts that at least *one* person saw more to him than his stature. He sighed happily. Especially Jon.

He ordered a bunch of food with a thought to leftovers, noticing a mini-fridge and microwave, a definite improvement over the last hole in the wall place. Probably more expensive, which was most likely the reason they had to share rooms by threes instead of twos. Settling onto their bed, which was the only option other than the small table and two uncomfortable-looking upright chairs, he found a sports channel and got comfortable, drifting to sleep listening to the sound of the water beating on the wall beside him.

Oh shit, oh shit. Jon couldn't stop the phrase from repeating in his brain as he dealt with the freeze-frame serving as screen-saver in his mind; Cam standing bare and proud in front of him, water running down that trim, creamy-skinned frame, staring raptly at Jon's growing erection with a look of---what? Interest? No way.

He stroked himself to a spare and unsatisfying completion, barely keeping from punching the shower surround as the image changed to that of Cam comparing cock size with that little prick, Marcus. And then doing more than that... Hell, if Marcus had touched his Cam, Jon was going to take his fucking hand off. Painfully.

Your Cam? He's not yours, idiot.

That was a hard sell, trying to convince himself that Cam wasn't *his* in every sense of the word. They'd been neighbours and best friends back as far as they could both remember. Even two grades apart, they had a solid closeness and camaraderie that neither had found in their other friends over the years.

When Jon had initially left for college, he'd wondered whether their long, untested friendship would survive the time apart and the huge difference between college and high school. But the first time he came back, Homecoming weekend, it was like they hadn't been apart, settling instantly back into their relationship with the ease of slipping on a favourite pair of shoes.

These past two years since Cam was in college too, between the gradually more difficult college coursework for both of them and part-time jobs that ate up their weekends, they had only managed to see each other a few times, mostly over the major holidays. But they had faithfully called and texted one another at least every other day, and that was when Jon began to notice that Marcus' name came up more and more often.

Out w M. Talk l8r?

Going to M's tonight.

"Hold on, Marcus is on the other line."

Jon was honestly glad that Cam had company while he wasn't there, was happy that he and Marcus, his co-worker and classmate, had hit it off, but a surprisingly big part of him was frankly jealous of the time they got to spend together. Especially when Jon was back in town.

He had gone into the small bookstore where Cam worked this spring, having purposely kept the timing of this trip home vague. Well aware of Cam's twentieth birthday just days before, Jon had wrangled some time off from his job and arranged to miss his two Friday classes so he could drive home for a long weekend Thursday night.

Jon had been looking forward to the surprise on Cam's face when he walked in, but it had been Jon who had gotten the shock when he spotted Cam and Marcus huddled closely on the couch in the apparently deserted store, looking at a magazine together, their heads practically touching.

Jon had been aware of his own sexuality for years and knew he was definitely gay. He also knew he loved Cameron as a best friend, but until that moment, standing in the misty evening outside the bookstore, he had never put two and two together and thought of Cam in a sexual way. Like a bolt of lightning, it hit him that he might have lost the chance to be with Cam before he even knew for certain whether Cam was gay as well.

An alien and breathtaking spark of pain had caught him completely off-guard. He just stood there outside the shop, watching through the window, grudgingly appreciating the stunning picture the two young men made, Cam's dark hair and fey, pale skin a perfect foil against Marcus' golden colouring and blond good looks. But when Marcus reached up to run his hand casually down Cam's back, Jon burst through the door, taking savage delight in the way Marcus jumped up and wheeled around in panic.

"Jon!" Cam had flown into his arms for a thumping hug, happy to see his friend. Jon took satisfaction from the innocent and welcoming expression on his face, trying not to analyse that momentary shaft of jealousy, ignoring Marcus and purposely dominating Cam's time for the duration of his visit that weekend.

If he was honest with himself, the thought of Cameron as more than a friend was never far from his mind. However, the interaction between them was so natural, so familiar that Jon didn't have any trouble acting as if nothing had changed. And, really, nothing had, had it? He didn't even know whether Cam was gay, although he had his suspicions. Hell, Cam was enough of a late-bloomer that he might not even know yet himself.

That had set the pattern and Jon had accepted the fact he may never come to act upon his burgeoning attraction for his friend. But that didn't mean he liked the closeness he perceived between Cam and Marcus, who was most definitely gay if the admiring eye fucks

he had given Jon were anything to go by. So when his uncle had talked to him about working for him again this summer, Jon had pleaded with him for a spot for Cameron too, jumping at the chance to get Cam away from Marcus. *And all to yourself*, a little part of his brain whispered.

A knock at the motel room door brought Jon forcibly back to present, and he roughly finished drying off. No Cam answering the door—he must've fallen asleep. Calling out for the delivery guy to hold on, Jon quickly pulled on some clean sweats and grabbed his wallet then went through the routine motions of accepting and paying for their dinner. Two-litre of pop in one hand and the pizza box with the warm paper bag balanced on top in the other, Jon smiled at the picture Cameron presented, sleeping propped up against the headboard of the bed, remote in hand, head lolling to the side, mouth slightly open. He wouldn't appreciate the comparison, but Cameron looked so innocent and so much like the kid he had once been. *But he's not a kid anymore, that's the problem*, Jon reminded himself.

His eyes wandered down the sleekly muscled form sprawled out before him, open to his frank inspection in nothing but a pair of light grey sweatshorts that he always wore to sleep in. Cameron stirred in his sleep, and one hand landed on his lower stomach while his leg bent up to the side. Jon was abruptly glad that he'd taken care of his arousal in the shower as he watched Cam unconsciously palm his semi-erection over his shorts. His hand gave a light squeeze then Cam's eyes drifted open, focusing quickly as he saw Jon watching him.

"Hey, sorry. I was going to pay for that." Cam got up and walked over to the table and Jon followed with the food. They ate their dinner and talked about a multitude of topics, never once at a loss for conversation. Finally, sated and sleepy, they took turns in the bathroom getting ready for bed.

Jon faced the bed with quiet trepidation and Cameron joined him after laying his clothes for the next day out on top of his duffle bag. Sid wasn't back yet, but knowing him, he would probably stumble in drunk after the bars closed.

"Well, this'll be fun. I've never slept with anyone before."

Jon's heart beat a bit faster at Cam's unintentional double entendre. "Just kick me if I hog the covers or something," he joked with his friend, his voice sounding a bit strained to his ears.

Cameron climbed onto the bed and crawled up to the top on the side closest to the bathroom wall. Jon tried and failed to keep from appreciating the sight of that compact, perfect ass pointed in his direction. Cam scooted under the covers and held up the edges, wordlessly inviting Jon to join him, those big, trusting blue eyes locked on his.

Wishing it was for real, fighting a panic-inducing combination of lust and caring and fear, Jon hurried to clumsily climb in, hoping to get covered before his growing erection gave him away.

“Don’t worry, Jonny, I’m not going to attack you.” Cam’s low, intimate voice was so close behind him Jon could almost feel the vibrations against his back, simultaneously soothing and arousing. He had evidently noticed Jon’s uncharacteristic haste.

Jon found himself lying without forethought. “Just tired.” That came off a little too curt. “I know you’re a perfect gentleman,” he teased back, suddenly tired of the self-imposed strain. He needed to relax, let his guard down. Attraction or no, this was his best friend in the world, not someone he needed to be constantly worried around.

He let the fact of that ease him into a more comfortable state of mind as he turned off the light, subconsciously adjusting his breathing to the already deepening pattern behind him. All the years he’d known Cam, through sleepovers and camping trips and sharing a room this summer, Jon knew it took him no time at all to fall asleep, and tonight was no different. Jon listened to Cam’s rhythmic, quiet breath for a long time before finally succumbing to the lure of forgetful oblivion.

Chapter Three

Warmth.

That was the first thing Cam noticed as a slamming sound brought him abruptly into wakefulness. Despite it being summer, most nights in the motel rooms he awoke chilled to the bone from the artificial air conditioning they'd cranked up to combat the day's residual heat the night before.

But tonight he was toasty warm. *Mmm...* Eyes still closed, he pressed back into the warmth. An arm tightened around him and he smiled.

Arm?

His eyes flew open, but all he got for that effort was blackness. Must still be night. Even with black-out curtains, he'd be able to see something if the sun was coming up.

A feminine giggle and an answering masculine grunt.

Now he was really confused; that sure sounded like a girl. Trying hard to think, not an easy task coming out of a deep sleep, he tried to remember the previous night to get his bearings.

Okay, getting there. New motel. Furnace behind him must be...Jon. And they were sharing a bed, because...

The wet sounds of kissing clear as a bell in the darkness.

Ah shit, Sid for a roommate. Who must've brought a girl home from the bar, apparently their entrance was what woke him up. Cam rolled his eyes in the dark, trying hard not to listen to the rustling of clothing and murmurs coming from the direction of the other bed. *Crap.* He pictured the clothes coming off some faceless girl, and his damn hormones perked his prick up, picking right up where it had left off without satisfaction earlier in the shower. Not even the thought of Sid being involved could quell the rush his cock and imagination were getting from the almost pornographic sounds emanating from the couple.

Cam wriggled with his discomfort, and the arm around him tightened once more, bringing his attention back to his own bed. This time, as the arm trapped him close, the

unmistakable feel of an erection pressed against his backside had him momentarily freezing in place.

That's Jon's hard-on against my ass.

Just putting words to the acknowledgement in his mind was incredibly arousing. Jon was hot, yes, but he saw Cam as just his best friend. Never in a million years would Cam have thought he'd be tucked into bed with him, cradling Jon's apparently very unchoosy cock in the crack of his backside.

His own erection took on new life and his breath grew short as the struggle to not move became way too much for him. Surreptitiously, Cameron arched his back, pushing back against Jon and was answered with a volley of thrusts and an incoherent muttering in his ear. His heart pounding through his chest, fuelled by the addition of skin slapping and unmistakable sounds of fucking off to the right, Cam set up a rhythmic undulation back against Jon that had his friend following suit as if following his lead in an intimate dance.

His own ragged breathing was masked by the noise from across the room, and as Jon's own breathing picked up along with the speed of his rubbing, Cameron went for broke, pushing his shorts down in the front enough to expose his cock then licking his palm and taking his erection firmly in hand. As he began to stroke, his upper arm was resting along the top of Jon's, whose hand was still wrapped around his middle. It was an incredibly intimate feeling to be so surrounded by another, *by Jon*, as Cam pleased himself. His breath caught and he sped up his motion, pressing back recklessly, wantonly, invitingly...

Suddenly, his hand was batted out of the way, and a larger, firmer hand took its place, curling around his straining cock with assurance, spreading the pre-cum welling from his slit over his sensitive head with a calloused thumb. Cameron gasped aloud, thankful that the sound coincided with a moan from the girl in the room. Jon's chest heaved against his back, his breath on Cam's neck was coming way too fast for him to be anything other than fully awake.

The knowledge that now Jon was a full participant in this crazy, impromptu rubbing-off session was the spark that sent Cameron spilling effortlessly over the edge, jerking in Jon's warm grasp, coming in spurt after spurt, harder than he had ever come before in his life.

Jon seemed to be catching most of his cum, and his arm lifted from over Cam, leaving a cool, sweaty void, as his other arm, the one he had been using as a pillow, curved around to cup Cam's top shoulder, keeping him in place. A hand yanked at his sleep shorts, forcibly pulling them the rest of the way down to his thighs, and Cam tensed as he felt a burst of fear.

Oh God, is he going to fuck me?

"Shh," came the soothing whisper in his ear. A moment later, the motions behind him made sense as Jon had apparently pushed his own sweats down and spread Cam's cum on his own shaft, using the slick to ease the slide along the cleft of Cam's buttocks. Jon rocked against him with more urgency than ever, nakedness against his own, gliding smoothly, rhythmically. Cam was held firmly in place, helpless to do more than meet Jon's pace as he surged to his climax, groaning quietly in Cam's ear as he jerked against him, warmth flooding between their bare skin.

The pair in the opposite bed soon after reached their own conclusion and quiet once again reigned in the dark room. Cam's mind raced with confusion in the aftermath of the wholly unexpected sex with his friend. Was this considered sex? Now what the hell should he do?

As if hearing his thoughts, Jon took part of the question away as he peeled himself away from Cam and rose, making his way to the bathroom. The light flicked on, water ran, then Jon was there, standing over him with his sweats back in place, expressionlessly holding out a damp towel and a glass of water. Blushing like mad, Cam accepted the towel and cleaned himself off, front and back, then paused awkwardly, unsure what to do with it once he finished.

Jon's familiar grin was a welcome improvement on the mask of a moment before, and Cameron relaxed a bit as he traded the used towel for the drink. Jon made a quick trip back to the bathroom, doing little more than tossing the towel in the room and turning the light off, plunging the room into utter darkness once again.

Jon bumped into the bed then climbed up from the bottom, landing next to Cam, who was once again at a loss for how to act. Tired of being on his left side, he turned over on his right, which put him facing Jon unseen in the dark. Not touching, not certain what to do, knowing Jon was just inches away after they had come all over one another, Cam was blown away by the conflicting feelings of rapport and uncertainty. He lay there, mind churning for

countless minutes, before finally feeling the tentative brush of Jon's hand across his hair, down to his shoulder where it gently squeezed.

"Go to sleep," Jon whispered. "Everything's cool."

It was just what Cam needed to hear, no more, no less, and he drifted off with the weight of Jon's hand anchoring him.

The next time he awoke, it was light enough to see in the room. Pretty sure that the daily wake-up call from Sid's dad was only minutes away, Cam tried looking at the clock, but a large, bare shoulder was in his way.

Jon...

That brought back everything from the night before, but before he could do more than process that, movement from across the room had him peering over Jon's shoulder at Sid's date, who was just hooking her bra. She looked up as if sensing eyes upon her and gave Cam a startled look of surprise, followed by a smile.

"Hi," she whispered. "Sorry if I woke you up." She looked down at the floor and found her shirt, pulling it over her head. "Shoot." She frowned. "Where's my purse?"

Cam sat up, having to pee anyway, and crawled out of bed to help her with her search, finally locating the bag under the discarded comforter from Sid's bed.

"Thanks. You know, I thought you were a girl."

Cam was too confused to manage more than, "Huh?"

She shrugged, a puzzled frown puckering her brow. "I could've sworn Sid said he was sharing a room with his cousin and his girlfriend."

Figures. What an ass. "Nope, just us guys." He only just barely managed to keep it light and not to sound irritated by another of Sid's homophobic references. "Do you have everything?" he prompted.

"Oh! Yeah, sorry. I'll get out of your hair. Tell Sid I'll see him around." She walked ahead of Cam to the door, and he grimaced before his conscience got the better of him.

"Do you have a way to get home?" He stopped short of offering a ride, since he didn't have a vehicle, but supposed he could give her cab fare, if there were even cabs in this small of a town.

Her face lit up in an appealing smile. "You're such a sweet kid. Yes, my car's here, but thanks for asking, honey. Bye." She patted his cheek.

Ugh. Why does everyone always think I'm a kid?

"See ya." Cam closed the door behind her and stepped into the bathroom to piss, deciding to hop in the shower and head down for the continental breakfast before it got busy.

Lathering up brought the memories of the night before forcibly back as he recalled cleaning the spunk—both his and Jon's—off himself while Jon watched. He flushed even as he started to get hard at the recollection. Unconsciously stroking, he dropped his hand like a shot when he heard the door open.

"Hey," came Jon's low voice. He pulled the curtain aside just a bit to stick his head in. "That was really nice of you to offer to help her out."

Cam shrugged casually in acknowledgement, but his mind was too full of the memories of last night to come up with a coherent response. With Jon's dark eyes locked on his, he couldn't keep a smile from inching across his face. Jon returned it in kind until they were happily grinning like fools at each other.

"Lock the door," Cam softly hissed and watched as a sexy, aroused look came over his friend. Jon spun away briefly to see to the door then stepped into the shower, wasting no time in taking Cam into his arms and pressing their wet, naked bodies close together.

"Fuck, that feels amazing. You're amazing. Mmm..." Jon slid his hands down Cam's back to cup his buttocks and rock against him. Cam couldn't believe what he was doing, so he stopped thinking about it and just felt. The firmness of Jon's cock rubbing against his, the flare of the head catching against his tip was something he could never have dreamt up in a million years, yet it was happening to him, right now in this motel room shower.

"We have to hurry," he urged Jon, and swivelled his hips against him. Jon nodded and made quick work of lathering up then reached between them to cradle both their erections together in his soapy grip. That effortless slide, the feel of hands not his own, another dick up against his, brought Cameron to climax with stunning speed and he bucked into Jon's grasp, holding Jon's shoulders as his seed spilled over those magic hands moments before Jon's answering groan.

"Ah fuck." Jon's body stuttered against his, and Cam let his head drop to Jon's shoulder, holding him as he rode out the waning peaks of pleasure.

The shrill sound of a phone in the next room had them jerking their heads up simultaneously, narrowly missing a collision. Cam came to his senses first and scrambled out of the shower, towelling off in record time and walking out of the bathroom just as Sid came staggering in to piss.

Dressing quickly, relieved at the narrow escape, Cam headed down to breakfast, and before long, the whole crew was headed out for the day.

Chapter Four

On a Friday, weeks of hard work later, they were closing in on being able to move to the next location. Ominous clouds were building in the air, finally casting some welcome shade. Dave drove up to where Jon and Cam were working together in the oppressive humidity, patching some cracks and stripping the tar. They paused in their work as he approached.

“How’s it going here, Jonny?”

Jon glanced around, rolling his shoulders to loosen the tension that had built up in them. “Almost done with this stretch. We should be able to finish it today.”

“Good. Sid and I are heading home for the weekend. As soon as you boys finish it up, you’re free until Monday. Do you want a ride home with us, or would you rather stay here?”

Jon looked at Cameron in token question, but there was really no decision to be made. Hours in the truck with Sid to go home and stay with their parents for a couple of nights, or hanging out at the pool and having the motel room to themselves for the weekend? *There’s a no-brainer.* “Do you want to go home?” he asked Cameron aloud, his eyes sending a private, heated message.

Cam crossed his arms as he glanced at the sky and appeared to think about it. Jon fought a snort at the over-acting. “Kinda, but nah, it’s a long drive for a couple days. Let’s just stay here and use the pool.” Message received loud and clear. Cam’s answering look gave him cause to work his ass off to get this section done pronto so they could get back to the motel.

It took them longer than they’d hoped, but finally they came to the newly paved section and started the long process of closing down the equipment. Huge, fat drops of rain were pelting them with stinging force by time they finished and climbed into the company’s F-150 they’d been left.

Jon was nearly shaking with excitement at the thought of having Cam alone to himself in the motel room at last. Sharing a room with Sid had been an exercise in extreme frustration over the past month. Lying close to Cam in the dark, wanting him with every ounce of his

being but aware of Sid's presence just a few feet away, had been torture. They'd settled for hurried encounters while Sid was out drinking, always knowing that Sid could come in at any time, and used the cover of darkness to hold one another close in their sleep, relying on their instincts to make sure they were safely separated by the time it was light enough to see in the morning.

A mental review of his dop kit for supplies had him pulling into a convenience store parking lot where he made Cam wait in the truck while he grabbed a twelve-pack of beer and a package of pre-lubed condoms.

Back at the motel, he backed the truck in, arm slung over the back of the seat, his hand teasing at Cam's neck, earning him a sly smile in return. They wasted no time in getting back to the room.

"Dinner first or pool?" Cam's voice was casual enough that Jon dropped the beer on the dresser with a disbelieving thunk, afraid that Cam really wanted to follow their usual routine. One look at his friend's face had him growling in mock anger and stalking towards him.

"That wasn't funny."

Cam laughed as he backed away, eyes wide. "Yes, it was. You shoulda seen your face." His face was still flushed with the heat of the day, sweat and rain sticking his dark hair to his cheeks and neck, covered in road dust. He looked beautiful.

Jon reached him and ripped the soaked shirt over his own head before dispensing with Cam's. He pulled them flush against one another with his hands cupping Cam's firmly curved butt, sweaty chest against sweaty chest, jeans-covered crotches aligned.

"We're a mess," Cam murmured in the direction of Jon's neck. "C'mon." He gave Jon's chest a wet slap before turning to tear the case open and grab two beers. Jon watched in admiration as Cam's taut ass retreated into the bathroom. Jon felt a foolish smirk tipping his mouth and, for the life of him, couldn't wipe it from his face. As he heard the water start, he began to strip and sent a quick prayer of thanks winging upward to whatever benevolent being had handed them this weekend to themselves.

Cam was already rinsing the shampoo from his hair when Jon joined him in the shower. Taking his cues from Cam, Jon kept his hands to himself and got cleaned up with merely a brush of their aroused bodies in passing as they switched positions under the spray.

As soon as they'd finished rinsing, Cam slid past Jon again and stoppered the tub before sitting down cross-legged, changing the shower over to running the tub full. He opened a beer and handed it up to Jon then opened his own. Entranced, loving spending time with Cam like this, Jon settled himself behind Cam as the tub filled. It was a tight fit, all the better for having to hold Cam closely reclined against him.

They drank their beer as the tub finished filling and Cam used his foot to turn off the tap. The ensuing silence was broken only by the occasional drop from the faucet. Jon thought his heart would burst right through his chest at the feel of Cameron in his arms, cradled between his thighs. He was swamped with emotion, and in the wordless, undemanding embrace, he wove vague thoughts of forever with his Cam.

That thought coupled with their unaccustomed privacy lit an undeniable need in Jon, a need to possess Cam, to make him his own, to fill him and be where no man had ever been. His desire pulled him right out of the quiet moment they'd been sharing and put him in a headspace where rational thought was impossible.

"Let's go." He urgently tugged Cameron to his feet.

"Where's the fire?" Cam teased as he acquiesced and stepped from the tub, only to gasp when Jon swept him into his arms to stride, dripping, into the motel room.

"Oh c'mon, I'm not a freaking girl, Romeo. Oof." Cam landed with a bounce on the bed, and Jon pounced, straddling Cam and taking advantage of his slightly open mouth to explore the interior of his mouth as lowered his weight onto the smaller man.

There was something utterly erotic about being completely naked against one another in the full light of day, and they arched and rubbed together as they devoured one another with their mouths, eyes open and aware of every nuance. Pre-cum added to the water slid between their abdomens. Jon needed to get closer, and he inserted first one knee then the other, spreading Cam's legs and settling into the cradle of his thighs with a groan.

"Mmm." He thrust harder against Cam as Cam fed an answering moan into his mouth. Cam closed his eyes and arched his neck, a now-familiar precursor to climax that fuelled Jon's own impending crisis. He latched onto Cam's proffered neck and sucked hard while Cam grabbed his ass, straining against him as Jon felt the warm pulse of his release between them.

Changing the suck to a bite, he flexed and released his hips and felt the tip of his straining erection slip across the pool of cum coating Cam's pelvis to come to a rest beneath Cameron's tight sac, right against what could only be his puckered opening. Cam froze, and Jon went still at the realisation that one more flex would put him right where he had dreamt of being since he first became aware of Cam in this light.

Quivering with his restraint, he watched as Cam's eyes opened, revealing a wary, hesitant gaze. Still Jon held hope. "I bought condoms," he whispered, disappointed to see that this confidence only increased Cam's look of unease.

Shit.

Losing his fight to balance on the edge, he knelt up over Cam and worked himself to his most unsatisfying climax of the past month, then sat back on his heels to catch his breath, unfocused eyes aimed towards the wall, unable to look at Cameron just then.

A tentative hand brushed his where it rested on his thigh, and he sighed inwardly as he struggled between his utter disappointment and his desire to comfort Cam. He looked down to see the object of his frustration watching him with a wry smile. That hint of humour in place of the nervousness he'd anticipated sent him right over the edge with a flare of temper.

"What's so fucking funny?" he demanded rhetorically, frustrated with Cam's hesitance, furious with himself for letting it get to him. Jon jumped to his feet to grab clean clothing and retreated to the bathroom instead of waiting for an answer. He took his time, trying to regain his cool, and when he emerged, Cam was dressed and waiting for him, humour gone, a solemn look on his face.

"I'm sorry, Jon. I wasn't laughing at you. I was just nervous," he said, words spilling from him hurriedly, as if he'd rehearsed.

Jon's usual equanimity had thankfully returned, along with an urge to pull Cam into his arms. He fought a debate in his head, the long ease between them somehow altered. Finally settling for sitting on the edge of the bed, leaving the choice of whether to come to him with Cam, he was gratified when the other man closed the distance and sat next to him.

He nudged Cam's leg with his own and felt an answering push. Jon smiled and looked down at Cam's familiar widening grin. The back and forth shoving escalated until, chuckling, Jon gave into temptation and threw an arm around Cam's shoulders, giving him a hard side-hug before flopping backwards on the mattress, pulling his friend down with him.

When their laughter died down, Jon turned his head to face Cam, lying pillowed on Jon's arm. His angelic, long dark lashes framed his baby blue eyes, his creamy, fair skin only just slightly more golden than when they'd started the summer thanks to his religious use of sunscreen. Looking into those trusting eyes, Jon knew he could never ask more than Cam wanted to give, as much as he wanted that ultimate connection. He just hoped Cam might overcome his trepidation someday soon.

Cameron felt an overwhelming sense of relief that the crisis had passed so quickly. Every second that he thought Jon had been upset with him had ripped at his heart. In fact, he could never remember being on the receiving end of one of Jon's rare displays of temper. It had taken his legs out from under him and made him want to do anything to mend the breach. Even...*that*.

Cam swallowed convulsively at the thought of losing his virginity to Jon. He had fantasised for years about what his first time having sex would be like, but he'd always imagined being the one doing the penetrating. Of a guy or a girl, both had occurred to him with relatively equal frequency. But the first time he and Jon had messed around on this very bed, when he'd pulled Cam's shorts down from behind him, was the first time Cam had thought about receiving, being taken.

While the sheer idea scared the hell out of him, he'd been trying his best to wrap his mind around it for weeks now, because he knew somehow that Jon would almost definitely be a 'top', making him the de facto 'bottom' of the relationship. And he wasn't sure how to feel about that. *Never* getting a chance to be the do-er instead of the do-ee? How did one even go about bringing that up?

Obviously, Jon had the most experience of the two of them. It was glaringly apparent in hindsight that the lack of girls in the handsome man's past pointed squarely to Jon's being gay. Cam wasn't sure how he'd missed it before, or why Jon hadn't told him, but now that he knew, the subtle control Jon exerted in their intimate play gave his preference away.

Cam smiled inwardly at the vision of him topping Jon, who probably had six inches and at least forty pounds on him. Yeah, that was sooo not going to happen. Marcus was probably more his speed, of a similar size, and he had also made his preference for receiving graphically known. If sex was all Cam wanted, he knew he'd have a willing partner in

Marcus. But the main reason Cam was still a virgin at the ripe old age of twenty was that he hadn't felt that legendary special spark with anyone, girl or guy.

Until now...

He let his eyes lovingly trace the face next to his, a face he knew almost as well as his own, now in close detail. Jon's dark brown eyes crinkled a bit at the corners, a sure sign he was back to his usual cheerful self. The arm under his head curved, not so subtly pulling him in towards Jon's mouth and Cam surged the last inch on his own, meeting Jon's full lips in a sweet, intimate kiss that made his stomach flutter.

"Hey," he murmured against Jon's mouth.

Jon's lips curved but didn't move away from his. "Hey yourself."

"I hate it when we fight."

The older man backed off a few inches, frowning a bit. "Were we fighting?"

At that, Cam reconsidered, "Well, maybe not a fight, but it wasn't pretty, whatever it was. Let's not repeat it."

Jon pinned him with a steady, solemn look. "We won't. I'm not going to ask that of you again anytime soon. I keep forgetting how young you are."

How young... Cam's heart stopped then sped up as a wave of shock wash over him. "Wh...what?" he stuttered, pulling away.

"Well, not young, but sex-wise, you're just a baby. I had no right to put you in that position. I'm the experienced one, I should've known better."

Jon tried to pull him back close, but Cam wrenched away and sat up, his heart dropping into his stomach as the words spilling from Jon's lips, the lips he'd just kissed, got progressively worse.

"I know you're not ready for anything as serious as that. We can just do what we've been doing, keep it casual."

Jon thought what they'd done so far was *casual*? Cam felt his world crashing down around him. All this time, Cam had thought Jon was the one person he could rely on to treat him like a man, who would always be there for him, unquestioningly. And now he had managed to drive him away with his scared, *virginal* reaction, had managed to make Jon see Cam in the same light as everyone else---as a skinny, little kid who needed protecting, who wasn't old enough to have a serious thought in his head.

He couldn't pull enough air into his chest. He could sense Jon's scrutiny and growing awareness of his disquiet. Even now, his reaction was probably reinforcing the 'immature' label. Cam needed to get out of here.

He crossed the room to slide into his running shoes, not bothering to lace them up.

"Cam? What's wrong?" Suddenly Jon was right there, right in his space, and Cam couldn't stand the feeling of being *loomed* over. He had never thought of it that way before, not with Jon, but now he was definitely feeling put at a disadvantage by his height, or moreover his fucking *lack* of it.

Cam tried to prevaricate, to keep the peace. "Nothing, I just need some air."

"Cam..."

His fraying control finally snapped. "Just back the fuck off, Jon. Okay?"

Jon stared at him as if he'd grown two heads. His mouth gaped and Cam took advantage of his frozen state to grab his wallet and cell phone.

Watching this, Jon recovered speech quickly. "Where are you going?" He looked concerned and upset.

For a moment, Cam wanted to swallow his pride and give in to the implicit demand, that he stay, that he smile, that everything be okay. But Jon's thoughtless words, his *opinions*, kept battering through Cam's tender psyche.

...just a baby...

You're not ready...

...keep it casual.

I keep forgetting how young you are.

Cam knew Jon could physically keep him from leaving the room if he really wanted to, but right now, he felt as though he could knock Jon out with one punch if he laid a hand on him. When Jon took a step closer, he clenched his jaw and raised his hand like a traffic cop. Jon stopped, the look on Cam's face apparently getting through to him.

Conspicuously keeping a space between them, he retreated to the door, snatching his favourite jacket from the hanger. Not trusting himself to speak, he let his eyes do the talking before even that became too much to bear.

Everyone else's opinions he could shrug off. But Jon's defection to their ranks was the worst betrayal of their friendship he could ever imagine.

Cam let the motel door slam closed between them, and walked away.

Chapter Five

Five years later

His phone vibrated and briefly, Jon considered letting it go to voicemail. But a glance at the number revealed it to be one he didn't recognise from his hometown's area code, and curiosity got the better of him. That, and there wasn't a single guy in the club worth his time tonight.

"Hello?"

"Jonny? It's Miranda."

Jon sat up straight with shock at the sound of that familiar, cultured voice. "Mrs. Lang?"

"Yes. But Jon, please just call me Miranda."

The thought of calling Cam's mom by her first name was bizarre, but no more so than anything else to do with Cameron. "Okay, Miranda. Is, uh, something wrong?" He couldn't imagine why Mrs. Lang, *Miranda*, would be calling him. Unless... His breath caught. "Oh God, is Cam..."

"Cameron is fine, Jon. But is there any way you can come home this weekend?"

Jon immediately ran through his schedule in his mind then wondered why the hell he was bothering. He'd always liked Mr. and Mrs. Lang, but Cameron had made it very clear he wanted Jon to keep his distance, and up until now, Jon had---grudgingly---respected that demand. His silence prompted more information.

"I..." She stopped and took a deep breath before continuing. "Mr. Lang is having surgery tomorrow to remove a brain tumour, and, well, there's a quite alarming chance that he might not...make it through the procedure. I'd like you to be here for Cameron if that were to happen."

The quaver in her voice and a delicate sniff told Jon that, yes, she was serious before he could ask *that* strangely automatic and thoughtless question. So instead, he wondered aloud the second thing that popped into his head, "What about Marcus?"

"Hmph, oh *him*. Well, he's still around, but they're not, you know, together. He was never the friend you were to Cameron. Will you come?"

And all he could say to that was simply, "Yes."

* * * *

Walking into the large, regional hospital about an hour from their hometown, Jon wondered for about the millionth time why he had come. The lady at the information desk directed him to the surgical waiting room, but he headed instead to the coffee stand in the lobby. Mr. Lang's surgery would take hours yet, and he needed the caffeine jolt after waking in the wee hours of the morning to drive here. But mainly, if he was honest with himself, he wasn't in any hurry to see Cameron and get rejected by him again.

When Cam had walked out of that motel room that summer, he'd thought Cam was just going to walk off some imagined slight or case of nerves, so Jon had kicked back and waited---given him his space. But as hours went by and he didn't return, Jon tried calling his cell phone. No answer after no answer. Finally, on about his sixth increasingly frantic attempt, Cam had finally picked up. The voice on the other end of the line was as cold and flat as a stranger when he told Jon that he was fine, he was getting a ride home from *Marcus* and not to call again, before hanging up. Disbelieving, Jon'd called back and had gone straight to voicemail.

Cam had covered all his bases, apparently calling Dave to officially quit and ask him to have Jon pack up his stuff and bring it back when he came home. Jon delivered the bag in person as soon as he got home a few weeks later, only to have an embarrassed Mrs. Lang gently tell him that Cam didn't wish to see him, adding of her own volition that maybe they just needed a little time and space to 'get over things'.

That little time and space had run past the summer and both had gone back to college not having seen one another face to face again that year. Jon heard through the grapevine the teeth-gritting news that Cam was now *out*, and he and Marcus were dating. The thought that Cam could want that little blond wanker over him just flat pissed him off, and finally, he embraced the whole avoidance routine with the same apparent fervour as Cameron.

Seasons ran into years and the two formerly best friends went over three years before they even ran into each other again. That time was during Jon's trip home for a high school buddy's wedding. He hadn't really wanted to go, but his parents had retired and were moving from the house into a condo so they could travel around in an RV. He was home anyway helping them sort and pack and had no good excuse to miss the event.

The venue was downtown in the historic hotel that was right next to the bookstore. The bookstore where the knowledge that he wanted Cameron had hit him as he'd peered through the window. The bookstore where, apparently, Cam still worked, because there he stood in the window, working on changing the display, stock still as he stared at Jon. He, too, came to a complete stop on the sidewalk, and they just gazed at one another, absorbing three years of changes in the other, separated by only a pane of glass, yet as far apart as if they were on different planets.

That fact was driven home when the muffled sound of Cam's name being called brought them both around with a start to see Marcus leaning into the display area to hand Cam a cell phone, then casually pat his ass before disappearing. A proprietary part of Jon that he'd thought dead and buried reared its ugly head, and Jon whirled to walk away before he could make an utter fool of himself.

After his parents' move, he had little reason to return to town, and so in the two years since, the closest contact he'd had with Cameron was the phone call yesterday from his mother. Did Jon think of Cam every day? Well yeah, but only as an object lesson. Really.

He sipped his latte cautiously as he turned away from the barista, and the cup nearly slipped through his suddenly nerveless fingers. There, across the lobby, stood Cameron, looking weary, talking on a cell phone. His profile was to Jon who hungrily watched as Cam ran his hand through that silky, dark hair, worn a bit shorter now. Cam was, as of yet, unaware of Jon's presence, and Jon watched as he hung up the phone.

As if feeling eyes upon him, Cam turned his head, first away then towards Jon. Taking his cue from the momentary jump of welcome he thought he read in Cam's face, Jon strode towards him, meeting him halfway and giving in to the urge to hold him close, pulling him into a wordless embrace.

Cam tucked in against him like a missing puzzle piece snicking into place, and a hundred questions raced through Jon's mind, all variations stemming from the biggest one —

a *Why did you leave me?* This was neither the time nor the place, but Jon vowed they would have this out finally. There had to be some way to salvage, if not a relationship, then at least their friendship, the loss of which had left a hole in Jon's life so large that in five years since the excision, it had not yet been filled.

"I can't believe you're here." Cam's emotional voice was muffled against Jon's chest, and Jon gave him one last squeeze before taking a step back, hands still ghosting along Cam's arms. He didn't want to lose the newly regained contact just yet.

"Your mom called. Have you heard anything?" Jon's voice was gruff with emotion and he cleared his throat nervously.

Those familiar powder blue eyes were rimmed with red, with dark shadows underneath, and Cam looked utterly exhausted. Jon had never seen him more beautiful.

"Nothing yet." He swallowed, throat bobbing, and glanced away. "This is weird, huh?"

Jon wasn't about to rehash everything standing in the middle of the lobby, so he steered Cameron towards one of the vacant semi-private sitting areas scattered around the atrium.

"Would you rather talk now or later?" Jon waited tensely for Cam's answer, afraid he would hear that there was nothing to talk about.

Cam smiled sadly and opened his mouth, but before he could say anything, Jon cut in, blurting out, "Why did you leave me? Was it for Marcus? Why him and not me?"

Jesus, Jon, get a grip!

Cam's eyes widened at the barrage of questions.

"I'm sorry. I've been waiting a long time to ask these questions. You wouldn't ever talk to me. And then you were with *him*. But you're not anymore?" Jon pressed his lips together, thinking he'd do well to get some fucking duct tape and gag himself. He clasped his hands together in front of him and waited for an answer, any answer.

Cam took a deep breath. "I left because you were suddenly as determined to treat me like a kid as everyone else in my life back then. I didn't leave you *for* Marcus, although he did come pick me up that night. And why him, was because he wanted me to top him, and I wasn't ready to be a bottom boy for the rest of my life like I would have been with you.

"I didn't talk to you afterwards because at first I was certain you had betrayed me by joining ranks with everyone who ever saw me as perpetually five years younger than I was.

Then when I grew up a bit and realised you were honestly just trying to not force me into something I obviously wasn't ready for, I was embarrassed about running off in a snit.

"I did get involved with Marcus, but it was mostly just sex. When the novelty wore off, we didn't have much in common. I think that's everything. Can I have a drink?"

Jon gaped at the litany and automatically placed his coffee in Cam's hand at the end, watching as he took several long swallows, nearly draining it.

"I'm not sure you need any more caffeine."

Cameron laughed for long minute and, apparently just to be smart, finished off the latte. "Thanks, Jon. That's the first time I've laughed since, well, for a really long time." He reached out to touch Jon's hand. "It's really great to be with you again."

Might as well go for broke. Jon took Cameron's questing hand firmly in his own. "Do you want to really be with me again?"

An adorable flush spread across Cam's cheeks as Jon watched, and at first Jon thought he had pushed too hard too fast. *Idiot.*

"Yes."

The whispered answer seemed as loud as a shout, and Jon could barely restrain himself from pulling Cam onto his lap.

"Hold that thought, okay?" Jon begged. "Don't change your mind?"

Cam's smile turned a bit wicked. "Oh, I won't." He stood and tugged Jon to his feet. "C'mon, let's go get some more coffee. For you," he hastily clarified. "And I'll take you up to see Mom."

Chapter Six

Critical but stable. Critical sounded so bad, but apparently it was standard classification for someone coming out of this kind of surgery. Mom had been offered the use of a fold-out bed in the same room as his dad, and so with her taken care of and visiting hours over, Cam was heading up to Jon's hotel room.

He glanced at Jon walking next to him, his warm hand confidently holding his, and wondered at the way they had been able to slide back into the ease of their previous relationship without so much as an awkward moment. That must be what true love was like.

He stopped in his tracks. *Oh my God, I'm still in love with Jon.*

Jon looked at him with a worried expression, dropping his overnight bag to the floor. "Are you okay? No, ah, second thoughts?"

Cam couldn't keep the knowledge inside him for one more second. He slid his arms around Jon's waist and pulled him close. "I love you."

Jon's lips parted in surprise and then they were on Cam's, stealing his breath with a kiss the likes of which he hadn't experienced for five long years. "I love you, too," Jon murmured against his mouth, and Cam poured everything he felt into the kiss, suddenly right with the world.

"Get a room." Cam looked up to see the desk clerk who had checked them in walking by with a pillow in his hands and a huge grin on his face.

They burst out laughing and hurried down the hall to their room. A suite instead of a standard room, the symbolic location nonetheless brought back memories for Cam and, he surmised from the way Jon looked at the bed with a smirk, for Jon as well.

"Dinner or pool first?" he teased, and the look on Jon's face was worth it, right up until he tackled him.

"Oof." Cam landed on the king sized bed with a bounce and a grunt. "What is it with you, throwing me around on hotel beds?"

Jon's smirk had grown taunting. "I like to use you to test out how springy the mattresses are." He toed off his shoes. Nice. Time to get things going.

"You just like tossing me around," Cam accused with a mock pout, slipping his own shoes and socks off and pulling his shirt over his head.

"Yep," Jon confirmed as he added his own shirt to the growing pile of clothing on the floor. Cam leant back on his elbows to admire Jon's chest and waited impatiently for the jeans to come off. *Boxers or briefs*, he joked to himself as Jon undid his pants.

Mmm, both. Boxer briefs. Fair enough.

His hands went to his own jeans and he lay back to shimmy them down past his hips. Jon stepped closer with a predatory look on his face and pulled the jeans the rest of the way off, leaving him in his own boxer briefs.

"We're like a matching set."

"Or a couple models." Jon landed on top of Cam, who parted his legs to welcome him in close. "Doing a naughty photo shoot. Would you buy these if the models were doing this?" He rotated his hips, and Cam could feel almost every ridge of his hard cock sliding over his own erection even through the two layers of cloth.

"Uh huh," Cam agreed a bit breathlessly. "Oh hell yeah." Jon had taken to thrusting, short controlled thrusts against Cam that mimicked what Cam *hoped* would be happening soon. Really soon. "So are you still Mr. Uber Top?"

Jon tongued then tugged Cam's earlobe with his teeth. "Do you want to be my bottom boy?"

"I hope like hell you have some supplies in your bag," he growled in Jon's ear, delighting in the shudder that went through that long, muscular frame.

Jon responded by mouthing his way down Cam's chest, nibbling and licking until he reached Cam's waistband. Looking up at him with a dark, wicked look, Jon ran his tongue under the band, then seized it in his teeth, pulling and tugging the underwear down with a little help from his hands in the back, until Cam's stiff shaft sprang free, slapping up against his abdomen.

With one mockingly brief and light kiss to Cam's impatient dick, Jon finished stripping Cam's briefs off and crossed the room to his bag, opening it to pull out a brand-new tube of lube and box of condoms. He waved them towards Cam.

His eyebrow rose. "A little sure of yourself, weren't you?" Secretly, he was pleased Jon had been thinking enough about him to pick up new supplies.

“Hopeful. Not sure.” A bit of raw emotion passed across Jon’s face and his eyes became suspiciously shiny.

Cam opened his arms, his own eyes blurring a bit as Jon got rid of his briefs and settled back in place.

“I’m sorry I fucked everything up. We could’ve had this for the past five years if I hadn’t been such an idiot.”

Jon nudged his nose. “You’re not an idiot. I should’ve known better than to say those things. You *do* know that I wasn’t talking about you as a man, but just your sexual experience. Right?”

“You mean *in*-experience. And yeah, I finally realised that many years after the fact.”

Jon pressed his forehead to Cam’s. “You weren’t ready. It might’ve screwed us up permanently in the long run, and we’re together now. The only thing I regret...” Jon cut himself off and turned his head away.

“Just tell me,” Cam encouraged, need to know, hoping it was what he thought. “If we’re going to make this work, we need to make things clear. What do you regret?” He held his breath in anticipation, waiting for the answer.

Jon met his eyes, and the despair and need for reassurance there almost broke Cam’s heart. “I wish I’d been your first.”

Cam wrapped Jon up in a long, tender kiss. Then he took both hands and urged Jon’s head back so he could see his whole face.

“You will be.”

Jon went completely still. “What about...”

“I always topped.”

Jon let out a gust of breath and sat back on his heels between Cam’s legs. His eyes traced a hot path down Cam’s body, sprawled across the comforter.

“Stand up for a sec.”

Cam complied quickly, and Jon pulled the sheets down, then they were back in place, rocking together, kissing frantically, as if to make up for the lost years all at once. Hands stroked everywhere within reach, relearning the feel of each other as they had so long ago, in silence, in the dark.

When Jon urged Cam up onto the pillows, Cam knew that any amount of stimulation could bring him over and he bit his lower lip, fighting for control. Jon ran his hands down Cam's thighs and gently urged them up and back, leaving Cam completely exposed to Jon's eager gaze.

Cam had been on the other side of things before, but feeling Jon's touch come without hesitation, stroking across his entrance, made him feel wanton and needy. He arched up to follow the touch and Jon chuckled as he popped the lube open and added a bit to his fingers.

Brushing the slick across his hole, Jon just barely delved inside before doing another gentle stroke. More lube and the light dip inside. Cam was going to go mad from the pace Jon was setting. The next entrance, Cam thrust upwards, bearing down and Jon's finger slid wholly inside.

"Oh fuck, this is going to feel good," Cam groaned.

"Mmm, you said it. You're so fucking tight. You're going to strangle my cock."

Cam panted a bit at the images that conjured in his head. "C'mon. One, two, three, let's get moving."

Jon added more lube and a second finger, rotating in light circles. "Hopefully you'll be a little more patient with me."

Cam came out of his haze of pleasure to process that. "You're going to let me... No way, really?"

"I'm your first. Only fair you be my first."

Oh my fucking God, he's serious. Ungh.

A burst of pre-cum nearly turned into the whole enchilada. "Could've picked a better time to tell me, there, Jonny. Kinda trying to hang on to my stuff here." Cam hissed against the discomfort as Jon worked him open in earnest.

"Okay?"

"Yes, just fuck me, dammit."

"Ooh, you sure let fly when you're turned on."

"I *am* going to let fly here in a second is the problem. If you want to be inside me when I go, you'd better come on in."

"My pleasure."

Cam watched hungrily from the pillows as Jon eased his fingers out and tore open the wrapper and slicked the condom down his shaft. Stroking an extra coating of lube down the rubber, he placed the head of his cock at Cam's entrance and rubbed up and down.

Cam exhaled and watched Jon's intent face as he pressed forward until his head popped past the maxed out guardian muscle. He sucked air through his teeth at the sting, finishing inhaling through his nose before blowing out again as the sting turned to burn then passed into a stretch.

Jon was rigid with his effort at control, and Cam briefly flashed back to the moment when they were younger and they'd been in a similar position. In this moment, for the very first time, he knew for certain that Jon had been right. Cam *hadn't* been ready for this back then. But oh, he was ready now.

Sliding his hands down that long back, he encouraged Jon to move, and he sunk in bit by bit until Cam could feel Jon's pubes touching his skin. They set into motion, a dance that Cam knew would become a new substitute for breathing, necessary to his very existence.

Jon hooked his arms under Cam's legs to change the angle and his stroke grazed Cam's prostate. He literally saw stars. "Oh fuck, Jon, that's going to..."

"Yeah, do it. Come on my cock, Cam. Oh, I love you, I love you."

Jon's fervent acclamation coupled with another direct hit on his gland sent him stuttering then soaring over the edge, shouting Jon's name as he came in great pearly ropes across his abdomen and chest. He could feel himself squeezing around Jon, and Jon pressed and held, growing impossibly longer within him before his head tossed back with the force of his climax, so beautiful in his release.

Cam wished the moment would never end, but when it did, it was a brief cleanup followed by Jon pulling him close, fitting him perfectly into the arms that he had missed every night since he had become accustomed to sleeping within their hold.

"Welcome home, Jon," he whispered in the dark, drowsy and sated and in love.

"Not home, a hotel," Jon murmured back, settling more comfortably against him.

"Doesn't matter where we are," Cam argued sleepily but with conviction. "You're always home with me."

About the Author

Devon started reading and writing at an early age and never looked back. After a creatively-sapping career in the business world, she gratefully took some time off to be at home. At thirty-nine and holding, Devon finally figured out the best way to channel her midlife crisis was to morph from mild-mannered stay-at-home mom to erotic romance writer. She lives in Oregon with her husband and two girls, who are (mostly) understanding of all the time she spends on her laptop, aka the black hole.

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