



Lust Bites

DISCOVERING THE ACTOR

Serena Yates

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Discovering the Actor

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

New Horizons

DISCOVERING THE ACTOR

Serena Yates

Dedication

For those who dream about giving their life a new direction.

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Chapter One

"Are you ready?" Scott Black glanced at his new boyfriend. They'd been together for a month, most of that time spent organising their move from California to Scotland. Now they were about to meet his parents and suddenly Scott wasn't so sure this was a good idea.

"No." Anton's sky-blue eyes were bright in his too pale face.

The long flights with a layover in Newark had taken it out of him despite the fact they'd travelled first class. Anton's long, strawberry blond locks were tousled and he looked good enough to eat, even as exhausted as he was. Too bad Scott had to focus on driving the rental car they'd picked up at Edinburgh airport. Returning to driving on the left side of the road had been surprisingly easy, but he was still nervous. The first roundabout had almost thrown him for a loop.

"Would you rather stay at a hotel, get some sleep and meet them tomorrow?" Scott wouldn't mind. He hadn't seen his family since he'd left for Los Angeles ten years ago. A career in gay porn later, he wasn't too sure of his welcome, even though his eldest brother, Logan, had reassured him when they'd spoken on the phone.

"That would only delay it, not solve the problem of having to meet new people. You know I'm no good at that." Anton sighed and pushed his hair out of his face. "And these aren't just *any* new people. Hell, they're your parents and family. What if they hate me?"

"They won't hate you." That was too ridiculous for words. "You're too nice a person to hate. Not to mention intelligent, well educated and about to bring order to their long neglected library of old manuscripts. If they'll hate anyone, it'll be me."

"You? But you're their son!" Anton's eyebrows rose.

"A son who used to be a gay porn star." Scott wasn't ashamed of what he'd done, but he'd always thought his stuffy aristocratic family would object. "Even if Logan assures me that they're okay with it, I can't quite imagine they'll love me for it."

"Okay, so maybe they'll hate both of us." Anton's lips twitched when Scott did a double take. "Watch the road!"

Scott returned his attention to not missing their exit off the M90.

"All right, now that we've discussed the worst case scenario, maybe it won't be so bad." Anton put his right hand on Scott's thigh, not moving it anywhere, just letting it lie there and reassure him. "We have each other's backs, right?"

"Oh, yes!" Scott had no doubts. "You've given up so much to be with me, I'll always have your back."

"Pffft, that promotion would have made me monumentally unhappy." Anton chuckled. "Thank God you rescued me from all that travelling and the unbearable levels of office politics. You've given me my first real shot at doing some serious research into the history of astronomy. I'm hoping I can focus on the history of the Astronomer Royal for Scotland, depending on the manuscripts your family's library holds."

"I love it when you get all excited about your work." Scott grinned. He didn't always understand everything Anton said, but his enthusiasm was sexy as hell. "Now, let me see, yes, this is our exit."

They were less than an hour north of Edinburgh and the landscape had already changed to one of wild beauty. He'd taken the slightly longer route so he could drive past Loch Leven, his favourite spot for fishing and swimming in the summer. As it came up on their left, he heard Anton gasp.

"Beautiful, isn't it?" Scott was proud to call this area home.

"It's unbelievable!" Anton lifted his hand from Scott's thigh and pointed at the island. "Look, there's a castle on that island!"

"Yes, there is." Scott smiled. "We used to row across the water and try and sneak up there, but the guard dogs wouldn't let us onto the beach."

"I bet you were a holy terror as a kid!" Anton returned his hand to its new home on Scott's thigh and Scott saw him smile from the corner of his eye.

"I did my share of damage." Scott shook his head. "Having two older brothers didn't help. Logan's six years older and David four, so they were always ahead of me. But I did my level best to match them in naughtiness."

They drove the rest of the way in silence. Scott had to focus on the narrow country road and Anton was staring out the passenger-side window. After a few more miles, and several turns, they finally made it to the old cast-iron gate that was set in the even older sandstone wall.

Scott lowered his window and pressed the bell, announcing their presence to the person on the other end. It sounded like Winston, but the voice was so tinny that he couldn't be sure. The gate opened, as if by magic, and Scott started the winding drive towards the castle. The old trees framing it were still hiding the main residence as well as they had ten years ago.

When they came around the final bend, and the view opened up onto the building and the immaculate lawn in front of it, Anton gasped. Scott grinned. The late eighteenth-century building was pretty impressive. Based on a fourteenth-century tower house, his ancestors had rebuilt it in 1781 in very early Scottish Baronial style. The ivy that climbed up the old tower was just as familiar as the crow-stepped gables and the battlement crenellations that made it look more like a castle than the Palladian manor it had actually become.

"Fuck!" Anton's eyes were big when Scott turned around to watch him after parking in one of the spaces in front of the main entrance and switched off the engine. "This is...this is huge!"

"Told you." Scott loved Anton's uninhibited reaction.

"Yes, you mentioned that your parents owned a castle. But you didn't say that it was this big. I mean, just look at the entrance door. You could fit a carriage through there." Anton's eyes kept wandering over the entire front of the building.

"They probably did, back in the old times. The former central courtyard was covered and the space converted into rooms in the original renovation." Scott felt like a tour guide, one who enjoyed the utter amazement on Anton's face.

"How many rooms does this place have?" Anton's hands gripped the sides of his car seat. He looked far more nervous than he should have been.

"Oh, there are about fifteen or sixteen bedrooms. Some of them in the east wing are used for renting out to tourists or for small corporate events. About the same number of bathrooms, a couple of dining rooms and various lounges, the library, of course, the main ballroom, the kitchen and several rooms for those members of the staff who prefer to live here rather than in the village." Scott opened his door and got out to stretch his legs. They'd be discovered pretty soon and if he knew his mother she'd have lunch waiting for them.

Anton had barely gotten out of the car when the main door opened and Scott's entire family poured out.

"Oh, shit. I'm in such trouble." Anton had gone white and stood rooted to the gravel driveway.

Scott walked around the car and put his arm around his lover's shoulders.

"It'll be fine. Just be yourself and they'll love you just as much as I do." Scott felt Anton's arm sneak around his middle and hold on. Together they walked towards the main door and met the group half way.

"Welcome home, Scott." His father was the first to speak and to reach out a hand for him to shake. "And you must be Anton?"

Anton nodded and quietly shook his father's hand, his eyes big as saucers. Scott's mother was next and pulled Scott into a hug.

"Welcome, Anton." Scott's mother stepped up and hugged his lover as well. "Please make yourself at home."

Logan and his wife, Fiona, were next, their two children Nessa, who was seven, and Camron, who was three, in tow. They'd gotten married just before Scott had left. He'd never met his niece and nephew, although he'd seen photos they'd e-mailed him since Logan had gotten in touch with him two years ago. Both of the children were adorable, with their big blue eyes, but very quiet. They stared at Scott and Anton holding hands, but didn't say anything. Not yet, anyway. Once David and his youngest sister, Janneth, both still single, had greeted them, the family introductions were done.

Nobody had bitten their heads off or even seemed unfriendly. That was about as promising a start as he could've hoped for.

* * * *

"You should have warned me you have a butler." Anton had felt like a bug under a magnifying glass during lunch.

"Why?" Scott looked puzzled as he led them through the hallway towards one of the exits so they could take a digestive walk and explore the gardens.

"I don't think he likes me very much." Anton was totally overwhelmed by the situation. "He kept staring at me as if I had a stain on my shirt or something."

"Winston? He's harmless." Scott laughed and opened the door. "I bet he's never seen a more attractive research scientist than you."

"Nice try. I don't think that was it." He stared at the view. Acres of the greenest lawn he'd ever seen stretched for miles. There was a tennis court on the left, right next to a swimming pool. It felt as if he'd landed in a movie. It made him dizzy.

"What would you've done if I'd warned you?" Scott closed the door behind them and pointed at the gravel path that wound through the flowerbeds.

"I don't know. Brushed up on my table manners." Anton was distracted. The gardens were beautiful and the fresh air felt good on his face.

"Your table manners are fine, baby." Scott chuckled and pulled him along, farther away from the intimidating main building. "I can't believe you're more worried about Winston than about the rest of the family."

"Humph." Neither could he. "They were really nice, you know? I'm glad I got to meet them."

"Yeah, I know. I'm happy I came back. Don't know what held me back for so long. I realise we haven't talked about any of the difficult stuff yet, not with the children there. But I really don't think my former career bothers them all that much. They would've said something by now, or reacted differently, don't you think?" Scott kept walking as if he knew the way. Shit, he probably did.

"I think they're amazing people." Anton wished his own parents were half as friendly towards him as Scott's family had been towards their son's boyfriend.

They kept walking for another hour or so, and when they returned to the house, Winston assured them that their suitcases had been taken to their room.

"Where is everyone?" Anton cringed. He probably shouldn't have been that openly curious.

"I expect they have returned to their normal activities, Sir." Winston didn't move a single muscle in his slightly wrinkled face. He was probably in his mid-fifties and had seen his share of floundering guests who weren't quite up-to-date with the social niceties.

"That's okay. We'll see them all again at dinner time." Scott smiled and took Anton's hand, making him feel ridiculously relieved. "Would you like to explore the library? We've got the whole afternoon, and since we're not supposed to sleep until we've adjusted to the new time zone, I thought this might be a good use of our time."

"But I have an appointment with your father tomorrow morning. Don't you think I should wait for his official introduction?" Not that he wanted to wait that long. The thought

of all those old books and manuscripts had been nagging him since they'd arrived. To be so close, and not able to see them, was painful.

"That's just the professional part. I expect my father will be discussing a lot of details about the job rather than the manuscripts, themselves. This afternoon, you're just a guest and are welcome to explore any part of the house that you wish." Scott winked at him, making it perfectly clear he knew what was going on in Anton's head.

"If you really think it's okay, then yes, I would love to see the library." Anton had a hard time controlling his impatience now that the decision had been made.

Winston led the way and when they entered a huge room, lit by floor to ceiling windows on one of the walls, Anton stopped in his tracks. Three of the walls, and the spaces between the windows on the fourth, were covered in bookshelves. The dark, old wood gleamed from having been polished. There were three sitting groups consisting of leather sofas and easy chairs grouped around the room, as well as two large antique desks at each end. Persian rugs covered the stone floor.

But the best part was the tons and tons of books spread out across every shelf. There were old leather bound tomes that looked more ancient than the castle walls, hardbacks and newer paperbacks, manuscripts and a whole range of antique telescopes.

"I've died and gone to heaven, haven't I?" Anton didn't know where to start.

"I can assure you that you are quite alive, Sir." Was that a smile tugging at Winston's lips? "Will there be anything else?"

"No, thank you, Winston. I think we're fine for now." Scott took his hand and led him to one of the sofas. "You just sit here with me and enjoy. We've got all the time in the world."

* * * *

It hadn't been quite all the time in the world, but enough for Anton to start believing that this was real, and that he was going to be extremely busy for a few years. He'd been very lucky to be presented with an unexplored treasure like this.

Dinner had been much easier than lunch and he'd enjoyed all the family banter. He was tired and more than ready to get some sleep. It had been a long day and he blindly followed Scott who was leading the way to their room. He didn't think he'd ever be able to find his

way back. He could only hope someone would be around to show him the way if he needed to go anywhere.

Scott finally opened one of the many wood panelled doors and Anton's jaw dropped. There was a real-life, four-poster bed, including blue velvet curtains and a matching bedspread, against one wall. The wall opposite held a fireplace, as well as a door he presumed led into the bathroom. A huge wardrobe and a matching dresser stood against the wall behind the door Scott had just closed.

"I should have issued another warning, shouldn't I?" Scott grinned and pulled him towards the bathroom.

"Yeah, that might've helped." Anton wasn't surprised when he found their toiletries had already been unpacked and sat neatly ordered next to the washbasin. Winston must have been busy.

"Come on, let's just take a quick shower and brush our teeth so we can get some sleep." Scott started to take his clothes off.

Anton stared at the gorgeous man. His broad shoulders, well-muscled chest and flat abdomen were perfect. When he pulled his long hair out of his usual ponytail, and let his hair cascade down his back, Anton was lost. Forget the quick shower, he was going to take his time soaping up his man. They hadn't done more than hold hands and kiss in almost forty-eight hours.

He undressed quickly and followed Scott into the large shower enclosure. Hot water was already creating a nice bit of steam. He picked up a bar of soap, rubbing it between his hands to create a luxurious lather. Scott was watching with avid eyes and started smiling when Anton began cleaning him. Scott quickly returned the favour, crowding Anton against one of the tiled walls once he was done.

Scott lowered his head and Anton licked his lips in anticipation of the kiss. He wasn't disappointed. His lover's tongue entered his mouth and their kiss quickly grew more passionate. The sandalwood scent of the soap in the air and Scott's slick skin under his hands when he caressed the other man's shoulders and upper arms made him hard within seconds.

An answering hardness against his lower stomach confirmed that Scott was in the same situation. Sliding one arm around Scott's middle and putting his hand on his lover's tight ass cheeks enabled Anton to pull him more closely against his hard cock. He ground his erection against Scott's and started moving his hips to maximise the friction he so badly needed.

Within minutes the tingling in his balls grew too strong for him to hold back and he came all over Scott's stomach. Scott pulled back from the kiss and buried his face between Anton's neck and shoulder while he shuddered through his own release.

"Fuck, I needed that." Scott moved back and let the hot water cleanse their stomachs before turning off the tap and grabbing a towel.

"Too quick, but I don't think I can stay awake much longer." Anton was suddenly too tired to do anything other than stand there and let his lover towel him dry.

"We'll take our time tomorrow morning." Scott grinned and led them towards the large bed. "We'll draw the curtains and it'll feel like we're in our own little world."

* * * *

"Is this where the auditions take place?" Scott was surprised how rundown it all looked. He hadn't been to an unfamiliar location in a long time.

The Princes Theatre wasn't small and had been fairly easy to find. The artist's entrance at the back was a different matter. It was well hidden and looked more dilapidated than Scott had expected. But this was theatre, not film. The budgets involved weren't even close.

"Yes, it is." The older lady with the crazy glasses, very clearly in charge of reception, looked him up and down. "What part is it you're auditioning for?"

"Oh, uhm, Mercutio." Scott didn't really mind which part he got, as long as he had a foot in the door.

"Really?" She stared at the list in front of her, scanning the pages and shaking her head. "I'm sorry, pet, that part's been taken. There was an unexpected applicant yesterday afternoon and Torin, that's Torin Macpatrick, our director, hired him."

"Oh." Scott's heart sank. This had been one of the few secondary parts available. The others had been leads and he didn't feel confident enough to try, despite what Anton had said after seeing one of his rehearsals. "Okay, well, thanks anyway."

"Sorry, pet." She gave him a blinding smile, showing a gold tooth. "But if you have a minute, I'll give Torin a call to see if anything else has come up. If you're willing to try for another part, that is?"

"Oh, sure, yes please!" Scott shut himself up before he started babbling. "I would really appreciate that."

The woman nodded and picked up the phone to make her call. The door in the back wall opened and a dark-haired man, in tattered jeans and a T-shirt that had seen better days, exited. He carried a coffee mug and started making his way across the reception area. Scott turned around, heading towards the sofa in one of the corners when he realised that the man was about to cross his path. The stranger wasn't looking where he was going and smacked into Scott before he could move out of his way. The man dropped the mug, getting hot coffee all over his jeans as it fell. It smelt more like whisky.

"Goddamn it!" Now the man looked up at Scott, anger blazing from his brown eyes. "Can't you look where you're going, you moron?"

"Excuse me?" He hadn't been the one not paying attention. "I'm sorry, but it seems to me..."

"God save us all! What's an American doing here? Can't you go invade somewhere else?" The man kicked the mug towards the reception desk and turned away, muttering something about having to get another one as he returned to the door in the back wall.

"Are you all right?" The receptionist put down the phone and flinched when the door slammed shut with a loud bang.

"Yes, I think so." Scott was trying to recover from the rudeness he'd just experienced. "Who was that?"

"Oh, that was Quinn Pinkerton. He plays Romeo." The receptionist smiled hesitantly. "He's been doing it for almost five years, but he's been having a hard time lately. Some sort of family tragedy, I think."

"Well, that might explain his short temper, but I don't think it excuses his lack of manners." What a diva. "Thanks for calling Mr. Macpatrick for me."

Scott had just made it to the sofa when the most stunning redhead he'd ever seen emerged from the same door the rude stranger had vanished into. The man was about six feet tall, well built and well dressed. His eyes were bright green and Scott almost looked for pointed ears.

"Mr. Black?" The man's voice had a heavy Scottish accent that made Scott smile. He hadn't heard a strong one like that in a long time. It made him want to return his own pronunciation to what it used to be.

"Yes, that's me." Scott stood and waited to see what this second man wanted.

"I'm sorry, I know you may need to leave for another appointment, but I didn't want to let you go before having a chat. Rosalind just called me to tell me that there was 'a very good-looking young man' in reception who'd wanted to audition for the role of Mercutio." The man offered his hand for shaking. "My name is Torin Macpatrick and I'm the director of this play."

"It's nice to meet you, Mr. Macpatrick." Scott shook his hand.

"Torin, please." Torin waited for Scott to nod his understanding. "I've just had another role open up, that of Benvolio, and thought that you might be interested?"

"Yes, thank you, I'd be very interested." Scott frowned. "I'm not prepared for that part, though. And I must be honest and tell you that I haven't got any theatre credentials so far."

"That's fine. It's not like this is a major role and I prefer to check people's abilities rather than their credentials. I'll see what you can do with very short notice, under stress." Torin looked at him as if he wanted to say something else, then shook his head. "Can you come back here tomorrow? I'm willing to wait a day if we can get someone as good-looking as you added to our group of actors."

"Sure, tomorrow is fine. And please, call me Scott." He couldn't very well have his potential new boss use his family name when he'd just offered a first name basis. Even though it had felt suspiciously as if Torin was coming on to him. Was that the real reason Torin was so interested in hiring him?

"Great, I'll see you tomorrow at ten a.m., then. Be ready to do Act One, Scene One. It'll help me see how you play off our volatile Romeo." Torin shook his hand again, gave him a blinding smile and vanished back through the mysterious door.

Shit, he was going to have to deal with Quinn. But still, he'd gotten an actual audition. He couldn't wait to tell Anton. They'd seen very little of each other over the past week, since they'd arrived, because Anton had been so busy immersing himself in the library's treasures.

Scott missed his lover. They hadn't had much time together in California before they'd left, either. Scott had hoped moving to Scotland would improve the situation. But Anton had been too tired from his new job and Scott had been very busy researching different theatres and their plays in Edinburgh. Nothing was going to change if he didn't make something happen, so maybe it was time to take the initiative.

Chapter Two

Anton sat at the huge antique desk in the library, knee-deep into a fascinating account of Thomas Henderson's life and work as the first Astronomer Royal for Scotland. A hand on his shoulder made him look up from the nineteenth-century document.

"Oh, hey love." It was always good to see Scott, especially when he hadn't expected him back this early. "How did everything go?"

"In a minute. First, there's something I need to do." Scott took the manuscript from Anton's hands and carefully placed it onto the far end of the desk.

Anton looked up into his lover's light blue eyes. They sparked with passion. Scott bent down and placed his lips onto Anton's, making him sigh and open up to the probing tongue immediately. Scott invaded his mouth as though he was on a mission. Hell, it felt as if he was. Scott stroked his tongue in and out of Anton's mouth while moving a hand up along Anton's thigh until he reached Anton's now painfully erect cock.

The slow stroking of his length through the soft fabric alternated with the careful kneading of his balls until Anton started bucking his hips. He was close to coming when he managed to pull back. There was no way he was going to allow himself to come in his pants. Not with one of the maids or Winston doing the laundry.

"Please!" Anton pressed his cheek against Scott's and tried to catch its breath. "Not in here."

"Don't worry, baby, I locked the door." Scott framed his face in both hands and placed hot kisses all over it. "I want you so badly. We haven't spent a lot of time together in the last week, and we're both too tired in the evenings and too rushed in the mornings to take our time."

"But Winston..." Anton didn't trust a locked door to necessarily stop the butler.

The man had this uncanny ability to appear whenever he was needed or thought he might be needed for something. Anton still wasn't sure whether the man was trying to spy on him as the newcomer to the family, or whether he was truly trying to help.

"Shhh, don't worry about Winston. With the door locked, he'll know better than to come in here." Scott chuckled. "It's a family tradition."

"What? That means he'll know what's going on in here." That wasn't reassuring in the least.

"So? It's not like he doesn't know that we're a couple." Scott moved his hands to Anton's shoulders and bent down to nibble on an earlobe.

"Ugh, God, you know what that does to me." Anton started writhing on the chair. He'd never known how sensitive his earlobes were until Scott had found out. His lover was using that knowledge mercilessly to get his way. Not that Anton really minded. He'd missed the physical intimacy they'd so recently discovered.

"Yeah, baby, I sure do. I'm hoping it'll convince you to let me have my way with you. I've been fantasising about you and this desk for a few days." Scott licked and nibbled his way down Anton's throat, ending by sucking on the base of it.

Scott mentioning that he wanted to fuck him on the desk surrounded by all those manuscripts and books, had made Anton's cock even harder. Feeling Scott's lips and tongue on that sensitive spot made him dizzy with lust.

"Is that a yes?" Scott pulled away and looked at Anton's face. "I don't want to do it if it makes you uncomfortable, baby. After all, this is your place of work..."

"Fuck that. The manuscripts are safe all the way over at the other end of the desk. I want you so badly right now I could scream." Anton had rarely been this eager. "As long as you're sure that we won't be interrupted, you can do anything you want with me."

The answering gleam in Scott's eyes was the only warning he got. Scott tightened his grip on Anton's shoulders to pull him into a standing position. His shirt was opened and off his body before he could blink, quickly followed by his pants and underwear.

"Get rid of your shoes and socks, then hop on the desk for me and spread your legs." Scott's voice was low and gravelly, the tone of command so erotic that Anton had to take a deep breath to regain control.

By the time he'd made it up onto the desk and had scooted far enough back he could put his feet flat on the surface, Scott had torn his clothes off. He stepped up between Anton's legs, dropping a condom and a sachet of lube onto the desk before putting his hands on Anton's knees. Scott stared at Anton's hard shaft. It was lying on his stomach, steadily dripping pre-cum and more than ready for action.

"Please." Anton reached for his aching cock. All he needed was a couple of strokes to relieve the tension.

But Scott took his hands and leant over Anton's body to stretch them out over Anton's head. It brought their groins into contact and Anton arched his back to try and put more pressure on his balls — let their cocks slide against each other. Anything.

"What?" Anton wanted to touch, to feel.

"Leave them there for a bit. I want to be the only one touching you. Will you let me do that?" Scott thrust his hips once, putting much wanted pressure on Anton's balls.

"Okay. Just...just please, do something." He was willing to let Scott lead for a while, but he wanted him so badly that he wasn't sure he could wait much longer.

Scott nodded once and pulled back. Anton left his hands where they were next to his shoulders. For now.

Scott stepped back and put his hands back onto Anton's knees. He slid them up and down his upper thighs, coming closer and closer to his groin on every upward stroke. It made Anton shiver with anticipation, but Scott didn't touch him where he needed it most. When Scott finally stroked Anton's balls with his thumbs and kept them there, Anton took a shuddering breath.

"You like that?" Scott's grin was mischievous as he bent down and sucked one ball into his hot mouth, still keeping the pressure on the other one with his thumb.

Anton groaned. Scott changed to the other ball and gave it the same treatment, driving Anton's arousal impossibly higher. When both balls were nice and wet, Scott licked a path up the sensitive underside of his cock. Scott ended the torture when he enclosed Anton's throbbing cockhead into his mouth and started sucking. Really hard. Anton was sure he was going to come from that, when Scott pulled back.

"Nooooo!" Anton couldn't take this anymore. He'd been so close.

Scott just grinned and picked up the condom to sheathe himself. When he opened the packet of lube, Anton sighed with relief. Maybe there was hope.

"I need you inside me, Scott." He'd never wanted anything so badly. "Now!"

"Your wish is my command. But I don't want to hurt you, so you'll have to be patient just a little bit longer." Scott followed his words with a slick finger on his perineum, caressing it in small circular movements.

Anton growled, willing his lover to move on. Scott grinned again and slowly trailed his finger towards Anton's waiting opening. The first touch of the sensitive skin there made

Anton whimper. When Scott slid one finger in all the way and hit his prostate on the first try, he howled.

"Now, damn it, now!" He was going to take matters into his own hands if his lover didn't comply this time.

Scott seemed to finally understand that Anton was serious and put the tip of his cock against Anton's waiting hole. When Scott started to push in, much too slowly for Anton's taste, he lost it. He slid his legs around Scott's hips and pulled him in all the way. The momentary pain was excruciating, but it morphed into pleasure before he could react. He'd been ready for this and he wasn't willing to wait a moment longer.

"Anton. Fuck!" Beads of sweat pooled on Scott's forehead as he stiffened and stopped moving. "That must've hurt, baby. Please, slow down a bit and let me make this good for you."

"There's only one way you can make this good for me." Anton lifted his hands to Scott's shoulders to pull him down for a scorching kiss. "I need you to move, to really give it to me hard. I'm telling you, if you don't, I'm going to take over."

"You are, are you?" Scott laughed. "I guess it's okay then."

Holding onto Anton's shoulders to stop him from moving across the desk, Scott pulled out and pushed back in quickly enough to make Anton hiss with the pleasure.

"Yes!" Finally the man had gotten the message. "Yes, that's what I mean."

Scott started thrusting in and out of Anton's clenching channel in long, deep movements that made him see stars every time his lover hit his prostate. Within minutes, Scott was driving in and out of Anton with such speed and force that it made the antique desk creak.

Anton was so far gone that he couldn't even care. His groaning, egging his lover on, had turned into an almost continuous sound. The scent of his lover's sweat mixed with that of the wood polish and old paper, and he was in heaven. All the sensations combined finally drove him over the edge.

He came in long bursts of ecstasy that painted their chests in white streaks of cum and made them slide against each other. It only took one more thrust for Scott to give in to his own orgasm. His lover's entire body shook as he held on, and emptied himself into the condom.

Anton's breath came in ragged gasps as he captured Scott's lips for a passionate kiss that didn't do much to calm them down. But finally Scott pulled up and back to deal with the used condom. Before Anton could gather his wits, Scott had wiped them clean with one of their shirts, lifted him up and carried him towards a sofa. They stretched out and snuggled together for the longest time.

"So, what brought that on?" Not that Anton was complaining.

"I missed you." Scott lifted his head. "We've spent less time together over the last week than before. That can't be right, baby."

"You're right." It was all his fault. "I'm sorry, I've just been so fascinated with this library that I forgot what's really important."

"I've been just as guilty. Trying to prepare for those auditions has taken up a lot of my time, too." Scott smiled. "But that may be about to change."

"Really?" He just knew deep-down that Scott was an excellent actor. Finding a director who was willing to give his lover a chance without 'proper' acting experience might be difficult, though.

"I think I have. It was weird because the director wasn't even interested in any acting credentials. It's not a problem, since I don't have any. And I'm sure acting classes don't count. It isn't final yet. I have to go back tomorrow, but it looks good."

* * * *

Scott walked into the Princess Theatre artists' entrance with butterflies in his stomach. This was when the acting classes he'd taken over the last few years would either pay off or prove to have been a total waste of time and money.

"Morning, pet." Rosalind smiled at him and nodded towards the mysterious door at the back. "You can go right through. They're waiting for you."

"Good morning and thank you." Scott smiled back, opened the door after a brief hesitation and stepped through. He followed the narrow corridor until he saw another door with 'stage' painted on it. Taking a deep breath, he stepped through and found himself on a medium-sized wooden stage. There were several people milling around at the other end and Torin sat in the second row, grinning and waving at him.

"Not you again!" Quinn emerged from the group of actors and walked towards him. Dramatically throwing his hands into the air he turned to face Torin. "What's he doing here?"

"This is Scott Black and he's come to audition for the part of Benvolio, since we lost our previous actor due to a broken leg. Scott is here on my request and I'd appreciate it if you showed him the proper respect." Torin got up from his seat and joined them on the stage.

"What sort of credentials does he even have?" Quinn obviously wasn't one to give up easily.

"Why don't you leave that to me?" Torin stepped close to Quinn and gave the man a challenging stare. "I'd like you all to do Act One, Scene One, as discussed. We'll see quickly enough if Scott can act or not."

And wasn't that the truth. Scott had rarely been as nervous as he was now, but he made his way through the scene without too many difficulties. It helped that he'd always been a Shakespeare fan. Pretty soon, he was beginning to enjoy himself.

"I'll pay that doctrine, or else die in debt," Scott finished with a flourish.

Uttering that last sentence was still a major relief. Quinn hadn't made his life easy. The last part of that scene had been Benvolio opposite Romeo. Quinn hadn't only stared daggers at Scott, but had tried to trip him up by leaving out words and whole sentences.

Torin hadn't interfered while they'd played, but when Scott dared to look at him now that he was done, it was obvious that the director wasn't happy. Hopefully, it wasn't Scott who'd put that look on his face.

"That was excellent!" Torin clapped his hands in polite applause. "I think you'll be an excellent addition to our little troupe, Scott. We only have one week until the play opens. Do you think you'll be ready by then?"

"I will certainly do my best." Scott couldn't quite stop himself from grinning.

"Much good that'll do us when it all goes down the drain." Quinn's dark eyes sparked with anger.

"I've warned you, Quinn." Torin glared at Quinn. "You'll give Scott every professional courtesy from now on. If I ever catch you trying to trip him up like that again, I won't hesitate to pull you from the play. We have an understudy, and I really like Scott's talent, so there are plenty of alternatives. You may have held this role for the last five years, but you're trying my patience. This is your final warning. Are we clear?"

"Perfectly, Mr. Macpatrick." Quinn threw one last glance at Scott and stomped off the stage. What a temper.

"Okay, Tim, why don't you show Scott around backstage, including his dressing room, then you guys can have lunch. I expect everyone back here at two p.m. so we can start rehearsing the next few scenes." Torin nodded, waved a hand in dismissal, and walked out.

After Tim and the other actors had given Scott the tour, they ended up at the dressing rooms. He shared his with three other actors, but he couldn't have cared less. The feeling of helping to bring a classic like *Romeo and Juliet* to life was indescribable.

He wasn't ready for an irate Quinn to storm out of his own personal dressing room to attack him.

"Listen, you little fucker. I don't know what you did to make Torin like you so much, but I'm telling you here and now that I'm not going to stand for it. He may not have wanted to check your background or credentials, but I will. I'm sure I can find something that will help me get rid of you." If steam had started to come out of Quinn's ears Scott wouldn't have been surprised.

"I'm sorry you feel this way." The threat of Quinn nosing around in his past didn't sit well with Scott. He needed to make peace with the man if at all possible. "I have no idea what I did to make you this angry, but if you'll tell me, I can try and fix it."

"There's nothing to fix! Upstarts like you don't know what's good for them. You think you can make everyone else's lives miserable. But I won't accept you weaselling your way into Torin's favour." Quinn snorted, turned round on his heel and vanished into his dressing room. The loud banging of the door seemed to be his signature exit mark.

"What's wrong with him?" Scott really wanted to know.

"I have no idea." Tim, who'd witnessed the whole scene, shook his head. "He's got a bad temper, we all know that. But he's never been this horrible. And you didn't even do anything!"

"That's what I thought." At least he wasn't the only one at a loss for an explanation. "Oh well, nothing we can do, right?"

"Nope, nothing at all." Tim grinned. "Guess that means it's time for lunch."

"Lead the way. I'm right behind you." Scott knew he was going to need a lot of energy to make it through the afternoon. More attacks from Quinn were likely. He'd been so angry and clearly determined to do something about Scott that he wasn't going to give up easily.

* * * *

The afternoon proved to be worse than the morning. Quinn had come back from lunch reeking of alcohol. He wasn't involved in anything onstage during the first hour or so, but when it was his turn, he clearly had problems standing up.

Torin frowned but let Quinn attempt to do his job. It quickly became obvious that Quinn wasn't able to remember most of his lines. He stumbled across the stage and kept running into other people as well as objects.

"That's it!" Torin got up from his customary seat in the second row and joined them on the stage. "I told you I'd given you my last warning and I was serious, Quinn. I'm pulling you out of the play for this season. If you manage to dry out you can come back in December to audition for the spring run. But until then, I don't want to see you here. I'm sorry it had to come to this but you've given me no choice."

"You can't do this!" Quinn's face had turned scarlet and his hands were fisted at his sides. "I've got seniority. And experience. You can't just pull me off the play, I won't stand for it."

"I can and I have." Torin's voice was deceptively calm. "As you know, I have full artistic control over the play since I also happen to be the one financing it."

"Aaargh!" Quinn stomped his foot. "I *will* get you for this. All of you! Mark my words, you'll come to regret this."

"I'm not impressed. Now, do I have to get security to show you the way out or can you pull yourself together enough to leave on your own?" Torin raised his eyebrows and stared at Quinn until the other man turned around and left.

The silence was so thick you could have cut it with a knife.

"Right. Now that we've got that sorted, I'd like to have a word with you in private, Scott. Will you please follow me?" Torin pointed towards the other end of the stage, where another door mirrored the one leading to the reception area.

"What about us?" Tim and the others looked truly lost.

"Oh, sorry, why don't you take the rest of the day off. It is Friday, after all. I'd like you back here on Monday morning as usual, please." Torin smiled at them and waited until they were gone.

"Finally alone." Torin turned to Scott, his eyes sparkling with mischief. "Come on, I'll tell you what I'm thinking in my office."

"Uhm, okay." Scott didn't like the idea of being alone with Torin. He wasn't sure whether or not the man had tried to come on to him yesterday. What he'd said just now could also be interpreted that way. He shrugged. There was only one way to find out.

* * * *

Anton sat at the well-worn wooden table in the Blue Moon Cafe, advertised as the oldest gay café in Britain, and enjoyed the simple furnishings, white walls and cool blue light. He'd taken a peek at the menu but he was going to wait for Scott to arrive before he ordered. Scott hadn't said anything when they'd confirmed their dinner appointment over the phone but the fact that he'd stayed away all day made Anton hope for some good news.

And there Scott was. Walking tall and proud, he didn't even look left or right as he approached Anton. Scott missed all the admiring glances from many of the café's patrons. Scott's entire focus was on him. Anton took a deep breath, still ridiculously grateful that this wonderful man was interested in him.

"Hi, baby." Scott bent down and placed a quick kiss on his lips before grabbing the other chair and sitting down. "Sorry I'm late."

"Hey, love. It's fine, I've been quite entertained soaking up the atmosphere." Anton grinned and pointed at the blue skylight. "Just watching the last rays of the setting sun making that light up has been fascinating."

"Have you had any time to look at the menu?" Scott grabbed one and started studying it.

"Sure I have. It all looks excellent." Anton grinned. His lover must be hungry if he was that focused on the food.

"It does, doesn't it? It's changed a little since I've last been here. But at least they still have their famous home-made cakes and pies." Scott looked up. "I'm sorry, I'm really hungry. I didn't have a big lunch because of all the stuff that was happening, so I need some food now."

"Hey, I didn't say anything." Anton laughed. "I forgot to have lunch before I had to leave for my appointment, so I know what you mean."

"You forgot to have lunch?" Scott shook his head. "Didn't Winston or my mother make you eat something?"

"It's not like they need to watch over me." Anton wasn't comfortable with other people taking care of him.

"I beg to differ." Scott frowned. "I don't want you to starve because you're buried in those manuscripts of yours."

"Don't worry, I've got more than enough reserves." Anton picked up his menu to make sure he ordered the right thing when the waiter approached.

Drinks and food orders dealt with, he turned back towards Scott.

"So, how did it go?" Anton reclined, ready to listen to the story.

"Well, the audition, itself, was painful because that guy I told you about yesterday, the one who plays Romeo, seems to really hate me. He went out of his way to make me stumble or give a bad performance. Luckily, he didn't succeed and the director hired me anyway." Scott smiled.

"That's great!" Anton wanted to jump up and kiss his man but wasn't quite sure that would be acceptable even in a gay-friendly restaurant. "Congratulations! I'm really happy that all your hard work paid off."

The waiter chose that moment to bring Scott's drink and some more crusty bread. When he left, his lover's grin grew even wider.

"It gets better." Scott took a sip of his soft drink. "Quinn had gotten a warning about behaving badly in the morning, but when he came back after lunch completely drunk the director lost it and fired him."

"How does that make it better?" Anton frowned. "Isn't he the guy who plays Romeo? I imagine he'd be quite difficult to replace."

"That's what I thought." Scott nodded and it took another few sips of his soft drink. "Turns out that I was wrong."

"He didn't!" Anton dropped his jaw.

"He did!" Scott reached over and pushed Anton's mouth closed. "I couldn't believe it, but he told me that he'd been so impressed with my handling of Quinn's aggressiveness, as well as my acting, that he was willing to give me a chance."

"That's—that's wonderful! We should go celebrate." Anton had visions of them celebrating in the bedroom, or maybe the library again?

"It is and it isn't." Scott looked thoughtful. "It's a major break, but it'll also be a lot of hard work. I've only got a week to learn the part and there'll be a lot of extra practice sessions."

"But you can do it." Hopefully they'd still be able to celebrate.

"I hope I can." Scott took Anton's hand again and this time kept hold of it. "But I'll need your help, baby."

"Of course I'll help. I'll do anything I can. I know how important this is for you and I want it to go well." Anton stroked Scott's knuckles with his thumb.

He was going to stay away from the library for the weekend and focus on his lover. Helping him learn his part was far more important than his own currently stalled project of writing memoirs for the nine previous Astronomers Royal. The publisher he'd spoken to this afternoon hadn't sounded too interested anyway. It didn't look like there was any urgency to the project for now.

Chapter Three

"Fuck, Scott!" Anton spread his legs farther to give Scott better access as the man was skilfully sucking his cock. "Shit, so good."

He closed his eyes and arched his back to try and get Scott to speed up his movements. After more than two hours of foreplay in the form of heated glances during dinner, stolen caresses in the car during the drive back home, and the teasing that had started as soon as they'd made it into their bedroom and out of their clothes, he was more than ready to come. The only problem was that Scott didn't seem to agree.

"Are you trying to kill me here?" Anton almost sobbed when Scott withdrew his mouth with an audible pop.

"No, I'm trying to make it good for you." Scott's grin was far too mischievous. There was only one way out of this.

"Come here." Anton pointed to the free space next to him on the bed.

"Huh?" Scott frowned.

"I want you to lay next to me so I can get at you." Anton waggled his eyebrows, hoping that would get the message across.

Finally Scott's eyes lit up and he scrambled onto the bed, putting his groin within reach of Anton's mouth. *Much better!* Anton reached out, sliding an arm between Scott's thighs to grab his muscular ass and hold him where he wanted. He enclosed Scott's swollen cock with his free hand and started jacking him off.

When Scott went back to sucking Anton's hard length into his hot mouth, Anton lost his rhythm. He closed his eyes and focused on pleasuring Scott. Hopefully that would make the 'torture' Scott was trying to inflict on him more bearable. Not that he was truly complaining.

Within minutes, they were both frantically bobbing their heads, trying to see who could get the other one to come first. Anton was convinced he was about to 'lose' when inspiration struck. He moved the hand that was holding onto Scott's ass slightly lower so he could slide his index finger between Scott's ass cheeks. When he reached the puckered hole and paused, Scott's mouth came off Anton's cock on a growl.

Bingo.

Using only slight pressure, Anton pushed the tip of his finger inside Scott's body, careful not to hurt his lover. Encouraged by the jerking motions of Scott's hips and his helpless whimpering, Anton kept up the pressure by slowly sliding his finger inside more deeply. He swallowed Scott's cock completely and hollowed his cheeks on the upstroke. When his finger found Scott's prostate on the next downward movement, he opened his throat and let Scott slide in. He swallowed around his lover's leaking head and Scott howled as he started spurting salty semen down Anton's throat. He pulled back slightly so he could taste as he swallowed.

"God, baby, that was amazing." Thankfully Scott didn't elaborate but instead took a deep breath and took Anton's now desperately swollen cock back into his hot mouth. He stayed completely still this time, focusing on rubbing his tongue against the most sensitive spot just under the crown.

Anton didn't even have time to scream his delight. His balls drew up and he started convulsing with ecstasy, pumping his semen into Scott's mouth. He squeezed his eyes shut and saw stars the feelings were so intense. Scott didn't stop sucking and licking him until he'd found every last drop.

Scott turned around, moved next to him and put his arms around him. Anton pressed his head against Scott's chest and listened to the heartbeat as it slowly returned to normal. This was what he liked best about their relationship. The quiet minutes after they'd both taken their pleasure from the other were the most peaceful and loving moments he'd ever shared with anyone.

* * * *

"That was a lovely lunch, mother. Thank you." Scott leant back and rubbed his well-filled stomach.

He'd missed these epic Sunday lunches where the food was almost secondary to spending time with the family. Somehow he'd still ended up eating too much. His mother's oven baked potatoes, steamed vegetables and glazed ham had been even better than he'd remembered.

"Thank you, dear. I'm glad to see your appetite hasn't suffered." His mother smiled and turned to Anton. "I hope everything was okay for you, too. I'm sure it's all very different from the food you're used to."

"It was excellent, thank you. My mother isn't much of a cook. She prefers to spend her time researching mathematical theorems. So this has been a real treat." Anton patted his non-existent belly. "But I need to leave some space for tea later. I don't want to miss those wonderful cakes."

"No missing of tea is allowed in this household. Even though it's an English custom, it's one that most Scottish people, us included, don't mind following." Scott's father smiled at his wife. "Thank you for an excellent lunch, Vanora. Every Sunday I'm grateful that you're willing to do all this work on the servants' day off."

"Oh, nonsense." Scott's mother shook her head. "It's not work if I only do it once a week. I look forward to it."

"Excuse me, My Lady, My Lord." Winston stood in the doorway looking as if he'd just bitten into a lemon.

"Yes, Winston?" Scott's father smiled at the butler who stood on formality far more than any of the family members.

"I am extremely sorry to interrupt the family lunch, but there is a Mr. Quinn Pinkerton at the door. He wishes to see Mr. Scott." Winston cleared his throat. "He was quite insistent."

Oh, shit. Translated into a normal person's vocabulary that meant he'd been totally rude.

"That is fine, Winston." Scott's father looked at him to wait for a reaction. When Scott nodded, his father turned back to Winston. "Will you please show Mr. Pinkerton to the green room and tell him that Scott will be right with him."

"Certainly, My Lord." Winston turned on his heel, managing to communicate his disapproval through the stiffness of his back.

"What could he possibly want from you? It's Sunday and he's been thrown out of the play." Anton frowned.

"My thoughts exactly." The only certainty Scott had, based on the man's previous behaviour, was that it wasn't going to be anything good. "I'm sorry, mother, father, but I think it's best that I go and find out."

"Absolutely, son. We'll keep Anton company while you're gone." His father grinned and winked at him.

Almost rolling his eyes Scott caught himself and managed to leave the room without laughing out loud. His father had obviously gotten the message about how inseparable Scott and Anton were. Luckily it looked like he approved.

When Scott entered the green room, so called because it contained his father's collection of exotic cacti, Quinn stood at one of the windows overlooking the garden. His arms were crossed in front of his chest and a sardonic smile curled his lips. Winston had remained in the room with him, a sure sign of distrust.

"Thank you, Winston." Scott almost smiled when Winston inclined his head in acknowledgement and left the room. "I must say that I didn't expect you here."

"I bet you didn't!" Quinn turned around, and if looks could kill, Scott would have dropped dead on the spot. "But even you couldn't be stupid enough to honestly think that I'd just vanish into the woodwork because Mr. high-and-mighty director decided he likes you better than me? I told you on Friday that I'd find something to get rid of you – and I have."

Scott shrugged, not wanting to give the man more ammunition.

"Aren't you going to ask what it is?" Quinn's eyes had darkened with anger.

"You're going to tell me anyway, so what's the point in asking?" Scott hadn't planned to make Quinn angrier, but the rising colour in the other man's cheeks told him that he'd succeeded anyway.

"I'll let you enjoy your little laugh because I know that it's going to be the last one for a long time." Quinn uncrossed his arms and pointed at Scott's chest. "I did some digging on the Internet and had a good friend of mine who just happens to work for Scotland Yard check into your past. Imagine my surprise when it emerged that you're an honest-to-God real-life porn star."

Scott couldn't find his voice. His secret was out. He doubted that he'd be getting any roles if this became general knowledge. And from the look on Quinn's face, there'd be only one way of avoiding that. Unfortunately, it meant giving up his first shot at a major part.

* * * *

Anton was close to biting his nails when Scott finally turned up in the family room where they'd withdrawn to try and digest lunch. The only two who didn't seem to have any problems were Nessa and Camron, who were chasing each other around the terrace that led from the room into the garden.

"What did he want?" Anton almost jumped up, he was so impatient. It couldn't have been anything good from what Scott had told him about the man.

"I think we need to take a walk." Scott turned towards his parents, leaving Anton to worry even more. "I'm sorry to be leaving you, but there's something personal I need to discuss with Anton."

"No problem, honey." Scott's mother grinned. "Just make sure you're back in time for tea. We wouldn't want you to starve out there in the wilderness."

"No starving, mother, I promise." Scott laughed and took Anton's hand as they left through the double French doors.

They walked for a while. Anton was impatient to find out what had happened, but Scott was clearly trying to figure out how to tell him. The frown on his face spoke volumes. When they'd reached one of the benches at the edge of the forest, Scott pulled him down, sitting next to him.

"Okay, here's the thing." Scott tightened his grip on Anton's hand and Anton squeezed back in support. "As you may have guessed the news isn't good. Quinn has somehow managed to find out about my past and is now threatening to tell Torin."

"But he can't do that!" Anton hated the thought of anything stopping Scott from making it as an actor.

"I'm afraid he can. And he will. He's made it quite clear that he isn't going to accept Torin letting him go for the season. According to him, Torin has tolerated his drinking before. He sees no reason for this to change and blames me for giving Torin an alternative that excludes him from the play." Scott rubbed his temple. "He's told me to call Torin tonight to let him know that I won't be turning up for rehearsals tomorrow morning."

"And he thinks that will make Torin give him back the part?" Anton snorted. "There must be better alternatives than that."

"I guess up until now there weren't. Or maybe it was never bad enough for Torin to do anything about it." Scott shrugged. "It's quite possible that this is the first time that Torin had an alternative. So, in a way, I *am* to blame."

"But that's not an excuse for blackmailing you." Anton would have liked to tell this Quinn what he thought of his methods.

"No, it isn't for a rational thinking person. Somehow I didn't get the impression that Quinn was being very rational about this." Scott leant back on the bench and covered his face with his free hand.

"I think there's more to this than Quinn wanting to keep his part. He's been nasty and negative from the start, but to tell you that he was going to find a way to destroy you goes further than 'normal' jealousy, if there is such a thing as 'normal' in this case." In fact, Quinn sounded suspiciously like he was on some personal vendetta or involved in a family feud.

Maybe that was it? Scotland had clans, and families belonging to those clans had been fighting for centuries. What if there was something in Quinn's and Scott's background that made them enemies? It might explain the abnormal level of animosity. But it might also give Scott some ammunition to fight back. There were bound to be a few skeletons in every family's closet. If he could find the right one, Scott's career as an actor might still be salvageable.

Anton looked at his devastated lover. He was going to have to be careful not to get his hopes up. His hypothesis was pretty wild, and if he couldn't find any evidence to support it, it might all be for nothing.

"It doesn't really matter why Quinn's doing this, does it?" Scott lowered his hand and turned his head to look at Anton. "The end effect is the same. I'm going to have to withdraw from this play if I don't want my past to be used against me. The problem isn't just this play, either. If the news about my background gets out very few people will take me seriously. It's the same thing that I suspect happened in Hollywood, where everyone knew about me, anyway. I think it explains why I had such trouble being accepted for a role in a mainstream film. I don't want the same thing to happen all over again."

"Will you give me a couple of hours to do some research?" Anton took Scott's other hand and pulled them both against his chest, making Scott sit up and pay attention. "I have a theory that might help you out of this mess. But unless I find some proof for what I'm thinking, it's useless."

"You want to solve this problem by going into the library to do research?" Scott shook his head, but he was grinning. "I love it when you go all research librarian on me. It's so sexy."

“Sexy? You’re making fun of me now, but you’ll see.” How had he let himself be goaded into a bold statement like that? Boy, was he in trouble now if he couldn’t find anything to confirm his theory.

“I’m not making fun of you about the sexy part. In fact, all this talking makes me believe we should have a session in our room before you go to the library.” Scott’s light blue eyes were sparkling with mischief and his lips twitched.

“I’d love to have a session in our room with you, but I think this is more urgent.” Anton hated to turn down the prospect of more fun between the sheets. He didn’t really have a choice though.

“You’re just going to have to make up for it tonight.” Scott made it sound like a threat but the growing pressure in Anton’s pants confirmed that it was a promise.

* * * *

Scott had felt optimistic enough after his talk with Anton to keep practicing, just in case. He’d managed to convince his youngest sister Janneth that he needed her help and they’d ended up having a lot of fun while he was memorising his lines.

When it was time for tea, he didn’t quite feel confident that he was going to be able to pull this off, but the total panic had receded into a general sense of disquiet. The rational part of his brain told him that it was okay not to know everything perfectly on the first day, but his ambitious side wanted to do an excellent job. He wanted to be seen and recognised for more than his body or his looks. Then there was the need not to disappoint Torin who’d put a whole lot of faith in him.

All of that might be for nothing, though, if Anton couldn’t find whatever it was he was looking for.

When Anton didn’t appear, Scott wanted to go and get him. His mother held him back, saying that Anton was probably doing something important and that maybe he didn’t want to be disturbed. She asked Winston to bring Anton some sandwiches and scones as well as some of the fruitcake he’d liked so much last Sunday. With that taken care of, the rest of the family focused on discussing politics, Janneth’s job search and the children’s new teachers. Scott found it very hard to stay seated, and as soon as they were done, he jumped up and made his way to the library.

He was surprised to find Anton standing in front of one of the windows rather than bent over books or other paperwork.

"Baby? Are you okay?" Scott stepped up behind his lover and slid his arms around Anton's middle.

Anton immediately leant back into him as if he was looking for support. He turned his head and kissed Scott's chin. Scott bent down and placed his lips on Anton's mouth for a proper kiss. When Anton opened up and their tongues met, Scott tasted mint and chocolate from the tea confections until Anton's own sweet flavour came through. He moaned as Anton turned around and pressed his body against him, grinding his hardening cock into Scott's thigh.

"I've missed you." Anton's face was flushed, his eyes bright. "I think I'm ready for the session in our room that you promised me."

"Yes, please, anytime." Scott pulled back but kept his arms in place around Anton's body. "But I'm curious about what you found out. You think you can tell me about that before we make it upstairs?"

"I guess. I'm just afraid that it isn't very good news. I think I know the reason behind Quinn's animosity, but I don't think you're going to like the implications." Anton stepped back and walked towards one of the sofas, Scott in close pursuit.

"Okay, just tell me." Scott sat down and pulled Anton next to him.

"I was trying to figure out why Quinn was being so vindictive for no obvious reason. So, I came up with the theory that there was something about your families that might explain this." Anton swallowed.

"Our families?" He'd never even heard of the name Pinkerton before.

"Yeah, I admit, it was a pretty harebrained idea. But I went ahead and found out that the Black family is associated with the Lamont clan." Anton paused.

"I know. It's one of the oldest Highland clans." Scott was beginning to see where this was leading. "So, which clan is the Pinkerton family associated with?"

"The Campbell Clan." Anton looked at him as though he expected immediate illumination.

"The clan that almost exterminated the Lamonts in 1646 despite the fact they had accepted the terms of surrender? The people who instigated the massacre of Dunoon?" Now this was beginning to make sense.

"I think the problem is that they didn't succeed. I don't know why it was so important to them that no Lamont be left alive, but the fact is that the ringleader, a Sir Colin Campbell, stood trial in 1662, was found guilty and was beheaded. It looks like they're still carrying the grudge, despite the fact that the Lamont clan never recovered and the current clan head lives in Australia." Anton shook his head. "I think that Quinn has made it his personal goal to make sure anyone associated with the Lamonts suffers a similar fate."

"That's just plain ridiculous." Who could carry a grudge that long? "But I can see how a slightly crazy person like Quinn might latch onto something like this to give his life meaning."

"Exactly. And that makes him even more dangerous. I think we need to find something to stop him. Some skeleton in the closet that will make him realise that he's not above reproach." Anton was so cute when he got excited.

"I don't really want to go into a family feud mode if I can possibly avoid it. I've been doing a lot of thinking ever since Quinn came by this morning. Do you know what I've realised?" Scott hoped that Anton would understand. "My past is always going to be with me. It's not something that I'm ashamed of, but it might hold me back because other people see it differently. Since I can't undo it, I think I need to learn to stand up for it."

"You mean you're going to tell Torin?" Anton's eyes widened.

"I don't think I have a choice. I may have deluded myself into thinking that nobody in the theatre world will care what I've done before. But of course, people will want to know. Somebody will start digging into my past and they're bound to find the many porn movies I've made. It will only be a problem if I try to hide it. Then, anybody can blackmail me. If I'm honest about it, some people may not want to hire me, but at least nobody can blackmail me, either." Scott took a deep breath. It was all very logical, but he was still scared.

"I think you're right." Anton tilted his head in thought. "It might mean that some theatre companies will turn you down. But it's not like you need the money, is it? This is about proving who you really are, what you can do."

"Exactly!" Leave it to his lover to put it that succinctly. "I'm fed up with people judging me for my body, for what I can do with it. I want to show that I have a brain and the ability to do more than fuck men on film."

Chapter Four

"I'm sorry to drag you into your office this early." Scott hadn't wanted to discuss his past at a coffee shop or other public place.

"Since it's something personal, I totally understand." Torin put the brown paper bag saying 'Beanscene' onto his desk and beckoned Scott to take a seat in the visitor chair. "Didn't stop me from getting us some coffee. No day is complete without it."

"Thank you, I really appreciate that!" Scott wasn't sure caffeine would help make him feel better, but he was willing to try.

Torin was being too nice. Would that change once the man knew about Scott's past? It might put his theatre's reputation on the line if anyone found out. He was bound to try and protect himself. Scott hated the thought of losing his part as Romeo.

Scott busied himself with the sugar packets and those little milk containers you could never get open without spilling the stuff everywhere. When they'd stirred their drinks and had taken the first scalding sip, Torin leant back.

"So, what do you want to talk to me about?" Torin's neutral expression and expectant gaze made him even more nervous.

"Do you remember our conversation about acting credentials when you asked me to audition for the part of Benvolio last Thursday?" Scott waited.

"Yes, and I told you that I wasn't interested because I prefer to make up my own mind." Torin took another sip of his coffee. "What's this all about?"

"The fact is that I have some acting experience, just not in theatre." He couldn't figure out how to say it without just blurting it out.

"You've done some movies?" Torin's face was still almost expressionless, very unusual for the lively director.

"Yes, I spent ten years making movies." Scott's hands were shaking from nerves. He so wanted to keep this part, his first chance at some real acting.

"Oh? They must never have made it out of the US because I'm sure I would've remembered you if I'd seen you in a movie." Torin finished his coffee and put the empty container onto his desk.

"Actually, they are globally distributed. But it's not a genre you're necessarily familiar with." Scott swallowed.

"Oh? And what genre might that be?" Torin raised his eyebrows.

"Gay porn." There, he'd said it.

"Gay porn?" Torin sat forward in his chair, face slightly flushed.

"Yes." Scott was getting ready to be yelled at, or fired, or both.

"Gay porn." Torin shook his head, leant back and folded his arms over his chest. "And you tell me this now, after I've already hired you?"

"I'm sorry. I know I should have told you before, but it didn't come up. Everything happened so quickly, I just never..." Scott stopped speaking when he saw the dark expression on Torin's face.

"You think that's a sufficient excuse for not telling me the truth?" Torin's frown deepened.

"No." Scott knew he'd lost. Torin was livid. "No, I don't. I'm really sorry. But, to be honest, I was afraid that you wouldn't want to consider me for a part if you knew. It's happened to me before and this chance was too important for me. It was still wrong of me not to tell you and I'm really sorry."

"You should be." Torin shook his head. "How do you expect us to have a good working relationship if we're not honest with each other?"

"I'm really sorry." Scott stood up. There was nothing left to say.

"Where are you going?" Torin uncrossed his arms and kept staring at him.

"Uhm, I'm leaving." Wasn't that kind of obvious?

"Yeah, I can see that. But why?" Torin's lips twitched.

"Because staying endangers your theatre company, might expose it to scandal." Scott was confused. Hadn't the man said so himself?

"So?" Torin's lips were definitely trying to form into a smile. "Have you never heard of the saying that there's no such thing as bad publicity?"

"Huh?" Scott sank back down onto his chair with an audible thud.

"Okay, it's my turn to apologise now." Torin's grin spread across his face. "I haven't been completely honest with you this morning."

"What?" God, he sounded like the moron Quinn had accused him of being during their first encounter.

"I knew that you're a former gay porn star. Your 'friend' Quinn Pinkerton called me last night and told me all about it. Demanded I fire you on the spot since he didn't want to be associated with an amoral abomination like yourself." Torin laughed. "Do you get it? *He* didn't want to be associated. As if this company were his."

"You knew." Scott shook his head to try and clear it.

Torin nodded.

"And you don't mind?" Scott started hoping again.

"I don't mind that you're a former gay porn star, no. Why should I? It'll only give this theatre company more notoriety. In fact, I have an idea I'd like to discuss with you. One that would turn your past into an advantage." Torin lifted a hand when Scott opened his mouth. "What I do mind is that you didn't tell me. I can see why in this case, so we're okay. But I was serious about demanding honesty or our working relationship really will be in trouble."

"You really don't mind?" Scott shook his head. "I'll be nothing but honest from now on. In fact, I'll give you my complete resume so you know everything you'll need to know."

"Including the titles of the movies you made?" Torin winked.

"Uhm, sure?" What the fuck? Was the man gay? What had happened to Scott's gaydar? Was it out of commission since he'd met Anton or what?

"Just joking." Torin laughed when he saw the relief on Scott's face. "But I *am* gay, in case you're wondering, and I'm available."

"Sorry, I'm not." Scott grinned. "I've got the most amazing boyfriend on the planet. I'm so lucky I met him. He's intelligent, fun and unbelievably sexy."

"Sounds like a man I need to meet." Torin paused for a moment. "Why don't you invite him for the opening night on Sunday? Front row seats, access to the stars backstage, the full VIP treatment."

"You'd really do that?" Scott couldn't wait to tell Anton.

"Sure, I've got to keep my lead actor happy, don't I?" Torin grinned. "And as everyone knows, the way to a man's heart is through pleasing his boyfriend."

* * * *

Anton sat in the first row of the Princes Theatre and was trying to calm down. God, it was Scott's opening night and *he* was the nervous one. The VIP treatment he'd received, as promised by Scott, had blown his mind.

He'd been picked up by a sleek black limo, offered champagne during the drive and given the red carpet treatment when he'd arrived at the theatre. Literally. He'd almost fainted when a liveried man wearing an eighteenth-century style wig had opened the limo door. His only way out of the car and into the brightly lit theatre had been via an honest-to-God red carpet. Two more liveried men in wigs had flanked the wide-open glass entrance doors and the most well-built, good-looking redhead he'd ever seen had walked towards him with a bright smile and open arms. Scott had been right. Torin was one of the best-looking men ever.

At that point, he'd given up trying to make sense of it all and had followed a gushing Torin into the Classical style building. The flashing cameras to his left and right hadn't registered until he'd started walking up the steps. He'd almost stumbled when he'd realised his picture might turn up in some local newspaper. His mouth had fallen open when he'd entered the lavishly decorated hall, including crystal chandeliers. The room was full of well-dressed people. He'd been glad Scott had insisted on buying him a tux. He would've felt even more out of place without it.

Torin had introduced him as Scott's partner and several bejewelled women and their husbands had tried to make conversation with him. He didn't remember a thing he'd said and could only hope he hadn't made a complete fool of himself and, by association, of Scott.

When Torin had finally saved him and led him to his seat before making his way backstage to solve any last minute panics, Anton had sunk back into the velvety softness and had closed his eyes. Deep breathing had helped and when he was finally a little calmer he opened his eyes to have a look around the theatre. Just in time to see the lights dim and the curtain pull up.

Anton sat through the first half of the performance, mesmerised. He'd never been to the theatre before, but seeing a play come alive like that was an eye-opening experience. Scott was totally convincing in his role and Anton was glad he'd encouraged his lover to take the leap into this new life.

The intermission was a blur of meeting Scott's family who had seats farther in the back, drinking some gloriously refreshing water and strolling around the well-restored building.

By the time the curtain fell after the final act, Anton was emotionally exhausted. He stood and applauded until his hands hurt.

Scott looked dead on his feet when all the actors came to take their bows. But as soon as he spotted Anton his eyes lit up and he winked at him. A jolt of arousal made Anton realise exactly what he needed to do next. Scott had said that access to the backstage area was included in the VIP package. Anton grinned as the applause faded and he started to make his way towards the exits. He was going to get himself an autograph from his new favourite actor.

Half an hour later, he'd finally made it backstage. A security guard checked his VIP ticket and let him through. The dressing rooms all had names on their doors and Anton was relieved when he finally found Scott's.

He knocked.

"Who is it?" Scott's voice sounded raw.

"Anton." Why didn't the man just open the door?

"Can you prove that?" Scott's voice was closer to the door now.

"Huh?" How was he going to prove he was him?

"Which of your household appliances did we almost break when we first met?" Scott's voice sounded amused, as if he was barely holding back his laughter.

"The washing machine." Well, that had been easy. He had a hard time suppressing his own laughter at the memory of how they'd both been so eager they kept coming in their pants.

The door clicked open and Anton walked in, expecting to see Scott. The room seemed empty until the door closed and revealed his butt-naked lover standing there with a big grin on his face and a sizeable erection between his legs.

"Surprise!" Scott locked the door while still looking at Anton.

Anton swallowed as his arousal spiked further. His lover looked good enough to lick. He was in excellent physical shape and Anton loved the way he displayed all his muscles for him to admire. When Scott released his long blond hair from its ponytail with a naughty grin, well knowing what that did to Anton, he was galvanised into action.

With a small moan, he stepped forward and pressed his body against Scott's. Anton lifted his hands and buried them in Scott's hair, pulling his face down so he could reach his lover's mouth for a kiss. Lips melded and Anton dove into the kiss with all the passion he felt

for his man. He went up on his toes and pressed his groin against Scott's, grinding into him with abandon.

"Anton, baby." Scott pulled back and was breathing hard. "You're wearing way too many clothes for this."

"Shit." And how was he going to get out of this contraption with anything close to the speed that he needed? "Aaarrgh! That's so unfair."

"Here, I know what we'll do." Scott grinned and opened his zipper for him, starting to free Anton's hard cock from its protective layer of cotton.

"How? What?" Anton moaned when Scott's hand stroked him and he almost lost it right then. Not that he was going to object to getting a blow job or even a hand job, but it wasn't what he really wanted. He needed them to be even closer than that.

"Hold on for me, baby. I have something different in mind for this time." Scott took his hand off Anton's cock and pulled him towards the leather sofa at the back of the room. "You've given me so much, supported me and helped me, I want to give something back to you."

"You don't need to give anything back to me." Anton was confused. What was Scott talking about?

"I want you inside me, please." Scott pointed at the condom and lube, which were waiting on the low table.

"But...we've never...I've never..." Anton sat down as his legs gave out. His cock had gotten even harder, just from the thought of fucking Scott for a change.

"You've never? Well, then it's about time." Scott's eyes twinkled with merriment as he opened the foil packet and sheathed Anton's cock.

"Are you sure?" God, this was such a turn-on. Why was he trying to talk Scott out of it again?

"Baby, I've rarely been so sure about anything." Scott grinned and slid onto the sofa sideways so he could hold on to the armrest. He spread his legs as far as they would go and stuck out his ass for Anton to see. "I've even prepped myself for you."

"Fuck!" Anton stared at Scott's hole, which was glistening with lube.

He turned so he could reach out and touch Scott's ass cheeks. Rubbing his hands over them made Scott moan. When he pulled the buttocks farther apart to get a better look, Scott

arched his back and lifted his ass even higher. Anton slid his thumbs along the crease and pressed both against the wrinkled opening, finding they slid in with relative ease.

"Fuck. Baby. Please." Scott lowered his head onto the armrest and pushed back against his hands. "So hot. Need you. Fuck me."

Anton didn't even try to think about what he was doing, or he might still have pulled back. For once he was going to follow his smaller head. He got up and knelt behind Scott, pushing his left leg down onto the floor so he had more room. He gripped his lover's hips and guided his throbbing length towards the waiting opening.

"You're sure?" Anton stared down at where he was about to penetrate Scott for the first time. It was an amazing view and he could only pray that Scott wouldn't change his mind.

"Yes. Please. Now!" Scott pushed back and Anton's cock head started sliding into the hottest, tightest place it had ever been in.

"Fuck, this feels good." Anton made himself wait a few seconds, but Scott's impatient moans and pleas made it clear what he wanted.

Anton pushed carefully forward and watched his cock vanish into Scott's body. The feeling was unbelievable and he dropped onto Scott's strong back once he'd bottomed out, he was so overwhelmed.

"Need you to move." Scott wriggled his ass and made Anton groan with the change in pressure. "Now!"

Anton started moving. He pulled out slowly, knowing how good that felt when Scott did it to him. When he pushed back in, Scott met him halfway and the sound of his balls slapping Scott's was so erotic, it made them both groan with lust. Anton lost it. He started thrusting long and deep, only managing to make Scott beg him to go faster.

A thin layer of sweat started forming on Scott's body and Anton wished he'd taken off the tux, he was so hot now. No time to stop though. Anton's movements sped up even further. The friction against his cock was wonderful and as aroused as he'd already been, he wasn't going to last much longer.

"Fuck. Baby. Close." Scott panted and pushed back against Anton on every inward thrust to keep up the momentum.

"Yeah." Anton took one hand off Scott's hip to enclose his cock.

Two strokes later Scott screamed and started coming all over the leather sofa. His tightening channel was too much to resist and with a final push into the heat of Scott's body,

Anton let go and filled the condom in long pulses of relief. His entire body was trembling as he let go and the ecstasy of having fucked someone for the first time in his life—of having fucked his *Scott* for the first time—spread through him in warm waves of satisfaction.

Scott collapsed and Anton's cock slipped from his body. Scott managed to turn around to grip Anton's shaking arms in his strong hands and lowered him onto his heaving chest. It took them a few minutes to catch their breath.

Scott lay him on his side and dealt with the condom, grabbing a small towel from God knew where to clean them both up. The man was way too prepared for his own good. Not that Anton minded in the least.

When Scott was done, he pulled a blanket up from somewhere, lay down next to him and covered himself. Scott slid his arms around him and pulled him close. Anton cuddled in and sighed.

"I can't believe you're still fully dressed." Scott grinned and kissed him when he'd finally recovered. "It made the whole thing even sexier, didn't it?"

Anton nodded. He was too exhausted to say anything. He was going to deal with the tux later. Much later.

"Thank you for helping me discover who I am." Scott tightened his embrace. "Not just as an actor, but also as a lover."

"Mhm. No problem. I love exploring new horizons with you." Anton smiled. He was beginning to hope they'd be doing that for the rest of their lives. Together.

About the Author

I'm a night owl who starts writing when everyone else in my time zone is asleep. I've loved reading all my life and spent most of my childhood with my nose buried in a book. Although I always wanted to be a writer, financial independence came first. Twenty-some years and a successful business career later I took some online writing classes and never looked back.

Living and working in seven countries has taught me that there's more than one way to get things done. It has instilled tremendous respect for the many different cultures, beliefs, attitudes and preferences that exist on our planet.

I like exploring those differences in my stories, most of which happen to be romances. My characters have a tendency to want to do their own thing, so I often have to rein them back in. The one thing we all agree on is the desire for a happy ending.

I currently live in the United Kingdom, sharing my house with a vast collection of books. I like reading, travelling, spending time with my nieces and listening to classical music. I have a passion for science and learning new languages.

Email: serenayates09@gmail.com

Serena loves to hear from readers. You can find her contact information, website and author biography at <http://www.total-e-bound.com>.

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