



Handcuffs and Glory Holes

A Rawlings Men Story

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To everyone who needs to be rescued.

Chapter One

The door leading into the back room of the club creaked open. It was the cue Willis Evans had been listening for, for over twenty minutes. As the sound of footsteps crossing the tiles floated into his cubicle, Willis lowered himself to his knees. The floor in the pokey little space was much the same as he'd always found it—cold, hard and far from clean.

The partition wall shuddered as the door into the neighboring cubicle was pulled closed behind its new occupant. Willis took a deep breath and let it out very slowly when he heard the lock on the other man's door slide into place.

All his attention focused in on the hole between the adjoining spaces. A few seconds passed, and a foil wrapper was offered through it. Willis stared at it for a moment, as if he'd never seen a condom before. Finally, his brain kicked into gear. He took the packet from the man on the other side of the glory hole.

It was nice of the guy to offer him the choice, but a second's consideration had Willis slipping it into the back pocket of his jeans. No point wasting it on a blow job when there might be someone who'd be willing to use it for something more than that later.

Fabric rustled. Willis turned his gaze back to the hole linking his world with the other man's. The edges of the opening might have been rough when it was first cut, but at some point some practical-minded visitor to the club had covered the perimeter with masking tape. The DIY job had been pristine when Willis had first visited the cubicle, several months ago. The strips were peeling away now, battered by constant friction.

Past the circular frame created by the remaining partition, Willis watched strong hands reach for a button up fly.

The lighting was dim, full of shadows, but as Willis stared through the hole, he could have sworn a spotlight shone on the other man's crotch, as if it was highlighting a personal little peep show, being put on just for him.

The top button slipped through the denim, then another. The hands that unfastened the other guy's fly were big, masculine—a working man's hands.

More buttons were quickly undone, it wasn't long before Willis knew his first 'date' for the evening was going commando. Pushing back the denim, the other man exposed a long, thick shaft, already half hard with expectation.

The guy wrapped his fist around his cock, stroking himself three or four times before finally offering his cock up to the hole. He was tall, the hole was only just high enough to accommodate him.

Licking his lips, trying to work some moisture in a mouth left dry by unaccountable nerves, Willis leaned forward and took the tip of the offered cock into his mouth. There was no reason to be anxious. It was just a blow job—he should have been able to do that in his sleep by now.

Willis closed his eyes as simple instinct encouraged him to suckle gently around the head of the other man's cock while it rested snugly inside his mouth. He took a little bit more of the shaft between his lips, dipping his head toward the hole in the partition.

Just a blow job...

A tiny satisfied sigh drifted through the partition and, as easily as that, something inside Willis settled. The pleasure in the soft little sound soothed a part of him that had been neglected for far too long. It was just a blow job—just a chance to feel another man's pleasure and know he was the guy who made the other man feel that good. As Willis felt all his concerns about the wider world begin to fade gradually away, there was no *just* about it.

Swirling his tongue around the tip of the other man's cock, Willis formed his lips into a neat seal around his shaft. The only important thing right then was the man before him and it didn't matter if he was on the other side of a wall. And it didn't matter if he was a stranger rather than the kind of master that Willis would have sold his soul for the privilege of kneeling before either.

The shaft filling his mouth stiffened further and Willis felt himself fall helplessly into the moment. Before. After. For the first time in far too long, everything but the present stopped mattering to him.

As reality started to slip away, Willis helped it along, chasing it from his mind, desperate to live in a world where everything really was as simple as a hard cock and a willing mouth, if only for a few minutes.

Sucking more greedily around the stranger's shaft, Willis dipped his head further forward, trying to take more and more of the other man's erection, until his forehead nudged against the partition. A slight change of angle, allowed him to slide his mouth a little further down the shaft. The head of the other man's cock slipped into his throat as his lips kissed the base of his date's cock, where it nestled between neatly-trimmed dark curls.

Pulling back, Willis ran his tongue along the vein on the underside of the shaft. Before the tip of the other man's cock could slip from between his lips, he bowed his head again. Pre-cum began to leak, hot and salty, onto his tongue, making him all the more desperate to satisfy the other man.

Something about the stranger called to him. It made him hope the other guy would be pleased with him, in a way Willis had thought he'd given up daydreaming about a long time ago.

Willis closed his eyes very tight. Reality wasn't important right then. The truth surrounding his life didn't matter. While he knelt there in the shadows, he was free to pretend the world was any way he chose to imagine it being. No one could even catch sight of his expression and guess what he was doing. And he couldn't be whipped for it, if no one knew.

"Perfect..."

Willis couldn't hold back a responding whimper as the word crept through the wall. Blinking his eyes open, he looked up at the battered partition, as if there was really some chance he'd see a dominant there, pleasure in his eyes and praise falling from his lips.

"That's right..." The other man coaxed, his voice rough with pleasure.

Willis moaned his reply around the guy's shaft, doubling his efforts to beg the other man's orgasm out of him. A movement high above his head caught his attention.

Fingers curled over the top of the wall. The other man rocked his hips, making the most of the leverage his strong grip on the partition could grant him. He fed his shaft into Willis' mouth again, moving faster with each thrust as he raced toward the edge of pleasure. A glance down and Willis saw the toes of a very well polished pair of boots poke under the barrier.

It wasn't enough. Closing his eyes, Willis pictured the wall disintegrating between them. He imagined one of those wonderfully powerful hands sliding into his hair, holding him in place.

Even without the other man's fingers tangling in the messy blond strands, Willis stilled, willingly giving up all control to the other man, as he let him take his mouth however he pleased.

As the shaft thrust deep between his lips, Willis licked and suckled around it, praying for another word of praise. The stranger's rhythm faltered. Willis sucked harder, his cheeks hollowing out as his lips tingled with friction.

The man buried himself inside Willis' mouth as he came, spilling across his tongue almost faster than he could take. Willis swallowed rapidly, determined not to miss a drop, and for once it had nothing to do with fear of being punished.

He wanted so badly to make it perfect. Even if there was no way the guy would see if he failed or succeeded, even if there was no reason why the hell he'd even care how a casual blow job from a faceless, nameless stranger ended. Just for a few seconds, Willis wanted to believe he was good enough to make it perfect for another man.

The guy's hips stilled, but he didn't immediately pull away. Even if it hadn't been perfect, at least the orgasm had been good enough to take his breath away. Willis heard the other man drawing in deep lungfuls of air as he recovered. Willis stayed pressed up against the barrier between them, letting him soften gently in his mouth, suckling tenderly around his cock, drawing out the moment for as long as he could.

"Good boy."

Before Willis even had time to relish the words, the other man pulled away, his shaft quickly disappearing back through the glory hole. Willis sat back on his heels. He couldn't remember the last time kneeling in that gloomy little space had left him hard. Pressing the heel of his palm against his straining fly, he quickly wished away his erection before anyone could notice it and set about reminding him that wasn't supposed to be there for his own pleasure.

When he heard the other man unlock the door into the adjacent space, Willis remembered that his job wasn't quite finished. Scrambling quickly to his feet, he managed to open his own cubicle just in time. The guy already had the door leading into the club half open, but he looked over his shoulder as Willis stared across at him.

It wasn't a crowded room, but their eyes did meet across it. The other man was older than Willis and darker. He was taller and broader across the shoulders too.

The larger man smiled slightly. Willis found himself smiling back, somewhat shy now that he was face to face with the man he'd just gone down on. The guy didn't say anything before he left.

As the door closed behind him, Willis leaned his temple against the cubicle door. He barely had a moment to close his eyes and memorize the smile before the door into the club swung open again.

Phil, one of the doms who worked for Willis' master, stood in the doorway. Willis waited for a command, to see if he was going to be ordered back into the cubicle, or if his master had other plans for him now.

"Out," Phil ordered with a jerk of his head. He grabbed hold of Willis' arm as he led him through the main rooms of the club. Pain shot through his shoulder, as the dominant half dragged him into another, rather different, back room on the other side of the building.

His master, Marshall, sat on a high backed chair at the far end of the room. Phil pushed Willis forward until he stumbled and fell to the floor at his master's feet.

"Rawlings just left," Phil reported.

Willis pulled himself up onto his knees, settling his hands behind his back, presenting himself the way he'd been trained, as the other men spoke over his head.

"You made sure he got a good look at you?" Marshall asked, as he turned his attention to Willis.

Keeping his eyes on the carpet in front of his master's feet, Willis nodded.

"He'll recognize you if he sees you again?"

Willis nodded again. "Yes, sir." He tightened his hands into fists behind his back, praying his master wouldn't guess how his heart rate kicked up a notch at the idea of being allowed to see the other man again.

A door opened and closed somewhere on the other side of the room.

"You've got the paperwork?" Marshall demanded, sharp blue eyes deserting his submissive in favor of the newcomer.

Someone stepped forward to stand beside Willis. A grubby boot kicked into his shin. Papers were passed to his master. One of them slipped from the little pile and floated to the floor in front of him.

Willis picked it up, his eyes automatically scanning it. He stopped short. It was a birth certificate for a Willis Evans. The only thing wrong with it was the dates. The year scrawled on the certificate put him at fifteen rather than nineteen.

He lifted his gaze for a moment as his master snatched it impatiently from his hand. The dominant didn't even glance toward him as he shuffled through the rest of the papers. "Good enough to fool the tabloids?"

"For a few days at least," the man who'd delivered them promised.

Willis watched Marshall's lips curl into a smile—the one that usually meant he was about to put the boot in—hard. "That'll be long enough."

"His next day off is tomorrow," someone spoke up from behind Willis.

Suddenly, the submissive found himself once more the focus of his master's attention. "Get him to the room off Henry Street. You know where the camera's hidden. Put on a good show. Tell him you like it rough, then turn to the camera and cry your eyes out."

"But—" The back of his master's hand caught Willis hard across the side of his face. His head snapped to the side, pain flaring through his cheek. His hand rose to cover his head, far too late to be of any use.

Closing his eyes, Willis waited, frozen in that position. He knew better than to speak to his master that way—just like he knew better than to think a slap would be all he'd get for it.

Seconds passed. The next blow didn't fall.

"You're bloody lucky I need you pretty for the cameras," his master snarled, his fist tugging at Willis' hair as he dragged him back up onto his knees.

"Yes, sir," the submissive whispered, as quickly as he could.

His master pushed him away, sending him sprawling to the floor before the other dominants. Scrambling up onto his feet, Willis quickly backed away from them all, before his master changed his mind—or came up with a punishment that wouldn't leave too many visible marks.

Knowing what would happen if Marshall caught him hiding away in some quiet corner, Willis forced himself to stay near the center of the main room of the club, where he could be easily found if his master, or his master's friends, wanted to get off.

It was stupid to think the guy on the opposite side of the glory hole was any different to any of the other men who'd screwed him since his master had decided he preferred to share his submissive rather than keep Willis for his own personal use.

No doubt the guy he'd just sucked off was just as big a bastard as all the others who'd used his mouth over the last few months.

Willis closed his eyes for a moment, his palm once more rising to nurse his stinging cheek. When he opened his eyes again, he looked around the club and the men who lingered there. There was no room for silly little daydreams in a place like that.

The guy probably deserved whatever Marshall had planned for him anyway...

* * * *

"I...um...bugger."

Sergeant Conrad Rawlings stopped staring idly at the list of coffees on the board behind the counter and glanced to his left. A young blond man stood at the next till, frantically patting his pockets.

"I must have...um..." the boy faltered, as if unable to bring himself to finish the sentence. Conrad didn't need to hear the rest. The guy had obviously left his wallet somewhere—along with his coat from the look of it. The day wasn't anywhere near warm enough for a man to wander around in a thin white t-shirt—not that it didn't provide a very nice view... His jeans were like a second skin too.

Just as Conrad's subtle inspection of the other man came back up to his head, the guy glanced over his shoulder. The younger man seemed to do a double take when their eyes met.

Conrad couldn't help but mentally echo the other man's earlier statement. *Bugger!* The boy looked away soon enough, but knowing he'd already recognized him, made it impossible for Conrad to do anything other than come to his rescue.

Stepping out of the line he was in, Conrad joined his friend from the glory hole in front of the other till.

Passing a note across the counter, he added. "And a regular coffee, black, no sugar. Thanks."

The waitress took the money. A minute later, Conrad was on his way out of the shop, his own cup of coffee in hand. His foot had barely hit the pavement before he felt someone fall into step next to him.

“Thanks.”

“You’re welcome.” Conrad sped up a little. The boy was several inches shorter than him. He had littler legs. Somehow he still kept pace with him through the crowds.

“I forgot my wallet.”

“Yeah, I noticed,” Conrad said, not once letting his gaze stray to the man on his left.

“I’m not usually so dopey,” the other guy offered.

Conrad said nothing. As they reached a junction, he allowed himself one quick glance at the younger man. He’d wrapped both his hands around his paper coffee mug, trying to get whatever warmth he could from it as the autumn wind rushed around them. Dragging his gaze away from him, Conrad looked back to the traffic lights.

“Would you like to screw me?”

All thoughts about how freezing the boy had to be, shattered inside Conrad’s mind. Traffic signals forgotten about, he blinked down at the younger man. “What?”

“I do owe you for the coffee,” he reminded him, an inviting little smile playing around his lips.

“Call me old fashioned,” Conrad said, allowing no hint of a smile to sneak out in return. “But I don’t pay for sex—not even with hot beverages.”

Suddenly the smaller man didn’t look half so cold as he had a moment before. Heat rushed to his cheeks. His gaze dropped to the pavement and stayed there.

Conrad was pretty sure this was exactly why he was better off sticking to glory holes and the kind of clubs that were dark enough to make the men he screwed unrecognizable. He wasn’t cut out to look someone in the eye when they had sex, then ignore them the next time he met them. And he wasn’t cut out to give a boy in need the brush off either.

“Conrad.”

The pretty little blond looked up at him, all confusion and big grey eyes.

“Conrad Rawlings,” Conrad clarified, holding out his hand to him.

The younger man freed one of his palms from the half-drunk coffee cup and shook his hand. “Willis Evans.”

The lights finally changed. The crowd moved forward. The little guy stuck to Conrad’s side, for all the world like a puppy showing off a newly discovered ability to walk at heel. He

even looked up at his master every so often, to see if he was pleased with him and might be inclined to offer him a treat.

He couldn't have screamed his submission more loudly if the jeans and t-shirt had been replaced by a leather harness. Conrad took a deep swig of coffee and pushed that image out of his head as quickly as it had snuck past his defenses.

"I'd have offered to do whatever you wanted for free, I just thought, since you did buy me the coffee and everything. Maybe it would be fun to kill two birds with one stone?"

And Willis obviously didn't have the cash to pay him back any other way. Conrad would bet good money on the fact the wallet he'd 'misplaced' didn't even exist. No doubt someone else in the queue would have anteed up the coffee money for him if Conrad hadn't been there. It was probably far from the first time the submissive had wrangled a warming drink that way.

When he actually heard the other man's stomach growl during a lull in the traffic at the next junction, Conrad knew there was no way in hell he'd be able to walk away and leave Willis no better off than he'd found him. He tossed his empty coffee carton in a bin and considered his options.

"I know somewhere we could go," Willis suggested.

Conrad met his eyes for a moment.

"It's not far from here," the submissive added, with a hopeful little smile.

For a few seconds, all Conrad could do was stare down at him. When the lights changed and he stepped forward, the younger man reached out and tugged gently at the sleeve of his coat, nodding toward a side street.

Conrad shook his head and kept walking.

"The place I know is—"

"I know a better place," Conrad cut in.

The boy hesitated then, as if he was suddenly uncertain he wanted to go anywhere at all with him. Conrad stopped and waited for him, but he kept his mouth shut. He might not have completely cured himself of 'taking up strays', as his family liked to call it, but he liked to think he'd reached the point where he knew there was nothing he could do to help someone who wasn't ready to accept his assistance.

The sub looked back to the side street he seemed so fond of. "Maybe we could go back there afterwards?" he asked, tentatively.

Conrad nodded. "If that's what you want." There was no reason way they couldn't go back to the boys place later. A quiet place to talk would probably be useful.

The submissive returned to Conrad's side. He made no further complaint as Conrad led him toward a nice little café on the next street. The younger man hesitated on the threshold, but he quickly caught up again as Conrad led the way to a table near the back of the room, right next to a huge old fashioned radiator.

A nudge sent the boy to sit in the corner next to the heater. Even while he looked confused as hell, there was something irresistible about him. And the memory of a very wonderful mouth wrapped around his cock wasn't the half of it. Willis called up far too many possessive and protective instincts inside Conrad for the dominant's peace of mind.

The older man held back a sigh. He knew there was a good reason why he stuck to lovers he never set eyes on...

The boy looked around the quiet little café as if he'd never seen one before. Taking a laminated menu from the far side of the table, Conrad pushed it in front of him.

"I'm fine. I can just wait while you..." Willis looked across at the waitresses, as if she might attack at any moment. "Or I could wait outside, if—"

"Read the menu. Pick something to eat."

"Um...my wallet, I..." The younger man didn't even try to meet his gaze as he said it.

"Breakfast's on me."

Big grey eyes looked up at him then, their expression unreadable.

"No repayment necessary," Conrad added.

The other man looked down at the menu in silence for a few moments. "I... I enjoyed last time we met," he blurted out, suddenly.

"So did I."

No man should look like he'd been given the world on a stick, just because he heard a guy admit he liked being blown. Conrad smiled slightly as a pleased little blush stole to the other man's cheeks. No doubt he'd make one hell of a good submissive for the right master at some point in the future. Not now, the boy obviously had other things he needed to deal with before he should be thinking about that, but still—

"You ready to order?" a waitress asked as she stopped next to them.

A glance across the table, and Conrad knew the younger man wasn't ready to make any sort of decision for himself right then.

"A breakfast special with everything and two mugs of coffee, thanks," Conrad said, before the sub had a chance to get flustered.

Willis made no comment on the order, even after the waitress left.

"Are you using?" Conrad asked, doing his best to make the question sound no more threatening than a bland discussion about the weather.

Willis looked him in the eye as he shook his head.

"Working for street money?" Conrad asked, in that same easy tone.

The younger man's gaze dropped. For a moment, Conrad expected him to bolt, but he held his ground. "I wasn't asking you for money." Lifting his eyes, he held Conrad's gaze, as if begging him to recognize it as the truth.

"I believe you."

The waitress came back before any other questions could be asked. The breakfast special they served there really was special. The platter almost took up half the table. Conrad nodded to the space in front of the submissive when she asked who it was for.

Willis looked up at him, once more all confusion.

"Eat."

"I don't—" He blushed when his rumbling stomach cut in with truly perfect timing. Willis picked up his knife and fork. The first few mouthfuls were hesitant, as if he expected the plate to be snatched from in front of him at any moment and he wanted to be ready to apologize as soon as it was.

Gradually, simple survival instinct took over. Willis didn't turn his attention back to Conrad until the last scrap was cleared. Then he looked back down at his empty plate in horror.

"When was the last time you ate?" Conrad asked.

The blush came back, but even after it had faded, there was a little color in his skin now. He still looked like he could do with a few more good meals to put a little bit of depth on his bones, but the hunger was gone from his eyes.

Hunger for food anyway, the submissive kind of hunger was still there, shining as brightly and as temptingly as ever.

Standing up, Conrad retrieved his jacket off the back of his chair. When he nodded for the younger man to walk out in front of him, he casually dropped his coat over the submissive's shoulders, as if it was no big deal.

Willis looked at him as if he'd grown another head. "You'll get cold!"

He'd get cold in a thick jumper, walking next to a boy in a thin t-shirt... Conrad just shook his head and left his jacket wrapped around the other man's smaller frame as they walked out into the street.

Conrad looked both ways along the road. The sensible thing to do would be to find out exactly what had gone so wrong in the younger man's life, and deliver him to someone who could help him. A decade on the police force had provided him with a huge list of organizations who could be relied upon to help a man back onto his feet.

It would be the sensible thing to do. Except, when he looked down at Willis, Conrad didn't feel that sensible.

He wanted to take him home and wrap him up in an insane amount of cotton wool. And possibly, if the guy was still interested when he was back up on his feet and ready to make a clear decision, bind him up in roughly the same amount of leather. Conrad forced himself to at least try to be rational.

"There's a place—"

"You promised you'd go back with me," Willis suddenly reminded him.

Conrad hesitated. Yes, he had agreed to go back to the boy's place with him. And even if he was no longer sure it was wise for him to be all alone with a man who called to him in a way no other submissive ever had, he knew a man didn't help someone by lying to him. He nodded his agreement.

The relief in Willis' eyes made him sure he'd made the right choice. As he let the other man lead the way, Conrad turned his attention back to his plans for him. He wouldn't have made it into the club where they'd first met if he'd been under eighteen, which ruled out a few different organizations. There was always St. Tristan's, though. They'd give him a room if he was under twenty-one. He took a sideways glance at the younger man.

He could easily pass for the right age, but it was hard to tell for sure. "How old are you?" All the color drained out of the submissive's face as the question hit the air.

Conrad frowned. "Willis?"

“Nineteen,” he said, his voice suddenly hoarse. “I’m nineteen.”

Just then, they reached the side street the submissive had pointed out to him on the way to the café. “Down here?” Conrad asked.

Willis just stared along the road, as if he’d never seen it before. Conrad’s jacket slipped part way off his shoulder as someone bumped into him on his way past. Willis pulled the coat back around himself. He looked down at it for a second. Then he shook his head.

“Willis?”

“No.” The younger man shook his head again as he took a step back from him. When Conrad reached out to steady him, he jerked away as if he’d raised a hand to strike him.

“Please.” The younger man took off his jacket and pushed it at against Conrad’s chest. “You have to... I... I’ve changed my mind, sir. I’m sorry, just—”

Conrad caught hold of Willis’ arm, as he stumbled over a curb stone.

“I can get the money to pay you back for—”

“That’s not important. Just tell me what—” Conrad didn’t even have time to finish the order before the boy slipped from his grip. One minute Willis was there, the next he was gone, rushing through the crowd, down the side street and out of sight.

Conrad looked down at his jacket. *Can’t be helped until he’s ready to be helped.* Just because he knew it was a fact, he didn’t have to like it.

* * * *

As Willis stepped into the small dank room, his eyes went straight to the camera hidden in the corner. His heart was racing so fast, he couldn’t catch his breath. He closed his eyes for a moment as he leaned over and rubbed at the stitch in his side, but he didn’t have to wait long before the door swung opened and slammed closed behind him. A shadow blocked out whatever weak rays of light managed to sneak into the room through the dirty window.

“I’m sorry, sir. I couldn’t—”

His master’s hand closed around his arm as Marshall spun him around.

Willis kept his gaze down, as if that might somehow help, even when he could feel his master’s fury pouring off him.

“Where’s Rawlings?”

“I... He wasn’t interested. I tried to bring him here, but he wouldn’t—” The first blow took the submissive’s breath away. As he doubled up, the next lie died on his lips. Dropping

heavily to his knees, Willis curled in on himself. He closed his eyes very tight and remembered the look in Conrad's eyes as he'd stared at him across the table in the café.

For the first time Willis could remember, he didn't feel guilty for displeasing his master. He'd taken a lot of beatings from the older man over the months. He couldn't help but think that this one, at least, was worth it.

Chapter Two

“What the hell’s going on?” Conrad looked around the station in amazement. The corridors should have been nigh on deserted that time in the evening, when it was late enough for everyone else on the day shift to have left, but still too early for the night shift to have brought in the worst of the drunks.

Instead, the hallway was crammed packed with dozens of handcuffed men, and even more cops.

“I’m a genius, that’s what’s going on.”

Conrad glanced over his shoulder, just in time to see one of his many cousins reach his side, grinning from ear to ear. “Ed—I should have guessed.” Where that sort of bedlam reined, Ed Rawlings couldn’t be too far away. “Any particular brand of genius involved?”

“Drug bust,” Ed specified. “Bloody huge drug bust. I should get a sodding Oscar for this one. Best actor. Best choreographer too. I had every sodding one of them dancing to my tune.”

Conrad smiled slightly. The younger man was almost bouncing up and down with excitement. Conrad looked him over. It was never easy to guess what his cousin would look like next time he saw him. This particular incarnation was bleached blond with black contact lenses and a fake tattoo scrawling up his neck and across his cheek.

“How long were you undercover?”

“Couple of weeks.” Ed pulled up his hood, slouched, and suddenly he didn’t look like a cop in a slightly scruffy hoodie, but a genuine Anti Social Behavior Order waiting to happen. He paced around a bit, doing a bloody good impression of a caged animal ready to attack at any moment, and scaring the hell out of most of the constables who hadn’t learned to recognize him.

Leaning against the wall, Conrad watched it all with due appreciation, until he caught sight of another familiar face down the corridor.

“Willis?”

He'd only taken one step in the younger man's direction when a scuffle had another officer calling for assistance. By the time the situation was under control and Conrad looked down the corridor again, there was no sign of the younger man.

"Did you see a pretty blond boy, about nineteen...?" Conrad trailed off as he looked over his shoulder and saw a strange expression on his cousin's face.

"Anything interesting happen to you last Wednesday?" Ed asked.

There was obviously no point expecting the other man to make any sense so soon after coming in off an assignment. Leaving Ed in his wake, Conrad made his way through the station, until he finally caught sight of Willis sitting in the corridor leading to the interview rooms.

"Willis?"

The younger man looked up. Conrad didn't think it was possible for the boy to get any paler than he already was, somehow he managed it. The lack of color only made the bruise on his temple look even darker and more painful.

Crouching down in front of the younger man, Conrad reached out and pushed the submissive's hair back off his face to get a better look at it. "Have you been checked out?"

Willis swallowed. "I saw the police doctor. He said I'm fine, sir."

"And who's responsible for this?"

"You, by all accounts."

Conrad looked up. Inspector Jarvis stared down at him, his expression even more serious than usual.

"What?" Conrad looked back to Willis, but the younger man looked just as confused as he felt.

"Apparently you've developed a taste for beating the hell out of underage rent boys," Jarvis informed him.

Conrad stood up. "What the hell's going on?"

Inspector Jarvis sighed and pushed open the door leading into the interview room. Conrad automatically helped Willis up off his seat, careful in case there were other injuries hidden beneath the submissive's clothes, and they followed the inspector and another detective into the room.

"It's been a long day, it looks likely to be an even longer night," Jarvis said. "One question before anyone says another word. Did Sergeant Rawlings do this to you?"

Willis looked from Jarvis to Conrad and back again. He shook his head.

Jarvis looked over his shoulder at Conrad. "Wait outside."

Conrad felt his hackles go up at the idea the boy might be lying because he was scared of him, but he went out into the corridor, knowing that was the quickest way for him to get back in there and find out what the hell was going on.

Ed was waiting for him just outside the door. A few seconds later, Conrad had brought his cousin up to date on what he knew.

The undercover officer nodded as if it suddenly all made perfect sense to him. "I guess if he can't get you for—"

The door swung open. Conrad strode back in to the room, vaguely aware that Ed was still on his heels.

"He says it wasn't you," Jarvis informed him.

The iron band that had wrapped itself around Conrad's rib cage relaxed and let him breathe a little.

"But his pimp says it was," the inspector added.

The band came back, tighter than ever. "Pimp...?"

"Didn't you know you were talking to Marshall's pet rent boy?" Conrad dragged his eyes away from the submissive for a moment. Detective Constable Simmons stood next to the inspector. It was wrong to assume that just because the man was the Chief Inspector's son, he'd automatically be a complete prat. In this particular case, Conrad was willing to accept that any such assumption was completely true.

Dismissing the constable from his mind, Conrad looked quickly back to the younger man. The submissive sat at the table, arms wrapped around his body as if struggling to hold himself together.

Marshall's pet rent-boy. Bile rose in the back of Conrad's throat at the thought.

"I guess if Marshall can't frame you for screwing him, this is his next best choice," Ed piped up from where he'd settled himself in the corner of the room.

"What?"

"Toby Marshall. Drugs and skin mostly. Sadistic bastard too. Apparently you really pissed him off at some point, because he's put a lot of effort into working out how to frame you."

“And you didn’t think that was something I should know?” Conrad asked, making some attempt at keeping his tone calm in deference to the submissive’s presence, but not entirely sure he succeeded. If he’d known that, perhaps he’d have been able to... Conrad wasn’t even sure, but it would have bloody well included making sure Willis hadn’t been beaten black, blue, and many interesting shades of purple.

“I knew he was after a cop called Rawlings,” Ed shrugged. “That doesn’t really narrow it down around here. Last time I counted, there were a couple of dozen of us in the force.”

Conrad looked back to Willis. The boy kept his gaze on the table, as if afraid to look up.

“Anyway,” Ed went on. “He was supposed to be the honey in the trap, lure you in front of a camera and put on a good show for them to send to the papers. ‘Police sergeant screws underage rent boy.’ Would have made one hell of a headline for one of the scandal rags.”

Conrad held up a hand, stopping him short. “Under-age?”

“With the birth certificates to prove it—not bad forgeries,” Ed allowed, with the air of a connoisseur. “The tabloids could have probably got away with claiming they thought they were genuine.”

Conrad just kept staring at the submissive. “How old would the genuine certificate make you?”

“Nineteen, sir.”

It sounded as honest an answer as it had last time he asked, just before the submissive bolted.

“Still, it’s a good thing for you that you didn’t take the bait,” Ed announced.

“What?”

“I heard him tell Marshall he damn near got on his knees and begged, and you weren’t interested.”

Willis’ gaze flashed up to meet his. A second’s eye contact was all Conrad needed. He hadn’t been able to go through with it. He saw it in the younger man’s eyes, along with the shame and the pain that flooded his expression. Whatever he’d told his pimp, the simple truth was, when it came right down to it, he hadn’t been able to go through with the plan to frame him.

“If we’re done with all the touchy feely bullshit,” the younger detective began. “It’s time he answered a few of our questions about his friends.”

“No!” Willis’ eyes opened very wide with the word. “I’m not saying anything.” He hesitated for a second. “I’ll say that Sergeant Rawlings didn’t hurt me, that he hasn’t done anything wrong. I’m not saying anything else.”

Simmons shrugged. “He’ll change his mind soon enough when he finds out that the cells are all full and he’ll have share with a few of the others. Doubt they’ll be happy when we tell them all he’s agreed to testify against them all in exchange for being released without charge.”

Conrad stepped forward.

The constable didn’t look impressed. “If he’s Marshall’s little bitch-boy then—”

Suddenly, Willis was also on his feet too, standing between Conrad and Simmons. “Yes, I am.”

“What?” Simmons looked from Conrad to Willis and back again.

Willis’ shoulders shook as he took a deep breath. “Yes. That’s exactly what I am. So you can throw me in any cell you like. Do you really think there’s anything any of those guys can do to me that they haven’t already done a dozen times over?”

The room fell completely silent.

“I won’t say a word against—against any of them. And if that means being locked up for refusing to cooperate or whatever the hell it’s called,” he shrugged, as if he knew his life inside prison would be that much different to his life outside it, and he was past the point of expecting anything different.

“Excuse me, for not feeling too sorry for Marshall’s whore,” the constable muttered. “The only thing I care about is the information he has on—”

”That’s enough!” Jarvis cut in. The room fell silent as angry glares replaced raised voices for a few moments.

“You, stay where you are,” he ordered, pointing to Willis. “Everyone else, out.”

Ed and Simmons filed out.

“You too,” Jarvis called to Conrad, when he would have stayed behind in the hopes of having a few minutes alone with Willis.

Conrad strode across to the door. Looking both ways along the corridor, he caught sight of a familiar head of blond hair. If he couldn’t find an actual Rawlings to sit with the boy, a man who was engaged to a Rawlings was the next best thing.

“Hadley!” The constable turned around and made his way across to him through the bedlam. “Sit with him until I get back.”

The younger man nodded and disappeared into the room. A hurried text, and Conrad was soon striding into the incident room.

“What’s your deal with him?” Inspector Jarvis asked as he reached the older man’s desk.

“Anonymous hook up in a club. And, apparently, an aborted blackmail attempt the next day. Is he under arrest?”

Most of Jarvis’ attention seemed to be on the report he was reading. “He was picked up with a couple of dozen others...” He turned over the page. “You know how these operations always end up going down. Arrest anything that moves. Sort out the wheat from the chaff later.”

“So you don’t actually have anything on him except for him being pimped out and beaten to hell and back?” Conrad asked.

The inspector pushed his hand through his hair. It was a bad habit for a cop to get into every time the job stressed him out. The older man didn’t have a lot of hair left to tear out.

“His lawyer’s on his way anyway,” Conrad informed him.

“His pimp’s lawyer is already here. He’s—” the DC began

“*Willis*’ lawyer’s on his way,” Conrad repeated.

Ed stood on the other side of the desk. Conrad saw his lips twitch. He could guess what the other cop was thinking, and he was right. Tony was just going to love being dragged to the station for a pro bono case at this time in the evening.

* * * *

Willis looked up as the door leading into the interview room swung open. For a moment, he let himself hope that it would be Conrad coming back, that he’d be able to see the other man again, if only for a few minutes.

The man who walked in looked a bit like Conrad. He had the same dark hair and broad shoulders, the same jaw line. But he wasn’t Conrad, and the sense of ease that Willis had found in the other man’s presence didn’t arrive with his man.

Striding across the room, the guy set a brief case on the small table, and extended his hand toward Willis. “Antony Rawlings. I’ve been retained to represent your interests.” He nodded to the policeman who’d been standing by the door ever since Conrad left. “Thanks Hadley, I can take it from here.”

Willis swallowed down his nerves as the constable left them alone. “I don’t, I mean...”

“Conrad arranged for me to represent you,” the lawyer cut in, taking a seat opposite Willis.

“I don’t understand... I...”

The other man looked him up and down, seeming to take in every detail. “Have you ever been arrested before?”

Willis shook his head.

“Good. Here’s the basic idea of how it works—I’m on your side. And right now, that means I’m going to get you out of here as quickly as possible. All you have to do is tell me the complete truth. Can you do that?”

Willis offered him a cautious nod.

The older man started firing off question after question at him. Willis’ head was still swirling with the echoes of them all, when the door was pushed open again.

Conrad walked back in. So did other men, but Willis only had eyes for the dominant. Conrad offered him an encouraging little smile, but he stayed on the other side of the room when all the others came closer.

Willis was vaguely aware that people were talking to each other above his head. Individual words jumped out at him. *Innocent. Police bail. Victim. Witness. Released without charge. Forms. Evidence. Custody. Address.* They all swirled into a jumble around him as more and more terms flashed back and forth across the room, from the lawyer, to the policemen and back again.

Willis dropped his gaze for a moment, before looking back up and meeting Conrad’s eyes across the room. He couldn’t look away then. Their eyes were locked and he was trapped by him in a way he never truly had been by Marshall.

“Police bail.” The words tugged at the edges of Willis’ conscious. “Willis!”

Conrad broke their gaze and the submissive was freed to look toward the inspector.

“You’re going to be released on police bail. Do you understand what that means?” the older man asked.

Willis shook his head.

“We’re not charging you with anything right now—you’re being released without charge, but you’ll have to come back and answer our questions whenever we want to speak to you. Understand?”

Willis managed a nod.

“And that means you’ll have to give us an address where we’ll be able to find you.”

Willis hesitated then. “Is my—is Marshall being released too?”

“No, he’s already been charged. We’ve got enough on him to put him away for a very long time.”

Willis was vaguely aware that the older man was talking to him the same way he’d speak to a child. Unexpected sympathy shone in his eyes as he looked down at Willis. “You were living with him?”

Willis nodded.

“Do you have anywhere else you can stay?”

Willis stared down at the tabletop.

“I could probably arrange—” the lawyer began.

“He can stay with me.”

Everyone in the room turned to look at Conrad. Willis was no exception. He stared up at the dominant, waiting for a punch line.

“Are you sure that’s a good idea?” The words floated over Willis’ head from someone behind him. He looked back to the desk, not able to watch the other man realize he didn’t actually want him anywhere near him.

“I’m sure,” Conrad said.

Not knowing what to say, Willis stayed silent as the other men talked around him. There seemed to be a lifetime’s worth of forms that needed to be filled in and men Conrad needed to talk to. With every second that passed, Willis was more and more certain he was going to be sent back to Marshall, put in a cell like the other cop had said and just left there to rot.

By the time Conrad actually walked him out of the station and held open a car door for him to get into the passenger side, Willis’ heart was racing so fast, he could barely breathe.

The door clicked shut. Conrad walked around to the other side and slid behind the wheel.

“Do your belt up, Willis.”

Hands shaking slightly, the submissive did as he was ordered.

Conrad pulled out of the car park in silence. Willis nipped at his bottom lip as he tried to hide his nerves and failed. Conrad, sitting next to him, radiated perfect calm and control over everything. Just being sealed in the relatively small car with him, tempted Willis to relax and simply relish the dominant's presence.

He closed his eyes for a moment. He couldn't ever remember feeling safer.

Then the engine stopped.

"We're here."

Willis blinked his eyes open. It was hard to see where 'here' was in the darkness. Conrad got out of the car and walked around. Lacking an order to do otherwise, Willis stayed where he was.

The dominant opened the car door and helped him out. His hand stayed on the small of Willis' back, as if he thought he needed steadying as the dominant walked him a little way along the road and to a gate leading to a basement.

They were down the steps and inside a flat before either of them spoke.

"You okay?" Conrad asked as he closed the door behind them.

Willis nodded. "Yes, sir."

The dominant walked forward, into a neat little living room. They really were in the sergeant's own home. The man's presence filled the space.

"Questions?" Conrad asked.

"Why are you being so kind to me, sir?" Willis blurted out.

Conrad smiled slightly, apparently not the least angry about being questioned that way. "Maybe for much the same reason you refused to frame me—twice."

Willis closed his eyes for a moment. He knew why he'd done that. He might have more sense than to admit it out loud, but he knew. He was half sure that he'd fallen in love with the other man the first moment he'd set eyes on him. Maybe even before that. Maybe he'd even fallen in love with him through the glory hole.

Whatever Conrad's motive for being kind to him was, it wasn't the same reason.

He looked up and met the other man's eyes. There was a strange expression in them. Conrad looked away from him before he spoke. "You're exhausted. You should get some sleep."

Turning away from him then, Conrad led the way to a bedroom, pointing out the bathroom on the other side of the hallway on the way past.

Standing just inside the bedroom door, Willis waited for an order.

Conrad walked across to a wardrobe on the other side of the room. Willis tried to glimpse past the larger man's shoulder, wondering what was going to emerge from the shadowy space. Conrad turned around with a blanket and a pillow under his arm. He retraced his steps to the bedroom door.

"Where are you—?" Willis cut himself short, but he knew it was too late. He braced himself for the blow, but none came.

"I'll be on the sofa in the living room."

Conrad's hand was already on the door handle when Willis finally scraped together the courage to speak. "I'm not too tired to make sure it'll be good for you," he rushed out.

The older man was very still for several long seconds. "I didn't bring you here to screw you."

Willis swallowed. "I don't mind—"

Conrad cut him short with a shake of the head. "Maybe it's best that you think of this place as a safe house. You're safe here."

Willis nodded, his gaze remaining on the carpet. He got the message. He wasn't to make himself too at home, this wasn't his home. The other man was just letting him stay there for a few days out of some misguided sense of pity.

Conrad reached out and tucked a knuckle under Willis' chin, guiding him to tilt his head back and look up at him.

"Safe," the larger man repeated. "That means no one demanding anything from you."

It was the nicest way Willis had ever heard a man turn another guy down. He nodded his understanding. A moment later, he was on his own in the room.

Willis looked around it. It was a nice room—nicer than he'd seen in a long time. There was nothing special about it, it was just...nice. The kind of room a nice man might sleep in.

Unable to face the prospect of lying in the other man's bed on his own, Willis walked past it and looked out of the window, into the little courtyard garden.

There was a low military style footlocker set just below the window. Sitting down on the hard wooden surface, Willis pulled his feet up in front of him and wrapped his arms around his legs.

He'd been stupid to think the dominant had meant anything but to offer him a bed for the night.

Willis shook his head at himself. So stupid. Marshall had told him he was an idiot often enough, that he didn't know why he should be surprised to find the dominant had been right.

The other man had told him other things as well—things he'd tried not to believe. Willis closed his eyes as he finally forced himself to face the truth. His master had obviously been right—so very, very right about it all.

Chapter Three

Willis had no idea how much time passed before he heard a footstep in the hallway, followed by a quiet click as the bedroom door was opened from the other side. In Marshall's house, he knew what it meant when a man came to his room in the middle of the night. It inevitably meant pain, of some sort or another.

Here he had no idea. Part of him was sure the other man was just checking up on him, another was convinced the guy had realized Willis didn't belong there and wanted him out of his house that minute.

The door handle rattled, as if the dominant had seen he was already awake, but didn't think Willis had heard him open the door.

Unable to turn around and face the other man, Willis kept staring out the window.

"Couldn't sleep?" Conrad asked.

Willis shook his head, not willing to trust his voice to stay steady if he tried to speak.

"Do you want to talk?" the dominant asked after a while.

Another shake of the head, still directed to the darkness outside the window, was all Willis could manage.

"Willis?"

The younger man swallowed as he heard Conrad take a step into the room.

"It's fine, sir," Willis managed. "You don't have to..." He closed his eyes for a moment. "I'm sorry I got the wrong impression before."

Conrad took several more steps forward.

"I guess I was better at playing pretend than I thought," Willis whispered.

"What?"

Willis forced out a strained little laugh. "I used to pretend that he didn't really mean it."

Another step brought the dominant another foot closer to him.

“The first time he ordered me to take money for it...” Willis dropped his gaze from the window to stare down at his hands. The knuckles were white from the grip he had around his own legs, but he still couldn’t keep the words back.

And Conrad just listened. If he’d told him to shut the hell up it would have been so much easier, but he just listened, and Willis couldn’t stop the truth tumbling out.

“After that first time, I went back to him, thinking he’d be pleased with me. My master hadn’t been pleased with me for so long. I thought, maybe it would be worth it if...” He shook his head. “Marshall just laughed. Told me that was it. No man who didn’t need to pay for it would stoop so low as to lay hand on me now. I thought he’d change his mind. That somehow I’d...But he never did.” The last words were barely a whisper.

Conrad stepped forward again. “And that’s why you think I...?” he asked.

“You’d have screwed me,” Willis said softly. “A few days ago, you’d have screwed me. And you’d have enjoyed it. But that was before you found out what I am, wasn’t it?” He closed his eyes again, shaking his head slightly. If he’d gone where the other man wanted to take him rather than try to get him to go back to that stupid room with the camera in it, maybe he could have at least had a few hours with the dominant, something to remember. But it was too late to wish for that now.

“It doesn’t matter,” Willis whispered, shrugging the whole babbled mess aside.

He waited for the sound of footsteps leaving the room. That didn’t happen. He heard Conrad take a pace forward instead. Tensing up, he forced himself to stay very still and simply wait for the first blow. He had it coming for his bloody cheek if nothing else, rambling on at the other man, complaining after he’d gone out of his way to help him so much.

Conrad lifted his hand, but when his knuckles touched Willis’ cheek, the gesture couldn’t have been gentler. The dominant sat on the footlocker next to him and guided Willis to turn to face him.

He was going to be nice about it. He was going to explain exactly why he had no interest in screwing him anymore, why his master had been right. Suddenly Willis knew he couldn’t let that happen. He tried to stand up and put some distance between them, but Conrad stopped him short as he leaned forward and brought their lips together.

Willis froze. It was barely enough to be called a real kiss, little more than a brush of mouths, then Conrad pulled back.

Willis caught hold of his arm to stop the other man's retreat. "Please?"

The sergeant looked down at him. Willis searched his eyes for any clue as to what he might be able to do to please him, but his mind was racing so fast, he couldn't make his brain work. All he could do was hold onto the other man's sleeve and pray that the dominant might change his mind again and decide he might as well make some sort of use to him, since he was there anyway.

"I meant what I said, sweetheart. I told you to think of this place a safe house for a reason."

The older man started to stand up. Willis felt the cotton fabric slip through his fingers, and any chance he had of keeping the other man there a moment longer disappearing with it.

He'd have felt a lot safer if he'd thought he had anything left to offer the other man, but he knew he didn't. He turned his face back to the window.

Conrad sat down again. As Willis risked a glance to his right, the older man rubbed against his leg, as if sitting on the edge of the hard wooden box had put the limb to sleep. When the dominant turned back to him, it was all Willis could do, not to tilt his head back and beg the other man for another kiss, as if he suddenly expected Conrad would want to kiss him all the time.

"The only thing that changed when you told me how you've been surviving on the street, is that I realized you need time to heal and to work through a lot of things before you start to think about if you might want to look for another dominant."

"I won't freak out on you, sir," Willis rushed out. "I can still do whatever you—"

Conrad's fingers settled over his lips, very gently. "Stop worrying about what I want." He took his fingers away. "What do *you* want?"

Willis dropped his gaze, looking down at the seat between them.

"Sweetheart?" Conrad asked, as the silence stretched out between them.

Willis couldn't keep the dominant waiting forever. It was bad enough that he kept him waiting as long as he had. "I told you what I wanted, sir," he whispered, risking a quick glance up.

Conrad gazed down at him. "No, darling, you didn't." The correction was as gently spoken as anything Willis had ever heard. "You told me that you'd do whatever I want—that's

different. I need you to tell me what *you* want—the truth, now—not what you think I’d like to hear.”

“I want you to...us to...” A rent boy who could talk about sex. Willis closed his eyes as heat rushed to his cheeks. He couldn’t ask the other man to screw him. The strength that kind of request required wasn’t in him right then.

Sure he was making things so much the worse with every second that passed, Willis forced himself to say something, anything. He had no idea what words were going to leave his mouth until they were already hanging in the air between them. “Let me show you, sir?”

Conrad studied him very carefully.

“If I can’t convince you this is what I really want, I won’t ask again,” Willis promised.

Conrad reached out and ran his fingers through his Willis’ hair, pushing the long fringe back off his face. Very slowly, the dominant nodded his agreement.

Willis smiled into the half-light that made it through the window as relief rushed through him.

“Whatever you want, nothing more,” Conrad told him again.

“If I do something you don’t want—”

Conrad cut him off with a shake of the head. “I can look after myself.” His smile turned rueful. “You’re the one who needs looking after, aren’t you?”

Willis caught himself before he automatically nodded his agreement with whatever the other man said. He could look after himself too. He didn’t want the dominant thinking he’d be hanging around him, making a nuisance of himself after Conrad was finished with him.

Standing up, Willis gently tugged on the other man’s hand, leading him toward the bed and safe territory, only to hesitate when they reached it. He’d take what he could get from the other man. If he received nothing more than he had at the glory hole, Willis knew he’d take it and love it, but if he could have more than that...

If there was any chance at all that he could have just a little bit more of the one good thing that seemed to have come into his life since he stepped out of the closet then he at least had to try...

Willis reached for the top button on the other man’s shirt. Conrad made no comment as the little bits of plastic slipped through the holes one by one. In the shadowy light, Willis

watched the other man's body being revealed to him. But, as he realized the dominant was making no attempt to strip him down in return, Willis's fingers faltered at their task.

"I promised I wouldn't take advantage of the fact you're here, remember?" Conrad said.

"Feels more like the other way around, sir," Willis murmured.

Conrad stroked his fingers through his hair, guiding him closer. "You really don't like taking the lead, do you, sweetheart?"

Willis rested his forehead on the other man's shoulder, cherishing the feeling of Conrad's bare skin against his temple.

"I haven't stopped thinking about you since that first day I set eyes on you, wishing that stupid wall wasn't between us," Conrad whispered to him.

Willis swallowed. As he closed his eyes, an image of the other man appeared in his head, the same one that he'd pictured so often over the last days. He'd never realized a smile could be so perfect.

"If you want to submit to me, you can."

Willis looked up, but before he could say a word, the other man silenced him with a shake of the head. "But the only way you can do that right now, is by showing me what you want. If that's just lying down and falling asleep a little more easily because you know there's someone here watching over you, that's great. And if you want to do more—that's fine too. But if you want to offer something to the man your submitting to, give me the truth, okay?"

Willis nodded slowly. He wasn't taking control. He was following the other man's orders, proving how much he wanted to be with him. He was doing something that would please his...his master. Right then, just inside his head, he couldn't resist the temptation to call him that.

Taking a deep breath, Willis turned his attention back to the other man's clothes. In a few moments, they were stripped from his body. Conrad just stood there then, waiting for Willis to tell him what he wanted now—for Willis to offer him something more—to show that no matter what Marshall had done to him, he was still capable of offering him more.

A tentative nudge was all it took to convince the dominant to lay back on the bed. As Willis moved onto the mattress next to him, Conrad reached for the bedside lamp.

Survival instinct kicked in. Willis caught hold of the older man's arm, stopping him short.

"Willis?"

For a few seconds, he couldn't make words happen. Willis had to swallow rapidly before he could force a single syllable out. "You said I had to tell you if there was something I didn't want, sir. Something I couldn't—" he tightened his grip on Conrad's arm. He couldn't let the other man see the state he was in. There was safety in the shadows that surrounded them. Safety in the certainty that Conrad would never see the bruises other men had left beneath his skin.

Dropping his hand away from the sergeant's arm, he somehow forced himself to let the dominant make the final decision. His heart raced faster and faster with every moment that passed, until Conrad finally lowered his hand back to the mattress without switching on the light.

The older man wouldn't see the bruises, and no one would see Conrad with him either. That was important too. Not a trap. Not a trick. Just a dominant and a submissive and a few hours to pass until the morning and the real world came back.

The darkness gave Willis courage. Scrambling out of his clothes as quickly as he could, he dropped them onto the floor by the side of the bed, snagging lube and a condom out of his jeans pocket at the same time.

Clambering back onto the mattress, he didn't waste any more time. Dipping his head over the dominant's lap, he guided the tip of the other man's shaft into his mouth, just as he had once before.

If Conrad's mind had doubts about screwing him, his cock certainly didn't. He was more than half hard from the start and he quickly stiffened further under Willis' hands and tongue as the submissive did everything he could think of to show the larger man how much he wanted him.

The very fact that the dominant wanted him to want it, that he cared if he wanted it or not, rushed straight to Willis' cock as he felt the other man's care of him wrap around him like a protective leather cloak.

Licking and sucking around Conrad's shaft, he murmured his pleasure, glorying in a moment where he could actually turn and run if he wanted to and know he wouldn't be beaten for it. And even more than that, he felt himself thrive on the fact that, for the first time in so many months, he didn't want to run.

Conrad reached out and stroked his fingers through Willis' hair and down over his neck and shoulders, encouraging him on without actually demanding anything from him. "That's right, darling."

Willis whimpered around the dominant's erection. The sound pulled a gasp out of Conrad in return. Pre-cum was already leaking steadily onto his tongue when Willis forced himself to pull away.

The older man half sat up, reaching out to him again. For the first time in what felt like several lifetimes, Willis didn't flinch away from an expected blow. He caught the other man's hand and pressed a kiss to it. Leaning forward at the same time, he let his own erection rub gently against the other man's leg.

He wanted it. He wanted him. For the first time since Marshall started loaning him out to his friends, Willis wanted another man so much he could taste the need for him, and he wanted Conrad to know that—for him to always know he'd given everything he had to him, freely and without hesitation.

Forcing himself to let go of the dominant's hand, Willis snatched up the condom off the bed and tore the packet open. Conrad leaned back on his elbow as Willis slid the latex down the older man's shaft with the ease of long practice.

By the time his one hand had guided it into place, his other had flicked the top off the lube. Quickly smearing the condom with the slickness, he moved to straddle the other man.

He could give him this. A perfect parting gift. No. Willis shook his head as he hurriedly pushed the idea of a time and place after this moment ever existing. All that mattered was right there and right then.

With another sort of dominant, he wouldn't have dared rest his hands on his lover's body to steady himself. Right then, as he stared down at Conrad, Willis didn't hesitate to spread his fingers out on the older man's chest, glorying in the strength he felt in the other man's body as he slowly lowered himself down around the dominant's shaft.

Conrad settled his hands on Willis' hips then, not rushing him but steadying him further, encouraging him to rest and let himself relax before he tried to make good on his promise to make sure it was good for him.

No. Willis closed his eyes for a moment. He didn't want to make it good for him—good was for men who'd hurt him if it wasn't good enough. Conrad deserved everything to be...perfect.

Rocking his hips, Willis started to move and slowly build up his rhythm, raising and lowering himself around the other man's shaft. The older man's cock filled him completely,

stretching him and rubbing against his prostate with every movement either of them made, encouraging Willis to move faster and faster around him as he lost himself in the sensations that raced through his veins.

Leaning back a fraction altered the angle. Pure pleasure shot through Willis, hot and uncontrollable, making him whimper as he frantically tried to keep his rhythm intact.

Conrad's hands tightened their grip on him, as if he couldn't resist the temptation to hold him tight, to start to lead his submissive's movements rather than follow him. Willis murmured his relief at the knowledge, at the added adrenaline that tight clasp sent racing through his brain.

When the other man released him, he wanted to cry out in protest. A moment later, he did yell out—in shock and surprise as the dominant's hand wrapped around his cock.

Conrad jacked him off, rapid and demanding, dragging him into an even faster rhythm than Willis had thought he was capable of. On edge before the other man's palm even touched his cock. All it took was a few moments with Conrad's fingers working around his shaft and he came, without warning, without permission—helplessly spilling over the other man's chest as pure bliss made him toss his head back. His mind disintegrated, until there was nothing but pleasure, nothing but Conrad, nothing but perfection.

Gasping for breath, head spinning with his own release, Willis fought to keep moving, keep offering what he could to the other man. Conrad's hands stayed on his skin, helping him keep his rhythm until the older man finally bucked underneath him, pushing up into him and strengthened his hold on him even further as he pressed his head back against the pillow and arched up to come deep inside him.

Even in the half-light, the pleasure on the dominant's face was mesmerizing. Willis stared at the other man's expression as seconds passed, and they both fell still. Knowing he was risking everything, Willis leaned forward and brushed his lips against the dominant's mouth.

Conrad smiled slightly, as he invited him to deepen the kiss. He didn't let him lead the kiss though. From the first moment, he took control of it, as if he was more than content to let Willis decide if he wanted to kiss him or not, but he couldn't suppress his own instincts to the extent he became a follower than a natural leader.

When Willis pulled back, Conrad slid his hand into his hair and guided him to lean forward and rest against him. Laying over the other man, with their bodies moving against each other with every breath and the dominant's hand stroking idly up and down his spine, it would

have been so easy to simply close his eyes and fall asleep there, as if he'd somehow earned that right, just because the dominant had got off on screwing him.

Conrad's heart was still racing a little. Willis felt it pounding against his skin, felt every breath the older man took. For a few seconds, he let himself pretend everything really was that simple, but eventually he forced himself to lift his head.

"I should...um..." he glanced across at the bedroom door and in the general direction of the bathroom on the opposite side of the hall.

Conrad released his hold on him very slowly, almost as if he was reluctant to let him go, even though he was as finished with him as any man could be.

Slipping from the bed, Willis made his way into the bathroom. When he emerged a moment later, he carried a warm cloth back to his dominant.

Conrad blinked his eyes open, confusion in his gaze at the first touch of the damp cloth moving over his skin. He smiled then, reaching up to push his fingers through Willis' hair once more. By the time Willis left the room to clean himself up in turn, the other man's eyes were already dropping closed.

When Willis glanced back through the open door leading into the bedroom a minute or two later, Conrad was sound asleep.

Creeping very quietly back into the bedroom, he carefully pulled the blanket up over the other man. He let out the breath he'd been holding as the dominant failed to stir. Willis knew what he had to do then. Silently collecting up his clothes, he retreated from the room, closing the door as quietly as he could behind him.

Carrying his clothes back into the living room, he slid into them, still trying to be as quiet as possible, just in case the noise might somehow carry through to Conrad.

A few of Willis' lingering bruises protested as he tugged his t-shirt over his head. He was going to be sore in the morning. Sitting down on the sofa to pull on his shoes, the submissive couldn't help but look toward the bedroom door.

One night of not feeling like a whore was more than he'd hoped for during the last months. It was greedy to want more, especially when he knew it was pointless...

Chapter Four

Conrad reached out across the bed as he blinked at the sunlight streaming through the open curtains. His hand failed to find anything but empty mattress. He was alone. A glance at the pillow and it was obvious no one had lain there at any point during the previous night.

Willis was gone. Muttering a string of curses under his breath, Conrad jerked himself out of the bed. Pulling on his trousers, he rushed to the bedroom door and through the little hallway into the living room.

Willis. The submissive was sitting on the edge of the sofa. He looked ready to bolt at any moment, but Conrad felt his heart beat return to something sensible, just at the very fact he was there. "You slept on the sofa?"

Willis stared at the piece of furniture for several long seconds, as if he was only then noticing its existence. "I'm not stupid, sir."

Conrad took a step forward, slowly closing the gap between them as he tried to feel his way forward in a conversation that was taking place far too early in the morning. "I never said you were stupid."

The younger man's Adam's apple bobbed. "I know I'm not your boyfriend, sir. I practically had to beg you to screw me. I might not have much pride left, but I still have more sense to crawl into a dominant's bed and try to cuddle up when he's finished with me."

Conrad stared down at him in silence for several long seconds as he reached the side of the sofa. "Do you regret last night?"

Willis shook his head.

"I will if you keep talking about it that way."

That made Willis look up.

There was no subtle way to ask the question. "Did you have sex with me because you wanted to or because you thought you had to?"

“Because I wanted to, sir,” Willis whispered. He looked over his shoulder then, toward the door leading out into the wider world. He rose to his feet. “I guess I should be going.”

“Going where?”

The submissive hesitated. “What they said at the police station was wrong, he wasn’t just a pimp. He was my master. I...belonged to him and—”

“I know.”

Willis blinked. “Sir?”

Conrad smiled slightly. “I know a submissive when I see one.”

“Yes, sir.”

And Conrad knew that Willis recognized a dominant when he saw one too. Even if he’d only ever known men who had no right to use the title, he still had a submissive’s instincts. He still knew what Conrad was.

Conrad studied him for a few long seconds, as he tried to work out what was the best move for the boy. “You said that you don’t have any family or—”

Willis shook his head. “You’ve done more than enough, sir. I can...”

Conrad put a hand on his arm when he would have rushed out. A choice. He had to give the younger man that—even if it meant that would be the last thing he was ever allowed to give to him. “There are places where I can take you that will help you get back on your feet, which can—”

Willis shook his head, and made a half-hearted attempt to pull his arm out of Conrad’s grasp.

“Or you could stay here with me,” Conrad finished.

Willis froze.

Conrad mentally cursed himself. Anything he might hope could come of their meeting was irrelevant, it was far too soon to mention any of it to Willis. There was no way he could be ready to understand what it was he really wanted to offer him.

For a long time, Willis was very silent, staring at some point that existed in some time and space Conrad couldn’t even guess at.

He waited the younger man out, not willing to make things any worse than he already had.

Very slowly, the submissive nodded.

“You understand what I’m talking about?” Conrad checked.

“I’d be your submissive, sir.” He sounded very calm about the idea.

“Yes.” He wanted to show him what that could really mean—what it should mean, what any dominant worthy of the title should offer his submissive in return.

Willis seemed to think for a long time before he nodded again.

“There are a few things we should talk through,” Conrad said very carefully, not even sure they were having the same conversation.

Willis nodded his acceptance of the idea.

Conrad smiled encouragingly at him. Re-writing the other man’s understanding of what dominance meant, what could be expected of him and what he should expect of his master in return, wasn’t something that could take place overnight, but he could at least make a start.

“Now’s a good time to tell me what’s important to you—if there’s anything you’d hope a good master would provide for you.”

Willis frowned slightly, as if he was working up the courage to say something.

Conrad waited.

“Five hundred.” When the words finally came, they were almost too quietly spoken for Conrad to make them out.

“What?”

Willis stared straight past him, as if he was gazing into a different world. “I’ll do whatever you want for whoever you want,” he said, his voice just slightly stronger. “But when you’re finished with me, I want five hundred pounds, cash.”

Conrad swallowed down the bitter taste in the back of his mouth. All it meant was that he expected what Marshall had taught him to expect. The boy couldn’t be blamed for that.

Willis glanced up. Their eyes met. Conrad saw the fear in the other man’s eyes.

“I…”

“What did Marshall tell you would happen to you if you ever left his…” Conrad couldn’t bring himself to call what the other man had given him a master’s protection. “...his control?” he asked, as gently as he knew how.

Willis shrugged. “A pimp who’s not fussy about the kind of boys he runs—whose clients couldn’t afford the kind of prices Marshall charged the men he...shared me with. There’s no such thing as a former whore, sir—just whores who can’t charge as much as they used to.”

Conrad stepped closer to Willis. The younger man seemed to sense that he had said the wrong thing. He looked down. "Or...maybe four hundred?" he suggested tentatively, as if the only thing wrong with the request was that he'd pitched his opening bid to high.

"Willis..."

"I'm sorry. I... It wouldn't have to be that much either, I just... Just enough to find a room somewhere and tide me over until I can..."

Just a little bit of hope that he wouldn't be picked up by another pimp right away. A fingertip silenced the submissive before he could beg for something he shouldn't ever have to worry about not receiving from his master.

"Look at me. Look me in the eye."

Willis struggled, but he did as he was told.

"That's not going to happen," Conrad said, working hard to keep any trace of emotion out of his voice. "Understand?"

"Yes, sir."

Conrad was pretty sure he'd give exactly the same answer to any question a dominant asked. He couldn't expect him to do anything else right then. In a few months, maybe, but not right then.

The dominant opened his mouth, not sure what he could say. With its usual perfect timing his mobile went off.

Never taking his eyes off the submissive, Conrad pushed his annoyance aside and extracted the infernal contraption from his coat pocket, where he'd tossed it over the back of a chair.

By the time he'd hung up, he knew two things for certain—some problems couldn't be fixed with a simple conversation, and if he made himself any later for his shift by trying to have a really complicated conversation right then, the inspector was going to lynch him, and that wouldn't do Willis any good in the long run either. He glanced at his watch.

"I'm late for my shift. I'd better get going."

"Yes, sir." Willis looked across to the front door as if he expected to be locked out until his master returned.

Conrad looked him up and down. "I'm guessing you didn't get a lot of sleep on that sofa."

“I’m—”

“The time to say you feel fine is when it’s actually true,” Conrad cut in, stroking the back of his knuckles down the submissive’s cheek to soften the correction.

Willis looked down.

Conrad glanced at his watch again. The flat wasn’t big enough to give someone a real tour of it, but he took the submissive by the hand and led him through the rooms one by one as he did his best to make him feel at home there.

The younger man’s expression was unreadable, but when they reached the kitchen, his stomach spoke up for him.

Conrad smiled as Willis blushed. Ruffling his hand through the other man’s hair, he guided him forward and pressed a kiss to his temple.

“Fix yourself something to eat and just crash for a while. I’ll call later and make sure you’re okay.”

Willis nodded. “Yes, sir.”

Walking away from the submissive right then, was just about the hardest thing Conrad had ever done. The only saving grace of the situation was that being out of the younger man’s presence for a little while let him think more clearly about what his next move should be. Before he was halfway to the station, he already has his mobile on hands free and a call ringing through.

“Hi Tony.”

His cousin swore at him. It was amazing the kind of vocabulary an apparently respectable lawyer could acquire in the course of business.

Conrad grinned as the cursing gradually petered out and he could put the first stage of his plan into action.

* * * *

“Hello again.”

Willis wiped his palm on the side of his jeans before he reached out and shook the lawyer’s offered hand.

“Conrad called and said he might be delayed. Come in and wait.”

Willis followed the other man into his office. When Anthony Rawlings sat behind his desk, the submissive found himself lurking uncertainly in the middle of the room.

It wasn't news to him that Conrad was running late. The dominant had phoned him and asked him to catch a taxi and meet him at the lawyer's office because he wouldn't be able to leave the station in time to pick him up for the meeting.

A huge old-fashioned rug occupied the center of the office. Willis stared down at it, but he hardly saw the rich pattern of reds and golds. There hadn't been much chance Conrad would keep him around for more than a few days, anyway. But he knew then that his stupid request had to have ensured that he'd be sent packing the moment he'd paid off the debts he'd already accumulated.

A lawyer who worked in that kind of office had to cost a fortune. And Willis had actually been stupid enough to ask Conrad for money when the sergeant was still out of pocket in legal fees...

"Did Sergeant Rawlings mention if there were any limits on the way the debt was to be repaid, sir?" Willis forced out, his hand clenching into a fist at his side as he tried to keep it all together.

The other man looked over his desk at him. "Pardon?"

Willis cleared his throat and forced himself to step forward. "I know I owe you money, sir. The legal fees and... If Sergeant Rawlings told you how I'm to pay them back, then..." Then maybe they could get this over before the other man got there, and Conrad wouldn't actually see him whoring himself out.

Anthony was silent for a long time. "I think we'd best wait for Conrad to get here before we say anything else." He pressed a button on his desk. "Three cups of tea please, Kathy." He looked back to Willis. "Please, take a seat."

A woman walked into the room a few moments later with three cups of tea on a tray. She looked as if she was about to set the drinks down and leave, but the lawyer stopped her short.

"Willis—this is Kathy—my wife. Kathy—Willis is a friend of Conrad's, who's unfortunately, running a little late at the moment."

Willis looked up at the woman. She was pretty, with dark curly hair piled up on top of her head and a nice smile. Willis managed to scrape up a return smile. Knowing that a fair number of the men Marshall had loaned him to were married was one thing. Coming face to face with the wife of a man he was about to service was something else.

He couldn't meet her eyes as she handed him his cup of tea. Small talk was beyond him. By the time the door on the far side of the room finally swung open to reveal Conrad, Willis' nerves were shot. He was vaguely aware of Kathy and Anthony leaving the room, but the frown around Conrad's eyes was what really held his attention.

"Willis?"

"I'm sorry, sir," Willis rushed out. "I meant what I said. Whatever you want for whoever you want. I did say that I'd pay off the debt, but he wanted to wait for you, and then his wife came in and—"

"Whoa!" Conrad crouched down in front of him, settling his hands on Willis' shoulders. "Take a breath."

Willis did as he was told. The air rushed thick and uncomfortable into his lungs.

"Debt?" Conrad prompted.

"I know how expensive lawyers are and—"

Conrad shook his head. "We're not here about that." The dominant looked at the desk and picked up a folder. As he flicked it open, he nodded to himself and moved the chair next to Willis, so they sat facing each other.

"I know what he made you call him," Conrad said, each of the words slow and precise, as if he didn't think Willis would understand them if he rushed them out. "But that's nothing like how a real master treats his submissive."

"Things will be however you want it to be, sir."

Conrad shook his head again.

Willis fell silent, wishing he was able to say something that would please the other man, but unable to work out what that would be.

"This is what I'm talking about." Conrad passed the folder to him.

Willis opened it and stared down at the printed page. As soon as he saw what it was, he handed it back. "I shouldn't have asked, sir." The words couldn't have tumbled out quicker without overlapping.

"It's not about paying you, sweetheart. It's about you having everything written down, so you can know exactly how you should expect a good master to treat you. And part of that's knowing that a good master doesn't just leave his lover to go begging if things don't work out between them."

Willis glanced down at the printed words, but he couldn't make sense out of them.

"I..."

Conrad seemed to understand. He closed the folder. "Here are the headlines okay?"

Willis automatically nodded.

"If you choose to leave my protection—tomorrow or in five years from now—there won't be five hundred pounds."

Willis closed his eyes.

"If and when we decide things aren't going to work out, we'll start putting things in order for you, so you can take care of yourself. If you're not in a paying job by then, we'll find one for you. And we'll find a nice flat in a safe part of town, and the bond and the first and last month will be paid on it before you move in. And you'll have some savings in place, to keep you going until you're properly on your feet."

Willis opened his eyes, but when he would have spoken, Conrad silenced him with a fingertip against his lips.

"In the meantime, we'll work out what you should do. I don't know if that's going to mean you going back to school, or getting a job, or volunteer work, or what—but we'll find something that's right for you."

Willis nodded, simply because he couldn't think of anything to say.

"Any questions?" Conrad asked, as the seconds passed.

"I'll belong to you, sir?" Willis hazarded, sure that would somehow make everything okay. "You and I will..."

"You'll live with me. You'll be my submissive. I'll be your master—a real master. It won't be anything like what he called dominance."

Willis looked up at him through his lashes. Conrad hadn't mentioned sex, and Willis wasn't sure how to do that without sounding like a slut. What the other man was offering was so close to what he'd hoped for when he first stumbled onto the scene, he couldn't risk ruining it with a stupid question.

Conrad didn't make him ask. "No one's going to force anyone to do anything he doesn't want to do, but if you end up in anyone's bed, it'll be mine—no one else's."

"I'd like that, sir," Willis whispered.

Conrad smiled then. "This is what you want?"

Willis nodded.

“If you have any doubts—”

“No doubts, sir,” Willis whispered. He wanted what the other man was offering him. He didn’t know if he deserved it or if he could keep it once the other man got to know him, but he knew he wanted it. It was practically his only solid point of reference in a world that had changed beyond his comprehension in the last days.

As he sat in the lawyer’s office opposite the dominant, all the things he’d claimed to understand swirled around in his head. Willis looked to the folder. It wasn’t even about knowing he’d have a chance to be something other than a whore when he lost the other man, it was about the simple fact the piece of paper meant he’d belong to him—that Conrad wanted him to belong to him. The man he loved wanted him.

Conrad smiled, as if he suddenly seemed to realize how certain he was about it all. Willis offered him a cautious smile in return. He couldn’t remember being more sure about anything in his life.

“Let’s get Tony and Kathy back in.”

It only took moments for all four signatures to be put in place on two copies. Tony took one and put it back in the file. Conrad handed the other to Willis. He wasn’t sure what to say or what to do with it. Folding it very carefully, he slipped it into the back pocket of his jeans.

Through the rest of the day, it stayed there, a reassuring reminder of everything the dominant had said to him, while Conrad took him shopping for all the things he’d decided it was important for him to buy his submissive that day.

It was late by the time they got back to the house, even later when they made their way into Conrad’s bedroom. Taking the contract out of his pocket, Willis set the document carefully on top of the chest of drawers. “You won’t regret it, sir.”

Willis repeated the words over and over inside his head as he listened to Conrad puttering about behind him. His master wouldn’t ever regret bringing him into his home, because he was going to be perfect for him. A perfect submissive for a perfect master—Except he was pretty sure there was only one of them who was perfect, and it sure as hell wasn’t the submissive in the room.

He heard Conrad step toward him. The dominant settled both his hands on the small of Willis’ back as he turned his submissive around to face him.

“Last night was all about what I wanted, sir,” Willis blurted out.

Conrad smiled. “And that means you think tonight should be all about what I want?”

It should always be about what his master wanted. “I didn’t mean it should be my turn again tomorrow, sir,” Willis rushed to add.

Conrad said nothing about that, he stroked his fingers through his hair instead, encouraging Willis to look up so he could study his face properly.

“I want to see all of you.”

It wasn’t an order, it wasn’t even a question, just a statement.

Willis nodded his acceptance of it. Knowing he’d be crazy to think he could get away with staying hidden away behind his clothes any longer than he already had, he didn’t try to put off the moment any longer.

He pulled his t-shirt up over his head and set it aside. He was in no condition to put on a show. He’d only make a fool of himself that way. All he could hope to do was get it all over with as quickly as possible.

Stepping back from the other man, Willis pushed his jeans off as quickly as possible, kicking off his battered trainers in the process. Unable to lift his head, there was nothing Willis could do but stare down his own body. There were dozens of patches of discolored skin. A particularly vivid bruise decorated his ribs. It had been one hell of a kick.

Conrad’s hand came to rest against it. His thumb stroked over the purpling mark.

“A little time to heal and a few good meals and you’ll be perfect.”

Willis blushed slightly, simply because he couldn’t imagine any man ever finding a nicer way to say he was skinny and beaten, but he’d accept him anyway. It almost sounded as if he’d *love* him anyway.

The dominant’s other hand settled under Willis’ chin and guided him to tilt his head back and offer his lips up to be kissed.

The older man was still dressed. His clothes brushed against Willis’ skin as he leaned into his touch. The kiss was slow and easy, but the other man’s lips were strong and confident against his—there was never any doubt exactly who was in control of the whole world in those moments.

The dominant’s hands slid down his back, settling on his arse as he pulled him closer, until their bodies were pressed together from tip to toe. Willis let his hands hang down idly by

his side, forcing himself to not reach out to the other man as he felt the other man's erection brush against him through his trousers.

It was all about his master. Conrad was a good dominant. He was more than capable of telling him if he wanted his hands on his body. Suddenly the whole world became very simple. Conrad would make the decisions. He wouldn't expect his submissive to read his mind the way other men had in the past.

Willis smiled into the kiss. He'd never felt safer in his life. He hadn't realized that simple safety was a feeling that could rush straight to his cock, but it did. He belonged to Conrad, and as he stood there in his master's bedroom, he had no doubt that he was the safest and the happiest man in the world.

When Conrad pulled back from the kiss, Willis blinked his eyes open. His hands were on the other man's shoulders, his fingers holding on tight to his shirt. He stared at his own fists, wondering when he'd moved, wondering if it even mattered, if his master didn't mind.

Conrad stepped back, but he made no move to part their bodies. His hands stayed on Willis' arse, guiding him to step forward and stay with his master as the older man walked backward toward the bed.

"Good boy."

The back of the larger man's knees hit the mattress. Conrad stopped. When he let go of Willis to reach for his shirt, the submissive made no comment. He let the material slip from his grip, but he couldn't help but stroke his hands along the bare skin once it was revealed to him.

In moments, Conrad was naked. As their bodies came together again, there was nothing to separate them. The height difference made it almost impossible for them to line up perfectly against each other, Willis knew that. He still rose onto his toes to try.

Conrad smiled at his efforts as he guided them both onto the bed. Lube and condoms were swiftly retrieved from the drawer. Slicked fingers slid against Willis' hole as he lay on his side, his head resting on the pillow as he offered his back to the other man. He was soon murmuring his pleasure as the dominant's fingers worked their way inside him and coaxed him to relax for his master.

One minute turned into two, into three and on into more. The submissive closed his eyes as he fought for control.

"No hiding, Willis."

He blinked his eyes open. Looking over his shoulder, he met the other man's gaze and held it. He let him see what kind of touch, what sort of thrusting fingers made him squirm back against them. He hid nothing from his master, not even his hope that there wouldn't be too much more teasing to endure before his master was ready to screw him properly.

Each fingertip touch that circled his hole before the digits slid back inside him, only made him more desperate.

Spooning behind him, Conrad finally pushed into him, slow and easy, as if he had all the time in the world, and this was how he was choosing to spend every second of it. Willis took a deep breath and let it out very slowly as the stretch of the other man filling him eased into a glorious ache that only made him frantic to feel Conrad move inside him.

Lying very still, Willis waited for the other man to decide what he wanted to do. It was all supposed to be about his master, but the first thing the other man did was reach around him.

His hand wrapped around Willis' shaft. Pure pleasure rushed into him, almost shattering his control from the first touch.

"Sir, I..."

"Too quick?" Conrad whispered in his ear.

Willis managed a jerky nod.

The dominant stopped stroking him, he just held him snugly in the palm of his hand as he set up his rhythm, thrusting deep inside him again and again.

The fact that the only set of sensations that raced through him came from his master's cock rubbing against his prostate didn't actually make it that much easier for the submissive to stop himself from coming.

Willis scrambled for control, determined not to let the other man down—to show him in any way he could, that he could be a good submissive for him.

"I've never ordered you not to come, sweetheart," Conrad whispered in his ear.

The permission was as good as any command could ever be.

Willis came, gasping at the force of the ecstasy that rushed through him. Closing his eyes, he held onto the moment as tightly as his master held onto him, and let pure bliss and perfection fill his world.

* * * *

Conrad felt his new submissive jerk and spill onto the sheet in front of him, he pushed into Willis one more time, one last deep thrust before he followed him over the edge. His mind went blank as the world condensed down to that place, that moment, to the pleasure that flashed between them, and the satisfaction that shot through him.

He held on tighter to the younger man, as he let himself lose his mind for a little while, not willing to come back to any kind of reality that didn't include Willis being right there with him.

As the real world slowly reasserted itself, Conrad rested his temple against the back of the other man's head. He took several deep breaths and let them out very slowly, pushing oxygen into his brain, just in case he should need to think clearly and quickly.

For far longer than he expected, Willis lay perfectly still, relaxed and sleepy in his master's arms. Then, he did exactly what Conrad expected him to. He started to move away.

Conrad let him part their bodies, just a few inches. Then he promptly pulled the other man back against him.

Willis hesitated.

"You're allowed to leave the bed if you get hungry, thirsty, or need to take a leak," he informed him.

Willis' Adam's apple bobbed as he seemed to try to swallow down the tension that flooded his body.

"You're not allowed to leave the bed because you expect your master to throw you out of the room the moment he's got off," Conrad whispered to him.

"Yes, sir."

It was a cautious sort of agreement, seemingly made more because he was pretty sure he should agree with his master than because he actually understood anything about what things were really going to be like between them, but it was a start.

Conrad lay very still for a little while, just letting the afterglow linger around them. As the moments passed, he'd usually have moved back to his own side of the bed.

Excessive amounts of cuddling after sex was more than a little bit soppy, even by his rather easy standards. Wanting a bit of space to stretch out and sleep was natural. Willis knowing his master cared for him was far more important than either consideration.

Rearranging them so Willis lay snug and secure in his new master's embrace, Conrad pressed a sleepy kiss to the top of his head. Willis smiled against his chest in response. Conrad found himself grinning over the top of his head too, as he held Willis just a little tighter.

They might still have a hell of a long way to go, but in that moment, it was impossible to believe everything wouldn't work out in time. Love had a way of making things settle neatly into place between even the most unlikely dominants and submissives. Conrad closed his eyes and let sleep settle around them both.

He'd always known there was a good reason why he'd kept going back to the glory holes...

About the Author

26 years old, from Wales, UK, Kim writes about kink, love and happy endings. If a story doesn't have those three things, it's not going to be written—at least not by this writer!

Apart from that, Kim likes to write a little bit of everything. So far that list includes Male/Male, Male/Female, a few different varieties of ménage, shifters, vampires, fairytales, time-travel and ghosts. It's anyone's guess what will come next...

A firm believer that there is no "One True Way" for people to kink, Kim likes to let the characters in each book pick their own ways to dominate and submit to each other. As long as they stay safe, sane and consensual—Kim's happy to let them live their lifestyle 24/7, or just open the toy box on weekends—whatever's right for them.

Published since 2008, Kim also writes BDSM erotic romances for Total-e-bound. You can catch up with Kim at www.kimdare.com or by e-mailing kim@kimdare.com

Kim loves to talk to her readers and can be found at www.kimdare.com.

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All Constable Hadley wants to do is put the last few weeks behind him. As if being taken hostage wasn't bad enough, he's had to deal with all the stupid publicity that's surrounded him ever since. And the fact that he hasn't slept since that night isn't helping him feel any better about the world, either.

The last thing Hadley needs is a shrink wandering around inside his head trying to dig up all his dirty little secrets. When he finds out he's being sent to Dr. Rawlings—the man he's had a crush on for months—Hadley knows his life has finally hit rock bottom.

The only thing that could make things worse for Hadley would be Dr. Rawlings finding out how he feels about him. But fate wouldn't be that cruel to him—would it?

***She's Got Balls* by Mia Watts**

What do you do with a “wife” who is more than you can handle?

When the FBI and local law enforcement team up for a mutually beneficial crime-stopping partnership, Rookie Agent Chris Tarpington and Detective Vin Pilk team up to prototype the new alliance. How better to bust a ring of drug dealing suburban housewives than to go undercover—way undercover—as a married couple?

Though Chris reluctantly gets in touch with his feminine side, he quickly finds ways of making his sexy partner squirm. And Vin is definitely squirming, but will he run away from his faux wife, or right into 'her' arms?

One thing is for sure: as the investigation heats up, “inter-agency cooperation” will take on a whole new meaning...

***Search Me Baby, One More Time* by Melinda Barron**

Wren Thornberry's life isn't going according to plan. She let her father talk her out of marrying Bryan Stockard, the man she loves, and moved halfway around the world. Now she's back home in Texas, babysitting her grandmother while grandma and her boy-toy work through their list of sexual exploits, making themselves the talk of the town.

But what Wren doesn't know is that things in her hometown are about to heat up even more, and it will have nothing to do with her grandmother. It seems that Bryan Stockard is still around, he wants to get back into Wren's life—by any means necessary, and now he has just the tools to do it: a police uniform, handcuffs, and the authority to make Wren *assume the position*.

***Ticket Me More* by Tia Fanning**

Hailed by the bridal flower world as an artistic genius, Meli works long nights making bouquets for women lucky enough to find love, while she herself lives a life of solitude. She yearns to share her heart and body with someone other than Bob, her *Battery Operated Boyfriend*, but acute shyness keeps her from engaging the “living” world.

However, Meli's quiet and predictable existence takes an unexpected turn when she is pulled over and ticketed by the most gorgeous cop she has ever encountered—Officer Michael Johnson. Though he doesn't seem to notice her as anything more than a traffic violation, Meli makes plans to overcome her timid nature and seize the police officer's attention...using any speed necessary.

***Handcuffs and Lies* by Bronwyn Green**

Sometimes promises to friends are the hardest to keep. Undercover police officer, Michael Tanner, promised his dying partner that he'd take care of the man's little sister. Trouble is, after her brother's death, Doctor Tori Spinelli wants nothing to do with Michael—or any other cop for that matter.

Tori has always fought against overprotective men and deception. Forced into protective custody with Michael, she's now faced with both in the same package. Despite their differences, Tori falls in love with him, but how can she trust a man who lies for a living?

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***Ryland's Sacrifice* by Kim Dare**

Principles don't pay tuition fees. When Ryland's math scholarship disappears overnight, he has two choices. He can borrow money from fellow student Jason Burrows, who has very interesting ways of collecting debts. Or, he can volunteer to be thrown to the werelions.

One night spent playing the part of a willing human sacrifice will give him enough money to finish his PhD. It seems like a good deal—right up until the moment he finds himself naked, blindfolded, bound and surrounded by lions.

***Saving Noah* by Carol Lynne and Cash Cole**

Dexter Krispin arrived in the small Kansas town of Schicksal with one thing on his mind: finishing his doctoral thesis. He hoped getting away from his hectic life in Pittsburgh would allow him to concentrate on the long overdue paper and to forget about his last lover.

Life-long Schicksal resident, Noah Stoffel, has managed to keep his sexuality a secret. Yet, after one look at the dark-haired newcomer, he knows his life in the sleepy town will never be the same.

But more than Noah's desire for privacy stands between him and Dexter. For years, the residents of Schicksal have been hiding a horrific secret, one that takes Dexter mere days to uncover and expose...a secret that could destroy—or heal—they all.

***In For a Penny* by Carol Lynne**

What's the old saying...you can never go home again? Raven Black resigned himself to never returning after being ordered from the only real home he'd ever known. Now, seven years later, Raven is back to face the man who sent him away.

Zane Conner is not only Raven's foster brother but the only man Raven ever loved. Despite his mixed feelings about the situation, Raven can't deny Zane when the older man asks for his help in saving the Lazy C Bar Ranch. A boy found dead on the ranch clinches Raven's decision.

Why did the young boy look so much like he had at that age—the same age he'd been when his own father had beaten him and left him for dead?

***Going Deep* by G.A. Hauser**

Dylan Conway thought he had a chance at the big leagues when a pro football scout invited him to try out for the team. After a successful college career, Dylan figured it was a sure thing.

It wasn't.

With his dream of playing pro ball shattered, Dylan takes a job in LA delivering pizza until he can figure out a new direction for his life. What he doesn't expect is to be propositioned at every delivery, and to his amazement, he's asked to work for a photographer of male nudes. He accepts, and begins his journey into a deeper, darker industry.

Sean Dean, AKA 'Rippin Long', is tired of working as a gay porn star. For seven long years he was the top earner for Tartarus Studios, but now he's sick and tired of the demands. He yearns for a real life and respectable work.

But even the jaded Rippin Long is stunned to see the latest addition to the Tartarus studios stable of stars: The delectable Dylan Conway. To make matters worse, Dylan makes no effort to hide his instant attraction to Tartarus' prized stud, and he's after more than sex. Dylan wants a 'relationship', something Sean has avoided after continuously being idolized as the porn star, and not the human being behind the façade.

One man jaded and at the end of his porn career, the other fresh and just beginning a new life in the industry—the possibility for any kind of future between the two seems daunting. Yet, the two men collide on set, burning up the screen like no other men before them. Could there be a chance for a real bond between them? With faith, hope, and a little help from karma, could true love bloom from what was once two broken lives?

***Tropical Hedonism* by Dakota Rebel**

After a boating accident, Sean Harris wakes up staring into the eyes of a handsome doctor. Even when he discovers that he is on an island within the Bermuda Triangle, and there is no way for him to get back to his old life, he can't be too disappointed if it means being stuck with the doctor.

Dr. Wesley Carpenter cannot believe that the younger Sean Harris would want anything to do with him. After half-heartedly turning down the advances of his patient, he realizes that resistance is futile.

The men find themselves falling for each other quickly, but ghosts from their pasts and outside influences try to get in the way of their happiness. Sean and Wesley may be on the island forever, but neither is sure if that guarantees they'll be able to continue their *Tropical Hedonism*.

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