



**THE
BEACH HOUSE**
SHAWN LANE

HOT SUMMER DAZE

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...When John's fingers grazed over Mason's nipples he nearly came unglued. He bucked back into the man, his ass pushing against John's evident erection.

Suddenly, he was turned to face the man himself and, before he could catch his breath, John roughly pushed him against the refrigerator. His hand closed around the aching bulge in Mason's pants, even as cereal boxes from the top of the fridge crashed down around them.

John's lips covered his, crushing them, his tongue probing through the seam and tangling with Mason's. His arms wrapped around John's neck, mostly to brace himself, since his feet dangled in the air. John ground against him, sending sparks all up and down his spine.

When he got to the point he could hardly breathe, Mason wrenched his mouth away on a ragged moan. "Oh my God."

John's hands rose to frame Mason's face, his fingers gripping his jaw, but not painfully. For just a few heartbeats their gazes held, hot as lava. And then John's lips grazed over his. Once, twice, drawing it out, teasing him into a near frenzy.

Just as the kiss deepened to the point Mason almost wondered if their mouths would fuse together, John dropped abruptly to his knees, causing Mason to stumble a little as his feet once more touched the ground. John's face was just inches from Mason's dick.

God, yes.

John opened the button-fly of Mason's jeans with expertise and soon he had Mason's rock-hard cock in his hand. A blunt, callused thumb brushed the tip, rubbing the drop of pre-cum that had appeared.

"Can't wait to taste you, pretty boy," John said, just as his mouth engulfed the head of Mason's cock...

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Ticket To Ride
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THE BEACH HOUSE

BY

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THE BEACH HOUSE
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For Shayne, who suggested it

CHAPTER 1

Beginning of June

“This bites,” Mason Adams announced as he dropped his two bags in the middle of the living room hardwood floor.

He glanced around the house with a critical eye. He stood in what he *thought* was supposed to be the living room anyway, but he spotted no television. Just a big overstuffed couch, a coffee table, and an easy chair. There was a big stone fireplace, too. The couch and the easy chair both faced out toward a large picture window overlooking the ocean.

“It doesn’t have to bite,” his agent, Ashley Stenson, declared, entering the house after him. She closed the front door. She was a tall, thin woman with dark, wavy hair she wore softly about her

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shoulders. He thought she might be over six foot by an inch or two. Most straight men Mason knew considered her exotically beautiful. "Oh, it's lovely."

Mason decided to look for the family room or television room. Surely there had to be one somewhere. Casting a glare at Ashley, he brushed past her to tour the rest of the beach house.

The first room he came upon after a short hallway was a big, bright sunny yellow kitchen. He liked the huge size of the stainless steel refrigerator. The counters were granite and in the middle of the spacious kitchen sat a large island.

Ashley stood in the doorway. "Wow, this is one nice kitchen. I don't even have one like this in my house."

"All but the fridge is wasted on me. I don't cook." He opened the fridge. "There's nothing in here."

"Yes, you have to fill it with food, Mason. I'll give you money for the grocery store later."

Mason kicked the door closed. "I have to do my own shopping?"

"Yes, it's what normal people do. And don't kick the appliances. We have to pay for any damages you do while you're here." Ashley grabbed his hand. "Let's see the rest of the house."

He allowed her to lead him down another hallway. Hopefully she was taking him to where the television could be found.

"These are spare bedrooms," she said, gesturing to an open door on either side of the hallway. "You can look at them later. There's not much to them. They have a bathroom between them, too. If you had guests over, they could stay there, but for now, no guests."

Mason peered into the rooms as they went by, looking for the television sets. Each room only had beds and dressers. Frowning,

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he followed her up a staircase at the end of the hall.

“The second floor holds the master and bath, of course. It’s above the living room and also overlooks the ocean. There’s also a laundry room up here. Great planning as far I’m concerned,” Ashley said. “And a couple more bedrooms and bathroom.”

He didn’t spot any televisions in the other two bedrooms up here either. “Is there a den or a family room?”

“No. There’s a sitting area in the master bedroom, though.”

A sitting area. Must be where the television was located.

The master was stunning, even Mason could appreciate that. The bed was a large four-poster king with a canopy, and the dresser and armoire were all in matching cherry wood. Directly to the right of the bed area were a fireplace and two overstuffed chairs along with an end table upon which a teapot and cups and saucers had been set. It reminded Mason of a model home.

“This is the sitting room area.” Ashley pointed to the chairs and fireplace. She sighed. “It’s divine. Better than I even thought from viewing the pictures.”

Across from the bed were French doors leading outside to a deck. Ashley flung open the doors and stepped outside. Mason followed her, the sea breeze grabbing his blond tresses and flinging them everywhere.

The view was breathtaking. The serene ocean waves rolled onto the sand, gulls flew overhead, and in the distance he could see the Embarcadero lined with shops and restaurants, as well as the famous rock of Morro Bay, El Morro.

He inhaled the fresh ocean air and then rubbed his bare arms. Damn, the clouds were rolling in from the sea, beginning to envelope the rock and with him wearing only a tank top and jean shorts, he was more than a little chilly.

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Ashley smiled and, taking his arm, which had little goose bumps forming on it, led him back inside. "Fantastic, isn't it?"

"Yeah, it's pretty cool. But, where's the television?"

"There isn't one. They told me that when I rented this place."

His jaw dropped. "What?"

"Mason, you are here to recover."

"You expect me to stay here for three fucking months without a television?"

Ashley shook her head. "It's not the end of the world, honey. Let's see how it goes. If things go well enough, maybe in a month or so, we can bring one in. There's a movie theater on Main Street if you get too bored. You can walk there."

"This is un-fucking-believable." He turned away from her, fury making him see red.

"When you came out of rehab, you agreed to my terms," she reminded him. She took his hand and brought him to the sitting area and gently pushed him down in one of the chairs. She sat in the other. "You almost died."

"I know."

"Do you?" She smiled sadly. "I'm the one who found you lying in a pool of your own vomit. My heart nearly stopped. I thought you *were* dead."

Mason stared at his hands, unable to look at the deep concern in her eyes. "I'm sorry."

"Don't be sorry, Mason. Be well. You promised me you would try. You'd lay low here, take some time for yourself and try to live a normal life for a while."

He let out a shaky breath and met her dark gaze. "Okay."

She touched his cheek. "Great. Now, let's move your stuff into this room and unpack and then I'll take you to the grocery store for

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some food.”

* * *

Ashley pulled into a parking space in front of one of the local grocery stores. She turned off the engine of her Mini-Cooper. “All right, we’re here. And remember, no alcohol.”

He scowled. “I know, you told me a hundred times.”

“I’m going to search your grocery bags, too, so don’t think you can sneak something past me.”

“You aren’t coming in with me?”

“No. I want you to do your own shopping and pick out your own food. My only advice is try to get *some* healthy foods.”

Mason sighed. “I’m not a child.”

“Of course not. But you are spoiled rotten and haven’t had to lift a finger to do anything for yourself in years. If we’re going to get you back on track, it starts now.”

“Fine.” He opened the car door and got out. Then he stuck his hand out. “Money?”

Giving him an encouraging smile, Ashley handed him a wad of twenty dollar bills. “If you need more, which I doubt, you’ll have to come out and let me know.”

He stuffed the money in the right front pocket of his jeans and sauntered to the automatic doors of the grocery store. It wasn’t that he’d never been in a damn grocery store. It had been a while, yeah, but as a kid he’d gone with his parents sometimes.

Mason couldn’t help but grimace at the reminder, although slight, of his parents. They’d been fine parents when he was a young kid. As soon as he came out to them at sixteen, however, their relationship changed. Silence had reigned in the house. He

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didn't speak to them and they didn't speak to him. Hell, his mother and father barely spoke to each other at that point.

As soon as he turned eighteen, he was told it was time for him to find someplace else to live. He'd quickly found friends who were willing to put him up and he hadn't seen his parents since. They could be dead for all Mason knew. He knew he was basically dead to them.

"Hey, you're blocking the entrance, get out of the way," some older guy yelled at him, pushing a cart. He nearly plowed right into Mason.

He jumped out of the way and walked toward the first section on the right, the bakery section. When he reached the loaves of freshly baked bread, Mason realized he should have picked up a grocery cart himself.

After that was taken care of, he loaded his cart with three loaves of French bread. He loved carbs. Shouldn't eat them, of course, but well, he'd take a few extra walks on the beach. Sure wasn't anything else to do around here.

Next, he picked out several cream-filled donuts out of the freshly baked donut bin. He'd pick up some sort of fruit to satisfy Ashley's suggestion he get something healthy.

By the time he reached the dairy area, his gaze fell on a totally hot guy standing in front of the refrigerated milk section. Mason figured the guy had to be in his early thirties or so, just a few years older than his twenty-six. He appeared to be about six foot, maybe a bit taller, but not much. But the man had beefy biceps peeking out from a formfitting navy polo shirt. Since the man wore a pair of khaki shorts, Mason could see he had very nice muscular legs, too.

Mason stared as the man ran long fingers through a head of

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dark chocolate curls, his lips pursed as he eyed the selection of milk. Should he offer to help? He couldn't help grinning at the prospect of helping the man with something far more intimate.

A woman with long blonde hair and a big bosom cut in front of the man to open the refrigerated doors. She smiled apologetically and said something but Mason was too far away to hear it. The guy said something back and gave her a flirtatious smile right before he laughed.

Mason sighed and turned away. Obviously straight. *Damn it.* Well, for a half a second, he thought maybe being stuck here for three months wouldn't suck as much as he'd thought. *Fat chance.*

* * *

"I'm impressed," Ashley said, putting the last of the groceries away. "You did better than I thought. You actually chose some vegetables and fruits."

"Yeah, whatever." He scowled.

She laughed. "Don't be such a grouch." She reached into her purse and pulled out a very simple flip-style cell phone, which she handed to him.

"What's this?"

"A phone."

"Yeah, duh. But this isn't my cell phone."

Ashley patted his arm. "I know. I've temporarily replaced yours with this one. Your usual one has Internet access and all the numbers of your so-called friends who helped get you to this point in the first place. For now, I don't want you calling any of them to come up here and party with you."

His jaw tightening, he said, "What if I remember their

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numbers?”

“Do you?”

His face flushed, Mason sighed. “No. I never bothered, because they were programmed.”

“Exactly. If you need anything, my number is the only number programmed in this one. Today is Friday, I’ll check with you on Monday unless you give me a call before that.”

“Don’t I get a car? What if I need to go somewhere?”

“Where?”

“I don’t know. *Somewhere.*”

Ashley smiled. “There’s a bicycle in the little side yard.”

“A-a bicycle?” Mason’s jaw dropped open. He hadn’t been on a bike since he was a pre-teen.

“You’ll do fine, honey. Now, I’m going to be on my way. Walk me outside.”

Mason followed her outside and to her car. He wanted to beg her to stay there, not wanting to be alone. But this was part of the deal, what he’d agreed to, so he remained silent.

He waved as she pulled away from the curb and drove up the quiet residential street. Watching her car get smaller and smaller, he hugged himself.

Great. All alone with no one to talk to but me. And I’m boring.

CHAPTER 2

“How far along are you?”

John Harding scanned the words he’d brought up on his laptop with a few clicks of the keys. “About halfway.”

His latest crime fiction novel, as yet untitled, would be the beginning of a new series. He hoped. On the phone was his literary agent, Lucas Spaulding.

“What’s the hold up?”

“What hold up?”

Lucas sighed. “You promised more than a month ago to have it finished by the end of last month. I’ve already talked to your editor about the series and she’s excited to see it. I’d like to submit the first one and proposals for two follow-up books.”

John closed out of the unfinished novel and shut down his

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laptop. He rose from the couch. “I’ve had a bit of trouble with the logistics of one of the murders, but I think I may have found a way to figure it out.”

“Yeah? What?”

“I think I’ll keep this to myself. I’ll tell you about it when the book is done in case it doesn’t work.”

“John—”

“Relax, I’ll get it done. Anyway, I think I’m going to sit outside for a bit and get some air. Clear my head. Check with me next weekend.” Before Lucas could protest, he disconnected the call and for good measure, turned off his cell phone.

Peering out the sliding glass door to his deck off his living room, John contemplated whether he should grab a sweater. The fog was already rolling in, as it often did during the summers. He’d been out earlier when the sun had been shining and so he wore shorts. He limped over to his closet, grabbed a sweatshirt and pulled it over his head before going out on to the deck. He rubbed absently at his sore left leg. It bothered him, especially when he sat too long.

Leaning over the railing of his deck, he looked out to the sea, at boaters spending their afternoons fighting the damp fog, and over at the rock.

John’s beach house wasn’t as fancy as the home on the left side of his place. That one was rented out now that the couple who had owned it moved away. They decided to keep it for the investment. Most of the time it was empty, but John thought he’d seen a car parked outside earlier in the day. He hoped whoever was staying there would be quiet.

To his right was a much smaller house that an elderly couple lived in. He checked on them when he could. Made sure they were

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okay. He couldn't really get past his fireman rescue mode even after quitting, he supposed.

John had only moved to Morro Bay after the accident that took his first career. He'd been part of the San Luis Obispo Fire Department for thirteen years before he fell through a burning roof, wrecking his left leg. He missed it sometimes. The adrenaline pumping through his veins as the fire alarm sounded.

Living here, by himself no less, had been a big adjustment. His relationship with his boyfriend of five years at the time had also been a casualty of his accident. Keith loved his active lifestyle too much to give it up for John. Didn't need someone who could barely walk some days cramping his style.

Sure, there were times when John wondered why Keith didn't love him enough to stick around, but for the most part, he'd moved on from the heartache. His friends told him it was Keith's loss and John decided they were right.

The sound of the sliding door opening on the deck next door had him looking to his left curiously. Last occupants had been a couple and their four kids.

A tall, well built young man with shoulder length blond hair stepped outside. He wore jeans and a thin T-shirt, exposing his bare arms and very nice biceps. The man rubbed his arms and then disappeared back inside. A moment later he returned to the deck wearing a windbreaker.

John couldn't make out the man's features too well from his deck but what he could see was pretty fine. The young man hesitated by the railing of his own deck, then turned toward the wooden plank stairs that would take him down to the grassy yard.

He knew he shouldn't be staring at the younger man. Hell, he fully expected the guy's girlfriend to come running outside at any

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minute. But, well, he liked pretty things. He grinned.

The man stopped at the bottom of the stairs and looked back toward the beach house. No doubt waiting for his companion. As if on cue, his own companion trudged outside and came to stand next to him.

John reached down to rub behind the golden retriever's ears. "Hey girl."

Mandy gave him a lick and then, as though curious, turned to peer at the blond man herself. They said dogs could be babe magnets and as far as John was concerned the guy was definitely a babe. Even more so the closer he got to John's house. Pure, creamy peaches and cream complexion. Perfect nose, full, sensual lips. His hardening cock liked the sight, too. Nothing like scaring off the neighbors with a boner.

Mandy gave a good-natured bark in greeting as the young man stopped just next to their deck. He smiled a little.

"Cute dog," the guy said.

Oh yeah, this man was soap opera cute. So not like anyone John had ever been with. Still, his cock seemed to think the guy was his type, so he turned just a bit so the guy wouldn't see his growing arousal.

"Thanks," John said coolly. If he played it unfriendly the guy would move on, he hoped. He wasn't in the closet here, exactly, but he didn't want the renter to think he had to notify the cops he was staying next door to a pervert or anything. John generally kept his distance from the vacationers.

"What's her name?" the blond asked. He had just a touch of a southern accent. Not too twangy, but just a hint, melting like smooth butter on a biscuit, enough to curl your toes. Oh, hell. What was he thinking?

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“Mandy.”

“Can I come up and give her a pet? Does she bite?” he asked doubtfully.

It was on the tip of his tongue to say yes. She bit constantly. Had just bitten three guys yesterday. But, he didn’t. “No, she doesn’t bite.”

The man smiled a little broader and went over to the wooden stairs up to John’s deck. The cold from the fog had reddened his pale cheeks, making him even more appealing. His eyes were a deep, emerald green. So intense, John wondered if they might be contacts. The young man knelt next to Mandy, who happily offered her paw to him.

“Ah, you’re so cute,” the man said, laughing. “I always wanted a dog just like you.”

“How come you don’t have one?” John asked.

“I’m not really home to take care of one.” He rubbed Mandy’s tummy, since she had rolled over to show it to him. “I’m Mason.”

“John.”

Mason straightened and stood, his gaze going out to the sea. “I thought I’d go for a walk. I’m renting the house next door.”

John nodded. “I figured.”

Mason turned his emerald eyes back to John. They sure didn’t look like contacts. “You live here?”

“Yes, I own the place.”

“I think maybe I saw you at the grocery store earlier. By the milk.”

A little startled, John laughed. “Um, yeah, that probably was me. I was there today.”

Mason smiled, little dimples appearing on either side of his delectable mouth. “Small world.”

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John glanced quickly at Mason's hands to see no ring. "Your girlfriend think it's too cold for a walk?"

"I don't have a girlfriend," Mason said.

"No time for one of those either?"

"Yeah, something like that. Well, thanks for letting me say hello to your dog. She's really sweet. I'm sure I'll be seeing you around."

"How long are you staying?"

"The whole summer." Mason went to the stairs and descended. "Thanks again, John. It was nice meeting you."

"You, too."

John watched as Mason headed over to the path that would take him down a short hill that eventually led to Embarcadero Street. Mason was too beautiful for his own good. And definitely too beautiful for John's.

He turned back to Mandy, who looked at him expectantly. "Ready for dinner, huh? Okay. It's probably time to start mine anyway."

John headed back into the house, dismissing the good-looking renter from his thoughts. He had to think about his novel and how to stage a murder. Definitely time to think about that and not hot young hunks.

* * *

Mason was freezing by the time he ran up the plank steps at almost eight o'clock a couple of nights later. He hadn't meant to be out that long. He'd walked up and down the harbor area and after deciding he didn't want to cook or eat donuts for dinner, he wandered into a restaurant overlooking the water. Though he

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didn't like eating by himself, the waiter had been cute.

And speaking of cute...his new neighbor, John, was so freaking hot. Damn, and his dog was adorable, too. In the grocery store, he'd been convinced John was straight when he flirted with the woman by the dairy case, but unless Mason was mistaken, and he didn't think he was, John was trying very hard to cover up the fact he was hard when he was talking to Mason a couple nights ago.

Which begged the question. Was he bi-curious? He could see himself seducing a guy like that. It certainly wouldn't be the first time doing so. A few years ago he'd seduced a so-called straight guy hired to give him a massage.

Mason hadn't seen any sign of a woman at John's house, but she could have been inside, and one thing he didn't like to do was interfere in other guys' relationships. At least not if he knew about it. He'd had sex a few times without knowing if they had significant others. Given a choice, he stayed away from such complications.

He stopped in the kitchen to make a quick hot chocolate with a package from the box he'd gotten at the store, and then headed upstairs to the master bedroom. The fireplaces in the beach house were gas and all he had to do was flick on a switch. He did so now and then shrugged out of the windbreaker he'd pulled on earlier.

Mason was about to unfasten his jeans to get into his comfy flannel pajama bottoms when a movement from the house next door caught his attention. John's house was only one-story and the window of whatever room he was in was wide open with no curtains, similar to where he was. A bare-chested John moved about the room.

He recalled seeing a pair of binoculars on his earlier tour of the

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house. Mason didn't consider himself to be a voyeur or anything, but he was dying of curiosity. Running out of the room, he hurried down the stairs to the spare bedrooms on the first floor. He thought that was where he'd spotted the binoculars. Sure enough, he located them in the second room he checked, and he dashed back to the master, hoping John hadn't moved away from the window.

Raising the binoculars, he adjusted them to see better, and aimed it right at the window of John's house.

Oh, yeah.

John had a seriously ripped chest and six-pack abs to drool over. Okay, now he was getting seriously aroused. His cock rose and pressed against the zipper of his jeans. It really had been too long since he'd been fucked. Hell, even his ass tingled in anticipation. He was about to unfasten his jeans to close his hand around his hard cock when John moved out of the room for a moment.

"Damn it."

A few minutes later John reappeared, but he was carrying someone. He had some man in his arms, the way men carried their brides over the threshold. Frowning, Mason couldn't help but be disappointed. John already had a lover?

John set the man in a big easy chair facing away from Mason and then John stood back. He turned to pick something up off a small table and then his arm rose, pointing toward the man in the chair.

"Holy shit!"

His heart hammering in his chest, his stomach lurching, Mason watched in horror as he realized John held a gun. Focusing his binoculars on the hand holding the gun, he watched John pull the trigger and shoot the man in the chair.

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Gasping, Mason backed up and threw the binoculars on the bed. He scrambled to find the cell phone Ashley had given him. In the windbreaker. He picked up the garment and pulled the little flip phone out and dialed nine-one-one.

* * *

Mason stood to the side of John's beach house, hugging himself, watching in numb shock as the cops stood on John's deck laughing and joking with him. John had pulled on a sweatshirt.

They'd arrived ten minutes ago and when Mason didn't hear any gunfire, he decided it was safe to venture outside and watch them arrest the murderer next door to him. But instead, they were standing there talking buddy-buddy to him.

The cops, two of them, stopped talking and looked at him. One of them, a tall, thin, balding guy said, "You the kid who called in the *murder*?"

The other cop and John laughed.

"Yes."

"Well, thanks for being an upstanding citizen and all, but everything's fine."

"Fine?" Mason stared at them incredulous. "Aren't you going to arrest him? Where's the coroner? The forensic dudes?"

The cop's lips twitched. "Not coming. Come on, Ramirez. Time to get back to the station. Sorry for bothering you, Mr. Harding."

"No problem," John said, waving them off.

The policemen walked around Mason and headed to the street in front of the house where their patrol car had been left.

It was something out of the movie *Fright Night* where Charlie

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called the cops on the vampire and Chris Sarandon convinced them there was nothing out of the ordinary. Or that other one with the same kind of premise, *Disturbia*, where the serial killer convinced the cops of the same thing.

John leaned over the railing and studied him. "Want to see the body?"

"W-what?" He backed up a step.

"It's okay, Mason. Let me show you. I promise I'm not a killer."

Mason shook his head.

"Do you think the cops would just leave if I killed someone? Come on. There's a logical explanation. Just let me show you."

He bit his lip. Torn between wanting to flee as fast as he could back to his place, and by that he meant his place in Los Angeles, and wanting to see what John wanted to show him. He reminded himself he wasn't actually in a horror movie.

Reluctantly, thinking he was probably being just as dumb as a teenager going in to the haunted house he's been warned about, Mason walked up the plank steps to John's deck. Mandy stood beside John, wagging her tail in greeting.

"Here, come inside. You're probably freezing out here." John limped over to the sliding door to his house and slid it open. He entered the house, followed closely by Mandy and not so closely by Mason.

Mason saw immediately the living room they stood in was where he'd seen John shoot the man. John turned from the big leather couch in the room and handed Mason the gun.

"Prop gun."

He stared at the gun. "Prop?"

"Yes, from the local theater." John went behind the easy chair

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and pulled up the body. “And here’s the victim.”

“A mannequin?”

John smiled and brushed a lock of his dark hair off his face. “Yes, also from the theater. I’m friends with the set director. He let me borrow these to stage a murder.”

Mason set the gun down on an end table and then poked his finger at the male mannequin. His cheeks felt as though they’d burn his face right off. “Are you an actor?”

John shook his head. “I’m John R. Harding.”

The name meant nothing to him. Mason shrugged.

“The writer?” John pointed to a nearby bookshelf lined with hardback books with the name John R. Harding on them.

Mason nodded. “I don’t really read.”

“You can’t read?”

“Oh, sure, I *can* read. I just don’t.” He felt like a big idiot now. “Um, sorry, for the trouble. I just...you know...saw you through the window.”

“You must have great eyesight.”

He wished the earth would swallow him now. “I used binoculars.”

The other man laughed. “Oh.”

“I’m not a stalker or anything. I...I’m just kind of curious about you. And when I saw you weren’t wearing a shirt, I wanted a closer look.” Mason shifted his feet. He was a little embarrassed at the admission. He wasn’t generally shy, but these days he couldn’t help feeling a bit vulnerable. Not to mention he had called the cops on him.

John stared at him. “You wanted a closer look?”

“Yeah, you’re pretty hot.”

“I don’t think I’ve ever been told I was hot before,” John said.

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“At least not by someone like you. How old are you, Mason?”

“Twenty-six.”

“Well, I hope you now realize I’m not a murderer and you can sleep safely in your bed without worrying.”

Mason smiled. “I think I can. And I really should get back there. I’m sorry for the trouble.”

“It definitely made for an interesting evening. Let me walk you out.”

He almost stopped John. He could see the leg that made him limp was stiff and causing him pain by the winces pulling at his mouth. But he didn’t think the man would appreciate him mentioning maybe he shouldn’t walk too much if his leg bothered him.

Mason stepped back out on the deck along with John and the dog. When he walked down the stairs to the yard, he was surprised when John and Mandy followed him down the steps.

“We’ll walk you to your house. You probably aren’t familiar with the rocks and bumps in the ground in the dark since you’ve only been here a few days. We’ll just make sure you make it safe and sound.”

“That’s really not necessary,” he protested.

“I know, but Mandy probably won’t mind a little walk.”

They walked the short distance in silence, but it wasn’t awkward. There was a slight breeze coming from the ocean and he could smell the salty air.

Going up to his own deck, Mason turned back to his companions. “Thanks for the walk, and I’m sorry again.”

“No problem.” John turned to go, but then stopped and looked back at Mason. “By the way, you’re pretty hot, too. Have a good night.”

CHAPTER 3

John and Mandy stopped just a few feet from Mason's place the next morning shortly after eight. The morning had dawned cool but was sunny and clear. He suspected the blond wouldn't be up yet.

He had to admit the younger man was fascinating. Beautiful, definitely, but there was something below the surface, an almost innocence he couldn't quite figure out.

And so now he was staring at the outside of his rented house. Pathetic. He turned to make his way up to the street with Mandy when the glass door opened and Mason walked outside. He was dressed in tight-fitting jeans and a long-sleeved white pullover. His shoulder length blond hair appeared damp and freshly shampooed.

Mason noticed John and his dog almost immediately. He

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smiled somewhat tentatively. “Good morning.”

“Good morning.” He had a feeling he was blushing. “I was about to head over to a coffee place on Main. I came by to see if you might be up and wanted to tag along. But then I decided you were probably still asleep.”

“I didn’t sleep very well. Unfamiliar place and all.” Mason walked down to his level. “At least it’s sunny this morning.”

“The fog will roll in later. So how about it? Want to go to get some coffee? My treat.”

Mason grinned. “Well, in that case, sure.”

He tried not to notice the fresh peach scent coming off of Mason. Probably his shower gel or something, but it smelled good enough to take a juicy bite. “Great, this way.”

They walked up the slight incline to the street in front of the houses. They’d only have to walk a couple of streets up and over to reach Main Street.

“It’s pretty here,” Mason said. “I can’t deny that.”

“Yeah, I’ve loved it since I moved here. I knew it as a boy because I grew up just over in San Luis Obispo, but it wasn’t until about six years ago I moved here.”

Mason eyed his leg. “You’re walking better this morning.”

“Mornings are usually better for me. It’s rested overnight and hasn’t had a chance to stiffen up on me.”

“What happened?”

“Fell through a burning roof. I was a fireman with the San Luis Obispo Fire Department. I’m lucky it wasn’t worse. Another man fell with me and he didn’t make it.” John tried not to think of Carlos often. Carlos left a wife and three kids behind. He was a great man and a good friend.

“I’ve never met a fireman before. I’m sorry about your accident

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and the other guy.”

John nodded. “Yeah. Those were some bad times for me. I had to stop work and I had a relationship end. Moving cities just made sense. So I did. Came here and started taking my writing seriously. I’d always written but had never submitted anything. That all changed after the accident.”

They’d reached the coffee shop and, after tying Mandy up outside, John held the door open for Mason to go in first. Of course he used the opportunity to zero in on the man’s fine, round ass.

“So, what do you do, Mason?”

“Well, I’m out of work at the moment.” He bit his lip and stared up at the coffee flavors on the board. “But normally I’m a model and an actor.”

Not at all surprising, considering how good-looking he was. “An actor, huh? Been in anything?”

“Just small parts mostly. I was the murder victim in an episode of one of the crime shows.”

John smiled. “Well, that’s pretty cool.”

Mason returned the smile. “Yeah, it was.”

He realized he didn’t even know Mason’s last name. “I’ll just have a large regular coffee, Julie,” he told the woman behind the counter. “What’s your last name, Mason?”

“Adams. I’ll have the hazelnut. Medium.”

They took their coffees to the side where the cream and sugar was and fixed it to their individual tastes.

“You come here often?” Mason asked as they went outside to a happy Mandy.

“About two times a week. Otherwise I make my own coffee.”

From where they stood they could see down the street to the Embarcadero and beyond the ocean and the big Morro rock. They

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took a moment to just admire the view.

"I can see why you live here," Mason said after a few minutes. "It's gorgeous and laid back."

"Definitely my style. I'm not much for the big city or much of a partier."

Mason flinched but didn't respond. He did start walking back in the direction they'd come.

"Come on, girl."

When they'd returned to their houses, Mason paused at the bottom of his deck. "Have you got a television over there?"

"Uh, yeah."

Mason sighed. "I don't have one here."

"Yeah," John said, "I seem to recall that the couple who own this place weren't much for television."

"You could maybe invite me over later. For dinner. Maybe you could cook something for me."

John supposed he ought to be surprised by the younger man's boldness, but he wasn't nor was he particularly bothered by it. In fact, he'd been wondering how to broach the subject about seeing Mason again. "You like chili and cornbread?"

Mason's smile was simply breathtaking. "Yes. What time should I arrive?"

"How about six?"

"Sounds good. See you then."

* * *

As Mason left his rented beach house at a few minutes before six that night, he briefly wondered if he should stick a condom, maybe two if he got particularly lucky, and a small inconspicuous

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tube of lube in the pocket of his windbreaker.

He knew the possibility of talking John into sex was definitely there. He'd had enough interaction with the other man at this point to recognize sexual interest in his coffee-colored eyes. And Mason hadn't been with anyone since just before his near overdose.

On the other hand, if John was gay or at least bi-curious, he'd probably already have the supplies. In the end, laziness won out as he decided he just didn't want to go back inside and trudge upstairs to his suitcase for lube and condoms. If by chance they got down to business and John didn't have the goods, well, he guessed he'd be running back over here then.

The night was chilly, not as cold as the night before, but the slight breeze and hint of dampness in the air had Mason sticking his hands in the jacket's pocket and hurrying between the two houses. The sun still shone, but in the distance clouds were rolling in.

He hurried up the plank steps to the slider instead of going around to the front door of John's house. He tapped lightly on the glass and John came over right away to open it.

"Hi," Mason said, brushing past him to enter and get out of the chill. Mandy trotted over to him. "Hey, girl."

"I'm working on dinner now, so why don't you come into the kitchen and talk to me while I cook?" John suggested with a smile.

"Sounds great."

Mason followed him into the kitchen, noticing it was quite a bit smaller than the fancy one in his rented place. No island and the appliances were white instead of stainless steel. Still it looked efficient and the fridge was giant. John went to the stove and picked up a wooden spoon to stir the chili.

"I've been meaning to ask what brings you here to Morro Bay?"

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I thought you were probably here with a significant other for a vacation, but you're here alone, right?"

He knew John would be curious, but still his stomach twisted and his heart rate sped up. He didn't like talking about it really. "Um, you got a beer or something?"

"Sure, help yourself in the fridge. Grab one for me, too. "

Mason opened the fridge and withdrew two bottles of Budweiser. He screwed off the lid and handed one to John. "To tell you the truth, I'm here to recover."

John frowned. "Like from an accident or something?"

He leaned against the counter by the sink. "No. I had kind of a breakdown. I got involved with some people who didn't have my best interests in mind."

"Drugs?" John guessed.

"Yes. Pills mostly, but also some cocaine and crystal meth."

John blinked. "I see."

Mason crossed his arms. "Uh, yeah. Not very smart I guess. Most of this shit was free. People gave it to me because they wanted to sleep with me or they liked my looks or wanted me to do something. Anyway, a couple years ago I went into rehab but I went back to it after a while. Ashley, my agent, found me near death from an overdose. I was rushed to the hospital and they managed to revive me. After that it was back to rehab and now I'm here."

"Your agent's idea?"

Mason nodded. "Right. No one wants to work with me right now. While I was doing the drugs my work ethics weren't great. I got a bad reputation. Ashley thinks if I lay low here for the summer things will get better in the fall and winter and she might be able to get me some jobs. But I have to stay out of trouble and the tabloids

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and, of course, away from drugs.”

John eyed the beer bottle he’d set down next to him on the kitchen counter.

“You’re thinking I shouldn’t be drinking this beer, huh?”

“I don’t know.”

He sighed. “Well, I figure having a beer once in a while isn’t going to send me running back to crystal meth. What do you think?”

“You’re probably right.”

His chest loosened just a little, making him realize how stiff and tight he’d been when the conversation began. “So, uh, do you want me to leave?”

That had John turning back from stirring the chili. “No. Why?”

“Some people don’t do well with addicts.” He shrugged. “Some people I thought, maybe, were my friends, well, they want nothing to do with me now.”

“Were they friends or drug buddies?”

Mason winced but answered. “Drug buddies, probably.”

“Yeah, I can see if you’re trying to be clean why they wouldn’t want anything to do with you. Not your friends to begin with.”

“True.” He smiled a little.

John returned his smile, which made a chink of ice melt off his heart.

“Time for dinner,” John announced.

* * *

“That was super good,” Mason said, carrying his now-empty chili bowl to the sink.

“Are you sure you aren’t just saying that because you didn’t

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have to cook?”

He laughed. “That’s definitely part of it. Last night I ate at one of the restaurants along the water. But I did eat lunch at home today.”

“What did you have?”

He felt himself blush. “Um, well, I nuked some hot dogs.”

John chuckled. “That your idea of cooking?”

“I’m not used to cooking for myself, really. Or doing much for myself at all. Ashley says I’m a spoiled, conceited brat.” Mason shrugged. “I guess I am a little.”

“I can see why people would want to do things for you. Humans respond to beauty, even subconsciously. And I can see why it would be easy to let them do things for you. If they’re willing, why not?”

“Yeah, that’s pretty much how I see it.” He sighed. “How I used to see it. I’m not supposed to any longer.”

He rinsed the plates and then put the stopper in the sink to fill it with hot water and soap. Not that he ever washed dishes, not even as a child had he been expected to do chores. But since John had agreed to let him come over for dinner, he felt he needed to do something in return.

“Here, let me.” John came to stand behind him and his arms came around Mason’s middle to close over the bowl in his hand. He pressed against Mason’s back, sending waves of sharpening lust soaring through him in mere seconds.

He opened his mouth to protest. “You don’t—”

The hard ridge of John’s jeans-covered cock slid across his ass, drawing out a moan of pure need from Mason’s throat.

“You like that, pretty boy?” John asked, his lips whispering over Mason’s ear before latching onto the nape of his neck.

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“Yes.” He gasped as the bowl slid from his fingers into the sink of water and splashed water all over his stomach and chest.

“Too bad, your shirt’s wet. Guess we’ll have to take it off.” John’s scorching hot fingers slipped under his shirt to score across his bare abdomen. The shirt inched up his torso and then over his head, discarded somewhere unknown to Mason.

When John’s fingers grazed over Mason’s nipples he nearly came unglued. He bucked back into the man, his ass pushing against John’s evident erection.

Suddenly, he was turned to face the man himself and, before he could catch his breath, John roughly pushed him against the refrigerator. His hand closed around the aching bulge in Mason’s pants, even as cereal boxes from the top of the fridge crashed down around them.

John’s lips covered his, crushing them, his tongue probing through the seam and tangling with Mason’s. His arms wrapped around John’s neck, mostly to brace himself, since his feet dangled in the air. John ground against him, sending sparks all up and down his spine.

When he got to the point he could hardly breathe, Mason wrenched his mouth away on a ragged moan. “Oh my God.”

John’s hands rose to frame Mason’s face, his fingers gripping his jaw, but not painfully. For just a few heartbeats their gazes held, hot as lava. And then John’s lips grazed over his. Once, twice, drawing it out, teasing him into a near frenzy.

Just as the kiss deepened to the point Mason almost wondered if their mouths would fuse together, John dropped abruptly to his knees, causing Mason to stumble a little as his feet once more touched the ground. John’s face was just inches from Mason’s dick.

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God, yes.

John opened the button-fly of Mason's jeans with expertise and soon he had Mason's rock-hard cock in his hand. A blunt, callused thumb brushed the tip, rubbing the drop of pre-cum that had appeared.

"Can't wait to taste you, pretty boy," John said, just as his mouth engulfed the head of Mason's cock.

Damn, when he'd suggested coming over here for dinner, he'd really thought he was just going to watch a little television. Not that he was complaining or anything. His shaft slid farther into John's mouth. Mason closed his eyes and leaned his head back against the cool fridge.

One of John's hands grasped his bare cheek, drawing him deeper still. His hips rocked as he fucked the other man's moist hot mouth. John's other hand closed over his balls, squeezing and rolling them between his thumb and forefinger. The man was clearly an expert.

John moved a finger to brush lightly over Mason's hole just as his orgasm slammed through him, shooting through every nerve in his body as he came in John's mouth.

The man responsible for his mind-blowing release leaned back on his heels and peered up at him, a little dollop of cum on the corner of his mouth. It was hotter than hell. After a few seconds of catching his breath, John stood.

"I really want to fuck this tight round ass," John said, his hand squeezing a cheek for emphasis, "right here, right now. Unfortunately, I don't have condoms and lube in the kitchen. We'll have to continue this in the bedroom."

John's hand closed over his and led him out of the kitchen and down the hall to the bedroom.

CHAPTER 4

John forced himself to slow down as he tugged Mason by the wrist toward his room at the end of the hallway. He hadn't had sex in too long to remember, for God's sake, and he didn't want to freak out the other man by being too aggressive. So far Mason didn't seem to mind.

When they reached the room, John stopped himself, barely, from shoving Mason onto the bed. Taking a deep breath, he said, "Why don't you take your clothes off the rest of the way?"

Mason nodded, but didn't say a word. He just kicked off his sneakers, inched his jeans and briefs down to his ankles and stepped out of them.

John's mouth watered. If Adonis from the myth had stepped out of the pages of legend, he would surely look like this blond

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beauty with the golden sun-kissed tan and shoulder length silky locks. Perfect round globes formed his ass, as though sculpted by Michelangelo himself. His muscles were toned, but not overly bulky, his chest bare of any hair, likely waxed, which was fine by John.

“You like?” Mason asked, with a self-assured curve of his full lips.

“Oh, yeah.” Reluctantly he tore his gaze away long enough to rip the bedspread with the leaf design from his bed and toss it in the corner. He yanked down the green blanket and ivory sheets.

He turned to ask Mason a question. He forgot what as soon as he realized the man stood directly next to him, so close his hot breath brushed across the skin of his neck causing goose bumps to appear.

Mason’s green eyes darkened and sparkled with mischief. “Let me,” he said softly, in a sexy southern drawl. His long, slender fingers curled under the hem of John’s shirt, the knuckles brushing teasingly across his bare abdomen.

John’s whole body shook with burning need and he couldn’t stop his own hands from tearing at the zipper of his pants, wanting to free his hard-enough-to-break-rocks cock.

Mason’s hot lips trailed across John’s skin as he pulled off the shirt over John’s head. Mason’s mouth latched onto an erect nipple, pulling it with his teeth.

“Ah, fuck,” John moaned, even as the other man’s lips found his in a searing, hot-enough-to-melt-glass kiss. After a few moments of breathless, pulse-pounding kisses, he pushed Mason away a few inches. Giving himself just enough space to get rid of his own pants and underwear. Mason’s gaze turned decadently wicked as his hand closed over John’s cock.

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“I can’t wait to have this inside me. You want me on my back or stomach? Or do you want me to straddle you and go for a ride?”

“You keep talking like that and I’ll come right now.” He did push Mason toward the bed then. “On your back.”

Mason obediently lay on the bed, linking his arms around his thighs so his sweet, pink hole was at the ready.

His breath hitching, John turned away and took the few steps to his dresser where the lube and condoms were located. He opened the drawer and removed the goods. Since Mason appeared to be ready, willing and able, he didn’t waste time and rolled the condom over his shaft. His balls were heavy with the need to come.

Kneeling on the bed next to Mason, John oozed out a generous amount of lube to slosh over his hard dick. When that was thoroughly coated, he sent a finger inside Mason to loosen him up.

Mason sighed.

“Good?”

“Wonderful. Do another.”

John obligingly thrust in a second finger, even as he slid his other hand across Mason’s thigh and to his cock to stroke it to full erection. Mason’s teeth pulled at his bottom lip and his eyes lowered to half-mast. The slight pink hue to his face was incredibly endearing.

“Now, fuck me now,” Mason urged.

John quickly replaced his fingers with the head of his dick. He pushed in slowly, but Mason’s ass easily loosened to welcome him. John slid home. His own eyes closed, his breathing grew shallow as he fought for control over the impulse to pound Mason hard and fast, deep and thorough. He should take this slow and easy. Not act like some conquering caveman.

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Then Mason shifted beneath him and John opened his eyes to gaze at Mason, the other man changed positions slightly, and his eyes widened. John guessed he'd hit Mason's prostate with the new position. He thrust against that spot, over and over, watching Mason's eyelids lower and widen as John pumped into him again and again.

"You like?" John mocked Mason's earlier words.

Mason's lips curved in a wicked smile. "Some."

"Some? I'll give you some." John's hips snapped faster as he sped up the movement, in and out of Mason's ass.

Mason's hand joined John's on Mason's cock, stroking it in quick, sharp pumps. "That the best you can do?" Mason asked breathlessly.

"Fine." John slammed in hard and deep, thrusting into Mason over and over, hiking the man's legs up around John's neck in order to plunge deeper still. He rode him roughly, thoroughly, but Mason closed around him, drawing him in, working John's cock with his ass muscles in such a way John's throat went raw with the screams torn from his throat when he came and came. Even as his body shook with his powerful orgasm, Mason whimpered underneath him, his cum splattering across his stomach.

With an exhausted groan, John withdrew. He rolled next to Mason and pulled off the condom, tossing it somewhere toward the wastebasket. He'd worry about cleaning up the mess in the morning.

Mason had turned to his side, his back to John. He spooned himself behind Mason and wrapped his arm around the other man's middle.

"You okay?"

"Uh-huh," Mason said. "Tired."

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“Me, too. Go to sleep.”

“Night.”

John leaned forward slightly to kiss the back of Mason’s head.
“Goodnight.”

* * *

John awoke to Mason lying half across him, the younger man’s face resting on his chest and his legs twined with John’s. It certainly wasn’t the most comfortable position but it was cozy. Too bad Mason’s knee was poised dangerously close to his crotch. He shifted, trying to put distance between that dangerous knee and something pretty important to him.

Mason’s eyelids fluttered open and his green eyes stared dazedly at John.

Smiling, John said, “Good morning.”

“Um, good morning.” Mason rose from John’s chest and disentangled himself. His cheeks were bright red.

“Something wrong?” John frowned.

“Well.” Mason sighed and rolled onto his back, staring at the ceiling. “I’m doing it again.”

“Doing what?”

“Stupid things. I only met you yesterday...well, a couple of days ago, I guess...and already I’m having sex with you. I mean, that’s my pattern. Jumping into bed with guys I just meet. I’m not supposed to do stuff like that anymore. That’s supposed to be the old me. The new me is supposed to be more careful.”

Though it really wasn’t what John wanted to hear, he guessed he could understand Mason’s morning-after regrets. He wasn’t exactly the type to jump into bed with a total stranger either.

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Though, yeah, that's what he'd done.

"I'm sorry. It was my fault," John said. "You were so damn sexy there in the kitchen I couldn't seem to help myself. I've never done that before."

"I didn't exactly push you away." He ducked his head and his blond hair hung in front of his face. He looked suddenly very young and vulnerable and something tugged hard on John's heart.

John reached for his hand and curled his fingers around Mason's palm. "We can just be friends if you want. Pretend it never happened."

He would hate that, of course, but he wouldn't force himself on anyone. Wouldn't even force his company on Mason, if he didn't want it.

Mason tilted his head up and looked at John through the strands of his hair. His lips curved into a very sweet smile. "Nah. We've already done it. Why be just friends now? We're past that stage. Might as well continue as we are."

"Are you sure?"

He nodded and suddenly pulled John toward him until John's lips were just inches away from his.

John tried to put some space between them. "I have terrible morning breath."

Mason smirked. "Me, too. We can have bad breath together. Kiss me."

He gave Mason a quick peck on the mouth, and then pushed away more firmly. "Seriously. Let me brush my teeth and then I'll cook you breakfast."

"Fine, fine." Mason waved at him. "Have you got a toothbrush for me? Or do you expect me to run across to my place?"

He chuckled. "Actually, surprisingly, I do have a spare. Several

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in fact.”

“Got that many lovers staying over?”

“Hardly. My sister sends me several for stocking stuffers every Christmas. Be right back.”

* * *

“These are the best breakfast potatoes I’ve ever eaten,” Mason announced to him a short while later after John had gone into the kitchen to fix breakfast. He’d set a plate of eggs, potatoes, and bacon in front of Mason a few minutes ago. “If you keep cooking for me I’m going to blow up.”

John set his own plate down at the table and sat beside Mason. “We could go for a run on the beach when we’re done here.”

Mason laughed. Then after a moment of staring at John, he said, “Oh, you were serious.”

“Yeah. I don’t run fast, of course. The bum leg pretty much wrecked my chances of ever winning the marathon. Before the leg injury I used to run all the time. Now it’s more of a jog and not very far before it bugs me too much.” He hated admitting he had any physical weaknesses. There wasn’t much he could do to change it though.

The other man shook his head. “Nah, I’m not really into the running scene, anyway. I got good genes for the most part. Someday that’ll probably change, but in the meantime I’ll skip the heavy exercise.” Mason winked. “I can think of another way to burn off calories, though.”

His pulse racing, John tried to be casual. “What way would that be?”

Mason’s hand covered his, effectively stopping his fork from

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lifting to his mouth. “We could go back to your bed and you could spend the whole day fucking me senseless.”

John cleared his throat. “Well, that is an interesting proposition.”

“Finish your breakfast though. You might need your strength.”

As nice as it sounded, John couldn’t quite get past earlier in the morning. “I have a better idea.”

Mason’s lashes lowered then rose, his green eyes showing his confusion. “You do?”

“Yeah. Why don’t we spend the day together doing something fun?”

“That’s just what I suggested.” Mason grinned wickedly.

He laughed. “No. I mean go and have some fun that doesn’t involve sex. Have you been to the beach yet?”

“No.” But Mason was frowning.

“That’s perfect then. We’ll finish up here and go on over. We can probably walk to the spot I like, but it’s easier to drive. The walk is a bit long, especially if you don’t like exercise.”

“Why?”

It was John’s turn to frown. “Why what?”

“Why do you want to do that instead of have sex?”

“Because, Mason, that’s what two people who are interested in each other do. They do things together and get to know each other.”

Mason picked at the food on his plate. “So, you don’t want me?”

John snorted. “Of course I do. But as you pointed out when we first woke up, we sort of jumped into this too fast. I think we should take it a little slower.”

“But we’ve already done it.”

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Just then, with his lower lip sticking out just a bit, his cheeks a little pink, and the uncertainty in his eyes, Mason looked very young. And very sweet.

John smiled. "I know. I'm just saying we should do some other things together. It's okay not to have sex all day long, Mason. I don't even think I could manage that."

"All right." Mason blew out a breath. "If you really think we should."

"I do. And if, after we go to the beach, we still have the energy, we can spend the night together."

Mason returned his smile then. "Now that sounds promising."

CHAPTER 5

Mason slammed John's car door shut and surveyed the area. John had parallel parked on a street next to the beach. On the opposite side was a campground.

John and Mandy got out on the other side. "When I was a teen, me and some buddies of mine would camp there." He flicked his head in the direction of the campground. "Then we'd come across the street and spend the day surfing."

"Nice." Mason smiled. He didn't know why. He'd never been surfing and really hadn't ever had the desire.

"You surf?"

"Nope." He noticed the campground seemed filled with motor homes and pickups with campers on the back. "Did you guys have a camper?"

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“Nah, they take limited tents. Or they did then. Don’t know about now. They had certain spots they allowed tents to set up. That’s what we did.”

Mason wrinkled his nose, but chose not to comment.

John grinned. “I take it you don’t like tent camping.”

“I’ve never done it,” he admitted. “But I’ve never wanted to do it either. Bugs and dirt and stuff. No, thanks.”

The other man laughed and reached into the trunk to grab the stuff he’d brought with them. “Okay, princess. Let’s hit the beach.”

Mason had gone back to his rented house to put on beach clothes. Shorts over swim trunks, T-shirt, and an open button-down shirt over that. On his feet he’d donned flip-flops. John had dressed similarly.

He followed John and his dog onto the sandy ground with a little less enthusiasm than the other two had. He could already feel sand creeping between his toes. The breeze had picked up the closer they walked to the water and goose bumps appeared on his bare skin. No doubt before the day was over he’d be burned to a crisp, too, in spite of the generous lathering of sunscreen John had insisted on.

Eventually, John stopped at a spot he declared would be perfect for them to set up their blanket and towels.

“See, you can see the rock pretty well from here,” John said, spreading the blanket at their feet. “Later, we can walk over to it and you can see all the wildlife that hangs out there.”

Mason plopped down in the little beach chair John had brought for him and then wrapped the towel around his legs. “It’s cold.”

“A little chilly.” John sat in the other beach chair next to him. Mandy frolicked in the sand just a few steps away. “See, isn’t this nice?”

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"It's not so bad." His gaze swept over the waves washing ashore. It was pretty, no doubt about that. He just wasn't sure he wouldn't have enjoyed it more from the deck of his beach house holding a nice cup of hot tea.

"What do you usually do for dates?" John asked. He reached into the cooler he'd brought and handed Mason a bottle of water.

"Sex."

"No, I mean before the sex part. Dinner? Movies?"

Mason sighed. "No, none of that. I didn't really go on dates like you mean."

"No one has tried to woo you?"

He laughed at that. It sounded so old-fashioned. "Um, no. The guys I've been with wanted to be with me because they thought I was hot and wanted to screw."

John frowned and put his hand on Mason's leg. "That's it? They didn't even buy you dinner?"

"No." Mason looked out to the sea, unable to meet John's searching gaze. "I guess they knew they could get it without that stuff."

"Well, they were assholes and not worth your time." He squeezed Mason's leg.

He still couldn't look at John. He was afraid John would see how pathetic he really was. He certainly felt that way. "It's peaceful," he said after a moment, when he thought he could speak without his voice cracking.

"Yeah, this really is my favorite spot. Want to walk to the rock now or just sit here for a while?"

Mason smiled. "Let's walk."

John stood first and then lent a hand to help Mason up. He didn't let go of that hand when they, along with Mandy, made their

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way down the beach toward the rock.

He looked around at the few others on the beach but no one seemed to pay any attention to them. He'd not been used to holding hands with another guy, but he found he liked it.

"I brought a Frisbee with me," John said.

"You gonna play with the dog?"

"Yeah, and you. I thought we could do a three-way." John laughed. "It's the *only* way I'll do one."

Mason felt his entire body heat. He knew he was beet-red. "I-uh."

John stopped on the beach and turned Mason to him. "It was just a joke. It's okay."

"But-but I have," he said softly, looking away. "In the past."

Fingers brushed his cheek. "What happened in your past doesn't have to affect us, you know. I'm not offended that you were in a threesome before. I just don't share. Ever."

He exhaled, deciding he'd overreacted, as usual. "It was just once and I was pretty out of it at the time."

John reached for his hand again. "Shall we continue?"

He nodded. "I'm not very good at throwing a Frisbee. I did it maybe once or twice as a kid. I was pretty uncoordinated."

"No worries. Mandy can't throw either."

Mason laughed, feeling better. "At least I'm not alone then."

The beach was a little more crowded closer to the rock and when Mason saw families with children playing in the ocean, he expected John would let go of his hand. He didn't. Mason noticed a little girl of maybe six or seven staring at them. She stood next to a woman, probably her mother, who was lying on a towel reading a paperback.

"Mommy, those men are holding hands," she said loudly.

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Her mother glanced at them. "Yes, they certainly are." She went back to her book.

Mason and John walked on until they reached the base of the rock. It was *huge*.

"So, what's the history of this thing?" he asked.

"Well," John said, "there were originally more rocks than this one and they were part of a chain. Some of the others are around, too, in varying degrees and locations. El Morro was much bigger at one time, too. It's figured they were volcanoes millions of years ago. Over the years most of them have been damaged by quarries. Juan Cabrillo sighted it back in the fifteen hundreds when he sailed to California. I've got books on it back home if you're really interested."

He shook his head. "Like I said, I don't really read. Thanks for the info, though. That's probably enough."

John blushed. "I know I am somewhat of a geek, sorry."

"First, there's nothing wrong with being a geek. And second, you aren't a geek. It's great to be knowledgeable."

"Hmm. I'd rather you thought it was sexy than great."

"Okay, sexy then." He grinned.

"Look over there, a sea lion." John pointed.

Mason followed his gaze and saw several sea lions on the rocks and seals in the nearby water. After a while of watching the animals, including some pretty friendly squirrels who ran up to them begging for food, they headed back up the beach to their stuff. They played Frisbee for a while and then headed back to the car.

"I did have a nice day, thank you," Mason told John, pretty surprised himself.

"Me, too. Why don't I grab some stuff when we get home and

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we'll spend the night at your place tonight?"

"I'd really like that," Mason said, sliding into the passenger seat of the car. "But what about the dog?"

"I'll bring her dishes and food, too. She can stay with us, right?"

"Definitely."

* * *

"This is really nice," John said, admiring the view from the master bedroom of the rented beach house.

They'd finished dinner, consisting of a frozen pizza and salad, cleaned up the kitchen, and had showered to get rid of the sunscreen residue. Mason had just flipped the switch to turn on the gas fireplace.

"Yeah, it is. But you know what? I think I like your place better." Neither of them had bothered to get re-dressed after the shower. Mason had pulled on his terry-cloth robe and John just wore a towel wrapped around his waist.

"You like my place better? It's tiny compared to this."

"I think that's part of what I like about it. This place is beautiful, don't get me wrong, but it's cold, impersonal. Your place has a lived-in feel."

John grinned and wrapped his arms around Mason's middle. "You mean I'm a terrible housekeeper."

He laughed. "Don't look at me. I've never cleaned a house in my life. I think you know what I mean, though."

"I do. I agree with you, too. But this place is still really nice." John undid the ties and then his hand slid under the folds of the robe to caress Mason's bare skin.

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Mason's prick, which had been half-hard in the shower, rose and pressed against John. "Mmm. Well, it will be nice to be fucked in here with the fireplace going. Kind of romantic, right?"

The hand crept down to close around his erection. "Definitely. What do you think about straddling me in that chair over there by the fire?"

"I think...now, now." Mason slipped the robe from his shoulders and dropped the garment in a pool at his feet. He tugged on the towel surrounding John's waist and flung it aside.

The hand not sliding up and down Mason's cock smoothed over his rounded cheek and then brought their bodies flush together. John's lips covered his in a kiss that began with just a gentle melding of their mouths but quickly turned hot and intense. He slipped his tongue past John's lips.

John growled low in his throat and moved them to the chair.

"Wait," Mason said, breaking the kiss. "I need to get the condom and lube."

He hurried to the master bath where he'd put the stuff when he'd unpacked. When he returned to the bedroom, John was sitting in the easy chair, leaning back, his feet propped on the footrest.

A jolt of pure lust shot through his cock and his ass twitched in anticipation. He sauntered over to the chair holding a condom and lube out for John.

John's hand stroked up and down the length of his dick. He took the wrapper and tore it open, rolling it over his shaft. He tossed the lube back to Mason. "Maybe you'd like to lube your ass for me."

Smiling, Mason stepped over to the bed and knelt on the mattress on all fours, presenting his ass. Peering over his shoulder to make sure John watched, he squirted a generous amount of slick

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lube over his fingers. One hand propping him up on the bed, his other smoothed across his butt cheek to slide down between. He slipped his index finger in his hole, moving it in and out, his gaze focused on watching John's lustful expression. He added his middle finger, slow and deep, his eyes nearly closing at the sensation of being filled. But he wanted more than fingers. He wanted John's cock.

He was about to add a third, when John ground out, "Come here."

Thank God.

Mason hopped off the bed and dashed to the chair. But then he stopped. "Do you think that will hold us?"

"Oh, yeah. Get on. Ride me."

Nostrils flaring, hard cock desperate to come, Mason climbed aboard. His legs straddling either side of John, he poised his ass over John's sheathed dick and lowered himself on the shaft. They both gasped as his ass clenched around John. Mason's eyes closed even as he began to move.

"Damn, you're so fucking tight." John moaned, thrusting upward.

A hand gripping his erection had his eyes flying open. He took in the sight of John's big, callused hand stroking his length, quickly working to bring the edge of his orgasm near. Biting his lip, Mason rode John hard and fast, watching the beads of sweat appearing on the older man's forehead. The easy chair squeaked with the motions of their joined body.

His hands braced on John's legs, Mason drove himself down on the man's cock deeper still, knowing he'd probably regret the rough ride later. The hand pumping him sped up to match his thrusts and he couldn't stop the cries from spilling out.

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“John, I’m—” His release slammed through him, drawing creamy cum from him, splattering it across John’s abdomen.

John stiffened under him, gasping out his own orgasm just a moment later. “Geez.”

He leaned forward in the chair enough to slip off John’s now spent cock. Wrapping his arms around John’s middle, he snuggled close. “Mmm. That was amazing.”

“Yeah, but exhausting. I’m going to fall asleep. Can we move to the bed?”

“You don’t want to sleep in the chair?”

John laughed. “It wasn’t so bad for sex, but sleeping? I’m pretty sure I’m too old for that. Especially when there’s a nice big bed just a couple feet away.”

Mason yawned and straightened. “Okay. Do you want to wash off again or anything? I wonder if I should wipe down the chair? Oh, God, if we got it dirty I’ll have to pay.”

He stood and pulled John up from the chair to inspect it.

“I don’t see anything. Relax. Let’s just go to bed.” John tugged him toward the bed. “What are you planning on doing tomorrow?”

Mason flopped on the bed. “Not much. I have to talk to Ashley. She’s going to check on me. You?”

“I have to get some writing done. Deadlines. But maybe the day after tomorrow we can take a trip up the coast. Maybe go to Hearst Castle.” John lay next to him.

Mason leaned over him. “Hearst Castle? That would be cool. I’ve heard of it, but don’t really know much about it.”

“It’s cool, you’ll love it.” John pulled him close and kissed the top of his head. “Goodnight.”

“Night,” he mumbled, his heavy lidded eyes closing out the world.

CHAPTER 6

John saved his book in the file he had for it and leaned back in chair. He'd managed to write nearly five thousand words since he'd kissed Mason goodbye at six-thirty that morning. Of course Mason had fallen immediately back to sleep. It was now almost four in the afternoon and he was heartily tired of writing.

He glanced out the nearby window at the sunny sky. Maybe he could convince Mason to walk down to the Embarcadero for dinner at one of the seaside restaurants. Thinking of Mason, he brought up his search engine and typed in *Mason Adams, model*.

Curious about the drug use and the overdose Mason talked of, two online articles caught his eye.

Male model, Mason Adams, was found unresponsive by

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his agent, Ashley Stenson, in his Los Angeles home. Adams was rushed to the hospital after an apparent accidental overdose. His condition is unknown.

And another one.

Mason Adams, a well-known model and some-time actor, was released from the hospital today after nearly dying of an accidental drug overdose. His publicist released a statement indicating Adams would be entering rehab at an undisclosed location.

John exhaled and read a few other things he found on the Internet and then clicked out. Apparently Mason's drug use had been really bad. He'd seen plenty of cases of drug overdoses and those that promised to never use again after multiple trips to rehab. He only hoped rehab had actually worked this time for Mason.

He powered down his computer, fed the dog, and then changed from a T-shirt to a button-down long-sleeved plaid shirt. He shook his head at Mandy when she walked expectantly to the door. "Not tonight, girl."

John made his way across the grassy yard between their two houses. The night was warmer than it had been the previous couple of nights. It would be nice to be down by the water. He just hoped Mason wasn't doing anything too important.

When he reached the beach house he spotted Mason sitting in a lawn chair on the deck staring out to sea. "Hey."

Mason turned his head and smiled. "Hey yourself. I was just thinking about you."

"I wondered if you wanted to take a walk down there to one of

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the restaurants on the water and have dinner with me.”

“Are you done with your writing?”

“Yes. Did you talk to your agent?”

Mason nodded. “Sure. She’s a pain, but she means well.”

“So, will you come with me?”

He jumped up from the chair. “Hell, yeah. Let me just get prettied up.”

John grinned and followed him through the open sliding glass door. “You look pretty enough to me.”

“Well, thanks, but I’m going to change and comb my hair. I’ll be down in a minute.” Mason ran up the stairs to the master bedroom.

John sighed and leaned against the wall. He knew it was still early, but he found himself really liking Mason. A lot. He could very easily get serious about him. And Mason was just renting this place for the summer. Plus there was the whole drug element. He couldn’t get mixed up with someone who wouldn’t stay away from that shit. Yet he was drawn to Mason like a moth to a flame.

Hell, today while he’d been writing, little bits of Mason had begun to show in his main character. He’d even changed the guy’s hair color from brown to blond. If that wasn’t a sign of it being almost too late, John didn’t know what was.

Mason came running back down wearing tight black jeans and a deep purple long-sleeved sweater. A sight so tempting, John nearly suggested dinner could wait until after some serious fucking. But the sparkle in Mason’s green eyes was so infectious there was no way he would disappoint him by suggesting they not go to dinner after all. The younger man deserved dates.

“I’m ready,” Mason announced.

“I see. You look amazing. Let’s go.”

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* * *

“Since neither of us has to drive, I’m thinking we’ll get a bottle of wine,” John said after they’d been seated at a table for two right next to the window overlooking the bay.

“Okay. But you pick because I don’t know that much about wine and what’s good.”

“No problem. Do you like whites or reds mostly?”

“Well, aren’t you supposed to drink reds with beef and whites with fish or something?”

He shrugged. “Maybe. I don’t care. I drink what I like. Whites? Reds? Blush? Sweet?”

Mason considered. “Probably sweeter.”

“Perfect. I’ll order a white zinfandel.” The waitress approached inquiring about their drinks and John ordered the bottle of wine.

Mason studied the menu. “I’m thinking about having the halibut. I saw when we came in it was listed on the fresh board. How about you?”

“I’m going to have the swordfish. With that price, I’ll take my chances on the mercury.”

When the waitress returned with their wine, and John tasted and approved the wine he’d had numerous times, they ordered, and then mutually gazed out to sea for a few minutes. The evening was beautiful with the lowering sun reflecting off the water.

“Where are you from originally, Mason?” John asked, breaking the companionable silence at last.

“Mississippi. A tiny little redneck town, really. I didn’t fit in at all.” Mason took a sip of his wine. “I got out of there as fast as I could.”

“Are you close to your family at all?”

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“No. I haven’t spoken to them or heard from them in any way for years. They were very much opposed to my being homosexual. I have a brother and sister, too. They took a disliking to me as well.”

“Well, they suck, don’t they?”

Mason smiled. “Big time. What about you?”

“Well, I was born and raised in San Luis Obispo. I love the area so I see no reason to leave it.”

“How about your family? Are they accepting?”

John shrugged. “I wouldn’t say they were warm and fuzzy, but honestly they weren’t even before I came out. My parents now live in Florida but we talk on the phone once in a while. I haven’t been to see them or vice versa in about three years. I’ve got a brother in the police department in Los Angeles and a sister who lives with her family in Monterey.”

“Families are overrated,” Mason said softly, swirling the wine in his glass.

The waitress arrived with his clam chowder and John’s salad.

“How’s the chowder?” he asked, deciding they were better off changing the subject.

“Good. Really good.”

“What did you do today other than talk to your agent?”

Mason rolled his eyes and then grinned. It was great to see him smiling again. “I went for a bike ride around town.”

“A bike ride?”

“Yeah, I guess the owners have bikes they said I could use, and since I don’t have a car here I took the bike out and rode all over. It was pretty weird because I haven’t ridden a bike since I was a kid, but I managed.”

“I wished I could have witnessed you peddling all over Morro

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Bay.”

“It was fun. I might have to get me a bike when I go home.”

John dug into his salad, not wanting to think about when Mason would be returning home. By the end of the summer, Mason would be gone. He knew that. But he didn’t have to let it ruin his evening. He reached for his wine.

“Are we really going to go do the tourist thing tomorrow?” Mason asked.

“Yeah. Sure. If you want to.”

“Well, I...we don’t have to if you’d rather not.” Mason looked away, out the window, his cheeks slightly pink.

John realized right away he’d said the wrong thing. He was still getting used to how to deal with Mason and obviously he’d needed a stronger, firmer response than John had given him. He felt like an asshole. Taking his dissatisfaction with Mason leaving at the end of the summer out on the man himself.

His hand closed over Mason’s, drawing the younger man’s uncertain gaze to him once more. “I do want to. I think we’ll have a great time.”

“Yeah?”

“Yep. In fact, in the area not too far from the castle is a sanctuary for elephant seals. I think we should check it out while we’re there. There’s also this cute town on the way called Cambria. Ever hear of it?”

“No.”

“You’ll love it. We’ll go there, too. Make a whole day of it.”

Mason’s eyes lit up. “That sounds really cool.”

“I agree. I’m looking forward to it.”

* * *

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Mason patted his stomach as they exited the restaurant some time later. "That was really good. Yum. But I'm full." He grinned. "And a little wasted."

John chuckled. "Same with me. To both. Look we're just a few blocks to the beach by the rock, why don't we walk off some of the wine and food?"

"Walk? Are you kidding?"

"No, it will be good for both of us. It's a nice evening. Come on, you can do it," he teased.

"I have no doubt I can make it there, I just wonder if I can back it back." Mason eyed the way toward the beach. "Fine, but if it's too cold or I'm too tuckered out you have to get a cab."

"Deal. Well, as long as you aren't faking being tuckered out."

"Okay, okay."

They walked silently side by side most the way to the beach. It being summer and tourist season, a lot of people wandered around the shops and the beaches.

When they were almost to the rock, they sat on an isolated bench overlooking the waves. It was peaceful and calm. John glanced around, noticing the nearest people were some distance away. He rested his hand on Mason's knee.

He wasn't sure what drove him to broach the subject, but he couldn't seem to stop himself and pretty soon he just blurted out, "It wasn't an accident, was it?"

Mason stiffened. He didn't look at John, but looked out toward the rock. For a moment, John didn't know if Mason would respond at all and then if he did, he would pretend not to understand.

"How did you know?" Mason's voice was soft like the breeze ruffling their hair.

John swallowed. His heart hammered painfully in his chest.

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“So it was a suicide attempt.”

“Yes.”

“Why, Mason?”

He closed his eyes. “I just...no one really loves me.”

“What?”

“They don’t care about me, John. They only hang around because of what I look like. They think I’m beautiful. People give me drugs and clothes and stuff because they think it will get them something. They want sex, they want money, they want jobs...something they can get from using me.”

Swallowing the lump forming in his throat, John reached for Mason’s hand. “I’m sure there are a lot of users out there. But you have to have real friends. People who care about you.”

“But I don’t. No real friends at all. There’s no one I can just call and say, let’s hang out, because they want something else. I can’t go, wanna go to the movies, because they don’t. They say, no way, that’s lame, but let me bring over some coke.”

“That’s terrible.”

“It’s just the way it is. I got so tired of it. You know? Some people probably think it sounds great to have people falling all over themselves to please you, but I always knew it was something they wanted, not because they gave a shit about me.”

“What about Ashley, your agent? She must care. She found you and called emergency and brought you here.”

Mason’s smile was heartbreakingly sad. “Think about it. She wants money. I’m a client, and if she loses a client, she doesn’t get money anymore. Sure, she’s nice, she does stuff for me, but in the end she’s just like the rest. If I lose my looks tomorrow, she’ll be gone. I know it.”

John wasn’t sure if his assessment of his agent was true since

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he didn't know her, but he hoped it wasn't. "Have you talked to counselors since then?"

"Sure. They had them in rehab. They were all right." Mason shrugged.

"Listen," John said, bringing Mason's hand to his lips. "I'm your friend and I care about you. I don't want anything from you. I just want to spend time with you. Yes, you are beautiful and I'm attracted to you, but it's you the person I like."

"You hardly know me."

He nodded. "I know we've only known each other a short time but I still really like the person I've spent time with."

Mason bit his lip. "I've never known anyone like you."

He tucked a strand of blond hair behind Mason's ear. "I can tell. I don't want drugs or money or fame or any of that from you. I do love to have sex with you, but if you told me right now, you didn't want to have sex again, I'd respect that and I'd still care about you."

Mason's eyes were just a bit shimmery when his gaze rose to John's face. "Yeah?"

"Yeah. Just remember that, okay? I would care very much if you tried to hurt yourself again. Are you ready to walk back? We've got a full day ahead of us tomorrow and we should get some rest." He stood and held out his hand for Mason, who took it.

"Thank you. For everything."

John gave him a brief hug. "You're welcome. Now, no more sadness. We're going to have a great day tomorrow."

Mason smiled and nodded. "I know. Can we watch some television tonight? I'm going crazy without it."

He laughed. "Definitely."

CHAPTER 7

“I’m having the best time,” Mason said, leaning over the railing of the elephant seal sanctuary, looking below at the animals lazing on the wet sand. One or two of them splashed in the waves, but most slept, occasionally their flippers flinging sand onto their backs.

John leaned in close to him, their arms brushing. “Me, too. It’s been a perfect day.”

“Did you see that freaking kitchen?” Mason shook his head. “That dude had way too much money.”

He smiled. They’d chosen tour number two of the choices given them which had included the kitchen, pantry, a bedroom suite, and library. And, of course, the enormous pools. All of the tours included the pools. John had been on all the tours, having

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lived nearby all his life. Mason had been talking about the kitchen ever since they'd left the castle parking lot fifteen minutes earlier.

He had to admit the man's sweetness and almost naïveté was very engaging. Mason had his moments of brattiness, but for the most part he was just the most adorable person John had ever met.

"He definitely had his fair share," John agreed. "The family still owns some of the land. Not the castle, of course. But they have other buildings that still belong to them."

"I couldn't imagine having to follow all his strict rules for guests."

He laughed. "I'm sure most of his guests figured out ways to get around them. People usually do."

Mason grinned. "Yeah. I can't decide who had it made more. Him with all his money or these seals. Look at 'em. They don't seem to have a care in the world."

"Definitely with as much money as Hearst had, he had a lot of worries."

"Well, this has been totally cool. I've never gotten to be a tourist. Not really. On photo shoots I was always working." Mason sighed. "And if I wasn't doing that, I was partying."

"I know. It's got to be hard not to when everyone's shoving it in your face. Ready to go on to Cambria? We can have a late lunch there before getting back."

"Yes. Thank you."

"For?"

"Doing all this for me."

"You don't need to thank me, Mason. I'm very happy to take you places." John shook his head and briefly squeezed Mason's hand before turning toward the car. It bothered him that Mason had to keep thanking him for treating him right. It told John a lot about

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what Mason's life had been like. When they got into the car, John decided to press Mason further about how things had been for him.

"I'd like to ask you something, but if it makes you uncomfortable you don't have to answer."

Mason stiffened beside him. "Okay."

"It's probably none of my business."

"Just ask, John."

"All right, have you ever had to...sell yourself or anything?"

He felt his face flame and he instantly regretted asking. It was none of his business and if Mason got mad that he asked, he'd certainly deserve it.

Mason sighed. "It that all? No, I've never had sex for money. I've also been tested over the years and have always been negative. I guess technically you could say I've had sex for drugs since I've been given them and then had sex. I don't know if that counts. I was pretty young when I had sex for the first time, though."

"How young?"

"Fourteen."

He swallowed his shock. "Um, yeah, that's pretty damn young."

"What about you?"

"I was a bit of a late bloomer I guess. I was twenty. I knew in high school, before really, in junior high, I didn't get all hot and bothered over girls, but I was kind of shy and somewhat geeky in school so I didn't really have much opportunity."

"You? A geek in school?" Mason laughed. "I seriously doubt that. You are smokin' hot."

"Yeah right. But yeah, I was pretty skinny and scrawny in school. It took hard work to change."

"Hmm, well, thank God for that hard work then."

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John smiled. "Better watch that or I'll be skipping lunch in Cambria and going straight to dessert."

"That sounds great, but I'm pretty hungry," Mason admitted. He squeezed Mason's knee. "We're almost there."

* * *

"Are you sure this is all right?" Mason asked, glancing around the deserted beach. After lunch, John had driven them to a dirt covered, rarely used parking lot. Then they'd done a bit of walking on a trail to this spot. The view of the Pacific from this spot was spectacular. "No one will see?"

John eyed Mason, whose cheeks were just tinged a bit pink. His green eyes sparkled with a hint of excitement. He turned and laid out the blanket, covering a good patch of sand. "No one's around. Many don't even know of this particular spot."

"You know about it, so there must be others."

"True, but the odds of them coming upon it just as we're having some fun are pretty small. Come, Mason, where is your sense of adventure? You're not embarrassed are you?"

Mason chuckled. "No, but you might be if someone does see." He yanked off his shirt and tossed in the sand, giving John an excellent view of his nicely defined chest and mouth-watering abs. He nearly swallowed his tongue. Mason glanced at the blanket. "I bet we still get sand in places we'd rather not."

"Probably, but that's why we shower when we get home." He unbuttoned his own shirt and shrugged it off his shoulders. He reached into the pocket of his jeans, his fingers closing over the condom and small tube of lube he'd brought with them when they left that morning.

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Mason undid his pants and then sat on the blanket to shimmy them down his legs. "I'm surprised, John. I wouldn't have thought of you as the sex in the outdoors sort."

"Good, I like to surprise you." He knelt on the blanket and pushed Mason to lie flat on his back. He covered the other man's body with his. "I've been thinking about this all day."

"Yeah? Prove it," Mason teased. His hand closed around the back of John's head and he pulled him down for a deep, heady kiss.

John's cock pressed against his briefs, reminding him he hadn't shucked his jeans. He gave himself up to the sweetness of Mason's kiss. Earlier they'd bought lollipops at a candy store and Mason had eaten his on the way. He tasted of cherry candy.

Mason's hands tugged at his jeans. John rose up just enough to help his lover dispose of his offending garments. Pretty soon they both lay on the blanket naked. The only sounds were birds cawing above and their own moans and gasps.

John framed Mason's face in his hands and deepened the kiss, his tongue slipping inside the warm moist mouth.

The cool breeze gentled against his bare skin, reminding John he was naked and vulnerable for anyone to come upon. He didn't think anyone would, but still it was way bolder than he had ever been. He'd come with reinforcements though to make both of them more comfortable. Breaking the kiss, he stretched across Mason to grab the condom, lube, and a smaller throw blanket to cover them.

"Getting shy?" Mason asked, breathlessly.

"I'm thinking I don't want my ass sunburned."

His lover laughed. "Okay, I could see that. Come back here with those lips."

John pounced, crushing their mouths together, even as his

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hands crept down Mason's warm naked skin, clasping the round, full globes of Mason's ass. "God, I want to be inside you."

"Get the lube."

John had to lean to the side to reach for the lube and condom.

"How do you want me?" Mason asked, even as his hand closed around his erect shaft.

"On all fours." John leaned back on his heels, waiting for his lover to turn over on the blanket covering the sand. The covering blanket dropped away, temporarily forgotten. When Mason braced himself on his hands and knees, John rolled the condom over his hard cock.

Fingers shaking, he lubed them and slipped two into Mason's hole.

Mason moaned, pushing back against the intrusion. "Yes, more."

John wondered if he could hold out long enough to inset another finger inside his lover or if his cock was too fucking hard to hold back. Looking up briefly at the birds flying overhead and then at the area around them, just to be sure they really were alone, he gripped Mason's hips and pushed the tip of his cock into Mason's tight entrance.

He stayed still for only a moment, allowing Mason to adjust to the sudden invasion, then he slid in all the way to the hilt. Since Mason's arms were helping to keep him steady, John reached a hand under him to grasp his lover's cock, his index finger grazing along the fat mushroom head.

His thrusts were slow and deep, John deciding to take his time fucking Mason. Likely they wouldn't be repeating this experience any time soon. He wasn't usually the bold type, Mason just seemed to bring it out in him.

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Mason thrust back, riding John's cock, quickening the pace just a bit. His heartbeat racing, he started pumping harder, faster, matching the rhythm Mason seemed to want to set between them. His hand moved up and down his lover's silky, hard shaft, drawing throaty moans from Mason.

"Mmm, John."

His lover's breathy pants sent jolts of lust through his already oversensitive body. Unable to hold back, he sped up, slamming into Mason's tight entrance over and over.

"Ah, fuck," Mason gasped. Cum shot over John's fingers and onto the blanket below.

No longer concerned with going slow, he pounded hard and fast, his own release pouring out of him. Mason fell beneath him and he collapsed on top. Their heavy, labored breathing mingled.

"Okay?" John whispered.

"Okay? Amazing. You're amazing. I never would have expected this from you." Mason yawned.

"Me either," he admitted. Lord, his limbs felt heavy. He rolled off Mason and held him in his arms. Pulling the blanket over them, he closed his eyes, intending to just relax for a short time.

* * *

John jerked awake, aware of Mason in his arms. He blinked and sat up. The sun had set and twilight had descended over them.

"Shit," he muttered.

"Hmm?" Mason stirred.

"We fell asleep. It's getting dark. We'd probably better go home."

Mason nodded and then opened his eyes. "Oh, yeah. Geez, it's

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cold.”

John laughed. “Yeah. All I can say is it’s a good thing we had the blanket over us or we’d be burnt to a crisp. Sorry. I didn’t mean to fall asleep.”

“No worries. But I’m starved all over again.”

“We’ll pick up burgers from a drive-through on the way back.” John kissed him. “Thanks for a great day.”

Mason smiled. “I should be thanking you. I think this was the best day I’ve ever had.”

John stood and reached to help him up. “My pleasure.”

CHAPTER 8

End of August

Mason opened his eyes with a smile on his face. He seemed to do that a lot lately. The morning sun streaked through the partially opened blinds in John's bedroom. John's back was to him and he hugged his pillow close. Mason's arm still rested around his lover's waist.

He sighed, content for the first time in...well, the truth was he had never been this content. This completely satisfied.

He had been basically staying in John's house...in John's bed...since the middle of June. They hadn't been spending their nights alone anyway so it seemed rather impractical to maintain separate residences. Mason checked on the rented beach house to

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make sure everything was in order, but otherwise, he had set up happily here at John's.

Mason carefully removed his arm from John's waist so as not to wake him. The clock said it was barely seven and he knew he'd worn John out last night. The memory of him coaxing John to fuck him three times made his smile widen to a wicked grin. He was seriously considering waking John up after all for round four.

A wet nose nudged his bare foot where it stuck out of the covers. Apparently Mandy had realized he was awake and likely wanted a walk anyway. Resigning himself to letting John sleep, he slipped out of bed, grabbing his discarded clothes from the night before.

He left the master bedroom, taking the dog with him, and went to the hallway bathroom. He dressed, figuring he'd shower later.

Once he and Mandy got outside onto the deck, he paused to look at the view. He'd come to love this place in the three months he'd been there. He'd miss it when he had to leave. Mason quickly pushed that thought aside. He did not want to think about that. It was too depressing. And too soon, too.

On the Embarcadero was a shop that had pecan rolls. He figured those and coffee would make the perfect breakfast, so he and Mandy headed down the street to the wooden stairs that would take them down to the touristy embarcadero. It being early, mostly locals milled about. He recognized some of them and they called out to each other.

Mason never would have guessed he would feel this way about a community. Especially not a sleepy little burb like Morro Bay. Up until he arrived, Mason would have sworn he was a city boy through and through. His phone buzzed in his pocket and he took it out and flipped it open.

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"Hey, sexy, you're awake already?"

"I woke up and you weren't here," John grumbled.

"Mandy and I are getting breakfast. Go back to sleep."

John yawned. "Want me to set up the coffee?"

"If you want. Or it can wait until I get back and I'll do it. You might need your rest for what I have planned for you."

His lover laughed. "I'm probably too old for all this sex."

"Bullshit. You seem to be keeping up just fine." Mason leaned on the metal railing next to the shop with the pecan rolls and looked out over the ocean. A few vessels had set out to sea. He could hear sea lions barking at each other in the distance. "Just lie in bed until Mandy and I get back. We shouldn't be long."

"All right, you've convinced me. See you in a few."

"Bye." He closed the phone and straightened up from the railing. "Shall we go get those pecan rolls?" Mason asked the dog.

When they entered the bakery, coffee and novelty shop all-in-one, the bell over the door jangled. They'd always brought the dog in with them, because the owners knew them and didn't seem to mind.

"Morning, Mason." A pretty brunette woman in her twenties greeted him.

"Hi, Kelly." After living the first few years of his life in a tiny town in Mississippi and practically hating every minute of it, he surprised himself by the fact he'd come to know many of the locals. Morro Bay wasn't as small as where he'd come from, of course, but it was a far cry from a big city.

"What'll it be this morning?" Kelly asked. "Pecan rolls?"

"Isn't it always? Two, please."

"Maybe you should get four so you can have more for later or tomorrow's breakfast." Kelly reached into the glass display case

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with tongs.

Mason grinned. "Now that sounds like a great plan. Make it six. I have a sweet tooth."

Kelly packaged up his rolls and he took out his wallet and paid. "See you next time."

"Come on, girl," Mason said, pulling the dog with him. He'd only walked a few steps away from the shop when his cell buzzed again. Shaking his head, he took it out of his pocket and flipped it open without looking at it. "We're coming now."

"Mason?" Ashley's questioning voice came over the line.

"Oh. Hi. Thought you were someone else. What's up?" Mason knew this wasn't her day to call to check on him. She'd called just three days earlier.

"Brace yourself, sweetheart. I have fabulous news."

"News?"

"Well, for starters, get packing. I'm on my way to come and get you."

Suddenly the ground seemed to spin at his feet. He slumped down onto the bench outside the pecan roll shop. He wiped his face with the hand not holding Mandy's leash. Swallowing dread, he forced out, "You're what?"

Ashley laughed. "I know it's a week early. You're probably itching to come back to Los Angeles anyway. Listen, I know this was a bit of tough love, but I thought it would help."

Mason sighed. "Renting me a beach house in a beautiful place like this is hardly tough love."

"I can only be so tough where you're concerned. You know what I mean. No television, no Internet, no parties. I mean I know you met that guy...what's his name?"

"John."

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“Right. But an ordinary guy and beautiful scenery can only go so far. I know you, Mason, you have to be getting bored. You crave excitement, you like nothing better than to strut your stuff in front of the cameras.” Her tone took on a decided note of excitement. “That’s why I’m coming to get you. I’m in the car right now.”

He closed his eyes. His stomach twisted. “Um, why?”

“You have a fabulous agent, if I do say so myself. I’ve managed to convince some very well-known fashion photographers to take a chance on you again. Obviously you laying low for these past months has worked. Day after tomorrow you’re going to Tahiti.”

Mason pinched the bridge of his nose. He was getting a headache. He tried to give the response she expected, but the words just wouldn’t form and so he remained silent, staring down at Mandy.

“Mason? Did I lose you?”

“No. I’m here.”

“You’ll be shooting in Tahiti for a couple of weeks and then it’s on to Spain,” Ashley said, sounding rather giddy. “Get packing, sweetie. I’ll be there in a couple hours or so. Oh, there’s my other line. I’ll see you when I get there. Bye.”

He leaned heavily against the bench, trying to get himself together. It couldn’t be happening. There was no way he had to say goodbye to John today. He was not fucking prepared for this. His heart constricted. Finally he was happy and now he had to walk away from it. Pretend these last three months were just...a way to pass his penance for trying to kill himself.

“I can’t go back,” he whispered for only Mandy’s ears. Tears stung his eyes, but he would not give into them. He let out a shaky

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breath. He had responsibilities. Ashley went through a lot to get him work again. To rent this place for his rehabilitation. Becoming a well-known model and actor was his dream. Some things were worth having to sacrifice. Even some people.

Mason forced himself to get up. Wishing it could be different would not make it so. Ashley was right. This was not the life he was made for. Eventually he would get bored with the sedate life. Bored with sex with only one man. Wouldn't he? The life he had was all he knew, all he wanted.

Still his legs felt heavy as he made his way back to John's house. He did not want to have the conversation where he would tell John he would be going back to Los Angeles today. How could he find the words to tell him?

Mason stepped onto the deck and instead of going inside the house he sat in the lounge John had placed on the deck. Mandy lay down next to him. His body felt cold as ice though the morning was warm. He didn't know how long he just sat there...numb. His cell phone rang, but he couldn't bring himself to answer it. Eventually the slider opened.

"Mason?"

"Hey, John."

"I was calling you. How long you been out here?" John knelt beside him, his hand cupped Mason's knee.

"A while." Mason held out the white paper bag containing the pecan rolls. John took them. He glanced at John, saw the frown lines, the worried creases in his forehead. He touched John's face. "It's okay. I'm all right."

"No, there's something. What is it?"

He forced a smile, knew it had to look ghastly. "Ashley's on her way. I'm going...home." The word tasted wrong, but he'd said

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it.

John blinked and then looked away. “Oh. But I thought you had the beach house for another week.”

“I did. She got me a photo shoot. In Tahiti. I leave day after tomorrow.”

The hand slipped from his leg and John stood. “I see. Well, that’s good for you. I know you were worried about it.”

He swallowed. “Yeah. Good for you, too. I know you need to get back to work on your book. Your agent has been bugging you, hasn’t he?”

John nodded. “Pretty much.”

“See, this works out for both of us,” Mason said, knowing his voice cracked with the effort to sound positive and bright.

John had turned away from him, his back to Mason. He stiffened and for a moment didn’t give any response. After what seemed a long time, but was probably no more than a handful of seconds, he said, “Yeah, I guess it does.”

When John didn’t say anything else, Mason got up. “I...I should go and get ready. She said she’s on her way.”

His lover—former lover—nodded. “You said that.”

Misery making it hard to breathe, let alone talk, Mason merely nodded in response, even though John couldn’t see. “Okay. Maybe you can come over and say goodbye when she gets here.”

John finally faced him again, but his expression gave away nothing. Just a blank mask. “Sure.”

Mason handed Mandy’s leash to John and then walked past him and to the steps leading off the deck. He wanted to look back as he made his way across the field between their houses, but didn’t. He didn’t know how to react to this stoic, nearly silent John. He knew telling John about leaving would be hard, but he’d

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expected...something. He didn't know what, but he didn't get it.

* * *

The sound of the car door slamming penetrated him as though he'd been stabbed through the heart. He'd been standing by the window of the living room in his rented beach house hoping Ashley would call back and say never mind.

Mason bent down to pick up his luggage and then walked out the front door. Ashley was coming up the walkway. She looked very happy to see him.

"Mason! You look fantastic," she said, hugging him fiercely when she reached him. "I guess the sea air agrees with you. Your color is back and you look healthy."

"Thanks." He smiled weakly and returned her embrace. "You look good, too."

She grinned. "Thanks, I've been going to a tanning salon. You didn't have too much leftover food I hope? Maybe we can bag it up and take it with us."

He shook his head. "No, I didn't have any." He'd been buying food with John and eating over there, of course.

"Oh, good." She grabbed his bags. "I'll get these in the car."

Mason was about to protest that he could do it when he noticed John was making his way toward them.

Following his stare, Ashley said, "That must be your friend John. He's very cute in a rugged kind of way."

"Yes. Can I have a moment?"

"Sure, I'll wait by the car. You got everything right?"

Not everything.

"Yes. Thanks."

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Mason met John halfway. “Hi.”

John’s hands were shoved in the pocket of his jeans and he was wearing a beat up leather jacket. “Hi.” His glance strayed to Ashley and her car, before landing back on Mason. “I want to say something before you go.”

Mason nodded, not trusting himself to speak. His throat was already raw with the effort to hold back the tears threatening to choke him.

“I know we’ve only known each other three months and I know when we first met, I pushed you into sex—”

He opened his mouth to protest but John shook his head.

“I did. We both know I was the aggressor. That wasn’t like me at all. I’ve always taken the time to know the guy before we jump into bed, but from the start, there was something different about you. If I had known then what I later learned about you after, I wouldn’t have done it. Well, not that soon anyway.” John sighed. “God, I’m babbling. I know we’ve only known each other three months, but in those three months you’ve become so much to me. Not just my lover but my best friend. Life is fun again and it hasn’t been in a long time. I hadn’t realized that before you came.”

“John—”

“Let me get it all out. I wanted you to know before you go, before you walk out on us, this, that for me this isn’t just a summer fling. I’ve fallen in love with you, Mason.”

The ground moved under his feet, or felt like it anyway. Ever since he’d started modeling he’d had dozens of declarations of love, in person, to his public email address, left on his Facebook account. He’d always replied with an equally fake *love you, too* in response. Now, when he was aware with startling clarity that this was the first time someone had actually meant it, someone actually

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did love him, he could only stare. His heart in his mouth...he just stared.

"Mason?" Ashley called from beside the car. "We should be going."

Desperately ignoring the raw pain in John's eyes, he whispered, "I have to go."

"Don't go."

"I-I have to." He felt the sting of tears, trying to push past his defenses. "Please, don't do this to me."

If possible the pain in John's gaze sharpened, like a stab to Mason's own heart. He wanted to tell John more than anything in the world that he loved him. John's jaw tightened and he took a step back, putting more distance between them.

"Mason!"

John reached inside his leather jacket and produced the white paper sack containing the pecan rolls. He held them out for Mason. "You should take these with you. I know how much you love them."

His icy fingers gripped the bag as though it could save his life or something. The tears pooled in his eyes now, blurring his vision. "Bye, John," he said, his voice cracking.

Mason turned and walked away then, to Ashley and the waiting car. He didn't dare look back or change his stride in any way, for he knew he'd be in serious danger of falling to his knees. He opened the car door handle and slipped into the passenger seat.

Ashley got into the driver's side beside him. She smiled, seemingly unaware of his torment. "Ready?"

"Yes."

"This is going to be great, Mason. This is a big break for you."

He nodded. "Do you mind if I sleep?"

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“Go ahead.”

Mason closed his eyes and tried to pretend his world hadn’t flipped upside down.

CHAPTER 9

John had been helping an old neighbor of his from San Luis Obispo sell freshly caught fish off his boat for most of the afternoon. John along with George, and George's wife, Betty, had gone out that morning on the boat George docked in Morro Bay and had a peaceful, quiet time shooting the breeze and catching fish. It had been good to feel sort of normal.

"You and Mandy can go on home now if you want," George said, as they sold off the last fillet. George, a retired policeman, had called him up last night to ask about the fishing. It was a great way to distract himself from his broken heart.

"I can stay and help clean up."

George smiled. "Nah, Betty's already got it under control. We're going to get cleaned up and go have dinner. You want to

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come along?”

The thing of it was, he did. John did not want to be alone in his empty house thinking of Mason. But he also knew the old saying, three's a crowd, was true. He shook his head.

“No. You two have a nice dinner. Thanks again for the day. It was great.”

“Anytime.”

John went and said goodbye to Betty and then he and Mandy walked down the plank off the boat and then back up to shore. In the last few days since Mason had left he'd gone about life sort of like a robot. The first night he'd not been able to sleep, so he'd stayed up and worked on his novel until he finally got it done. His agent had been so happy he sent him a fruit basket the next day.

When he and Mandy reached the shop on the Embarcadero that sold the pecan rolls, he stopped and stared. He didn't think he could ever eat another pecan roll again. Pathetic, he guessed. And what was more pathetic was he didn't want to go back to his house. Not yet. So he turned back around and headed down the road leading to the rock and eventually his favorite spot on the beach.

Being a bright, sunny day there were perhaps more people milling about the beach than he liked, but it still beat going home to a Mason-less house. He hadn't brought his blanket or a towel, so he just plopped down in the sand and stared off to sea.

John knew eventually he'd have to get over Mason. Obviously it wasn't meant to be. He'd laid his feelings out for Mason and didn't get a response... Well, certainly not one he had hoped for. God knew he'd had broken a heart before. It just didn't get easier. Falling in love with Mason had snuck up on him. Grabbed hold and would not let go.

After a while he got tired and leaned his head down in his

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knees, folding his arms under him and closing his eyes. Mandy had been lying next to him since they'd come to the beach. He heard children playing not too far away, but they stayed far enough from him not to bother him.

A soft breeze and movement directly next to him stirred him awake some time later. He blinked several times, trying to reorient himself.

"I love you, too."

John turned his head quickly, his eyes fully opening to the sight of Mason sitting next to him in the sand. His heart pounding, he could only stare at the beautiful man he'd come to love so much and never expected to see again. Mason's shoulder length blond hair blew about his face from the wind that had picked up. His green eyes twinkled. A soft, beautiful smile lit his face. For a moment, John was sure he was dreaming.

Mason's hand rested on his folded arms. "Hi."

"So, you are really here?" John straightened, his gaze hungrily raking over Mason.

"Yes." Mason leaned close and kissed him on the lips, but he didn't linger, always seeming to be aware of their surroundings. "I love you, John."

Choked with too many emotions at once, John could barely manage to respond. He nodded. "About time you said it."

Mason smiled, his eyes shiny with unshed tears. "I know. I'm sorry. But I'm here now."

"Yes, you are." John stole a quick kiss, then pulled back to look at his lover. "Shouldn't you be in Tahiti?"

"Probably. But I'm not going to Tahiti or to Spain."

He swallowed, hope practically bursting open his chest. "No?"

"No. I don't want to go anywhere that takes me so far away

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from you. Not for a while anyway.” Mason laced his fingers with John’s. “I’ve been so miserable since I left here. I didn’t want to go, but I didn’t know what to do.”

“What did you do? What did you tell Ashley?”

“I was going to go to Tahiti. I was all set. Packed even. Then I didn’t. I couldn’t.” Mason sighed. “I had a long talk with Ashley. I told her the truth about us. How I feel. We both agreed this isn’t the right time for me to resume my career.”

“Really? She agreed?”

“It’s my life, for one thing, and, well, I guess she cares about me more than I thought she did. She told me she wished I had told her all this stuff before. And, she wants to come up here soon and actually meet you.”

John didn’t bother to keep the hope from taking over, and he knew he was grinning from ear to ear. “You’re going to stay here? With me?”

“If you’ll let me. I’m sorry. I know I can’t say it enough.”

He shook his head. “You’ve said it enough. I love you, Mason. I’m so glad you feel the same way and came back to me.”

Mason reached over to pat Mandy’s back. “I really want to be with you, but this isn’t like our little private beach.”

He laughed. “Definitely not. We’ll go back home. Hey, how did you know where to find me?”

“I took a wild guess when you weren’t at home, but your car was. I waited around a bit but when you didn’t come home right away I decided to check here. My car is parked at the curb.” Mason stood and offered his hand to help John up.

After standing up, John pulled him into a long hug. “God, I can’t believe you’re really here. I thought I’d lost you.”

Mason hugged him back. “Not a chance.”

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* * *

John tumbled Mason underneath him on their bed. They'd already removed their clothes, starting to undress almost as soon as they stepped inside the house.

Their lips fused together, tongues dancing. Even though only a few days had passed it seemed far too long since his fingers grazed over the perfect, smooth bare skin.

"John, make love to me," Mason whispered against his lips. "I want you."

"Mmm, let's see." John slipped his hand between their bodies to close over Mason's hard cock. His thumb brushed over the tip, rubbing in a drop of pre-cum. "God, you're amazing."

"Show me."

John crushed his lips over Mason's. He gripped Mason's jaw with the hand not stroking Mason's cock. His lover's hips rose up, pushing against him.

Mason moaned low and his hands stroked all over John, down his back, pausing briefly to squeeze John's ass cheeks, before a finger slid along the crease, probing toward John's hole. He stiffened and broke their kiss.

Mason grinned. "No?"

"Not this time. Maybe another time. Right now, I want to fuck you."

"I can't wait. Where's the lube?"

He laughed. "Damn, you're incorrigible."

"You've said that before."

"It's still true. I was trying to go slow and be romantic." He shook his head and rolled off Mason to get the lube and condom.

"I love you, John, and you can spend the rest of our lives being

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as romantic to me as you want. Right now, I want your cock.” Mason turned over onto his stomach and rose up on all fours, presenting his very tempting ass to John.

Fuck.

Ripping open the foil packet, John wasted no time rolling the condom onto his erection, his balls already tightening in anticipating of being inside that tight hole. As though reading his mind, Mason wiggled his ass and spread his legs wider, giving him the perfect view and easy access. It took just a moment for him to lube his fingers and then Mason’s entrance. His lover pushed against his probing, his ass opening for John.

Withdrawing his digits, he pushed the head of his cock in, trying once more to go slower, but Mason would have none of it and he thrust back, his body swallowing John’s cock. His eyes closed, almost of their own free will as he slid all the way home.

“Yes, please,” Mason begged.

The begging pushed him over the edge and John began to pound Mason’s ass, hard and deep, driven on by Mason’s whimpers. He wrapped a hand around his lover’s dick, working it fast and rough, drawing even more gasps and groans from those perfect lips.

His own release came fast, surprising him with the quickness, the power, jolting up the base of his spine. “Mason!”

With a cry of his own, Mason joined him with his own orgasm moments later.

John collapsed, lying across his lover. He was aware he should move, not wanting to crush the smaller man, but not sure he wanted to be separated even a little bit from Mason. He’d thought...well, never to have this again...not with this man.

“Uh.” Mason protested.

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He chuckled. "Okay, I get the hint." He rolled off and pulled Mason close, wrapping his arms around his middle. "I'm sorry. I should have taken my time."

Mason shook his head. "No, next time. It was perfect for us now."

"What do you think about this place? It's not the big beautiful beach house you were renting."

"No, but you know I've always liked yours better. That house was great and it brought me here to Morro Bay and to you. But this place is yours and that's where I want to be."

"It's your place now, too." He leaned up on his elbow. "I don't want you to think I don't think your career is important. You should work when you want to."

"I will. I'm just...strutting my stuff in front of the cameras is just not that important to me anymore. Right now anyway. It's not only meeting you, but everything from before, too."

"Whatever you want, Mason. It's up to you. I'll support whatever you decide."

"Thank you. I'm not sure I know how to be normal though. I'll try."

"I just want you to be you." John kissed him.

Mason yawned. "I'm tired. That was a long drive. But I'm hungry, too."

John kissed his nose. "Sleep. I'll make us dinner and wake you when it's ready."

That earned him a deep kiss. Mason's smile was radiant when he broke the kiss. "You're just perfect. I am *so* keeping you."

His throat clogging with emotion, John whispered as Mason closed his eyes, "I'm keeping you, too."

SHAWN LANE

Shawn Lane believes love and passion know no boundaries. Shawn writes both erotic love stories involving men in historical or contemporary settings and interracial romances between men and women. Shawn is always looking for new stories and new characters to create while holding down life in California.

* * *

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