SCALES AND A TAIL
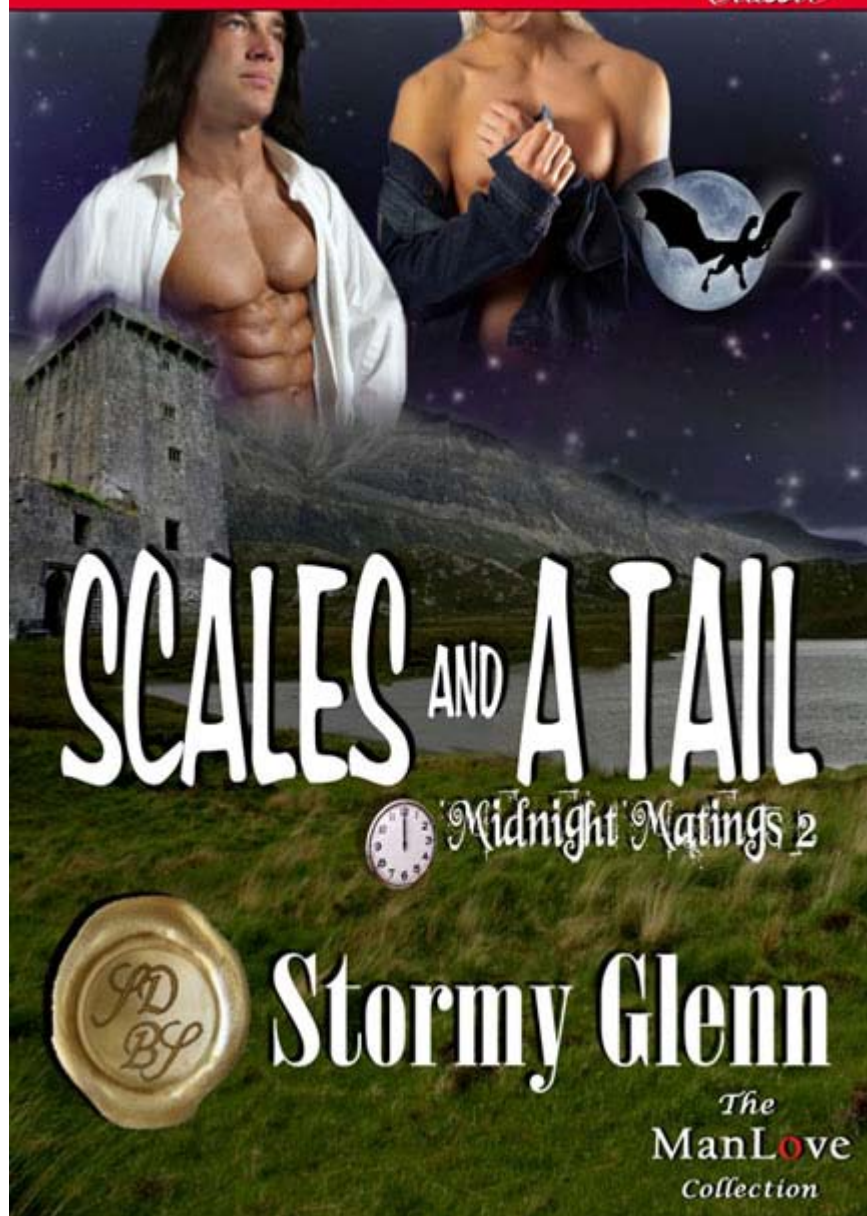
Midnight Matings 2

Stormy Glenn

Scales and a Tail

The paranormal world is in chaos. The elders are tired of their younger people playing the field, causing trouble, and fighting with each other. Everyone who attends the UPAC Conference now has twenty-four hours to claim a mate of a different species. If they don't, they will never have a mate. The spell is cast. There is no escaping the Midnight Matings.

Beauregard Stratford is a bunny shifter. Simple enough, right? Unfortunately, he is the only white bunny shifter in existence. He also is cursed with violet eyes, hyperactivity, a strong weakness for anything shiny, and a penchant for leaving bubble gum everywhere.

When he finds himself mated to Sebastian Drakus, a dragon shifter and prince of his kind, Beauregard can't seem to make himself behave no matter how hard he tries. He wants to be good, to make Sebastian proud of him, really he does, but things just keep happening to him...bubble gum mishaps, getting drunk, not to mention that fact that he is a true bunny and constantly horny. Nothing seems to go right. Can he convince Sebastian he's worth the trouble, or will the dragon prince wash his hands of the whole bunny fiasco?

Genre: Alternative (M/M or F/F), Paranormal, Shape-shifter
Length: 42,170 words

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EROTIC ROMANCE
MANLOVE

Letter to Readers

Dear Readers,

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Regarding E-book Piracy

DEDICATION

Joyee and Gabrielle, thanks for joining me on this wild ride. Thinking outside the box is a blast. You ladies are the best!

SCALES AND A TAIL

Midnight Matings 2

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Chapter 1

"Welcome. I am Elder Burke." The elder paused as if waiting for something. "I want to thank you all for being here tonight. This is a momentous occasion for us. It's been twenty-five years since the Great War between paranormals ended, taking a large portion of our population from us."

Sebastian Drakus glanced around when the room went deadly quiet. It was strange, considering how many people stood in the room. The corner of his lip curled up. He hated crowds.

"I would like you all to drink a toast with me in memory of those we lost." The elder held up his champagne glass and waited until everyone in the crowd held their own glass. "May we never forget them."

Sebastian raised his glass and drank down the entire contents. It wasn't like he'd get drunk from a single glass of champagne. It would take more than a bottle to get him drunk.

"As I have said, this is a momentous occasion for us all. In the twenty-five years since the Great War ended, the United Paranormal Alliance of Cooperation has watched and waited. We will wait no more."

"The fighting between species must stop," another elder in a long white robe said as he stepped forward. "We are known to the humans, and they have learned to accept us in their midst. However, their tolerance will only last so long. The constant fighting among the paranormal communities has come under scrutiny. We no longer have the luxury of watching you solve your own disagreements."

"Elder Lucas is correct," Elder Burke said as he gestured to the other elder. "We no longer have the indulgence of waiting for you to end your petty squabbles. As such, we have taken measures to insure that you take your place amongst our society."

Sebastian glanced around when the crowd started to grow restless, everyone looking to each other as the silence hung over them. Elder Burke gestured to the glass he had set down on the table. "You've all taken a toast with me. As such, you are now bound by the covenants we put before you."

"Each of you has twenty-four hours to find and claim your mate," Elder Lucas said. "If you fail to claim a mate in twenty-four hours, and bring him or her before this council to be recognized, you will not have a mate. You will go feral inside of a week."

Sebastian's jaw dropped open. He couldn't believe what he was hearing. He came to the Great Gathering because he'd been ordered to. If he had known the councils' plans, he would have stayed home.

"Because of your continued squabbling between races, you may not claim a mate of the same race," Elder Burke said. "You must claim a mate outside of your own species."

"If you fail to bring a mate before this council by the stroke of midnight tomorrow night, you will be hunted down and executed as a rogue paranormal."

"To insure that you will find a mate, something special has been added to the potion that each of you drank. It will insure that the need to mate outweighs your need to fight. It is a particular additive that induces the mating heat in each of you. You will not be able to deny the need to mate."

"And just in case you think to try and break this spell," Elder Burke said, "we have added a special clause. Anyone that attempts to negate the covenants of this spell will instantly be cursed as befitting their race. Vampires will no longer be able to drink blood. Shifters will no longer be able to shift. Magic user will have no magic, and so on. I'm sure you get my point."

The two elders went to stand back with their fellow elders and turned back to face the crowd. "Now, children, good luck. We expect to see each of you in twenty-four hours. May your hunt be successful."

"Un-fucking-believable." Sebastian Drakus shook his head as the room erupted into total chaos. People were yelling and shouting. Others were attacking each other. He actually saw a man leap up onto the dais and go after one of the elders.

Sebastian stood there for a moment and stared at the council of elders, complete and utter shock racing through him. They couldn't be serious. They just couldn't. Yes, he wanted to find a mate, but one outside of his own race? What were his choices? An elf? A cougar? A bloodsucking vampire? He'd rather go without a mate for the rest of his life.

"This is unacceptable."

Sebastian glanced at the man standing next to him and nodded. He agreed. If he couldn't choose his own mate, he didn't want one. And he certainly didn't want a mate from outside of his own race. The elders could go fuck themselves, as far as he was concerned.

"I'm out of here," Sebastian said as he started for the doors. He wasn't going to stick around and wait for some asshole to jump his ass. He could already see several people eyeing him, even if they were keeping their distance.

Sebastian knew he was intimidating to most people. He was the biggest of his kind, in either his shifted form or his human form. He assumed it was why so many were just staring at him instead of chasing him down.

He clenched his fists as he walked closer to the crowd. The first fucker to jump him was going to go down. He refused to be mated against his will. If he couldn't choose his mate, then he wouldn't have one.

Sebastian dodged a body flying past him. He shook his head and kept walking toward the double doors. The chaos on the room was getting worse. People weren't just fighting anymore. They were biting and scratching, claiming each other.

There were teeth everywhere.

Sebastian stopped when a man in werewolf form jumped in front of him. He arched an eyebrow and stared the man down. "Don't even think about it," he warned when the wolf looked him up and down like a prime side of beef. "I'd tear you up."

"I can take you." The man snickered.

Sebastian stood straighter, knowing that his six-foot-nine height would intimidate the man as it did most people. "No, you couldn't."

The man lunged, teeth bared and hands curled into claws. Sebastian rolled his eyes and punched him right in the jaw. The werewolf dropped to the floor like a rock. Sebastian dismissed the man from his mind the moment he stepped over him.

"Hey, Sebastian, running off so soon?"

Sebastian drew in a deep calming breath and turned to look at the blond man standing off to one side of him. Unfortunately, he knew the man, and a little too well. They had played together in the past. The man was a good little bottom, but he wasn't mate material. He liked to play the field a little too much for Sebastian's liking.

"Derek."

"What say you and I hook up, gorgeous?" Derek crooned as he sidled up to Sebastian. His hands started running down Sebastian's broad chest. "We've had fun before. We can have fun again."

Derek had been fun to play with, but he wasn't long-term material. He had a little too much of an independent streak for

Sebastian's tastes. He preferred his men to be submissive. Derek only played at it.

"Not going to happen, Derek." Sebastian peeled Derek's hands off his chest and pushed him away. Derek's eyes darkened, and the corner of his lips turned down. Anger filled his features.

"You owe me," Derek growled as he grabbed at Sebastian's shirt again. "After everything I did for you, all of the things I let you do to me. You owe me."

"Derek, I don't owe you a thing. You willingly let me do those things to you. You were not forced. Now, let go," Sebastian warned. "I don't want to hurt you."

"But you can." Derek's eyes lit up. He pressed his body back against Sebastian's. "Claim me and you can do whatever you want with me."

"It's not going to happen, Derek."

"I can be a good mate for you, Sebastian. I already know what you like."

"No, Derek!"

Sebastian pushed Derek away from him again and turned to leave the room. His steps faltered when a large weight landed on his back. Sebastian reached back and grabbed Derek and flung him away, barely missing the sharp teeth snapping at his neck.

Damn shifters. They never took no for an answer.

He picked up his steps, trying to get out of the room before he had to deal with some other asshole that thought they would be good mate material. If he could get back to his room, he could get his luggage and get out of the castle before anyone else stopped him.

Just as Sebastian reached the two large doors leading out of the ballroom, another body slammed into him from behind. Sebastian growled and turned to confront Derek again. He was shocked to see a sprite of a man collapsed on the floor at his feet instead of Derek.

"Are you okay?" Sebastian asked. He reached down to help the man up, frowning when the man cringed away from him. Bright violet

eyes blinked up at him, filled with fear. Sebastian tried to soften his features, squatting down in front of the man so his sheer size didn't frighten him more. "Hey, it's okay. I'm not going to hurt you."

"Mine!" someone shouted from behind Sebastian.

Sebastian looked up just in time to see a body barreling toward him. He quickly stood and braced himself for the impact, knowing he couldn't stop it. And it was going to hurt. The man charging at him was in human form but he was huge, probably some sort of wolf or cougar shifter. Sebastian didn't have time to tell before the man crashed into him.

He grunted, his muscles screaming at the exertion used to hold the man off. Sebastian was a big man, stronger than most, but it still took all of his strength to keep the angry man from biting him.

"Get the hell off of me!" Sebastian shouted as he shoved the man away. He hissed when the man's claws dug into his flesh, tearing his white silk shirt. He loved that shirt. "What the hell is your problem?"

"He's mine!" the man growled, flexing his clawed hands.

"Who?" Sebastian asked in confusion. He had no idea what the shifter was talking about.

"Him!"

Sebastian glanced down to where the man pointed, only remembering the frightened man at his feet when he felt arms wrap one of his legs. The man was clearly terrified. The small body pressed up against his legs was shaking so much that Sebastian could feel it all of the way up his thighs.

Sebastian sighed and looked at the shifter again. "Look, it's obvious that he doesn't want to be *yours*, so why don't you just leave him alone and go find someone else?"

Sebastian wouldn't normally get involved in situations like this, but the man wrapped around his legs seemed so frightened that he couldn't help but feel sorry for him. No one wanted to be forced to mate against their will—the main reason Sebastian wanted out of the place as fast as possible.

"I saw him first."

"And?" Sebastian had no idea what that had to do with forcing someone.

"He's mine!" the man growled.

The body wrapped around Sebastian's leg shuddered. A whimper of distress reached his ears. Sebastian knew he needed to do something before the shifter attacked him again. He reached down and grabbed the small man, peeling him away from his leg despite the man's struggles.

He lifted the man up then grunted when the small man tried to climb him. Sebastian almost laughed, the strangeness of the situation hitting him. He was being threatened by a shifter as a sprite of a man tried to use him as a tree.

Could his life get any stranger?

"I want him," the shifter growled. "Hand him over."

"Or what?" Sebastian might have been amused by the situation, but he wouldn't take someone threatening him. He wrapped an arm around the man clinging desperately to him, lifting him up in his arms. He glared at the shifter. "I'm keeping him."

"I saw him first," the shifter snapped. "He's mine."

"Doesn't look that way from where I'm standing."

The shifter growled and lunged. Sebastian heard the man in his arms cry out. He swung around, putting his back to the oncoming threat, protecting the man with his body. Pain shattered the control Sebastian had on himself as the shifter's claws sank into his back.

Sebastian roared. He held the little man against his chest and extended the claws on his other hand, swing around and striking out at the shifter. Blood splattered everywhere as his claws raked across the shifter's chest.

He heard a loud growl and felt the shifter's claws sink into his side. The man in his arms cried out, and Sebastian knew he'd been hit as well. The scent of blood was thick in the air—but so was something else.

It tickled Sebastian's senses, intrigued him. Before he could track the sweet scent or figure out where it was coming from, the shifter lunged at him again. The full force of a mad shifter hit Sebastian like a freight train. The man in his arms screamed as Sebastian dropped him.

Someone slammed into Sebastian from behind. He stumbled forward, tripping over the small man that he had been holding. Sebastian twirled around to make sure he was safe just in time to see the shifter dive towards the little man.

Going purely on instinct, Sebastian gathered fire in his throat and let it loose. Black smoke filled the air, obscuring his vision of the small man for a brief moment. Sebastian reached through the smoke and grabbed onto the first bit of skin he felt.

He pulled hard, breathing a sigh of relief when the little man came sliding across the floor toward him. He was slightly singed but otherwise seemed okay. Sebastian grabbed the man up in his arms and sprinted for the door.

He broke through it just as something slammed into him again. The little man in his arms went flying. Sebastian fell to the floor, landing hard on his hands and knees. His teeth snapped together over his bottom lip, drawing blood. He growled and curled his hands into fists.

Sebastian pushed himself to his feet and turned to look at the shifter crouching by the doors. He spit the blood in his mouth out on the floor then wiped the remaining blood from his lips and glanced at it for a moment then up at the shifter.

"I'm getting really tired of this shit," Sebastian growled. "You're not getting the little guy so bugger off."

"Mine!" the shifter shouted.

Sebastian rolled his eyes. He just wanted to go home, no fuss, no muss. He didn't want to fight his way out of the damn castle. It didn't look like he was going to get what he wanted without a fight.

Of course, if he took the reason for the fight out of the picture…Sebastian turned to see the little man he'd held a few minutes earlier huddled against the wall, hugging his knees to his chest. Sebastian gestured with his hand for the man to come to him.

The man frantically shook his head, his wavy white hair bouncing around his face. Sebastian growled deeper, gesturing with his hand again.

"Come here!"

Violet eyes widened fearfully. The small man climbed to his feet and walked the distance between them until he stood directly in front of Sebastian. His thin little body trembled. Sebastian almost groaned with the way the man's eyes dropped submissively down to the floor.

"Do you want to be mated to this man?" he asked softly, hoping his gentle voice would calm the man.

"No," he whispered. "Please."

The moment the words were spoken, Sebastian opened his mouth and let out a billow of smoke, enveloping the man. This smoke wasn't pure black like normal, but gray and tinged with blasts of red flames.

It was the mating fire of his kind. As long as he didn't exchange blood with the little man, the effects would wear off in a few hours. For now, it would mark the frightened man as his, warning all others to steer clear of him or suffer Sebastian's wrath.

The man trembled and cried out, grabbing the back of his neck. Sebastian knew he was feeling the brand that all mates felt when they were claimed. Sebastian's life symbol would be burned into the man's skin, only fading when he died—or if Sebastian didn't complete the mating in the next twenty-four hours.

Satisfied that the man had been saved from the shifter, Sebastian grabbed him by his arm and jerked him close to his side. He turned back to give the shifter a bored stare. "Now it's no longer an issue. He has been claimed and is no longer available."

"You'll be sorry," the shifter sneered. "He was mine. He'll be mine again."

"Yeah, yeah." Sebastian made a shooing motion with his free hand. "Get along little doggie. We've had enough of you."

Sebastian knew he had guessed the shifter's race when the man growled and suddenly sprouted fur and fangs and two pointed ears. There were some things that were instantly recognizable in certain breeds…like ears and a tail. Fur was a big one, too. Sebastian had scales.

"I'm going to kill you!" the shifter snarled.

Sebastian rolled his eyes. Like he had never heard that before. He didn't usually start fights, just because he hated the drama involved. But he would certainly finish one, given the chance. He wouldn't back down from a challenge.

"When and where, furball?"

"How about here and now?"

"Very well." Sebastian twisted his head left and right, popping a few vertebrae, then pushed the small man at his side behind him. He flexed his claws and let his teeth extend, a small billow of smoke coming out of his nostrils. He gestured with his hand for the shifter to come toward him. "Let's get to it then."

The shifter tensed and crouched as if getting ready to pounce. Sebastian braced himself for the fight to come then dropped his jaw in shock when someone barreled into the shifter, sending him crashing to the floor.

Before the shifter could gain his feet, he was yanked up and a vampire sank his teeth deep into the shifter's throat. A long frustrated wail filled the air as the shifter was claimed by another. Sebastian almost felt bad for the guy—almost.

The shifter was yanked to his feet and dragged off before he could protest. Sebastian snickered and turned to head to his rooms again, only remembering the small sprite when he nearly tripped over him again.

"Well, what am I going to do with you?"

Sebastian's mouth dropped open when the man before him suddenly shifted, dropping through his clothes to the hard floor beneath him. He reached down and started sifting through the clothes, just barely catching the sight of white fur before it started scurrying across the floor.

"Oh no, you don't!" Sebastian snapped as he grabbed the bunny by the scruff of the neck and lifted him up into the air. He looked the rabbit over, a slow smirk starting to cross his lips as an idea came to him. "Yes, I think you'll do just fine."

The bunny started to struggle. Sebastian hissed when the little furry's hind legs came up and scratched his arm, leaving deep bleeding welts. "Knock it off," he growled, shaking the bunny. "I'm not hurting you."

The bunny glared, flattening his long ears against the side of his head.

"Now, you just be a good little bunny and we'll get along fine," he said as he tucked the bunny under his arm and walked back into the main gathering room, heading for the dais of elders. The fighting seemed to stop the further he walked into the room, people parting to give them a wide berth.

"You're not being a good bunny," Sebastian said as the bunny continued to struggle. Sebastian lightly thumped him on the back end. He almost chuckled when the bunny stopped struggling, but flattened his ears down to his head even further. At least he listened well.

"Elder Burke," Sebastian called out when they reached the dais, "I wish to have my mating recorded."

Sebastian could feel the bunny's heart start to thunder as he was held him up for the Elder's inspection. His hind legs were pulled up close to his chest, and he tucked his tail, as if he was trying to look as small as possible. It wasn't hard. Sebastian's hand was almost as big as the bunny's entire body.

"Yes, well," the elder said, "I can see your mark on him. Has he marked you?"

"Elder." The man chuckled as if greatly amused. "Dragons do not get *marked*."

Sebastian was a little surprised when the rabbit in his hand suddenly went slack. He felt his grip starting to slip and grabbed the bunny with both hands, cradling it against his chest. The damn thing was out cold.

"Elder, if you don't mind?" Sebastian said as he got a better grip on the pure white rabbit.

He was really beginning to rethink this whole bunny thing. Claiming the little furball had seemed like the thing to do considering the circumstances. Now, he wasn't so sure. The damn thing was as limp as a dishrag. Sebastian was hoping he hadn't killed the bunny or given him a heart attack.

"Very well, Sebastian, please kneel and…" The elder grimaced then waved his hand at the floor. "Just put the bunny down there."

Sebastian knelt down on the floor and laid the bunny down between him and the elder. The moment his hands lifted away, the bunny was up and running. Sebastian let out a loud growl and dove after him, catching the bunny's hind legs in his hand before the damned thing could get away.

He scrambled to get a better hold on the little guy. Once his had a firm grip, he held the bunny tightly to his chest. Sebastian could feel the bunny's heart thundering against his fingers. The little thing was terrified.

"You're fine," Sebastian whispered. He placed the bunny's body between his arm and body and held his hand under him, his fingers wrapping around the bunny's neck. The bunny jerked when Sebastian started stroking his fur, his heart pounding even faster. "Calm yourself, little one. No one is going to hurt you."

Little by little, Sebastian could feel the bunny's heart rate start to slow. It took a few minutes before the bunny's body relaxed. Satisfied that the bunny wasn't going to run again, Sebastian looked up at the elder.

"Please continue, Elder Burke."

"Yes, well…"

Elder Burke looked a little uncomfortable. Sebastian didn't care. He wanted this over so he could go home. He had things to do. He didn't have time for this little game the council of elders wanted to play.

Hence, the bunny.

Sebastian had been astonished when he heard the elders' words, not that anyone would know it to look at him. It would never do for the biggest and baddest of shifter kind to be seen flabbergasted, but that was exactly how Sebastian had felt.

"As Elder of the Draconic Clan," Elder Burke said, "I accept your mating, Sebastian Drakus."

Sebastian didn't know exactly what occurred when a mating was accepted and recorded by the elders, but he didn't expect the agony that shot up through his head from the base of his neck. Sebastian cried out and dropped forward, using his free hand to brace himself.

The bunny held against his chest screamed. It was a horrible sound and one Sebastian hoped he never heard again—like fingernails down a chalkboard. When the pain started to subside, Sebastian quickly checked that the bunny was still alive. He was breathing heavily, but he didn't look too injured.

Sebastian breathed a sigh of relief. He didn't want the little guy to die. A mating was very serious stuff. A dead mate was even worse. He looked up at the very grim looking elder. "Is that everything? Is it done?"

"Your mating has been recorded, Sebastian, but you need to know there is a clause," the elder said as he reached for an envelope off a nearby table then held it out to Sebastian.

Sebastian barely refrained from rolling his eyes as he took the envelope then tucked it onto his shirt pocket. "Of course there is."

"This envelope is only to be opened once your mating as been consummated and not a moment before." The elder pointed a finger at

Sebastian. "And remember, Sebastian, you must protect your mate at all costs. Your life threads are now combined. If he dies, you die, and vice versa."

"What?" Sebastian snapped.

This wasn't exactly what Sebastian had planned when he chose the little bunny. He stared down at the bunny in his hands as sense of horror filled him. It seemed like the perfect option, considering the situation. He'd claim the bunny until this fiasco was over then send him on his way. As long as he didn't complete the mating, it was perfectly acceptable in his world.

Now, he was going to be the laughingstock of his clan.

"Fuck! I'm mated to a bunny?"

Chapter 2

Beauregard bounced as he landed on the bed Sebastian tossed him onto. The moment he stopped bouncing, he shifted back into his human form and started looking around for something to cover himself. He needed to go retrieve his clothes.

When he couldn't immediately spot anything, he got up and walked over to the nearest dresser and started rifling through it. He tossed shirt after shirt over his head. Paired socks by the half-dozen landed on the floor. Then came the silk boxers. Beauregard held up one pair of silk boxers—black with little red hearts.

Who wears this shit? Beauregard tossed them onto the pile building up on the floor. He needed a good pair of jeans, a simple cotton shirt, and some high-tops. Who wore all this fancy crap? And how could they stand it? It had to be incredibly uncomfortable.

"What the hell are you doing?"

Beauregard rolled his eyes and turned to face the dragon. He waved his hand down his naked body. "I'd think that was fairly obvious, even to you."

"Apparently not," Sebastian said as he crossed his arms over his chest and arched a dark black eyebrow at Beauregard. "If it was obvious, I wouldn't have asked."

"Hello, I'm naked."

Sebastian tilted his head slightly. "Yes, I can see that."

"I need something to wear. My clothes are back in the great room and damned if I'm going to parading my naked ass around for everyone to see."

Beauregard's eyebrows shot up in surprise when Sebastian growled and his features suddenly darkened. Uh oh, he was in trouble. Sebastian looked pissed. The puff of dark smoke that suddenly spiraled out of Sebastian's nostrils didn't help.

"You will not parade your *naked ass* around for anyone to see," Sebastian snapped. "Is that perfectly clear? I am the only one who gets to see you naked."

Beauregard's eyes rounded. "Whoa, where'd that come from?"

Sebastian blinked as if his words had surprised even him. "Damned if I know."

Beauregard laughed. He was suddenly incredibly amused with the situation. He was a freaking rabbit, and now he was mated to a dragon, and a possessive dragon at that. The situation was just too funny.

"It's not that amusing," Sebastian said after a few moments.

"Yes, it is."

"No, it is not."

"Is, too." To back up his statement, Beauregard stuck is tongue out at Sebastian.

"Is not," Sebastian barked.

"Is, too."

"Is—fuck, I'm arguing with a bunny."

Sebastian rubbed his hand down his face and turned away. Beauregard felt sorry for the man. Sebastian hadn't asked for this mating any more than he had. It probably wasn't fair of him to make fun, even if the situation was amusing.

"Actually, we're called rabbits, not bunnies," Beauregard said. "We're small mammals in the family Leporidae of the order of Lamorpha. I, specifically, am a European rabbit, or *Oryctolagus cuniculus.*"

"You're a fucking bunny," Sebastian snapped as he swung around.

Beauregard cocked an eyebrow and grinned. "Not yet, but I could be given the right incentive."

Sebastian's mouth dropped open at the same moment his silver eyes widened to an almost impossible size. Beauregard smirked. He was used to freaking people out. He'd been doing it all of his life, even in his own colony. He just hoped it didn't bring Sebastian to hate him as others of his kind did.

"Are you for real?" Sebastian asked. "Do you not understand the situation we're in?"

Beauregard sighed deeply and crossed his arms over his chest. "I think I understand the situation perfectly. You tried to use me to get past the elder's little mating curse, and it came back to bite you in the ass. Now you're stuck with me."

Sebastian blinked for a moment, then chuckled as he sat down on the end of the bed. He rested his face in his hands for a moment then glanced up, clasping his hands together and letting them dangle between his knees.

"Yes, I guess that does sum it up pretty well."

Beauregard wasn't sure how he felt about the sadness he could hear in Sebastian's voice. Surely it couldn't be that bad being mated to a rabbit—right?

"Is that fate so bad?" he asked softly.

"Do you know who I am?"

"Uh, not really," Beauregard answered. "I mean, I know you're a dragon because you said so and you went to Elder Burke to have our mating recorded. I know he's the elder of the Draconic Clan, your clan. I also know your name is Sebastian." Beauregard shrugged. "But, I guess that's about it."

Sebastian dropped his head to stare down at the floor. His shoulders slumped. He looked so dejected. "My name is Sebastian Drakus. I am the royal prince of the Drakus Clan, the highest order of dragons."

"Okay." Beauregard frowned. That sounded pretty fancy, but what did he know of fancy? He lived in a studio apartment because it was all he could afford on his meager salary. "And that means what?"

Sebastian's head popped up. "You don't know?"

Beauregard shrugged. He felt confused, and he didn't like feeling confused. It always made him feel stupid. "No."

Sebastian leapt to his feet. "It means I'm the fucking prince of my kind, damn it."

Beauregard took a step back, wondering if he needed to be wary of this large man. They were supposed to be mated. As far as Beauregard knew, that meant that they couldn't hurt each other. But maybe that was just in a rabbit mating.

"Congratulations?"

Sebastian stared for a moment then dropped back on the mattress, covering his eyes with his arm. His shoulders shook as he laughed, but Beauregard didn't think the man was laughing from amusement.

Beauregard watched Sebastian, wondering what he could do to make the man feel better. If he had his little purse, he could give Sebastian one of his knickknacks, but his purse and everything else was back in the grand ballroom. He didn't even have any bubble gum to share.

Beauregard's lips twisted together as he tried to think of something. When a sudden cold breeze blew through the room, making him shiver and reminding him that he was standing there naked, a sudden idea filled his mind.

Before he could dissuade himself differently, Beauregard used his rabbit abilities to jump up on the bed and straddled Sebastian's body. Rabbits could jump really high in either human or shifted form.

Sebastian's arm dropped away from his face, and he stared up at Beauregard like he couldn't quite believe what he was seeing. Beauregard grinned and wiggled his hips.

"My name is Beauregard Stratford. I'm not a prince, or anything remotely noble. I don't even know who my father is. I'm not widely

accepted in my colony because I have all-white fur and I was a single kit litter. I even have violet eyes, and no other bunny does. I'm an anomaly."

Sebastian's features had started softening as Beauregard spoke, but it was the only part on his body that did. In fact, the long hard part between Beauregard's naked thighs just seemed to get harder with each passing moment. Beauregard trailed his hand down Sebastian's chest, flicking one button open at a time until the man's shirt lay open.

"However, I am still a rabbit. That being said, and considering we are now mated, you should know that rabbits are clichés. As the saying goes, *we fuck like bunnies*. Carrots are an aphrodisiac, and if you piss me off, I will leave pellets in your shoes."

Beauregard shrieked when he was suddenly grabbed and swung around. Sebastian pressed him into the mattress and moved to kneel between his thighs. He hovered over the top of Beauregard, his arms resting on each side of Beauregard's head.

"I am a dragon, little bunny, and I am not a cliché in any form of the word. I'm big and bad and mean. I can break you in two without breaking a sweat. Piss me off and I'll singe every bit of fur from your body."

"I can lick my own balls."

Sebastian's mouth dropped open. "You can what?"

"I'm a rabbit." Beauregard smirked and wiggled his eyebrows. "We're very flexible."

One of Sebastian's eyebrows shot up. "Just how flexible are we talking here?"

Beauregard pulled his legs up then grabbed his ankles, effortlessly lifting them up by his head and planting them into the mattress by his ears. It brought his ass up into the air in an embarrassing manner, but the sudden exhale of breath that shot from Sebastian was worth it.

"Fuck!"

Beauregard lowered his legs to the bed again, keeping his knees bent and pressed close to Sebastian's sides. He liked the feeling of the large man between his legs. "I'll bet I can lick your balls while you fuck me."

Sebastian's eyes closed, and he breathed deeply. The rigid clench of his jaw told Beauregard that Sebastian was holding on to his control by a mere thread. Beauregard hoped to break that control. Their mating would never be complete unless Sebastian fucked him.

And Beauregard had been waiting his entire life to be fucked by his mate. He didn't plan on waiting much longer now that he had met the man. He just had to push Sebastian a little bit further.

"I'm pretty damn flexible, Sebastian. I'm also resilient. I doubt there is much you can do to me that I can't take."

"Beau-Beauregard." Sebastian's eyes were almost black when he opened them and stared down at Beauregard. He looked hungry, and not in the *I want to eat you* sort of way. "You don't know what you're saying, bunny, you really don't."

"Try me."

Sebastian growled. That was the only warning Beauregard got before he was flipped over onto his hands and knees. His ass cheeks were pulled apart and a long, forked tongue stroked across his tight hole.

Beauregard cried out, the sound filling the room in its intensity. He felt like screaming as Sebastian licked his ass over and over again. Beauregard had never felt anything like it in his life. Hell, he'd never even imagined it, and he had a great imagination.

When Sebastian's forked tongue began to harden and push into his ass, Beauregard did scream. The licking suddenly stopped and large hands flipped him over, Sebastian's worried face staring down at him.

"Don't stop!" Beauregard shrieked.

"Geez, bunny, I thought you were hurt."

"No!" Beauregard quickly turned back over and stuck his ass into the air. "Again."

"Are you demanding, little bunny?"

"Please?"

Sebastian chuckled. "That's better."

Beauregard groaned again when Sebastian's forked tongue went back to licking his ass. Being mated to a dragon was definitely looking up. If Sebastian could make him into a pile of goo with just his tongue, Beauregard couldn't wait to find out what he could do with his cock.

Beauregard almost protested when Sebastian stopped licking his ass, until he felt two thick fingers sink into his ass. Considering they were the first real, non-plastic object he had ever had in his ass, he was definitely in favor of real over a dildo. There was just something different about it, more erotic.

Beauregard couldn't keep his loud moans to himself. He just opened his mouth, and they spilled out, growing louder each time Sebastian's fingers sank into his ass. Yeah, he was loud. So fucking what? Sebastian seemed to like it. The louder Beauregard cried out, the more force Sebastian used. Beauregard was in heaven.

"I think my little bunny likes this."

Beauregard nodded rapidly, beyond recognizable speech at this point. He could only feel, and he felt wonderful. He tingled, staring where Sebastian's fingers thrust into him and spreading throughout his entire body. Every nerve was vibrating.

Beauregard inhaled sharply when Sebastian pulled his fingers free and replaced them with his cock. The man pushed in slowly, and Beauregard felt every thick inch stretching him. Sebastian's large hands gripped Beauregard's hips so tightly, he wondered if he'd have bruises in the morning. He didn't care. He'd wear them with pride. They'd mean he'd mated.

He knew the importance of this moment. Once Sebastian came inside of him, they would be truly mated in the ways of Beauregard's people. This was the final step, and then they would be mated forever.

Beauregard just didn't know what being mated to a dragon meant. He always expected to find another rabbit. Rabbits mated rabbits. It was kind of a tradition. Other rabbits understood the high sexual drive, the hyperactivity, the need to nest.

What did dragons do?

Beauregard groaned as Sebastian started to slam into him over and over again. Only the man's hands gripping his hips kept Beauregard from shooting across the bed from the force. Sebastian was very strong, and in an odd way, Beauregard found that a huge turn-on.

Maybe that was why Beauregard found himself so attracted to the dragon. Rabbits were timid creatures by nature, even Beauregard in most cases. He was incredibly aroused by the power flowing through Sebastian. The man didn't even have to try. It came naturally to him.

And damn, wasn't that hot?

"You're so fucking tight," Sebastian growled.

Duh! I'm a virgin, Beauregard thought, but he didn't put his thoughts into words. That would have required not moaning, and that just wasn't possible.

When Sebastian grabbed a handful of his hair, Beauregard thought he would come right there and then. He was a rabbit. They were big into the hair thing—pulling, brushing, stroking, whatever. It was all very arousing.

"We need to visit my tattoo artist," Sebastian said.

One of Sebastian's hands stroked over Beauregard's skin. Beauregard shivered at the silky touch. If Sebastian kept moving like he did, he could do any damn thing he wanted. Beauregard didn't care.

"I want to see my name on you when I fuck you."

Beauregard nodded as much as he could, considering Sebastian's fingers were still wrapped in his hair. He had no idea what Sebastian

was going on about, but if getting a tattoo made the man happy, Beauregard was all for it. The pleasure racing through his body at the moment was unlike anything he had ever felt.

"Are you ready to come, my little bunny?"

"Oh yeah."

Beauregard was so ready to come he was shaking. When Sebastian's hand reached around him and wrapped around his cock, that was all Beauregard needed to toss him over the edge. He cried out loudly and came all over Sebastian's hand and the bed.

Waves of ecstasy swept over Beauregard. His knees shook and threatened to give away. His chest felt tight, constricted, as if he couldn't quite get enough air. He could feel the tight circle of muscles in his ass contracting, squeezing every last bit of pleasure out of the cock thrusting into him.

Sebastian suddenly stiffened. His roar shook the bed. Beauregard started to smile when he felt a sudden burning sensation that started at the nape of his neck then trailed down his spine, ending in the crack of his ass where he was connected to Sebastian.

Beauregard inhaled sharply. The sensation wasn't unpleasant, but it wasn't exactly something Beauregard had ever felt before. It was like being touched by a flame, but not burned.

When liquid lava suddenly filled his ass, Beauregard screamed as another orgasm ripped through him, one more intense than his first one. The burning sensation and the lava filling him seemed to meet up, overwhelming Beauregard. He collapsed down on the bed, his arms and knees unable to hold him up.

A heavy weight followed him down then rolled him onto his side. Beauregard sighed deeply when Sebastian's arms wrapped around him, pulling him back into the curve of the large body behind him. This was how a mating was supposed to be. He just knew it.

Sebastian's chuckle drew Beauregard's attention. He glanced over his shoulder at the man. "What?"

Sebastian's fingers trailed down his spine. "I guess we don't have to see my tattoo artist after all."

"We can if you want. I don't mind."

"No need. For some reason my name has appeared on your skin, right down your spine." Sebastian's grin was very satisfied. "Maybe it's part of the whole mating thing."

"Really?"

Beauregard turned more, trying to get a good look at his back. He couldn't see anything by skin. He frowned then pulled away from Sebastian to get to the side of the bed. Both men froze and groaned when Beauregard's sudden movement pulled Sebastian's cock from him.

"Oh, forgot about that."

"Give me a little warning next time," Sebastian growled.

"Sorry." Beauregard laughed as he scooted to the edge of the bed. "I'm not exactly used to this."

"Bunny, where are you going?"

"I want to see."

"See what?"

"The marks on my back."

Duh!

Beauregard climbed off the bed and walked to the first door he found. He quickly shut it and leaned back against it. He waved his hand at the door. "There's someone out there, Sebastian."

"Of course there is, bunny." Sebastian smirked. "I am a prince after all."

"Do they have to stand right outside your bedroom door?" Beauregard was mortified. He hadn't exactly been quiet when they were having sex. At the time, it hadn't seemed like a big deal. Sebastian seemed to like it. But Beauregard didn't want everyone hearing him.

"Relax, bunny, they won't say a word."

Beauregard frowned. He figured out two things in that instant. One, Sebastian was amused by his friends hearing him. Two, Sebastian had yet to call him anything except bunny.

"I do have a name, you know. It's Beauregard," Beauregard said. "Are you ever going to call me anything but bunny?"

Sebastian chuckled as he rolled to the side of the bed. "I haven't decided yet."

"Well, that doesn't make sense."

Really, it didn't.

"Beauregard seems like a pretty big name for such a small bunny."

Beauregard's mouth dropped open. "Small bunny?"

"I almost thought you were a sprite when I first met you."

"Sprite! Sprite! I'll give you sprite!" Beauregard shouted as anger filled him. He leapt across the room. It took three hops, and he was on Sebastian. Before he could truly attack, he was swung around and slammed into the mattress. Sebastian's large body trapped him against the bed.

"And now you know why I call you bunny."

Beauregard frowned when Sebastian tapped the end of his nose. He was still angry at Sebastian for calling him a sprite. He didn't want to be happy—even if Sebastian's smile lit up the room.

"You like to hop everywhere like a bunny."

Beauregard rolled his eyes. "Duh, I am a bunny."

"And just as cute."

Indignation filled Beauregard. "Hello! I'm sexy, not cute."

"That you are." Sebastian grinned. "But you're also cute."

Bunny huffed. "Fine, as long as I'm sexy, I suppose I can be cute, too."

"That's very generous of you, bunny." Sebastian chuckled.

Beauregard suddenly noticed how wonderful the hard body pressed over him felt. His heart skipped a beat when he noticed the fire starting to burn in Sebastian's eyes. One a scale of one to ten,

Sebastian was definitely a twenty. The look in his eyes could melt steel.

Beauregard spread his legs and brought his knees up to grip Sebastian's body. He knew the instant Sebastian felt his hard cock. The man's dark silver eyes darkened, becoming almost black.

"As long as I'm being generous…" Beauregard's words trailed off as a slow, sensual grin began to cross Sebastian's lips.

The man suddenly scooted up until they were face-to-face. Beauregard inhaled sharply when Sebastian hooked his arms under Beauregard's legs and pulled them up to his chest. Beauregard was eternally grateful they had just had sex when the head of Sebastian's cock started to push into him. The man was not exactly small—anywhere.

Sebastian grinned and thrust deep inside of Beauregard, stealing the air from his lungs as pleasure swept over him.

"As long as you're being generous, bunny, why don't we find just how flexible you really are?"

Chapter 3

Sebastian realized that there was a heavy, dead weight on his chest, even as he woke up. He didn't normally have something on top of him, so he noticed right away. Popping open his eyes, Sebastian grinned when he spotted Beauregard's white head snuggled into his chest. It seemed his little bunny had found a place to sleep.

He could feel his morning erection pressing up between Beauregard's thighs but knew the man would be too sore for him to relieve the ache that was slowly building in his balls. He'd taken Beauregard twice the previous night, and the man was a virgin.

Unfortunately, Sebastian hadn't learned that until after the second time. He'd have to talk to his little bunny about being truthful with him. Omission wasn't a lie, but it was close enough. He would have taken Beauregard slowly instead of fucking him like a man possessed.

Sebastian stroked his hand through Beauregard's silky white hair. He was a man possessed, and didn't that beat all. He was mated to a freaking bunny, and he couldn't seem to be bothered by it. That in itself confused Sebastian more than anything.

He was a dragon, and a prince at that. He was supposed to be mated to another dragon and carry on the dragon bloodline. He always knew it. He even expected it. He didn't expect a bunny mate.

Sebastian smiled when Beauregard mumbled in his sleep and pushed into his hand. He was starting to believe that his little bunny was starved for affection. Beauregard seemed to crave every touch Sebastian gave him. He'd have to ask about that at some point.

Resigned to not getting a piece of tail—Sebastian chuckled at that thought—he carefully rolled Beauregard to the mattress and tucked

the blankets around his mate. Beauregard wiggled for a moment then settled down and went back to sleep.

Sebastian stared then rolled his eyes when he realized he was staring. Beauregard was just so damn cute…err…sexy. He was breathtaking. Sebastian could stare at him for hours and never get tired of looking.

There was something about having such a small, delicate mate that called out to Sebastian's baser instincts. He didn't think he would feel that way if he had been mated to another dragon, even a smaller dragon. Beauregard was another story, though.

Sebastian felt protective, possessive, and intrigued all at once. He'd kill anyone that messed with Beauregard. That was a given. But something told him he'd also kill anyone that put a move on his bunny, too. The mere thought of anyone else putting their hands on Beauregard was enough to make smoke start swirling out of his nose.

Not good!

Sebastian drew in a deep, cleansing breath and forced himself to turn away from his mate. He'd get nothing done if he stood there and continued to stare at Beauregard, no matter how much he wanted to.

He needed to clean up, get dressed, and figure out how to get out of the council headquarters. Being away from home for long periods of time wasn't easy. He had a lot of work to do. The only reason he had even come to the gathering was because it was mandatory. Otherwise, he would have sent someone in his place.

Being a prince of his clan wasn't as glamorous a job as everyone thought. He had responsibilities that he couldn't ignore, both to his clan and to all of shifter kind. Staying at the council castle just meant it was all piling up at home, waiting for him.

Yippy!

Sebastian headed for his bathroom. Maybe a long, hot shower would relive the need he felt to climb right back in bed with Beauregard and spend the day learning every glorious inch of the man's body.

Sebastian walked straight to the shower and turned it on. Once the water was hot enough, he climbed in. One thing about being a dragon, the hotter the shower, the better he liked it. He stood under the spray of water and got his hair wet. It took just a few moments to wash his hair and rinse off.

His problem came when he started scrubbing his body. The moment his hands began moving over his body, he couldn't stop thinking about how Beauregard had done the very same thing the previous night.

Despite his lack of experience, Beauregard seemed to know just where to touch Sebastian to arouse him to a fever pitch. He knew just where to bite and nibble, and just how hard. He knew where to lick, where to nuzzle, and just where to touch Sebastian until he didn't know his own name.

Just thinking about the previous night made Sebastian reach for his cock. If he couldn't fuck his bunny, he could certainly think about it. He fingers wrapped around his hard cock and started stroking.

He moved slowly at first then with increasing speed as images of Beauregard in the throes of passion filled his head. Beauregard seemed to have no inhibitions. He was willing to try and do anything.

His mouth certainly had no filter on it. The more aroused Beauregard became, the louder his cries. Sebastian knew he was going to quickly become addicted to making his bunny scream with pleasure. At some point, he knew he needed to examine why he felt so powerful when Beauregard lost his mind.

Right now, however, the pressure building in his balls was taking his full attention. Sebastian leaned his head back against the shower wall and spread his legs. He stroked his aching cock with one hand and moved the other one down to squeeze his balls.

In his head, he pictured Beauregard doing it. He could almost see the man on his knees, sucking him off. That was something they hadn't done yet, but Sebastian planned to have it on today's itinerary.

He was going to feel Beauregard's lips around his cock if it was the last thing he did.

He wanted to sink his hands into the man's white hair while he fucked his mouth. Those gorgeous, plump lips of Beauregard's were meant to be wrapped around his cock. Sebastian would bet his life on it.

Sebastian's breathing became short. His eyes closed. He stroked faster and faster, rubbing his thumb over the small slit in the top of his cock with each pass of his hand. His legs began to tremble as the pressure built to an unimaginable intensity.

Sebastian suddenly stiffened and thrust his hips forward, tightening his hand as he drove his cock into his firm grip. A low groan was ripped from his lips as he came, shooting ropes of cum all over the shower wall.

Sebastian stroked himself a few more times as he sagged back against the shower wall. That had been really intense. Sebastian didn't know if it was the images of Beauregard sucking him off that made it better or what, but it was the most powerful orgasm he could remember having by his own hand.

Sebastian shook his head and finished washing up. Once he was clean, he turned the water off and climbed out, reaching for a towel to dry himself off. He quickly dried off his body then his hair.

Sebastian hung the towel over the shower door then turned toward the bathroom counter and the mirror that hung over it. He needed to brush his teeth and shave then start thinking about his day and what needed to be done so he could leave for home.

Sebastian took one look in the mirror and let out a sound that he hoped he never heard again. It was pure terror. His eyes widened as he leaned closer to the mirror and looked at himself. Surely it was a figment of his imagination. There was just no possible way that his beautiful black hair suddenly had a streak of white in it.

It just wasn't possible!

Sebastian's hand shook as he reached up and touched the white streak. Damn, it was real. A streak of pure white hair about an inch wide was growing on the side of his head near his temple. The contrast between his own black hair and the new white hair was blaringly apparent.

"Beauregard!" Sebastian snapped through gritted teeth.

He pressed his lips together and stormed back into the bedroom. He just knew his little bunny had something to do with this. He spotted Beauregard sleeping, all stretched out on the mattress in total abandon, and his anger started to dwindle away.

Beauregard really was exceptionally cute, and yes, even sexy. He was stretched out on his back, one leg straight down, one leg bent at the knee. His arms were thrown out as far as they would go on either side of Beauregard. The sheet had slipped down and was even now threatening to expose Beauregard's morning erection.

Sebastian groaned. He was well and truly fucked if just the mere sight of his bunny's naked skin could take him from blistering angry to horny as hell in the space of a few seconds. If Beauregard ever learned of the influence he had, Sebastian knew he would never hear the end of it. What he needed to do was make sure that Beauregard never found out.

Sebastian heaved a heavy sigh then walked toward his walk-in closet. He needed some time away from Beauregard so that he could consider his options. Locking the man away seemed pretty damn good right about know.

But knowing Beauregard, even after just a number of hours, Sebastian knew the man would just escape or sweet talk his way out of whatever cage Sebastian locked him in. Sebastian couldn't wait to see how the people back home dealt with Beauregard. He had no doubt the little bunny would be running the place within a week.

Sebastian got dressed, pulling on a pair of black slacks and a crisp white dress shirt. He decided to forgo the suit jacket and tie for now. He could always get them later. Right now, he had to figure out what

exactly he could do with the streak of white hair on his head to minimize the attention it was sure to gain.

As he walked into the bathroom, an idea struck him. Sebastian stared at himself in the mirror for several moments then started to chuckle. He might actually be able to pull this off. As carefully as he could, Sebastian separated the white hair from the black and began braiding it. He tied a small rubber band around the bottom and let the braid fall back against his body.

Sebastian's hair was in no way as long as Beauregard's which was nearly down to his waist, but it did hang nicely down to just past his shoulders. The small braid of white hair actually seemed to enhance his features, drawing attention to his square jaw and firm cheekbones. It even made his silver eyes stand out.

Not bad.

Satisfied that he didn't look like a complete freak, Sebastian waked back into the bedroom. He drew the sheet up over Beauregard again then walked out of the bedroom, closing the door softly behind him.

"Interesting hair you have there, Sebastian."

Sebastian rolled his eyes as he looked across the room to Galan, his second-in-command. The man was sitting at a small table by the window, a cup of coffee in one hand, a book in the other.

"Good morning, Galan."

"From the noises I heard earlier, it certainly seemed to be good for one of us."

"I take it you haven't found your mate yet?"

Galan's eyes narrowed. "What in the hell do I need a mate for?"

Sebastian thought about the unbelievable sex he had had the previous night and the sexy little bunny sleeping in his bed then shook his head. If Galan didn't know, Sebastian wasn't about to tell him.

"Don't wait too long, my friend. The Elders stated that we only had twenty-four hours or we go feral." Sebastian tapped his wristwatch. "Time is running out."

"Whatever," Galan snorted.

Sebastian rolled his eyes out and decided to leave Galan to his own devices. The man still had until midnight to find his mate. It was only nine in the morning now.

"My mate is sleeping."

Galan snorted.

Sebastian raised an eyebrow. "Is there something amusing about what I said?"

"I'm surprised he's breathing." Galan laughed. "With all the noise you two were making last night, I thought for sure he'd be dead by now."

Sebastian frowned when he felt his face flush. He didn't flush. "My mate is very enthusiastic."

"Apparently," Galan snickered.

"He's also very flexible. He can bend in ways you've never even imagined." Sebastian smirked. That should get Galan's attention.

Sebastian knew he was right when Galan's grin slid away to be replaced with one that was part intrigue and part envy. "Just how flexible is he?"

"He can lick my balls while I fuck him."

"Damn."

Galan swallowed so hard that Sebastian heard it from across the room. He chuckled and crossed the room to pour himself a cup of coffee.

"I want a guard assigned to my mate. He's to have one at all times." Sebastian frowned for am moment. "You'd better make that two guards. Beauregard has trouble written all over him."

"I'm not sure what to address first," Galan said, "the fact that your mate is named Beauregard or the fact that he might need two guards? Is he really that much trouble?"

Sebastian chuckled. "I suspect that he is."

"Trouble for the clan?"

"No." Sebastian shook his head. "No, I think he's just going to be trouble for me."

"Does he have a problem with dragons?"

"Not exactly. In fact, I don't even think he's thought about it. Beauregard is—" Sebastian frowned as he tried to figure out the best way to describe his little bunny.

"Awake, apparently."

Sebastian swung around to see his sleepy mate standing in the doorway to the bedroom. He had just a sheet wrapped around his naked body and stood there, wiping his hand across his face. He looked as sexy as hell with his hair in disarray, his face glowing with sleep.

Sebastian frowned when he noted a streak of black hair on the side of Beauregard's face. It was in the same place as the streak of white hair on his head. Somehow, he had the deep impression that Beauregard had something to do with both streaks.

"Good morning, bunny."

Beauregard blinked for a moment then frowned. "Are we back to that again? My name is Beauregard, not bunny."

Sebastian grinned. "I like bunny."

"You would."

Galan started laughing hysterically, drawing Sebastian's attention. He turned to glare at his second-in-command. "Something you'd like to say?"

"You're mated to a bunny?"

Sebastian winced as a low growl sounded from across the room. He could see the coming disaster before it even happened. Sebastian turned and caught Beauregard around the waist and kept him from attacking Galan.

"No, bunny, no attacking Galan."

Galan looked shocked when Beauregard snarled and lunged at him despite the arms Sebastian had wrapped around the man's waist.

Beauregard might have been a bunny, but he was a damn strong bunny. It was all Sebastian could do to hold on to his struggling mate.

"Beauregard!" Sebastian snapped. "That's enough."

Beauregard stopped struggling almost as fast as he had started and turned to look up at Sebastian. "Now you use my name?"

Sebastian chuckled and pulled Beauregard tighter against him. "I like bunny."

"You already said that, *Sebby*."

Sebastian blinked. "Sebby?"

Beauregard didn't look repentant at all as he shrugged. "If you can call me whatever you want, then I can do the same."

"And you couldn't pick something more…manly?"

"Bass, Bash, Batty, Basty, Sebby, Doodlebutt, Se—"

"Doodlebutt?" Sebastian snapped.

Beauregard grinned. "Yeah, makes Sebby seem pretty manly, doesn't it?"

"I like this guy, *Sebby*."

Sebastian growled and narrowed his eyes as he looked at his second-in-command. A puff of smoke escaped his nostrils. "Bunny may get away with calling me nicknames. You won't."

Galan swallowed again as his face paled. "Sorry, Sebastian, it won't happen again."

"Wow, that's really cool," Beauregard said. "Can you do that whenever you want?"

Sebastian pulled away and frowned down at his bunny when the man tried to look up his nose. "What are you doing?"

"Trying to see where the smoke comes from." Beauregard's head bobbed and weaved a he tried to get a better look up Sebastian's nostrils.

"Beauregard!"

"Uh-oh, you're using my name again." Beauregard leaned back to look up into Sebastian's face. "What did I do wrong this time?"

"It is not polite to try and look up someone's nose."

"I was just curious." Beauregard's lower lip slid out. "Geez, what is it with you guys and all your rules? Don't do this. Don't do that. It's getting to a point where a guy has to ask permission to take a shit."

"Beauregard!"

"What?"

Sebastian groaned as Galan's laughter filled the room. He was never going to hear the end of this. His little mate was totally incorrigible, and Galan was doing nothing to help the situation with all of his amusement.

"Galan, bunny lost his clothes when he shifted last night. They should be somewhere near the entrance to the grand ballroom. Can you please go get them for him?"

Galan was still chuckling as he stood to his feet and headed for the door. He paused at the doorway and glanced over his shoulder. "Anything else you need while I'm out?"

"Food!" Beauregard shouted.

"Uh, okay." Galan frowned. "Any specific type of food? What do bunnies eat?"

"I'm a rabbit, what do you think?"

"Grass?"

Beauregard growled and lunged. Sebastian rolled his eyes and tightened his arms around Beauregard's waist. He could just see what his future was going to be like. He was going to spend all of his time keeping these two from fighting.

"Galan, go and bring Beauregard back something back to eat, and no grass."

"Got you, boss." Galan chuckled then left the room.

Sebastian waited until the door shut behind Galan then turned Beauregard in his arms so they were facing each other. "Bunny, you really need to stop trying to attack Galan. He's my right-hand man. He's not going anywhere."

"Well, neither am I." Beauregard's lower lip slid out again.

Sebastian had to admit he was intrigued with the way that lush lower lip stuck out of Beauregard's mouth. It was incredibly hot and made him think of his wish from this morning—to have his cock in Beauregard's mouth.

Sebastian groaned and tried to rein in his libido. He had other things he needed to be concentrating on, not Beauregard's luscious mouth. He was doing a pretty good job of controlling his baser needs until he heard Beauregard inhale sharply.

"What?"

"I can smell you," Beauregard whispered as he dropped his hold on the sheet wrapped around him.

Sebastian sniffed the air but smelled nothing. He frowned as a soft pink flush filled Beauregard's face. "Bunny?"

Beauregard tilted his head back, arching his neck and closing his eyes. His hands grabbed Sebastian's dress shirt like he would crumble to the floor if he didn't. Sebastian began to grow concerned when Beauregard moaned, his entire body trembling.

"Beauregard, what's wrong?"

Was there some sort of condition that rabbit shifters had he didn't know about? Was Beauregard going into some sort of seizure? The shaking of Beauregard's body said that it was a very real possibility.

Beauregard's eyes suddenly snapped open and then Sebastian was the one inhaling sharply. The man's violet eyes had darkened, turning dark purple. What was so eerie about it was that the white's of Beauregard's eyes had almost totally bled away, leaving nothing but purple orbs pinned on him.

"Need!" Beauregard growled.

Sebastian fell back against the table as Beauregard attacked him. There was a hint of violence in Beauregard's movements, but Sebastian didn't think the man intended to hurt him. Beauregard was simply trying to tear his clothes off.

"Beauregard!" Sebastian shouted as he grabbed the bunny's wrists and held them away from his body. He had no idea what had suddenly

come over Beauregard. He also didn't know how he felt about this feral side of Beauregard except—aroused?

"Need!" Beauregard growled again. Instead of attacking Sebastian, he started rubbing against him.

Sebastian blinked for a moment then pushed his leg between Beauregard's thighs. The man instantly groaned and started riding him, moving up and down the leg thrust between his. Sebastian could feel a wet streak soak into his pant leg from the hard cock rubbing against his thigh.

His eyebrows shot up to his hairline when Beauregard bucked against him then screamed before collapsing in his arms. The wet spot on his pant leg widened, and Sebastian knew his little bunny had just come.

He drew in a shaky breath, trying to calm his racing pulse. Sebastian couldn't remember the last time he had ever seen anything so erotic in his life—if ever. He was so aroused right now he could probably come from having a leg between his thighs as well.

Now, he was the one in need.

"Beauregard."

"Huh?" Beauregard lifted his head from Sebastian's chest and gazed up at him with dazed eyes.

Sebastian grabbed a handful of Beauregard's hair and tugged down until the man got the idea and dropped to his knees. He made quick work of undoing his pants and pulling his hard, aching cock out.

A small tug on Beauregard's hair and heaven enveloped Sebastian. He groaned and tightened his grip as Beauregard started sucking. He was right. Beauregard had the perfect lips for sucking cock. The man was a natural.

"Fuck, Beauregard," Sebastian groaned, "your mouth is perfect."

Beauregard mumbled something unrecognizable then went back to sucking and licking. Sebastian did fine, enjoyed every swipe of

Beauregard's tongue and every suck of his mouth, until Beauregard's fingers wrapped around his balls.

Having his balls played with, either licked or squeezed, was a personal pleasure of Sebastian's. It felt better to him than having his nipples played with or his earlobes nibbled on. He loved it.

When Beauregard squeezed his ball sac, Sebastian roared and filled the little bunny's mouth with his release. Waves of unbelievable pleasure washed over him, making his knees shake and threaten to give out on him.

Sebastian rested back against the tabletop to keep himself from collapsing on the floor as Beauregard licked him clean then carefully tucked him back into his pants, zipping him up afterwards.

Sebastian loosened his grip on Beauregard's hair and allowed the man to stand. Beauregard leaned into him, resting his head against Sebastian's chest. Sebastian wrapped his arms around his bunny and rested his chin on top of Beauregard's head.

"So, bunny, what was that all about?" Sebastian asked after a moment of silence. "You went from zero to horny as hell in like five seconds. I'm not complaining, mind you. It was hot as hell. I just kind of wondered what that was all about."

"I could smell you," Beauregard said as he leaned back so he could look up.

"I took a shower this morning." Sebastian knew he didn't smell bad.

"You were aroused."

Sebastian gaped. "And you could smell it?"

"Rabbits have a very good sense of smell."

The corners of Sebastian's mouth started to curve up then a small chuckle escaped his lips. In a matter of moments, the amusement of the situation struck him harder, and his small chuckle turned into an all out belly laugh.

"Bunny, you are a true delight."

"I'm also good at sucking cock."

"Yes, you are." Sebastian chuckled.

Beauregard beamed and wiggled back and forth. "I liked sucking your cock."

A sudden blinding anger filled Sebastian. He growled deep in his throat and lifted Beauregard up by his arms until their faces were mere inches apart. "I have no wish to hear about the men in your past. I am your present and your future. There will be no other men."

Beauregard's eyes widened as he blinked. "Um, what other men?"

Sebastian's eyebrows drew together in a deep frown. "You said—"

"I didn't say a thing," Beauregard protested. "You're the one that brought up other men."

Sebastian was confused, and he didn't like feeling confused. He lowered Beauregard to the floor then pushed his hand through his hair in an aggravated gesture. "There haven't been other men?"

"No, I told you that last night. I was a virgin until you claimed me."

"Then how did you—" Sebastian snapped his mouth closed. He really had no idea how to ask Beauregard how he had given such an expert blowjob without making the man sound like a complete slut.

"How did I what?"

"Never mind."

"No, I'd really like to know wha—"

The door swung open. Beauregard squeaked and shifted, all in the blink of an eye. Sebastian's mouth dropped open as he watched a pure white rabbit race across the hardwood floor and into the bedroom. When he looked up, Galan was standing there, staring just as intently.

"Was that Beauregard?" Galan asked.

"Yes."

Galan's eyebrows shot up. "He really is a bunny?"

Sebastian smirked, crossing his arms over his chest. "Yes, my mate really is a bunny."

Chapter 4

Beauregard raced under the bed and hid, his heart beating a million beats a minute. He ran up and pressed his body against the wall under the head of the bed. He didn't know who had been coming through the door, but he didn't want anyone seeing him naked except Sebastian.

The myths were true. Rabbit shifters were a horny lot. They liked to have sex and as often as possible. However, they only liked having sex with their mates. Once claimed, no one else would ever do.

In that one thing, rabbits were more loyal than any other shifter kind. They never even had sex before they were claimed by their mates. It was not only considered bad taste. It was tradition.

Beauregard doubted Sebastian understood the commitment he made when they mated. Beauregard would never have a desire to be with another living person as long as he lived. All of his sexual interest was now firmly fixated on his mate.

Beauregard couldn't help but wonder if Sebastian would feel the same. The man seemed possessive enough, but what did Beauregard know of dragon shifters? Maybe Sebastian didn't care about being mates, but he didn't like sharing his toys?

The more Beauregard sat huddled against the wall, the more depressed he became. He wasn't supposed to be mated to a dragon. He was supposed to be mated to another rabbit. That's how things worked.

The elders had really screwed them all over when they decided to play their little game. Beauregard couldn't help but hope that karma

came back around and bit the elders in the butt. It would serve them right.

"Bunny?"

Beauregard hesitated for about one second then scrambled across the floor to reach the safety of Sebastian's arms. Sebastian leaned down and picked him up, cradling Beauregard in his arms and close to his chest. Beauregard's eyes nearly rolled back in his head when Sebastian started petting him. Rabbits were very tactile creatures. They craved touch.

"Hey, bunny, what has you so upset?" Sebastian asked as he carried the bunny over to the bed and sat down. He stretched out on the bed and placed Beauregard next to him. "Galan won't hurt you, bunny, I promise."

Beauregard shifted back to his human form and stretched his body out along Sebastian's, pressing into him. He liked the closeness he felt when he was pushed up against Sebastian's larger body, the safety.

"I'm not afraid of Galan," Beauregard said as he plucked at the buttons of Sebastian's shirt. "Although he might want to reconsider being afraid of me. I may be just a rabbit, but I can still do some serious damage."

"If you're not afraid of Galan, then why did you run?"

"I was naked."

Duh!

"Bunny, Galan's seen naked men before. Besides, you're gorgeous. You have nothing to be ashamed of."

"I wasn't ashamed." Beauregard growled and shoved away from Sebastian. "I was being loyal, but I guess you dragons don't know anything about that."

Beauregard was working himself into a royal snit, and he knew it. He just couldn't seem to stop it. Sebastian, as his mate, should have been as concerned as he was, but the man didn't even seem fazed.

"Excuse me?"

Beauregard's eyes narrowed when he detected the barely controlled violence in Sebastian's voice. Maybe he had crossed the line just a little bit with that dragon comment, but he was pissed.

"You heard me!" Beauregard snapped. "You should have been as concerned as I was with someone else seeing me naked, but apparently it doesn't matter to you. Maybe I should just parade naked through the entire castle?"

"You'll do not such thing!"

"Try and stop me," Beauregard growled as he jumped off the bed and raced for the door. He had just grabbed the door handle when Sebastian's arms wrapped around him from behind. Beauregard squealed as he was swung up off the floor.

His arms and legs flailed wildly as he was tossed through the air. He landed on the bed, bouncing several times before he came to a stop on his back. Beauregard leaned up on his elbows and stared up at the menacing man standing at the end of the bed, his arms crossed and his eyebrows pulled down in a deep frown.

"Now, do you want to explain that statement or do I need to spank your little cottontail ass?"

Beauregard's eyebrows shot up when his cock jerked at Sebastian's words. Apparently he liked the idea of having his ass spanked. Now, wasn't that a surprise. Sebastian must have thought so, too, because he suddenly started chuckling.

"Oh, bunny, what am I going to do with you?"

"Um…" Beauregard glanced down as his stiff cock. "I may have a few ideas."

Sebastian laughed and shook his head. "Not this time, bunny. I want to know what you meant by what you said. And this time, if you don't tell me, I *won't* spank you."

Beauregard groaned and dropped back onto the mattress. This mating thing was going to take some time to get used to. Sebastian seemed to think he had a right to Beauregard's every little thought. It

kind of reminded him of the leader of his colony—only, Sebastian was much sexier.

"It's wrong for anyone but my mate to see me naked."

"I agree, but what does that have to do with the way you're behaving?"

"Me?" Beauregard sputtered as he sat up. "What about you? You didn't even blink an eye when Galan saw me. It was like you had no problem at all with him seeing me naked."

Sebastian sighed deeply and walked over to sit on the edge of the bed. He was frowning, and Beauregard didn't think that was a good thing. But hell, what did he know? He thought his mate wouldn't want anyone to see him naked, either.

"Beauregard, it's wrong to parade yourself around in front of others, but we're shifters," Sebastian finally said. "Someone is bound to see you naked at some point."

"No, that's wrong." Why didn't Sebastian understand that? "We never shift back in front of others. Only our mate can see us naked. It's a point of honor with rabbit shifters."

Sebastian suddenly smiled, his frown slipping away. He gestured with his hands for Beauregard to come closer. Beauregard didn't even have to think about it. He loved being in Sebastian's arms. He climbed across the mattress and into Sebastian's lap.

"Okay, listen to me, Beauregard. I will give you that I am used to seeing other shifters in the all together. It's kind of hard not to when you're as big as we are when we shift. However, that being said, I'd prefer if no one saw you naked." Sebastian tapped his finger on the end of Beauregard's nose. "And I appreciate the fact that it's a point of honor for you not to let anyone see you naked. But, in the future, I'd also appreciate it if you kept from disparaging dragons, as I am one."

"Sorry," Beauregard mumbled as he glanced down at his fingers, twisting them together nervously. Sebastian was right. He shouldn't have taken his anger and confusion out on dragons as a whole. His

beef was with Sebastian. "You just seemed to not care at all and that made me angry."

"Bunny, we've had less than twenty-four hours together. It's going to take some time for both of us to get used to each other. Just because I didn't have time to react to Galan walking into the room does not in any way mean I wouldn't have thrown a temper tantrum of epic proportions if he had seen you naked."

Beauregard started to smile at Sebastian's words. A temper tantrum of epic proportions? He liked the sound of that. "Really?"

"Really." Sebastian cupped Beauregard's chin and tilted his head up. "You are my mate, and no one should see you naked except me if it is at all possible. I would appreciate it if you continued to keep this gorgeous little body for my eyes alone."

"I can do that." Beauregard grinned. He could do as his mate requested and keep his honor. Could there be a better compromise? "I am sorry about what I said. I don't know anything about dragons other than the fact that you're huge and you breathe fire."

"Technically, bunny, we don't *breathe* fire. There's a gland in my throat that carries a gas that ignites when I release it. We call it the fire pouch. When we use it, we can either push fire out of our mouths or smoke out of our nose."

"That's how you made those smoke rings."

"Yes."

Beauregard laughed. "That is so cool."

"It's also the way we mark our mates. When I mated you, I blew out a special smoke that is reserved just for our mates. It marked you here." Sebastian's fingers grazed Beauregard's back from the top of his spine, down to the bottom. "Any other dragon that sees you will know that you belong to me."

Beauregard tugged on the braid of pure white hair at Sebastian's temple. "This is a rabbit's way of marking their mates."

Sebastian frowned. "I suspected as much when I saw it."

"You don't like it?"

"I didn't expect it, that's all." Sebastian's frowned turned up into a smile. "It was a little surprising when I woke up this morning and went into the bathroom only to find a streak of white hair on my head."

"I like what you've done with it." Beauregard rubbed the braid between his fingers until he reached the end. He eyed Sebastian cautiously, unsure of the man's reaction to his words. "This would look really cool with some beads on it."

Sebastian's eyebrows shot up just a little. "Actually, that's not a bad idea."

"I have some beads that you might like."

"Would you mind putting them in for me?"

Beauregard grinned. "I need my purse."

"Purse?"

Beauregard rolled his eyes when Sebastian got a stricken look on his face. "Yes, purse. It's a little neon green bunny-shaped bag attached to the belt in my pants. I keep everything in there."

"Well, Galan brought your clothes in." Sebastian lifted Beauregard up and sat him down on the bed before standing up. "I'll go get them real quick."

Beauregard could hardly contain his eagerness as Sebastian walked out of the bedroom. He loved his little purse. Granted, it was strange for a full grown man to carry one, and he'd received lots of ribbing for doing just that, but his mother gave it to him, and he loved the little green bag.

Sebastian walked back into the room a moment later, a large pile of stuff in his hands. He set them down on the bed next to Beauregard. There was another frown on his face. Beauregard was beginning to wonder if it was a permanent look on his face.

"What?"

"Where's the rest of your stuff?"

"Oh, I have a small bag in the rabbit dorm."

"The rabbit dorm?"

Beauregard laughed as he reached for his neon green rabbit purse. "Yeah, unless you're rabbit royalty, you stay in the dorm when you come to the council castle. Only the head rabbits get their own rooms. The rest of us share one big room."

"Well, not anymore. I'll send Galan down for your stuff. You stay with me from now on."

Beauregard beamed.

"You do want to stay with me, don't you?"

Beauregard suddenly realized that his head was bent down and Sebastian couldn't see his grin. He quickly glanced up and grinned even wider. "I'm your mate. I have to stay with you now. Besides, I don't think you'd fit in the dorm beds unless you turned into a pretzel."

"I would prefer not to try that." Sebastian chuckled.

Beauregard laughed and then started digging through his purse. He pulled out three different flavors of ChapStick, because you can never have too many. He also pulled out an iPod, paperclip, two metal bottle tops, a package of watermelon-flavored bubble gum, a hair clip, two white polished rocks, a bottle of sparkly neon green nail polish, three small glass beads, and a silver spoon.

"That's quite the collection you have there, bunny."

"Oh yeah, I like collecting things." Beauregard held up the three small beads. "These are all I have right now, but I have a whole jar of beads at home, some really nice ones, too."

Sebastian sat down on the edge of the bed and bent his head to the side. "Well, go ahead, bunny, put them in my hair."

Beauregard was practically giddy as he pulled the tie off of Sebastian's braid. He carefully worked first one, then two, and finally three beads onto the end of Sebastian's braid before putting the tie back in place.

"There." Beauregard dropped the braid back into place and gently patted it. "This should work pretty well. When I get home, I'll find some more beads for you. I have some really pretty ones that would

go great with your hair." Beauregard tilted his head a little as he stared at Sebastian. "Is there any particular color you like?"

"I'm sure whatever you find will be perfect, bunny." Sebastian reached over and tugged on Beauregard's hair. "What about you, are you going to put beads in your hair?"

"I don't have any more with me. The rest of my beads are at home."

"I'd be willing to share."

"Oh, no." Beauregard quickly shook his head. "I gave these beads to you. I can find something else to put in my hair when I get home."

"Bunny, you're not going home, remember?"

"Oh yeah, right." Beauregard frowned. "We're going to your home, aren't we?"

"It's your home now, too."

"Yeah?" Beauregard started to smile again. He liked the sound of that, sharing a home with Sebastian. "What's it like, our home?"

"We live in a big castle carved out of the side of a rock cliff. It's huge, maybe even bigger than the council castle, and it can house hundreds of people."

Beauregard's mouth dropped open. "Hundreds of people live there?"

"Oh no, bunny, there are several people that live there, mostly my inner circle and those that work on my estate, but other dragons come and go all the time. I am the in line to be the next leader of my dragon clan. I have a lot of duties."

"Anything I can help you with?"

"Oh, I suspect you will be able to help me with a great many things."

Beauregard beamed again when Sebastian grinned. It made him feel warm all over inside. It was a strange feeling, being so pleased that Sebastian was happy. Beauregard couldn't help but wonder if it was all part of the whole mating thing.

He didn't really know that much about mating. As the only pure white bunny in his colony, he was kind of on the outside looking in. Most of his colony avoided him. He was considered an anomaly.

It hadn't bothered him while his mother was alive. She adored him. But now that she was gone, Beauregard missed having a family to turn to when others made fun of him or avoided him. He just hoped he wouldn't experience too much of that when he reached Sebastian's home.

Of course, being a bunny in a castle full of dragons was sure to be an experience. Beauregard frowned at that thought. "Sebastian, are there any other rabbits at your home?"

"Nope, you'll be the only one."

"No one will eat me, will they?"

"No." Sebastian chuckled. "Rabbits are definitely off the menu."

"You actually eat rabbits?" Beauregard was shocked and a tad bit scared, not to mention disgusted. "Ewwww."

"Bunny, I'm a carnivore. I eat meat and lots of it, but I can honestly say I can't ever remember eating rabbit. I prefer something a little bigger, like a side of cow."

"I'm a vegetarian."

Sebastian chuckled again. "Then I'll make sure you get plenty of fruit and vegetables."

"And bubble gum."

Sebastian's left eyebrow shot up. "Bubble gum?"

Beauregard reached into the pile of stuff from his purse and grabbed the package of bubble gum, holding it out to Sebastian. "I love bubblegum. Watermelon is the best, but cherry will do in a pinch. And I can blow the biggest bubbles. Watch."

Beauregard unwrapped a piece and popped it into his mouth, chewing quickly. Once the gum had been sufficiently chewed and was soft enough, he started blowing a bubble. It grew and grew and grew and popped.

Beauregard blinked as Sebastian went into hysterical laughter, rolling back on the bed. He wrinkled his nose when it began to itch from the bubble gum then groaned when he realized he had bubble gum over his entire face. It wouldn't be the first time, and most definitely not the last.

He started peeling it off, rolling it into a tiny ball between his fingers as he did. He cast a quick glance at Sebastian. The man was rolling back and forth on the bed as he continued to laugh. Beauregard frowned and stuck his little ball of bubble gum between the bed frame and the mattress. He'd get it later and put it in the garbage.

"It wasn't that funny," Beauregard huffed.

Really, it wasn't.

"Oh, bunny, you're so cute."

"There you go with that cute thing again." Beauregard crossed his arms over his chest and glared. "I want to be sexy, not cute."

Beauregard inhaled sharply when he was suddenly grabbed and rolled beneath Sebastian. The man pinned him to the bed, his heavier weight making it almost impossible to move. Sebastian's face hovered right over his.

"You are very sexy, Beauregard, never doubt that. I don't think I've ever met anyone that can arouse me as fast as you do."

Beauregard knew Sebastian spoke the truth. He could see it in the darkening of his silver eyes and the press of the man's hard cock against his thigh. Beauregard's breathing hitched as arousal swamped him.

"How do you do this to me?" he whispered.

"Do what, bunny?"

Beauregard felt his face flush as he looked away from Sebastian's intense stare. He wasn't sure he wanted to admit to Sebastian how much the man affected him. It seemed like it would give Sebastian a lot of power over him, and that couldn't be good.

"I asked you a question."

"And?" Beauregard snorted as he looked back at Sebastian. "You may be my mate, but you are not my lord and master. I don't have to answer you if I don't want to."

"Beauregard, what in the hell is that matter with you?" Sebastian asked as he pushed away from Beauregard and climbed off the bed. "I asked you a simple question. I wasn't demanding anything."

Beauregard sighed and sat up. At least his arousal was gone. His shoulders slumped as he silently climbed from the bed and started dressing. This roller coaster of emotions he kept going through was really starting to wear on him. One moment he was happy and horny. The next, he was sad and dejected. Surely there was some sort of middle ground?

"Are you going to ignore me, Beauregard?"

Beauregard stopped tying his neon green shoes laces and looked up at Sebastian. The man looked like he was on the edge of anger. His arms were crossed over his chest, but Beauregard could see his hands clenched in fists. The frown on his face drew the man's eyebrows down into a deep grimace.

Beauregard's heart fell and the pit of his stomach began to roll. He didn't want Sebastian angry at him, but he wanted to keep some things private. If he gave too much over to Sebastian, what would he have left for himself?

"I don't mean to ignore you, but I don't want to answer."

"Why not?"

Beauregard blew out a deep breath. "Because if I give you everything, there will be nothing left for me."

"Except me."

"And that will last just long enough for someone to make fun of the fact that you're mated to a freaking bunny."

Beauregard knew it deep down in his heart. He was a rabbit mated to a dragon, and an odd rabbit at that. Sebastian might be enamored of him right now, but the moment someone made fun of their mating, Sebastian's intrigue would turn away.

"You're my mate," Sebastian said. "For me, that's all I need to know. You belong to me as much as I belong to you. Our relationship may have started out a little on the odd side—"

Beauregard snorted loudly. Sebastian ignored him and kept talking.

"—of things, but it doesn't mean we're not mated. When I gave you my mating mark and accepted yours, that was me giving my full commitment to us being together. I don't care if other people disagree with our mating. It's none of their damn business."

Beauregard stared down at his hands, picking at one nail with the other. "It bothers me that I'm so affected by you," he whispered. "It's like I have no will of my own. I feel happy when you're happy, sad when you're sad. I smell you and get so aroused that it's all I can think about."

When Sebastian squatted down in front of him, Beauregard still had to tilt his head back to look up into the man's face. He was really tall.

"You listen to me, love," Sebastian said as he cupped Beauregard's face between his hands. "The things you're feeling, the rollercoaster that you're riding? I'm riding it, too. It's part of the mating ritual every mated couple goes through."

"Does it ever end?"

"Not in the way you would hope, I'm sorry to say. Our shifted sides are getting used to each other as much as our human side. It's kind of like having four of us in this two-person relationship. Things can get a bit confusing."

"I'll say." Beauregard snorted.

"But it does get easier with time. Any relationship, shifter or not, needs time to settle. We need to learn about each other and get to know one another. The connection between us grows with each passing minute." Sebastian chuckled ruefully. "I imagine with enough time, you'll know what I'm feeling when I feel it."

"Is that why I get so aroused when you do?" Beauregard breathed heavy, nervously. "I feel like a complete slut. You breathe differently, and all I can think about is being naked with you. I don't even care if someone saw us. I just want you."

Sebastian's chuckle was laced with a slight tremble. "I can't say I'm particularly bothered by that one, bunny. I like you hot and horny."

"Yeah, but does it have to be all the time?"

"It's only fair. If I get horny at the sight of you, you should be horny if I breathe."

Beauregard swallowed hard as the heat of arousal started filling him again. "How's your eyesight right now?"

Chapter 5

Sebastian flicked a stray bit of hair off his forehead then chuckled when he watched Beauregard do the same thing in the bathroom mirror. "You look wonderful, love."

"I look like a doofus." Beauregard tugged on the bowtie at his throat.

Sebastian turned and straightened Beauregard's bowtie. "You look perfect."

"I've never worn a suit like this in my life."

"The dinner tonight is strictly black tie, bunny. We have no choice."

Beauregard's lower lip slipped out. "Well, I don't have to like it."

"It will be fine, love." Sebastian grinned. He was incredibly amused by the little snit Beauregard was working himself into. "We'll go to dinner, mingle a little, then come home and have lots of hot bunny sex."

"Really?" That seemed to perk Beauregard right up.

"We'll have a blast."

Sebastian stuck his arm out. Beauregard grinned and wrapped his arm though it. Together, they walked out of the bathroom and then out of their quarters. Beauregard seemed much more at ease walking beside Sebastian until people started staring at them.

"Why is everyone staring?" Beauregard whispered.

"Because I'm with the most stunning man here?"

"You're so full of it." Beauregard's light laughter filled the hallway, causing more people to look at them.

Sebastian knew that part of Beauregard's charm was the joy that seemed to come so naturally to him. He made everyone around him happy, including Sebastian. The last few days being mated to the little bunny had opened Sebastian's eyes to how uptight he had become. He was pretty sure that Beauregard would cure him of that in a matter of weeks.

Sebastian had never been so intrigued with someone. He knew part of that intrigue came from the mating bond, but not all of it. He didn't even think the council's mandates had that much to do with it. It was Beauregard.

Sebastian had forgotten about the envelope that Elder Burke had given them after their mating was recorded until he found it in his pants yesterday. As he read it, he had started to become angry at their complete gall.

"All mates must physically claim each other at least once every twenty-four hours until the next leap year conference. Failure to do so will cause you to lose your ability to shift permanently. You will be put down for the safety of everyone if you go feral. Now that your mating has been recorded, this is the only mate you will ever be granted."

Then Beauregard walked out of the bathroom naked and all of his anger had left in the wink of Beauregard's eye. If the council mandated that he had to mate with his bunny at least once every twenty-four hours, who was he to argue?

"Is there going to be dancing?" Beauregard asked. "I love dancing."

"I'm sure there will be." Sebastian liked the idea of dancing with Beauregard, swinging him around the dance floor in his arms. "Maybe we'll take a spin on the floor after dinner?"

"Yes!"

Sebastian laughed when Beauregard grabbed his hand and started twirling around in circles under his arm. He spun around and around until he suddenly stopped. His eyes looked a little glazed over.

"Whoa," Beauregard whispered as he stuck a hand out to steady himself. "Dizzy."

Sebastian shook his head and pulled Beauregard back into his arms. "Come on, dizzy B, let's go eat."

"They're going to serve vegetables, aren't they?"

"Yes, love, they will have vegetables."

"That's good because I can't eat meat, you know. It would make me sick."

"Don't worry, bunny, they have—"

"Sebastian."

Sebastian stopped. His stomach clenched as he turned to see Derek standing in the doorway that he and Beauregard had just passed. He didn't like the look on the man's face. It held a hint of malice.

"Hello, Derek."

"Who's the cutey?"

"This is Beauregard, my mate." He arched an eyebrow at Derek. "Where's yours?"

"Oh." Derek waved his hand in the air. "He's around somewhere."

"Maybe you should go find him."

Sebastian really wanted Derek to leave before the man became catty, as he knew Derek could. It was one of the main reasons Sebastian had never pursued a relationship with the man. He could be a real pain if he didn't get his own way.

"I was hoping we could have dinner together."

In the past, Sebastian would have considered the smile Derek gave him as sensual, but not anymore. He'd seen sensual in a small little white bunny, and Derek didn't even come close.

"And maybe a little more," Derek continued as his look turned steamy.

"No, thank you, Derek." Sebastian tightened his grip on Beauregard when the man began to fidget. "I'm mated now, and that means I will only be with my mate."

"Him?" Derek sneered as he turned his eyes to Beauregard. "You don't need him, Sebastian. I can give you so much more than he can. You know I can."

"It doesn't matter, Derek. I'm mated to Beauregard, and that's the end of it."

"You owe me," Derek growled.

"I don't owe you anything."

"Does he know about me?" Derek nodded toward Beauregard. "Does he know what we did together, what we meant to each other?"

"I never made any promises to you or even hinted that there would be anything between us other than a few nights of sex." Sebastian clenched one of his hands into a fist. The other one was wrapped around his mate, keeping him from running off. Beauregard seemed pretty upset. "Whatever went on between us happened before I ever met my mate and can't be held against me. I trust Beauregard to believe me when I say it will never happen again."

"I trusted you when you said you'd take care of me, and you tossed me away for what?" Derek sneered. "A bunny?"

"Careful, Derek, you're crossing a line here that you don't want to cross," Sebastian growled. "Beauregard is off limits."

"Is he?"

Sebastian felt a sliver of something akin to fear slither down his back at the cold, calculating glare Derek gave Beauregard. He pulled the little bunny closer to his side as if he could protect him from the hate glittering in Derek's eyes.

"Stay away from Beauregard, Derek," Sebastian warned. "I mean it. If anything happens to him, I'll hold you personally responsible."

"I wouldn't dream of hurting a hair on your little bunny's head."

Sebastian watched Derek for another moment then backed away, finally turning and walking down the hallway again. When he glanced back over his shoulder, Derek was still watching them.

"Who was that?"

Sebastian almost groaned. He really didn't want to have this conversation with his mate, but he supposed, considering the confrontation they had just gone through, that Beauregard deserved some sort of explanation.

"Derek and I fooled around a couple of times, long before I met you."

"You had sex with that man?"

Sebastian sighed and stopped walking. He turned to face Beauregard. "I've been alive for a very long time, Beauregard. I've had sex with a lot of people, both men and woman. But the minute we mated, that all stopped. I won't be having sex with anyone but you for the rest of my life. I promise."

Beauregard swallowed hard and dropped his eyes. "He said you did things together…things like you do with me?"

Fuck!

"Yes and no," he answered. "Derek is into pain. I don't believe you are."

"I—"

"Beauregard, be honest here. You might be flexible as hell and like things a little rough on occasion, but you don't actually like pain, do you?"

Beauregard shrugged. "Maybe I do."

"You don't, trust me on this." Sebastian knew it deep down in his soul. "Derek is a pain slut. He likes to be whipped until he has welts on his back. He likes being submissive, being fucked by a lot of men at the same time. Hell, he'll lick my boots if I tell him to. That is not who you are."

Beauregard shuddered. "He likes to be whipped?"

"Yes, he does."

"And that's what you did to him?"

"Me and a lot of other men." Sebastian drew in a deep breath as he tried to figure out just how much to tell his mate. "Derek was fun to play with on occasion, but we never played alone. It was always a

group of us playing together. Why he's chosen to single me out, I'll never know."

Beauregard suddenly laughed, which totally confused Sebastian. "I know exactly why he singled you out. I don't care what happened between you in the past. You belong to me now, and if he dares lay a finger on you, he'll find out exactly how ferocious a bunny can be."

Sebastian blinked. "You're not angry?"

"Oh, I'm plenty angry, just not at you. He had no right to confront us the way he did, especially since he has a mate of his own, as do you. That was just plain rude, but he knew exactly what he was doing. He wanted me to know about you two."

"You think so, huh?"

"I know so."

Sebastian was surprised. Beauregard actually made sense now that he thought about it. Derek was mated. He was mated. That should have been the end of it, but apparently, Derek had other ideas.

Sebastian was still a little disturbed by the way that Derek had looked at Beauregard. It was pure evil. He knew that if Derek got Beauregard alone, the man would do something drastic, something that would harm his little bunny. He'd have to talk to Galan about getting his mate a guard the minute they got home.

"Come on, love, let's go eat then do a little dancing." Sebastian wiggled his eyebrows. "Then we can go back to our room and fuck like bunnies."

One of Beauregard's eyebrows shot up. "Funny."

Sebastian chuckled. "I thought so."

* * * *

Sebastian enjoyed diner much more than he thought he would. He usually hated the council dinners he had to attend as the representative of his clan. Beauregard's constant chatter and delightful nature in almost everything made it seem so much more fun.

"What's in this salad?" Beauregard asked before putting another forkful in his mouth. He seemed to miss his mouth and started chasing the fork around with his lips until he caught it.

Sebastian frowned. "I'm not exactly sure, but I suppose I could find out."

"It's won-wonderful."

Sebastian's eyebrows shot up. Was Beauregard slurring his words? He quickly glanced at Beauregard's wine glass, but it was empty. An even quicker glance around them showed that Beauregard's odd behavior hadn't been noticed by anyone else—yet.

"Beauregard," Sebastian whispered as he leaned down close to his mate's ear. "Have you been drinking?"

"Nooo." Beauregard giggled and covered his mouth. "I do-don't dr-dr-I hate alcohol."

"Maybe someone slipped some wine into your glass or something."

Beauregard's head seemed to roll as he turned to look at his glass. He picked it up and turned it upside down. "Nope, no wine."

Sebastian grabbed the glass and set it down on the table. He nearly jumped out of his chair when he felt Beauregard's hand grab his groin under the table a moment later. He quickly reached under the table and grabbed Beauregard's hand, but not before the man unzipped his pants and stuck his hand inside.

"Beauregard!"

"Oh, he's mad at me." Beauregard leaned his head against Sebastian's shoulder. "Are you going to…to…" Beauregard frowned for a moment then a wide grin spread over his face. "Are you going to spank me?"

Sebastian groaned when several heads turned in his direction. Beauregard had not been quite with his last statement. Anyone sitting near them had heard him. He so wanted to sink into a hole.

"Is there a problem with your mate, Sebastian?"

Please, where's that hole when I need it, Sebastian wondered as he turned to look at Elder Burke, who sat just a few seats away. He tried to sound confident as he replied. "No, Elder Burke, nothing is wrong with my mate."

"He seems a tad…" The elder frowned. "…inebriated."

Sebastian winced. He could hear the disapproval in Elder Burke's voice. "I think he just had something that didn't agree with him," Sebastian said as he tried to capture Beauregard's roaming hand. It wasn't easy. It felt like Beauregard had a hundred hands, all of them aimed at his groin.

"Are there apples in his salad?"

"Apples?"

The elder smiled. "Rabbit shifters have a special susceptibility to apples, Sebastian, especially Granny Smith apples. It affects them just as an entire bottle of Irish whiskey would affect you. Check his salad."

Sebastian was curious, and a bit freaked out. Beauregard had gone from trying to get into his pants to trying to slide under the table. Sebastian wrapped an arm around his mate's waist and held him in his chair then grabbed Beauregard's fork and started searching through his salad.

"I'm hot."

Sebastian had just spotted a piece of chopped apple when he turned to see Beauregard trying to strip his shirt off. He had the top few buttons already undone and was frantically pulling at his bowtie.

Sebastian just knew this wasn't going to end well. He stood up, pulling Beauregard up with him. Bending down, he put his shoulder into Beauregard's waist and lifted the man up to lay over his shoulder.

"Thank you for a wonderful dinner, Elder, but I think it's best if I get my mate back to our rooms."

"Yes, I can see that." The elder had a slight smile on his face. "Try not to be too put out, Sebastian. He may not have known there were apples in the salad."

Sebastian opened his mouth to reply, but all that came out was a high yelp as two hands came down hard on his ass. Beauregard was laughing hysterically. Sebastian rolled his eyes and just walked out of the large room. He made it as far as the hallway before Beauregard's hands slid down the inside of his pants and grabbed his bare ass.

"Beauregard!" he snapped as he quickly lowered his mate to his feet and grabbed him by his arms, giving him shake. "Knock it off. This isn't the place for this. You need to behave yourself."

"I'm sorry," Beauregard whispered.

Sebastian sighed. He felt like a heel. Beauregard's eyes were rounded and filling with tears. Sebastian reached up to smooth back a lock of white hair back from Beauregard's face but the man shied away from him. He paused, his hand hanging in the air between them.

"Beauregard, do you think I'm going to hit you?"

"N-n-no."

Beauregard might have denied it, but Sebastian could see it all over his pale face. "Beauregard, I would never hit you, never."

"Can…can I go now?"

Sebastian frowned. Something was going on with Beauregard, and it was more than just the apples. The man, who had been filled with joy just moments ago, making passes and trying to get into Sebastian's pants, was suddenly terrified.

"What's wrong, bunny?"

"Nothing."

"You're lying to me, bunny. Being honest with each other is very important."

Beauregard pressed his lips together and refused to answer. Sebastian knew he wasn't going to get any answers out of Beauregard when he was in this condition. Sometimes Beauregard was too stubborn for his own good.

"Come on, bunny, let's go back to our room. We can talk there."

"I want to dance," Beauregard said. "You said we'd go dancing."

"Honey, you're in no condition to be dancing right now. You're drunk as a skunk."

"Skunks get drunk?"

"Uh, I guess they could, but I was just using it as a figure of speech."

"Oh."

Sebastian wrapped an arm around Beauregard's shoulders and started leading him back toward their quarters. He needed to figure out what exactly was going on with his mate, but he needed to get him to bed first.

"Oh," Beauregard whispered.

He suddenly stopped and pressed his face against the windows that looked out over a small balcony. Sebastian looked beyond his mate to the small stone balcony. He could just imagine what his mate saw.

The balcony was small, enclosed on three sides. A small fountain sat in the middle of the courtyard, lit up by lights hanging all around the three walls surrounding the balcony. It looked like a wonderland.

"Come on, love, let's go dance," Sebastian said as he opened the doors and let Beauregard out onto the balcony.

"But there's no music."

"I'll make music for us."

Sebastian walked to the edge of the fountain and drew Beauregard into his arms. The man's head barely came to the middle of his chest. Sebastian chuckled and wrapped his arms around Beauregard's thighs, lifting him up into the air until they were face-to-face. Beauregard laughed and quickly grabbed on, his arms wrapping around Sebastian's neck.

"Wrap your legs around my waist, love."

Once he had, Sebastian pulled him close. "Ready?"

Beauregard had a huge grin on his face as he nodded. Sebastian started dancing them around the balcony as he hummed. In all

honesty, he was just moving in circles, but Beauregard seemed to like it, and that was all that mattered to Sebastian.

He let out a relieved breath when Beauregard snuggled into him, burying his face in Sebastian's neck. He tilted his head slightly to lean against Beauregard's and just danced, humming some offbeat tune.

This was right. This was the way it was supposed to be between mates.

Chapter 6

Sebastian glanced to the seat beside him. Beauregard was practically bouncing in his seat as he watched out the window. They were less than a mile from Sebastian's castle, even if they were already on his land.

Beauregard seemed part anxious and part excited. Sebastian couldn't wait to see which part won over. Beauregard was proving to be quite the interesting character. Sebastian was starting to wonder if the Council of Elders really did know what they were doing when they decided to play their little game.

Sebastian was intrigued by Beauregard on a minute-by-minute basis. Sebastian was pretty sure he'd had more sex in the eight days since they mated than he had in the last year. Beauregard was constantly horny and had no inhibitions when it came to sex. He was willing to try anything.

In the last several days, he'd spanked Beauregard until the man came without ever being touched, tied Beauregard to the bed and fucked him until he was unconscious, and discovered just how flexible his little bunny really was. In another week, he expected them both to be in traction.

Just thinking about it made Sebastian's dick hard.

Beauregard inhaled suddenly and swung around in his seat. His eyes took on the look that Sebastian was quickly coming to recognize as his aroused look. The violet color turned dark purple, and the white of his eyes starting fading away. It was hot and an instant way to know Beauregard was horny.

"Need," Beauregard growled as he climbed across the seat.

"We're almost home, bunny."

"Don't care. Need now."

Sebastian would be forever grateful that he had a limousine with a tinted partition between the front seat and the backseat. Beauregard scooted across the seat and then slid down to the floor just as Sebastian started to put the partition up.

His pants were undone and his hard cock deep inside Beauregard's mouth before the partition was up all the way. Loud moans of arousal filled the back of the car. Sebastian didn't know if they came from him or from his bunny. He didn't care. The lips wrapped around his aching cock were driving every single rational thought from his head.

Beauregard may have been an untried virgin when they mated, but the man took to sex better than anyone Sebastian had ever met. He was quickly becoming the best sexual partner of Sebastian's life. He was glad he got to keep the sexy little bunny. No one sucked cock like Beauregard.

In a matter of minutes, Beauregard had Sebastian squirming in his seat, his fingers sinking deep into the man's white hair. The pleasure racing through his body was enough to make Sebastian groan loudly. He didn't care if Galan or his new cougar mate heard him.

When Beauregard gently rolled his balls, Sebastian knew it was all over for him. He roared out his orgasm. His heart thundered in his chest as he filled Beauregard's mouth with the heated signs of his release.

Sebastian dropped his head back on the seat and waited for his heart to beat normally once more. His body shuddered as Beauregard continued to lick as his sensitive cock, cleaning every last bit of cum from his skin.

"Come here, love." Sebastian held out his hands to Beauregard. He knew the man was needing. He always was after giving him a blow job. Well, truthfully, Beauregard was pretty much horny all of the time.

Beauregard eagerly climbed into Sebastian's lap. Sebastian lifted him up and turned him around until he faced the front of the car, his back resting against Sebastian's chest. Sebastian slowly unzipped Beauregard's jeans and pulled out his hard cock.

"Listen to me, bunny," he murmured in Beauregard's ear as he began stroking the man's silky, hard cock. "I want you to do something for me."

"Yes, anything!"

"You need to hear what I want before you agree."

Sebastian was concerned about Beauregard's fear of being seen naked by anyone besides him. It wasn't so much that he wanted others to see his mate naked, because he didn't. But more that he wanted Beauregard to be comfortable around others who were naked.

Dragons shifted whenever they could. At any given moment, someone could shift back and there would be a naked person standing there. Sebastian had to get Beauregard used to that because he didn't want the man to freak.

"I'd do anything for you, Sebastian," Beauregard panted. "I trust you."

Sebastian closed his eyes as Beauregard's words washed over him. He almost gave up his plan. He wanted Beauregard's trust almost as much as he wanted his heart. If this backfired on him, Sebastian would never forgive himself.

He opened his eyes back up and gazed down at his little bunny. Something tender floated through him and created a lump in his throat that made it almost impossible to swallow. Maybe he was out of his mind trying to get Beauregard used to being around naked people. Maybe he should just take what he had in his arms and be grateful.

"Do you know how precious you are to me, little bunny?"

Beauregard just blinked up at him.

Sebastian smiled and leaned in to place a small kiss on Beauregard's lips. It quickly turned into a kiss so filled with passion

that it nearly seared Sebastian's lips. Sebastian forgot all about exposing Beauregard to new things and just enjoyed his mate's desire.

He continued to stroke Beauregard's cock until the man arched into the air and cried out. Sebastian was spellbound by the picture Beauregard presented as he climaxed. His face was flushed. His lips parted as he groaned. His dark purple eyes were dazed as the slowly returned to their natural violet color.

"So sexy," Sebastian groaned. He chuckled lightly when Beauregard's flush deepened. "You are, bunny, very sexy indeed. I like watching you orgasm. I like knowing I am the one to bring such pleasure to you."

"Wha-what did you want me to do?"

"Never mind, bunny, it wasn't important."

"Are you sure?"

Sebastian smiled. "I'm sure."

Beauregard watched him for a moment then nodded before reaching for a Kleenex to clean himself up. After he tossed his napkin in the trash, he grabbed another one and cleaned up Sebastian's hand.

"Get tucked in, bunny, we're almost home."

Beauregard quickly got rid of the evidence of their backseat play then tucked himself back into his pants, zipping them up. He bounced across the seat and started looking out the window again almost as if they hadn't just gotten off together.

Sebastian felt a little put out. He reached over and grabbed Beauregard's hair and tugged until the man glanced back at him.

"What?"

"Come sit with me."

Sebastian was elated when Beauregard bounced back across the seat with as much enthusiasm as he had when he went to the window. He picked Beauregard up and settled him on his lap, wrapping his arms around him.

"I think you'll like our castle, bunny. There's lot of places for little bunnies to run and play."

"Yeah?"

Sebastian chuckled at the excitement on Beauregard's face. He hit the button and lowered the partition between the driver and the backseat. Galan was driving, his new mate in the seat next to him. Every few minutes Galan would look in the rear view mirror. He had a huge grin on his face. Sebastian just arched an eyebrow at Galan, and the man quickly went back to facing straight ahead.

"Can we pull over for a minute?" Beauregard asked. "I don't feel so well."

"Of course." Sebastian frowned as he looked up at Galen. "Pull over."

Galen nodded and the car quickly came to a stop on the side of the road. He was out of the car and opening the back door just as quick. Sebastian eased Beauregard out of the backseat and helped him stand up next to the car, holding on to him so he didn't slip in the snow which still covered the ground.

"How do you feel now, bunny?" He had done everything he could to insure that Beauregard didn't eat anymore apples, so he couldn't be drunk or have another hangover. The last one had been bad enough.

Sebastian didn't like the paleness of Beauregard's face. He looked chalky. He had one hand pressed against his stomach. The other one was hovering near his mouth. Sebastian was afraid of what that meant.

When Beauregard suddenly covered his mouth and looked around frantically, Sebastian knew his worry was founded. He grabbed Beauregard and lifted him over to the bushes by the side of the road.

Beauregard immediately dropped to his knees in the snow and started throwing up in the bushes. The sounds he made were horrendous. Sebastian didn't understand how a man so small could make such big noises.

"Galan, get me something to wipe his mouth and a bottle of water out of the small fridge in the back."

"Yes, Sebastian," Galan answered before hurrying back to the car. He was back in just a moment, a wet cloth in one hand and a bottle of water in the other. He held them out to Sebastian.

"Are you about done there, bunny?"

Bunny nodded and leaned back against Sebastian. His face was totally drained of blood, and his hands shook as they fluttered against his chest. Sebastian began gently wiping his face then offered him some water to wash his mouth out.

"Feeling any better, love?"

"I wanna die," Beauregard moaned.

A small chuckle escaped Sebastian's lips before he could prevent it. "Sorry, bunny, not going to happen."

Beauregard glared.

"Did you eat something that didn't agree with you? Any apples or something else I need to know about?" Sebastian frowned when Beauregard's eyes slid away from his. "Bunny?"

"It must be all of the excitement," Beauregard said quickly. "I didn't have breakfast before we left. I was too wound up about getting on the road to eat anything."

"Well then, that's probably what made you so sick." Sebastian stood up and lifted Beauregard into his arms. He carried him to the car then gently slid in, Beauregard still in his arms. Beauregard snuggled into his arms, nuzzling his face under Sebastian's chin. Sebastian smiled when Beauregard let out a small sigh. "Is that better, bunny?"

"Yeah," Beauregard murmured as if he were starting to fall asleep. He patted Sebastian's chest. "I like it here."

"All right, you just rest right there. I'll let you know when we reach home."

Beauregard was asleep before they pulled into the large courtyard in front of the castle. Sebastian decided to let him sleep. When the car came to a stop and Galan opened the door, Sebastian climbed out with Beauregard cradled in his arms.

"Is he okay, Sebastian?"

"I think so. He didn't eat breakfast, and I guess all of the excitement got to him. Can you and your mate get our bags? I'm going to take Beauregard upstairs. I think it's better for him to just sleep right now."

Galan nodded and went to the back of the car. Sebastian readjusted Beauregard so he had a better grip on him then carried him up the big steps leading into the castle.

He was saddened that Beauregard was missing their arrival. He was sure that the first sight of the imposing castle he now lived in would have been entertaining to see. But, Beauregard's health came before Sebastian's amusement.

"Prince Sebastian."

Sebastian smiled and nodded when he spotted his longtime butler. "Hello, Carlos. I trust things have been mellow since I left?"

Sebastian knew they had been or Carlos would have called him. The man was nothing if not efficient. Carlos had been working for the Drakus family since before Sebastian was even born. It sometimes seemed like the man had always been there.

"Everything is as it should be, sir."

"I'd like a tray of food brought up to my quarters, Carlos, no meat or apples. Something fit for a vegetarian."

For the first time since he remembered, Carlos looked flustered. "A vegetarian, sir?"

Sebastian nodded to the sleeping man in his arms. "This is Beauregard, my mate. He doesn't eat meat. He also hasn't eaten today since he was too excited about coming here. He needs to eat. He's slight enough as it is without missing any meals."

"You're mate, sir?" Carlos asked. "And he's a vegetarian?"

"He's a bunny shifter, Carlos."

Carlos's eyes widened. "A bunny, sir?"

"Yes." Sebastian's eyes narrowed. "Do you have a problem with that?"

"No sir, of course not." Carlos straightened his tie and smoothed down the outside of his suit jacket. "I'll just have to inform the cook that rabbit is no longer on the menu."

"Yes, do that." Sebastian barely suppressed the smile threatening to break out. "Beauregard would be very upset if we ate one of his relatives. And please inform the staff that there will be a bunny on the premises. Anyone that attempts to harm him in any way will be dealt with by me."

"Yes, sir, right away, sir."

Sebastian waited to smile until Carlos had hurried from the room. He knew that Beauregard was going to be a surprise to his clan, but he figured with the council's mandate, they'd all be too busy finding their own mates to worry about his.

Sebastian hurried up the grand staircase to his quarters on the second floor. He pushed his door open and walked through the large living area to the master bedroom. Being the prince of his clan paid off in this area. Not only did he have a master bedroom the size of most people's homes, but a sitting room, private dining area, and large master bath spa.

As he laid Beauregard down on the bed, an idea began to grow in his mind. He pulled Beauregard's shoes off then covered him with a blanket from the bottom of the bed. Once his bunny was all tucked into bed, he quietly crept out of the room, closing the door until it was open just a crack. He wanted to be able to hear Beauregard when he woke up.

When he entered the main living area, he went directly to the desk area in a small alcove off the living room and picked up the phone. He tapped his fingers lightly on the table top as he waited for the phone to be answered.

"Ah, Carlos," he said when the man picked up the other end. "Please have Harlan come to my quarters."

"Right away, sir."

"Oh, and who has the rooms next to me, the ones that share a wall with my balcony?"

"Those rooms are vacant at the moment, sir. They are usually reserved for visiting dignitaries."

"Good, I want them left empty. Assign visitors to another room. I have plans for those rooms."

"Very good, sir."

Sebastian hung up the phone and reached for a pad of paper. He sat down and started drawing and making notes. He had something special planned for his little bunny, something he felt any bunny would like. He just had to figure out how to do it without Beauregard finding out.

"Come," he called out when he heard a knock on the door. He looked up when it opened then went back to making notes when he saw Harlan and Galan walking in. Both men walked over and stopped in front of his desk.

"Galan, I'd like you to find me an indoor gardener, someone that knows about arboretums, and an architect. I don't care what the cost is. I want them here as soon as possible."

"Can I ask what for?" Galan asked.

Sebastian grinned as he looked up from his notes. "I want to turn the room next door into an indoor park for Beauregard, someplace he can be in bunny form. Winter is still hitting us pretty hard. He needs someplace inside to run and play."

"An arboretum?"

Sebastian nodded. "I figured we could put in some large windows so sunlight could come in then add grass and bushes and stuff. But I want bars over the glass for safety. I'm hoping we can come up with something that will keep him safe but not make him feel like he's in a cage."

"I may actually know someone that can help with that," Harlan said. "Peter, who works in the armory, makes stained glass as a hobby. He might be able to figure something out for you."

"Peter?" Sebastian tried to picture the large gunsmith making stained glass. The picture just would not form. Peter was huge. He worked day in and day out in the armory, either on swords and knives or guns. He did it all in the weapon department.

He was also bald, had numerous scars on his body due to working around hot metal, and growled at nearly everyone. It took grace and a delicate touch to make stained glass. Peter did not fit that picture.

"Uh, yeah, if you think he could help, that would be great."

"I'll mention it to him," Harlan said.

"I forgot to ask, Harlan, did you find your mate?"

Harlan grinned. "I did, a sweet little fox named Jeremy."

"Well, congratulations, my friend. You'll have to bring him by so Beauregard can meet him. I think he's going to feel a little uncomfortable being such a small shifter in the world of dragons. He could use a friend that understands how he feels."

"An excellent idea, Sebastian. I'll bring Jeremy by later today."

Sebastian nodded. He worried a lot that Beauregard would feel uncomfortable being in a castle full of dragons. Having someone else around that understood his fear would do him good, although, Sebastian wanted to meet this fox before he let his mate around him.

"Jeremy doesn't eat rabbit, does he?"

Harlan blinked. "Uh, I don't think so, but just in case I'll tell him that rabbit is off the menu."

"It's off the menu for all of us. I've already told Carlos to inform the cook. There will be no more rabbit served in this castle." Sebastian shuddered. "Can you imagine how horrified Beauregard would be if we served up rabbit for dinner?"

"Let's just be thankful cows don't shift or we'd all be in trouble," Harlan said.

"Right." Sebastian chuckled. "With this new mandate from the council, we need to keep track of who and what we have here in the castle. I don't want anyone feeling like they need to be in fear for their lives."

"I'll have Carlos make a list," Galan said. "If anyone knows what's going on here, it's Carlos."

"Good idea."

And it was. Sebastian didn't know what he would do without Carlos. The man practically ran the entire castle, which left Sebastian free to lead the clan of dragons that he oversaw. Carlos was a lifesaver, and very competent.

"Okay, if there's nothing else I need to know, I'd like two guards assigned to keep Beauregard safe." Sebastian nodded toward Galan. "Pick two of our most trusted men, preferably ones that won't be distracted with new mates. They need to be on their toes around Beauregard."

"Is there something I need to know about your mate, Sebastian?" Harlan asked.

Galan started laughing. "He's not like any bunny you've ever met before."

Harlan looked so confused that Sebastian couldn't help laughing himself. "Beauregard is a force unto himself. He doesn't take orders very well, and he kind of tends to do his own thing. I don't want to stomp on his spirit, but he must be protected."

"Of course he must," Harlan agreed, "but just how much of a force is he?"

Galan went into hysterical laughter. Sebastian was more restrained. He just grinned. "Beauregard is unique."

"Unique?" Galan barked. "You call him unique?"

Sebastian rankled a bit at Galan's amusement. Beauregard was unique. There wasn't another rabbit in existence like him. He had personality, even if he didn't have style. Beauregard's idea of style consisted of shoelaces matching the color of his nail polish.

"Beauregard *is* unique."

"Right." Galan laughed.

Sebastian glared, narrowing his eyes at his second-in-command. He crossed his arms over his chest and arched an eyebrow at the man.

"Tell me that being able to lick my balls while I fuck him isn't unique."

Galan choked on his laughter.

Harlan's eyes rounded. "He can lick your balls while you fuck him?"

Sebastian's grin was almost from ear to ear. "He's very flexible."

Chapter 7

Beauregard opened his eyes, blinking rapidly as he looked around. He wasn't in the limo anymore, and he really had no idea where he was, but it sure was a nice place. He was lying on a large four poster bed, a sheer white canopy over his head.

The room itself was white-walled with large dark wooden beams crossing the arched ceiling. Beauregard sat up and looked around some more, amazed at the sheer size of the room. It looked bigger than his entire apartment back home.

The bed he sat on was situated against the wall. Directly across from the bed was a small sitting area with a loveseat placed directly in front of a large stone fireplace. To both sides of the fireplace sat double glass doors that led outside.

Colorful tapestries hung from the walls alongside swords and knives and shields with dragons on them. Beauregard felt like he was in a medieval castle, except for the few modern conveniences he could see—the large screen television hanging over the fireplace, the telephones, and the desk that sat in the corner with a laptop on it.

It was cool. If a few knickknacks were added here and there, the place could be really stylish. Beauregard tossed back the huge, white down comforter he was snuggled under and scooted off the large bed. He laughed when he actually had to slide the last few inches to get off the bed. It was that far off the hard wooden floor.

Beauregard searched around until he spotted his high top shoes. He quickly pulled them on and tied the neon green shoelaces. He couldn't wait until his stuff arrived and he could put in another color. He liked changing colors often. It kept him from feeling stale.

Beauregard walked to the largest door in the room and opened it just a crack so he could peek out. It opened into an even larger room, this one decorated like a living room. Beauregard slipped out and shut the door behind him.

He could hear voices coming from the other side of the room, a small alcove of some sort, but he couldn't see anyone. He could hear Sebastian's rich timbre as he spoke, though, and headed in that direction.

When he rounded the archway leading into the small alcove, Beauregard paused, wondering if it would be rude to just walk in. Two very large men were talking with Sebastian, but neither of them was as big as his mate.

"Sebastian?" he whispered softly. Beauregard cringed back when three heads turned in his direction until he spotted one smiling at him. He quickly crossed the room and took the hand that Sebastian held out to him, leaning into his arms.

"Hey, love, how are you feeling?"

"A little confused," Beauregard answered. "I thought you were going to wake me up when we reached home."

"You looked pretty tired. I decided you needed your rest more."

"Oh."

"You've already met Galan," Sebastian said as he gestured to the other men in the room. "This is Harlan. He's commander of my warriors."

"You have warriors?" Beauregard was really starting to feel like he was in medieval times. Castles, dragons, warriors, swords on the walls—if that wasn't medieval, he didn't know what was.

"Of course I do." Sebastian chuckled. "This is a castle, after all. What would it be if there weren't warriors?"

"Um, a castle?"

Sebastian laughed. "True, but it wouldn't have the same style if I didn't have warriors to fill it. Most of them are just unmated dragon shifters. Each dragon is required to serve in my army for a period of

two years. After that, they are allowed to stay in my service or move on to other pursuits."

"They're required to serve?" Beauregard frowned. "Sebastian, I don't have to serve, do I? I won't make a very good warrior."

"No, love, you are not required to serve. Besides the fact that you are a bunny and not a dragon, you're mated. Only unmated dragons are allowed to serve. No dragon is allowed to mate until they put in a term of service. Once they are mated, they can no longer serve."

"Why not?"

Sebastian chuckled and hugged Beauregard. "Because protecting our mates becomes our number one priority after we mate. That means a warrior can't give their total dedication to serving me if they have a mate. Their loyalties are torn."

"Did you serve?"

"Beauregard," Galan said, looking totally smug, "you are looking at the only dragon of noble birth that has ever served. In the past, the nobility were immune to serving. Sebastian, however, felt that it was his duty to serve right along with all of his warriors."

"His father had a fit," Harlan added. "But Sebastian gained more respect from his warriors than any other royal prince in existence. He didn't expect any special treatment, and he didn't get any. He worked just as hard as any other warrior in training."

Beauregard was impressed, and just a little proud, to be mated to a man who didn't accept his position as his due. He was quickly coming to understand that Sebastian had a sense of honor as strong as his own.

"I think that was a very wise choice," Beauregard said. "A warrior is sure to respect the man in charge more if that man has experienced the same things he has. There's a better understanding of what is expected and what they go through."

"Yes," Sebastian mused, looking at Beauregard strangely, "that was my thought exactly."

Beauregard shrugged. "It makes sense."

"I'm glad you think so. I'm just a little surprised that you get it. I didn't think rabbits had armies or nobility."

"We don't really, not like you do, but it doesn't take a genius to understand that men will be more willing to follow someone that has experienced what they have. If you have someone that lords their high position over them but has never done a lick of work, men won't respect them."

Harlan started clapping, which made Beauregard jump. He turned to look at the man, unsure of what exactly was going on.

"You said he was unique," Harlan said after he stopped clapping. "I didn't realize you also meant he was intelligent as well. He will make a good mate for you, Sebastian."

"I couldn't agree more," Sebastian said as he snuggled Beauregard closer.

Beauregard didn't quite understand what was going on, but as long as he was wrapped up in Sebastian's arms, he didn't much care.

"So, do I get to see this castle of yours?"

"Of course, bunny." Sebastian tapped a piece of paper on the table as he looked over at Galan. "Please see that this is taken care of, Galan. And Harlan, I will need those two warriors as soon as possible."

Once both men nodded, Sebastian wrapped his arm around Beauregard's shoulders and led him out of the alcove. He waved his hand around the large room.

"As you can see, this is the living area."

"Yeah, I kind of got that." Beauregard chuckled.

"Well then, let's take you out to the balcony. The view from there is one that has to be seen to be believed."

Beauregard was curious, especially when Sebastian grabbed a large black cloak and wrapped it around his shoulders. He almost smirked when Sebastian pulled the hood up over his head and tied the cloak closed.

"I'm going to have a cloak especially made for you, one lined with white ermine fur. It will look beautiful one you."

Beauregard frowned. "Um, could we maybe make it out of fake fur? I'm friends with a few ermine shifters and wearing a cloak made of their fur would just be wrong. It would be like making a hat out of rabbit fur."

Sebastian laughed. "I think that could be arranged, but I still think white fur would look best on you. It would look wonderful with your hair."

Beauregard felt better knowing Sebastian understood his aversion to having a real fur cloak. He just didn't understand why he needed a cloak until Sebastian led him out to the balcony and the first blast of cold air hit him.

"It's still winter here," he gasped when he saw the snow-covered landscape below the balcony. There was white snow as far as he could see, dotted here and there with trees and the occasional house. It looked like a winter wonderland.

"We're pretty high up in the mountains here, bunny. We should have snow for another couple of months. Once the snow melts, we'll have rain for a little while then the sunshine comes and summer will be here. Winter won't be back for several months."

"I saw that huge fireplace in the bedroom. I don't think the winter months will be a problem."

"There's also a fireplace in the living room and the bathroom. We'll be plenty warm. I had the castle modernized about ten years ago. Why suffer when we can have modern conveniences?"

"Yeah, I saw the big screen television and the laptop." Beauregard was astonished when Sebastian's face flushed. He didn't think the big dragon was capable of being embarrassed. Apparently, he was wrong. "That is so cute. You're blushing."

"Am not." Sebastian's lower lip pushed out, but he looked happy, not aggravated.

"Are to." Beauregard laughed as he turned around to look back over the landscape. He felt Sebastian's bigger body blanket him from behind. "This is amazing, Sebastian. Is all of this yours?"

"Ours, love, this is all ours."

"Ours?" Beauregard glanced over his shoulder. "Really?"

"Yes, really."

Beauregard didn't know what to say. Sebastian was sharing everything with him. Beauregard didn't have much, certainly nothing like what Sebastian had, but he was willing to share what he did have.

Beauregard unzipped his small bunny purse and pulled out his small collection of items until he found his bubble gum. He held a piece out to Sebastian. "Want some bubble gum?"

"Bunny, I don't chew bubble gum."

"Oh." Beauregard frowned as he looked back inside his little purse. His bubble gum was his most prized possession in his purse. What else could he share with Sebastian? He had two polished white rocks. He didn't really need both of them. "Want a rock?"

"You keep it."

Beauregard blinked several times as he looked into his purse. Tears were starting to form in the corners. He didn't think that Sebastian would be interested in his bottle tops or his nail polish. Sebastian had been shocked when Beauregard painted his nails. He hadn't said anything, but Beauregard knew.

"I have a silver spoon," Beauregard said, pulling it out of his purse and holding it up for Sebastian. "You can have that."

"Bunny, I'm good," Sebastian said. "You keep your stuff."

Beauregard started to feel stupid, something that usually only felt when he was at home surrounded by the other rabbits in his colony. He always stuck out at home, whether in human form or shifted into a rabbit. He never felt like he really belonged. He was starting to feel that way again.

Sebastian didn't want anything he had. He probably felt that it was all stupid junk like everyone else did. Beauregard got it that the

stuff he collected was strange, but he never knew what might catch his interest or how he might be able to use it in his crafts.

He liked making things with his hands, usually jewelry like bracelets and earrings and decorated hair clips. Sometimes he even made little jeweled purses. He just didn't think someone like Sebastian would be interested in any of that stuff.

Beauregard put everything back in his purse, even his bubble gum, and zipped it closed. He wasn't in the mood for bubble gum right now. It usually made him feel happy and bouncy and at the moment, he was as far from feeling that way as he could imagine being.

"Can we go back inside?" Beauregard asked. "I'm getting cold."

"Well, we can't have that," Sebastian said as he turned them back toward the big double glass doors. "I've arranged for Carlos to bring us something to eat. Are you hungry?"

"Who's Carlos?"

"That would be me, young sir."

Beauregard jerked around to see a rather staunch-looking man standing in the small dining area with a tray of food in his hands. The man set it down and pulled the domed silver lid off of several different plates.

"I've brought you a variety of items, young sir. We have sundried tomato penne pasta salad, a selection of cut vegetables, and some of Jenna's special homemade sweet bread. For dessert, Jenna made a very nice chocolate mousse cheesecake." Carlos replaced the domes and clasped his hands behind his back as he looked over at Beauregard. "If there is something else that you would desire, please do not hesitate to tell me."

"Who's Jenna?"

"Jenna is Carlos's wife and our cook," Sebastian explained. "She is the master of the kitchen."

Carlos beamed. "Quite right, sir."

Beauregard smiled even though he still didn't feel that well. "Did you say chocolate mousse cheesecake?"

"I did, young sir."

"Please, call me Beauregard." He gestured behind him to Sebastian. "He likes to call me bunny but—"

"I wouldn't dream of it, sir."

Despite the knot in the pit of his stomach, Beauregard could feel himself warming toward Carlos. The man seemed starchy, but nice anyway. He couldn't wait to meet his wife. He just hoped she was as nice.

"Shall I get you some chocolate mousse cheesecake, Beauregard?"

Beauregard grinned. He started to open his mouth to answer Carlos when Sebastian spoke from behind him.

"Real food first, Carlos. Beauregard was sick on our way here. He needs something light on his stomach before he digs in to dessert."

Beauregard frowned. "Says you," he said as he turned to look up at Sebastian. "I think cheesecake is exactly what's called for."

"After you eat some real food."

"Sebastian, I—"

"Please?"

Beauregard rolled his eyes. There was no way that he could deny Sebastian when the man said please. He turned back to face Carlos, surprised when he saw a flicker of amusement on the man's face. He wouldn't have thought the stern man would show any emotion.

"Let's try the pasta salad first."

Carlos nodded. "Excellent choice, young sir."

Beauregard made his way over to the table and sat down as Carlos served him up a plate. He stared at the plate of food Carlos put in front of him. There was no way he could eat that much.

"Uh, Carlos, you do know I'm a rabbit, right?"

"Of course, young sir, Prince Sebastian explained it to me when you arrived."

"*Prince* Sebastian." Beauregard chuckled. "Yeah, I'll never get used to that."

"The House of Drakus has a long and illustrious history, young sir," Carlos said. "I'd be happy to explain it to you when you have the time."

Beauregard blinked. "Um, sure."

Sebastian chuckled as he sat down across the small table from Beauregard. He gestured to the plate piled with food. "Eat up, bunny. I want to see you clear at least half that plate before you leave this table."

"Half?" Beauregard gasped as he looked down at the plate. "Sebastian, I don't even know if I can get through a quarter of this. Rabbits just don't eat this much."

"Just try, okay?"

"I'll try," he said as he picked up his fork and dug in, "but I'm not making any promises."

"Once you've eaten and cleaned up, I'll show you the rest of the castle."

Beauregard nodded as he had a mouth full of food. Once he had chewed and swallowed the delicious food, he glanced over at Carlos. "This is really good. Please tell your wife thank you for me."

"Of course, young sir." Carlos bowed his head slightly then left the room.

Beauregard returned his attention to his food and the man sitting across from him. "Aren't you going to eat?"

"I had breakfast this morning before we left the council castle. I also didn't get sick on the way here. I'm fine."

Beauregard snorted and went back to eating. "I'm a bunny, not a baby."

"Beauregard!"

Beauregard set his fork down on the table, suddenly not hungry anymore. Why did Sebastian's use of his name in that particular

shocked tone make him feel like shit on a hot summer day? It wasn't fair.

"I'm sorry."

He seemed to be saying that a lot lately. Maybe he was never going to fit in here. It would make sense. He didn't fit in anywhere else. Beauregard's stomach suddenly started to roll. He covered his mouth with his hand and glanced wildly around.

"Bathroom!" he cried out through his fingers.

"That way," Sebastian pointed as he jumped to his feet and ran around the table. Beauregard raced to the door Sebastian pointed to. He made it into the bathroom just in time to drop to his knees and throw up in the toilet. He threw up until there was nothing left in his stomach.

A cold cloth smoothed over his forehead. Beauregard groaned and dropped his head onto his arms. He felt like death warmed over. He never wanted to eat another thing in his life.

"I'm really starting to get worried about you, Beauregard," Sebastian said quietly from beside him. "This is the second time today that you've been sick. I think maybe you need to see a doctor."

"No." Beauregard shook his head until his stomach threatened to rebel again. "I just need to rest."

He didn't want to see a doctor. He suspected he knew exactly what was wrong with him. He just hadn't expected it considering he had mated a dragon. And he certainly wasn't ready to tell Sebastian why he was sick.

With the way things were going, he wasn't sure he was going to be around long enough to explain it. Sebastian seemed to be irritated with him every time Beauregard turned around. It wouldn't be too long before the man became fed up and tossed him out.

Beauregard wanted to be good, really he did. It just seemed that no matter how hard he tried, he couldn't fit in with other people. Conforming wasn't something he was very good at, but maybe if he tried hard enough, he could be. Beauregard couldn't think of anything

he wasn't willing to do to be able to stay with Sebastian, even give up his bubble gum.

"Can we see your castle a little later?" Beauregard asked as he turned his head to look at Sebastian. "I'm really tired."

"Of course, love, whatever you need."

There were a lot of things that Beauregard needed, but he wouldn't ask for them. He was being enough of an inconvenience to Sebastian. He didn't want to make any more waves than he really had to.

He sent Sebastian a weak smile. "I just want to take a little nap."

Chapter 8

Sebastian paced back in forth between his desk and the window. He was going out of his mind. Beauregard was sick, and he knew it. Hell, everyone knew it. They just all pretended like nothing was going on. Even the doctor was in on it.

Beauregard had been sleeping on and off for nearly a week. When he was awake, he was getting sick to his stomach. He was pale and losing weight. By the second day, Sebastian put his foot down and called the doctor.

That visit in itself made Sebastian want to growl and smash something with his fists. Beauregard refused to be examined by the doctor with him in the room. Sebastian had protested, but the damn doctor had backed his little mate up.

When the doctor came out, he had announced Beauregard healthy and hale, something Sebastian knew his little mate wasn't. Beauregard continued to be sick even after the doctor left, and that had been days ago.

No one would tell Sebastian what was wrong with his mate. What food that was brought in was hardly touched. Beauregard would be up for an hour here or there but never long enough for Sebastian to really question him.

Not even the workers next door making tons of noise as they retrofitted the place and turned it into an arboretum seemed to bother Beauregard. He just slept right through it. If Sebastian didn't get some answers soon, he was going to hurt someone.

"Sebastian?"

Sebastian swung around, frowning when he realized he hadn't heard anyone come in. "Galan."

"Beauregard's stuff has arrived. Where would you like it placed?"

"You can bring the personal items in here. Everything else can be placed in storage until Beauregard decides what he wants to do with it."

Galan's lips seemed to twist around for a moment as the man frowned. "There are only four boxes, Sebastian. There is nothing to put into storage."

"Four boxes?"

Galan nodded. "I was a little surprised myself. I guess all of the furniture went with the apartment. His personal belongings all fit into four cardboard boxes, and barely that. There just wasn't much to pack."

"Maybe he keeps some of his stuff somewhere else or something." There had to be an explanation as to why Beauregard didn't have more stuff to pack from his old apartment.

"Sebastian, there's a box of clothes, a box of books, and two boxes of odds and ends." Galan chuckled a little. "And when I say odds and ends, I mean *odds and ends*. He collects some of the strangest stuff."

"Well, just bring it in here then. Beauregard will want his stuff near him when he wakes up."

"Is he still sleeping?"

"Yes, and I want to know why. The doctor keeps telling me that he's fine, but I know he's not. No one gets that sick and sleeps that much unless they are sick. If someone doesn't tell me soon, I may have to call the council and get their assistance."

"Have you asked Beauregard?"

"How?" Sebastian snapped as he swung his hands into the air. "He's always sleeping. He wakes up long enough to eat a little something, which is never enough, and fool around, and then he's right back to sleep."

Galan's eyebrows shot up to his hairline. "He wakes up to fool around?"

"Yes."

"And you let him?"

"It seems to be the only thing that keeps him from getting sick. If I refuse to fool around with him, he gets upset and then he runs to the bathroom and throws up. It just seemed easier to fool around with him after he's eaten something and then let him go back to sleep rather than arguing with him about it."

Sebastian pushed his hand roughly through his hair. He was at his wit's end. He wanted his happy, bouncy mate back. He didn't want to spend an hour with his mate fooling around and then have no one to share his life with. He wanted his relationship with Beauregard to be about more than sex, not matter how good that was.

"I don't know." Sebastian planted his hands on his hips and leaned his head back to stare up at the ceiling. "Maybe I'm doing something wrong, and Beauregard is sleeping to avoid me. I mean really, what do I know about bunnies? He could be—"

"Sebastian," Galan whispered.

Sebastian looked over to find his second-in-command looking across the room. Sebastian followed his gaze to see a white bunny hop out of the bedroom. The bunny hopped across the room and right to the main door. Beauregard stopped and glanced over his shoulder as if waiting.

Curious, Sebastian walked over and opened the door. Beauregard hopped out the door and started down the hallway. Sebastian followed a few paces behind the bunny. He could hear Galan behind him.

Beauregard hopped down the hallway, stopping every few feet to sniff at something, then hopping on. When they reached the top of the grand staircase, Sebastian debated picking Beauregard up and carrying him down. It seemed like a long way down for a bunny to hop.

Before he could decide, Beauregard hopped to the step below him, then the next one, and the next, until he made it all of the way down to the bottom. Sebastian and Galan followed right behind him. Several people stopped to stare. Sebastian just shrugged and followed the bunny.

Beauregard stopped at the swinging door that led to the kitchen and looked up at Sebastian. Smiling down at his bunny, Sebastian reached over and pushed the door open, holding it until Beauregard hopped inside then following him in.

Beauregard went right for the fridge. Sebastian walked over and opened the door. Beauregard pushed himself up onto his back legs, resting his front legs on the edge of the fridge, and started sniffing around, his little pink nose practically vibrating. He seemed particularly interested in the vegetable bin.

Sebastian squatted down and opened the bin. Beauregard's hind legs wigged like mad as he tried to get over the edge into the drawer. Sebastian chuckled and lifted Beauregard up until he could climb in.

He slid down and sat on the floor next to the drawer and watched his mate start to nibble on the vegetables in the bin. It was the first time in days Sebastian had seen his mate have any type of appetite. He didn't care if they were sitting on the floor of the kitchen with the fridge door open. If Beauregard was hungry, he could have whatever he wanted.

Beauregard seemed to have no particular aversion to anything in the drawer. He chewed on lettuce, carrots, bell peppers, and celery. When he came to a large avocado, he just looked up at Sebastian.

Sebastian chuckled and reached for a knife off the counter. He carefully peeled the avocado and removed the pit. After slicing what was left into small sections in the palm of his hand, he held his hand out to Beauregard.

The bunny ate every last slice then licked Sebastian's hand clean. Once he was all done, Beauregard climbed back out of the bin and

jumped across to Sebastian's lap. Sebastian's mouth dropped open when he suddenly found himself with a lapful of naked man.

"I need a bath."

Sebastian quickly stripped his shirt off and placed it around Beauregard's shoulders, knowing the man's dislike of anyone seeing him naked. He buttoned it up, then grabbed Beauregard in his arms and stood up.

He wanted to say something to Beauregard as he carried him out of the kitchen, but he was afraid to upset the silent truce that seemed to be going on between them. Besides, he didn't know what he would say if he did say anything.

He carried Beauregard up the grand staircase and down the hallway to his room. When he reached the bathroom, he set Beauregard on the bathroom counter and turned to get the water going in the tub. He even added some bath bubbles.

"Are you mad at me?" Beauregard whispered from behind him.

"No," Sebastian said quietly, without turning toward his mate, "I'm not mad, but I am confused."

"Sebastian."

"Yes?"

"Would you please look at me?"

Sebastian sighed deeply then turned to look at his mate. "Why don't you climb into the bathtub? We can talk while you're soaking."

Beauregard pressed his lips together and climbed into the bathtub. Sebastian waited until the tub had filled up then turned the water off. He handed Beauregard a washcloth and bar of soap.

"I know apples make you drunk. I learned that at the council castle. What's making you sick this time? Is there some other fruit I need to be aware of?"

"Carrots are an aphrodisiac."

"You've mentioned that before. Anything else I need to be aware of?"

"I'm a bunny."

"I'm aware of that."

Beauregard stared down at the bubbles in the tub for a moment then looked up at him. "Bunnies are unique in the shifter world. I suppose all species have one thing or another that they can do, and bunnies are no different."

"Beauregard, you're rambling. Just tell me."

Sebastian's heart began to pound frantically when Beauregard's eyes filled with tears. Did Beauregard have some sort of disease? Was he dying? What was wrong with his mate?

"I'm pregnant."

* * * *

Beauregard felt tears slip down his face when Sebastian stood up and walked out of the bathroom without a word. He pulled his knees up to his chest and wrapped his arms around them. He closed his eyes and dropped his head down on his knees.

Being mated was stupid. His life back home was pretty lonely and miserable, but at least he didn't feel like his heart was being ripped out of his chest, like he did now. Beauregard just wanted to curl up in a hole somewhere and hide.

He didn't want to be mated anymore. It took so much and it gave almost nothing in return. Sure, the sex was great, and Beauregard loved being with Sebastian, but this deep, aching pain he had in his heart just wasn't worth that. It hurt too much.

Beauregard didn't think he asked for much, not really. He tried real hard to not make waves, even though he knew he tended to do just that. He tried to be good. He had even tried real hard not to leave his gum all over the place. He just wanted to be accepted and wanted in return.

Now that would never happen. Sebastian hated him. The man couldn't even talk to him. Beauregard leaned back in the tub and

rubbed the small bump growing at his abdomen. It was small now, but would just grow over the next few weeks.

Beauregard really had no idea what he'd give birth to, considering he had mated with a dragon. Only time would tell. And as much as he worried about that, he couldn't help but be excited that he was going to have a baby.

He just wished Sebastian felt the same. A small sob escaped Beauregard's lips as he thought of the likelihood that Sebastian might never want a child created between them. As angry as he had seemed, it was a very real possibility. Sebastian had been shocked enough to be mated to a bunny. This was sure to throw him for a loop.

When the water started to grow cold, Beauregard climbed out and dried off. He emptied the tub and cleaned up the bathroom then went in search of his clothes. He was surprised when he found an outfit neatly folded on the end of the bed but figured someone had laid them out for him. Once he was dressed, his purse safely attached to his belt, he stepped out of the bedroom.

Two very large men instantly jumped up from their seated position. Beauregard started to become scared until he recognized one of them as Harlan. He pressed his hand against his chest until his heart stopped thundering then nodded to them.

"Hello, Harlan, it's good to see you again."

"Beauregard," Harlan said, nodding back. He gestured to the other man. "This is Omar. We've been assigned by Sebastian to be your guards."

"Guards?" Beauregard whispered. "I need guards?"

"You are mated to the dragon prince, Beauregard, and you live in a castle full of dragons."

"Good point." Beauregard glanced around the living area. "Is…uh…is Sebastian around?" He knew by the way that Harlan hesitantly glanced over at Omar that Sebastian had left. They didn't even have to say anything.

Beauregard couldn't think of a thing to say to break the heavy silence. Harlan and Omar seemed really nervous as well. They wouldn't even look Beauregard in the face. "Right, well, um, I think I'll just go back to my room."

Beauregard turned to head back to the room and relative privacy when he heard Harlan clear his voice. He closed his eyes, bracing himself for what Harlan had to say, but he was afraid he already knew.

"I'm sorry, Beauregard, but you've been moved to another room."

Beauregard's knees almost buckled as sheer agony ripped through him. Not only did Sebastian not want to talk to him, he didn't even want him in the same room. Sebastian was kicking him out.

Beauregard knew it would come at some point. He knew that from the very beginning. He had just started to believe that he and Sebastian might actually have something special together. He had started to believe in the dream.

It was stupid, and he only had himself to blame. He should have remembered what it was like back home in the rabbit colony. Being the only white rabbit, things had been pretty rough. He made it day by day by reminding himself that there was someone out there for him, just for him, someone that would love him and want him despite everything.

But there wasn't. There was no one out there for him. It had all been a dream, and a stupid one at that. Who wanted a white rabbit that got drunk on apples and chewed bubble gum?

"Beauregard?"

"Just let me get my stuff."

"I moved it while you were bathing."

Beauregard felt like each word out of Harlan's mouth was a slap in his face. Sebastian was in such a hurry to get rid of him, he wouldn't even allow him to pack his own stuff. Beauregard guessed that pretty much said it all right there.

Beauregard pressed his lips together and walked toward the door. Harlan and Omar followed right behind him. When Harlan opened the door for him, Beauregard cast one more look at the room, the place he had been happy for a little while, then turned and walked out.

There didn't seem to be any reason to stick around. There wasn't anything for him here and he obviously wasn't wanted. Beauregard dropped his hands down to cover his abdomen as he realized that not even his baby was wanted.

Beauregard was escorted down the hallway to another set of stairs he had never seen before then up to the third floor. His room was at the far end of a long hallway. Beauregard didn't care. Any place was better than staying where he wasn't wanted.

Harlan opened the door, and Beauregard walked in without even looking at the room. He just didn't care. He felt kind of numb at the moment.

"I'm sorry, Beauregard," Harlan said.

Beauregard nodded sadly. "It's not your fault."

"Once he calms down—"

Beauregard held up his hand. "Please, don't. He made his choice."

"Is there anything you need?"

Beauregard couldn't keep the tears in his eyes from slipping down his face as he turned to look at the small room he had been escorted to, the prison Sebastian had put him in. "No, I don't need anything," he whispered. "Not anymore."

Chapter 9

Sebastian took the last sip from the scotch bottle then smashed it against the fireplace. It was the third such bottle he had gone through, and still he couldn't forget the words Beauregard had whispered to him.

His mate was pregnant. His beautiful, bouncy, lying, cheating mate was pregnant. Sebastian growled and reached for another bottle. If he ever discovered who had knocked Beauregard up, he'd rip them limb from limb.

"Don't you think you've had enough?"

"No!" Sebastian growled. When Galan tried to take the bottle out of his hands, Sebastian swiped his claws at him. "Leave me the fuck alone."

"Sebastian, this isn't the way to handle this. Talk to Beauregard."

"Beauregard! Beauregard!" He snapped. "I don't want to hear his name again. He lied to me and cheated on me. He doesn't deserve to have his name spoken in this house. In fact, I'll make it a royal decree. His name is never to be spoken in this house again."

"Sebastian, you don't want to do that."

"The hell I don't!" Sebastian slammed the bottle down on the table with such force that the bottle shattered. "He's supposed to be my mate. He cheated on me. He told me he was a virgin. He lied. I should have known better. No man can give a blow job like that and still be a virgin. He's probably slept with every rabbit in his colony. Who knows who fathered his kid?"

The pain in Sebastian's hand from the broken glass bottle was nothing compared to the pain in his heart. He had been ready to give

Beauregard his heart, and the man had spit in his face. No wonder Beauregard had slept so much. He wanted to avoid telling Sebastian the truth.

"You could be wrong," Galan said.

"I'm not wrong." Sebastian glared at Galan, who seemed to be on Beauregard's side. "We've been mated all of two weeks, and he already knows that he's pregnant. No matter how many times we've fucked, it can't be mine."

"Sebastian—"

"He probably knew before we ever mated. I'll bet our meeting was all as set up. He probably planned the whole thing." Sebastian laughed harshly. "Bag a prince and live the high life."

"Damn it, Sebastian, you're being ridiculous. Beauregard adores you. He certainly didn't plan the little decree of the elders. He's as much a victim here as you are."

"Oh right." Sebastian waved his hand at Galan. "He probably has a lover somewhere. I'll bet the elder's decree really through him for a loop. He just latched on to the nearest guy, one who just happens to be a prince."

"God, you are so full of yourself," Galan scoffed. "I hope he did have a lover. At least then he might have had someone that wanted him for him, and not because he was stuck with someone."

Sebastian's mouth dropped open as his oldest and most trusted friend betrayed him. "You don't mean that."

"The hell I don't. You've done nothing but lord your noble title over Beauregard's head from the very beginning, showing him how lucky he was to be mated to a dragon prince. He should thank his lucky stars."

Galan slammed his hands down on the table and leaned forward. "I hope he never forgives you for this. You don't deserve him. He's sweet and kind, and he loves you, and you've treated him like he's a freak. You disdain his clothes, his choice of shoes, even his nail polish. You make him feel like there's something wrong with him,

which is exactly what everyone has done to him his entire life. Why should you be any different just because you're his mate?"

Sebastian growled and launched himself across the desk at Galan. He couldn't remember ever being so angry in his life. He wanted to hurt Galan, to make him hurt as much as he was hurting.

Galan was waiting for him when he came across the desk, and he wasn't nearly as inebriated as Sebastian was. At least, that's what he told himself when he picked himself up off the floor a few seconds later.

"Are you done?" Galan asked.

"Not hardly."

Sebastian lunged again, and once again, Galan was ready for him. This time, Sebastian landed upside down on his desk. He panted heavily as pain racked his body. He knew he could beat Galan. He was bigger and stronger. He just didn't seem to be able to beat him at the moment.

"Sebastian, I don't want to fight with you but—"

"Good, don't, just leave me alone."

"Sebastian—"

"Just go, Galan," Sebastian said as he covered his eyes with his arm.

He really did want to be alone so he could nurse his broken heart in private. He didn't want others to know how much he had been betrayed by Beauregard and how much it had hurt. He felt like his heart was laid bare for everyone to see.

"I'll leave, but I want you to listen to me first," Galan said.

"What?"

"You need to really think about this, Sebastian. I truly believe that Beauregard didn't betray you. Maybe he didn't know until now. He certainly would have told you if he had known. He's your mate. He needs you just as much as you need him."

Sebastian didn't move until he heard the door close behind Galan. He slowly sat up, noticing the bloody gash on his hand when he did.

He must have cut his hand sometime during the fight or on the broken whiskey bottle. It was deep. It was going to need stitches.

Sebastian glanced around until he spotted the phone on the floor. He bent down and picked it up. After hanging it up for a moment, he lifted the receiver again and waited for Carlos to come on the line.

"Yes, sir?"

"Carlos, call the doctor. I think I need stitches."

"Right away, sir."

Sebastian hung up the phone, then pulled his shirt off and wrapped it around his bleeding hand. It was stupid to fight with Galan. Sebastian might be bigger and stronger, but they were pretty evenly matched. Besides, Galan was his best friend.

He had just become so angry at what Galan was saying. He seemed to be on Beauregard's side, not Sebastian's. He didn't seem to understand how betrayed Sebastian felt, how much his heart was breaking.

It wasn't fair. Sebastian never asked for a rabbit mate. He never asked to be mated at all. This was all the fault of the elders. If they hadn't made their little decree, he would never be in this mess.

And the worst part, the part that really stung Sebastian and made him feel the most pain, was the thought that Beauregard might never have meant all the things he said and did, that it all might have been a lie.

He had been so stunned by Beauregard. The man was amazing. He had caught Sebastian's interest from the very beginning. Knowing he had been played for a fool was a bitter pill to swallow.

Knowing the child that Beauregard carried wasn't his made him want to throw up. He could think of nothing greater than to be able to create a child with Beauregard. He hadn't even known it was a possibility.

There was a part of Sebastian that was excited by the idea, intrigued. A small white bunny that looked just like his mate would

have been a dream come true. Even a dragon would have been happily accepted.

And as much as Sebastian hoped he would be able to raise someone else's child, he didn't know if he could get past the fact that Beauregard lied to him. If there couldn't be honesty between mates, then what was the point of being mated?

Mates were supposed to be a team. Sebastian should have been able to trust Beauregard more than he trusted anyone, even Galan. He didn't know if they could ever get that back, or even if they could. Maybe they never had it in the first place.

"I hear you're looking for a friend."

Sebastian glanced up, surprised to see Derek standing in his doorway. "Derek, what are you doing here?"

Derek shrugged and sauntered into the room, trailing his fingers along the back of a chair. "I used to come here all of the time. Don't you remember? You invited me."

Sebastian sighed. He really didn't want to be dealing with this at the moment. He had too much other stuff, important stuff to be thinking about. He didn't need to be fighting advances from a former fuck toy.

"Derek, what do you want?"

Derek walked across the room and came to stand between Sebastian's legs. He trailed a single finger down Sebastian's naked chest. "I just thought I would come and console you."

"Console me?" Sebastian frowned. There was something not right about that statement. "What do you need to console me about?"

"A little birdie told me that your mate was unavailable to see to your..." Derek glanced down at Sebastian's groin…"your more manly needs."

Sebastian instantly figured out that Derek knew Beauregard had been sick. He just didn't understand how Derek knew. It hadn't been a secret, exactly, but it also hadn't been broadcast either.

"My mate takes care of my needs very nicely, thank you."

Sebastian grabbed Derek's hands and pushed him away. Within a moment, Derek was back. He had to give it to the man, he was persistent. Sebastian just wasn't interested. He had a mate that loved him.

Even as he thought the words, the reality of them slammed into Sebastian, and he inhaled sharply. Galan was right. He was being such an idiot. Beauregard was his mate, and that meant for better or worse. It didn't mean he kicked his mate to the curb at the first sign of trouble.

Beauregard had been honest in his feelings for Sebastian. He didn't understand how Beauregard could be pregnant, but he knew his mate had said something the minute he knew. Beauregard hadn't lied. He hadn't betrayed Sebastian.

Sebastian, on the other hand, had betrayed his mate. He had treated Beauregard so shabbily that he doubted the man would ever forgive him. He wouldn't blame Beauregard in the least but he had to try.

"Derek, I don't have time for this," Sebastian said as he pushed Derek away again. He needed to get to Beauregard and beg for his forgiveness.

"You never have time for me anymore," Derek whined.

"Derek, you have a mate. I have a mate. Let it go. It's not going to happen." Sebastian shook his head as he hopped off the desk then started for the door.

"I'm supposed to be your mate!"

Sebastian swung around at Derek's outraged scream just in time to see a flash of silver. The next instant, excruciating agony exploded in his shoulder. Sebastian's knees buckled under the intense pain.

"Derek, wha—" Sebastian stared up at Derek in confusion.

"You're mine," Derek snarled. "You've always been mine. I won't let some furry freak separate us now."

Derek stepped forward and jerked the knife out of Sebastian's shoulder. Sebastian shouted in agony as the knife was ripped free. He

panted heavily until he saw Derek raise the knife in the air. He quickly raised his hands to stop Derek when the knife started to descend again.

"Derek, stop!"

Derek's eyes were wild, a hint of insanity making them seem brighter. Sebastian didn't think Derek was going to stop until one of them was dead. He didn't plan on it being him. He had too much to live for.

"Fuck!" Sebastian shouted when Derek started stabbing at him. Several of his stabs got through and sank into Sebastian's hands until they were nothing but a bloody mess. Sebastian tried to fight Derek off as he struggled to his feet.

Once he was on his feet, he jumped back several steps and opened his mouth, blasting Derek with a large fireball. He wished his small study was larger and he could shift. He'd just eat Derek. Of course, he might get indigestion from it, but the man would be gone.

Sebastian's eyebrows shot up to his hairline when the smoke cleared, and Derek still stood there, slightly singed but none the worse for wear. Derek was a cougar shifter. He should have gone up in flames.

"You didn't think you could get rid of me that easily, did you?" Derek smirked. "My mate won't let me die."

Sebastian frowned. This couldn't be good. On the other hand, Sebastian doubted Derek's mate knew he was here. No one wanted their mate panting after someone else.

"You will be mine."

"I don't think so," Sebastian said as he slowly backed away from Derek. If he could get out of his study into the large two-story entryway, he could shift, and then Derek wouldn't be able to fight him off.

Derek screamed and raised the dagger in his hand. Sebastian bolted. He wasn't stupid. He knew fighting Derek in his human form

would be his doom. He wasn't about to stick around and let the man continue to stab him.

Something heavy crashed into Sebastian just as he reached the doorway. He went flying through, crashing to the hard marble entryway and sliding halfway across it. By the time he turned over, Derek was almost on him.

Sebastian shifted in an instant. He felt himself grow bigger, stronger. When he opened his eyes and looked down, Derek was just a speck, a small, irritating speck. Sebastian's roar filled the cavernous room. He heard doors open and people start running even as he filled his fire pouch with smoke and prepared to blast Derek away.

"Sebastian, no!"

Sebastian turned his head to see Galan standing at the top of the stairs. Beauregard stood next to him, his mouth hanging open in shock. Sebastian leaned toward his mate and gave off a little rumble.

Much to his surprise, Beauregard stepped forward and reached a hand out to him. Sebastian lowered his head until Beauregard could reach his snout. Pleasure of intense proportions flowed through him when Beauregard stroked his hand over his snout.

"You look amazing," Beauregard murmured, "much bigger than I expected."

Sebastian rumbled again.

"No!" someone below him shouted. "You stay away from him. He's mine!"

Sebastian jerked away from Beauregard and turned to stare down at Derek. He opened his mouth again, intent on smoking Derek where he stood.

"Sebastian, no!" Galan shouted again. "You can't kill him. He's bonded to his mate. It will kill his mate as well."

Sebastian roared. He wanted to kill Derek. It was the better choice. Derek would never stop. Sebastian could see it in the man's eyes. He just wouldn't stop.

"Please, Sebastian?"

Sebastian swung back around to see Beauregard staring at him. He rumbled softly.

"He's sick, and he needs help, but it's not his mate's fault. If you kill Derek, you kill his mate. Whoever it is, he doesn't deserve that."

Sebastian was torn, his need to protect Beauregard so powerful it almost consumed him.

"Please?" Beauregard whispered.

Sebastian turned to look back at Derek, intent on making the man go away. He wouldn't kill Derek, simply because Beauregard had asked him not to. Sebastian hoped Derek understood that the *furry freak* had just saved his life.

When he glanced down, Derek was nowhere to be seen. Panic set in instantly. He heard Galan yell then Beauregard screamed. Sebastian turned just in time to see Derek shift into his cougar form and jump at Beauregard.

Every thought of not killing Derek left his head as Derek's sharp teeth snapped at Beauregard. Sebastian roared so loud, the windows shook. He ignored Beauregard's horrified look and snapped at Derek, catching him by his hind legs.

Sebastian lifted him into the air. He had every intention of eating the man. Derek had threatened his mate. That could not be allowed. Despite Beauregard's pleas, Derek needed to die. Sebastian swung Derek up, ready to open his mouth and eat the cougar, when the front doors suddenly flew open and a cold blast of air hit Sebastian, freezing him in his spot.

"You can't kill him, Drakus," some man in a dark robe said as he rushed in. "He belongs to me."

Sebastian blew out a puff of angry black smoke. He didn't know this man. His words meant nothing in the face of protecting Beauregard.

"Derek is my mate. If you kill him, you kill me."

Sebastian snorted. When Derek started to struggle, he shook his head rapidly until the cougar stopped. He wasn't in the mood to listen to other people. He had to save his mate from Derek.

"Please." The stranger held up a hand. "Please don't hurt him. Derek needs help. He doesn't need to die."

"Sebastian."

Sebastian's head snapped over to the open doorway. Three more men stood there. Sebastian instantly recognized them as elders. One was Elder Burke, the elder of the Draconic Clan. The other two were elders as well, but Sebastian didn't know which ones.

"Sebastian, let Derek go," Elder Burke said.

Sebastian was unable to resist a command by an elder. That's what made them elders. He opened his jaw and let Derek's hind legs fall out of his mouth. The cougar fell to the floor with a loud thud.

Elder Burke arched an eyebrow as the other two elders and the stranger ran forward to check on Derek. "That's not exactly what I meant, Sebastian."

Sebastian tilted his head a bit, not really caring, and letting the elder know it.

Elder Burke gestured to Sebastian's dragon form then crossed his arms over his chest. "Shift, Sebastian."

Sebastian let out a loud roar of protest even as he felt his dragon body following the elder's demand. He groaned as pain flowed throughout his entire body as he shifted back into his human form and fell to the floor, landing on his hands and knees.

Sebastian drew in a deep breath and pushed himself back to sit on his ass. When he looked up, Elder Burke was standing over him, between him and Derek.

"He tried to kill me," Sebastian said slowly as he watched the others tend to Derek. "He tried to kill Beauregard."

"I know, Sebastian," Elder Burke said. "Myron came to us when he discovered his mate's intentions. He knew Derek needed to be

stopped, but he doesn't want him harmed. I'm sure you can understand, Sebastian. They are mates despite what Derek has done."

"I just want him gone where he can never hurt Beauregard again."

Sebastian was tired. The ache in his shoulder and hands was increasing. Despite his shift, he'd sustained serious injury and lost a lot of blood. He knew he needed to get medical treatment soon, but all he really wanted to do was curl up and sleep with his mate.

"Beauregard." Sebastian glanced toward the top of the grand staircase but he couldn't see his mate. He struggled to get to his feet. "Where's Beauregard?"

"Calm yourself, Sebastian," Elder Burke said as he put a hand on Sebastian's unharmed shoulder and pressed down. "Galan has returned your mate to his room. He has set guards to stand outside Beauregard's door. He is safe."

Relieved couldn't even begin to describe how Sebastian felt. His shoulders slumped as he sighed deeply and settled back down on the floor. His head was starting to spin. He could barely turn it as Elder Burke squatted down beside him.

"We need to get you to a doctor," Elder Burke said.

Sebastian thought that was a very good idea. Still, he didn't want to let his guard down until he knew for sure that Derek was no longer a threat. He waved his hand in Derek's general direction.

"What's going to happen to him?"

"Derek and his mate will be moved to a secure location until such time as their bond can be established, and Derek rids himself of your influence."

"My influence?" Sebastian snapped.

"I'm afraid that you unwittingly created a connection with Derek during your times together, one that interferes with the bond between him and his mate."

"But I never—"

Elder Burke waved a hand of dismissal at Sebastian. "It was nothing you were aware of, Sebastian, but rather something unique to

submissive cougar shifters. Derek was susceptible to you, and in his present state he really does believe he's the better choice of mates for you, even if he feels a connection to his own mate."

"That sounds really fucked up."

"Can you imagine how his mate feels?" the elder asked but Sebastian didn't really think it was a question. More like a statement. "Myron feels the mating bond, yet he has to acknowledge the bond Derek has with you or potentially lose his mate forever."

"I don't want to have a bond with Derek," Sebastian said. "I never did. We just played around a few times. Hell, we didn't even play alone. There were always others there. Why didn't he bond with one of them?"

"Who can say? Suffice to say, Derek did develop a connection with you. That connection needs to be severed and the one with his mate strengthened. Once that is done, Derek will no longer want to be with you, just his mate."

"Good luck to Myron then." Sebastian shook his head. "He's going to need it."

Chapter 10

"Are you sure he's okay, Galan?"

"He's fine, Beauregard, just a few scrapes and scratches. He needed a few days of bed rest to recover, but the doctor said he's fine."

Beauregard frowned and turned away from the window to look across the room at Sebastian's second-in-command. It had been a week since Derek attacked Sebastian, and Beauregard had yet to see the man.

During the fight, Galan had shuffled Beauregard back to the safety of his little room and stood guard outside his door. Food had been brought in, and a doctor came to exam Beauregard, but no Sebastian. And Beauregard wasn't allowed out of his room.

"Can I see him?"

Beauregard desperately wanted to see Sebastian, to assure himself that his mate really was okay. He had seen the blood, the wounds. He knew Sebastian's injuries were more severe than a few scrapes and scratches. It was killing him inside not being allowed at his mate's side.

"That's not a good idea, Beauregard."

"No, of course not," Beauregard whispered as he turned back to look out the window. He didn't really see anything, not the snow capped mountains or fields of pure white laid out before him. He didn't see anything except the hatred in Sebastian's eyes. He doubted he'd ever forget.

"He'll come see you when he's ready, Beauregard."

Beauregard covered his mouth to keep from laughing hysterically. Sebastian wasn't going to come see him. Sebastian couldn't stand the sight of him. It would be even worse now. Beauregard couldn't hide his condition anymore.

He was far enough along now that he could find out the baby's sex if he really wanted to know. In another week, he'd just start to add weight as the baby grew to birth size. He'd be as big as a house. And that was sure to make him attractive in Sebastian's eyes. Not!

Beauregard wished he could shift back into his rabbit form, but the doctor had warned against that. This late in his pregnancy it could harm the baby. As much as Beauregard wished he wasn't carrying, he still wouldn't do anything to harm his child. It was all he had left of Sebastian.

"I think I'm going to take a nap," he said as he lowered his hand and turned to look back at Galan. He could feel the man's eyes watching his every move, and it was unnerving. Beauregard felt like Galan could read his every emotion.

The man was kind enough, but there was a hint of pity in his eyes whenever he looked at Beauregard. Galan was the one man that knew everything that happened between Beauregard and Sebastian. Beauregard liked the guy, but he couldn't help but feel resentful. Galan was also his jailer.

"Do you need anything?"

"No."

It was Beauregard's constant answer nowadays. What he needed, he couldn't have. What was offered, he didn't want. Beauregard felt like he lived in a cotton-filled bubble. Nothing came in, and nothing went out. Most of the time, he didn't even know what time of day it was.

"Maybe after you get some rest we can take a walk outside, get some fresh air."

Beauregard knew Galan was only trying to help, to give him something to look forward to. He tried to give Galan a small smile to

let the man know he appreciated the gesture. He knew it fell flat when Galan frowned.

"He will come see you as soon as he can, Beauregard."

"Yes, of course."

If Sebastian had really wanted to see him, he would have come before now. But he didn't, and Beauregard knew it. If Sebastian was as healthy and hearty as Galan said he was, then there was nothing keeping him away.

Beauregard suddenly felt exhausted. It almost made him laugh. He hadn't done anything except look out his window for hours, yet he felt like he had run a marathon. He knew part of that was being pregnant, but another part was the complete destruction of his heart and soul. And no amount of sleep could fix that.

Beauregard walked over and climbed into bed. He pulled the covers up around his neck and closed his eyes. A moment later, the door quietly shut, and he knew Galan had left. Only then did Beauregard let his tears fall. There weren't many, just a few. He'd already cried out most of them.

He stroked his hand down over his distended stomach, one more tear falling when he felt a small butterfly movement under his hand. It wasn't fair that he didn't have someone to share this with. Sebastian should have been here to share his joy, and because he wasn't, Beauregard's joy was quickly fading away.

He didn't want to be alone through all of this. He didn't want to raise this child alone. All he could see ahead of him was years and years of special moments and no one special to share them with. That wasn't fair to him or his child.

His child deserved a father, someone who would laugh with him, kiss his hurts, and protect him from the evils in the world. He deserved someone that loved him. He didn't deserve to be brought into the world Beauregard lived in.

Beauregard just couldn't bring himself to end things like he knew he should. The pull to love and protect his child was stronger than his need to leave the pain of Sebastian's rejection behind.

Beauregard stilled when he heard the bedroom door open then quietly shut. He could hear someone breathing as they slowly walked across the floor to stand beside the bed. It wasn't Galan. In the last week, Beauregard had gotten used Galan's footsteps. These weren't his.

As the bed dipped and a man's body stretched out behind him, Sebastian's sweet masculine scent enveloped Beauregard, and he almost cried out. Only by biting his lips did he keep the desperate sound behind them.

"I know you're awake, Beauregard," Sebastian said softly as his arm wrapped around Beauregard. "I can hear your heart beating."

Beauregard squeezed his eyes closed as tightly as he could as if that gesture might keep his tears at bay. "What do you want?" he whispered. He couldn't think of a single reason for Sebastian to be here unless it was to drive the knife further into his heart.

"I missed you, bunny."

Beauregard shoved his hand in his a mouth as a sob broke through his lips. Sebastian *was* pushing the knife in deeper. He was waving something in front of Beauregard he could never have.

"Ssshhh, love, don't cry." Sebastian's face nuzzled the back Beauregard's head, his hands stroked up and down Beauregard's arms. "I'm here now, and I'm not going anywhere."

That got to Beauregard. He wiped the tears from his eyes then glanced over his shoulder. "Why?"

"This is where I belong."

"You belonged here before." He couldn't keep the hurt out of his voice. "It didn't seem to matter to you then."

"I was wrong." Sebastian drew in a deep breath. "I know that what we have between us is too special to let go. I don't know how

this will play out, but I don't want to lose you. I'll do whatever I need to do to keep us together."

Beauregard frowned. Sebastian's hand trembled as it brushed against Beauregard's abdomen. He didn't like the pinched look on Sebastian's face, especially not when he was looking down at his stomach.

"If being the father to this child is what I need to do, then I'll do it. I can't promise that I will ever forget the circumstances around his creation, but I will be a good father. He'll never know anything but love and acceptance from me."

Beauregard didn't know how to answer that. The joy he had started to feel now that Sebastian was back was slowly turning to dread, and now anger. Sebastian thought he was being so giving, offering to be the father of a child they created together.

Beauregard pushed away from Sebastian and moved to sit on the opposite side of the bed from him. He wanted to hit Sebastian, to hit something. He wanted someone to understand the anger he felt, the all-consuming anguish that gripped him like a vice.

"You need to go," Beauregard whispered through his tears. "My child doesn't need a father. He has me."

"Beauregard!"

Beauregard didn't care that Sebastian had used his usual chastising tone when speaking his name. It was usually the only time Sebastian used it. Normally, Beauregard felt bad. This time, he just didn't care.

"Please go."

"Beauregard, I'm trying to—"

"I know what you're trying to do," Beauregard snapped as he jumped to his feet. He turned to glare at Sebastian. When Sebastian's mouth dropped open, he assumed it was because of his show of anger.

He was wrong.

"You're huge."

Beauregard rolled his eyes even as he wrapped his arms protectively around his stomach. "No shit. That's what happens when you get pregnant."

"But…" Sebastian stood up and gestured toward Beauregard's stomach. "How can you be this big this fast? Is something wrong with the baby?"

"You mean besides the fact that his father doesn't want him, no."

"Father!" Sebastian raked a hand roughly through his hair. "How can I possibly be the father? We've been together less than three weeks."

Beauregard felt the blood fade from his face as he suddenly realized why Sebastian was behaving the way he was, why the man had been so angry when he discovered Beauregard was pregnant. Every dream, every hope Beauregard ever had of being with Sebastian shattered in a blink of an eye.

Beauregard covered his mouth as the truth smacked him in the face. "You think I lied to you about being a virgin," he whispered. "You think this is someone else's child."

"It doesn't matter, Beauregard. I told you that I'll be the father and—"

"You son-of-a-bitch." Anger unlike anything he had ever felt took a hold of Beauregard. "Get out! Get out and don't ever come back."

"Beauregard!"

"Don't you Beauregard me, you fucker!" Beauregard shouted. He reached over to the nightstand and grabbed a glass jug of water then tossed it as hard as he could at Sebastian.

"Beauregard!" Sebastian shouted as he jumped out of the way, narrowly missing the jug. It hit the wall and shattered, water spraying all over the wall and floor. "What the hell is wrong with you?"

"Get out!" Beauregard shouted, stomping his foot. He started grabbing anything he could get his hands on then throwing them at Sebastian. Some hit his target, some missed. He just kept throwing

things until Sebastian suddenly grabbed him by the arms and shook him.

"That's enough!"

"Don't touch me," Beauregard snarled as he ripped his arms away from Sebastian. "You don't ever get to touch me again."

"What the hell is wrong with you?"

Sebastian looked so confused, so horrified by Beauregard's behavior that he couldn't help laughing, but it was a cold laugh. It held nothing but contempt for the man he once thought he loved.

"There's nothing wrong with me that won't be cured when you're gone."

"Beauregard, I don't understand—"

"You don't understand?" Beauregard sneered. "I'm a rabbit, you asshole. My gestational period is forty days. Forty days!"

Beauregard watched the blood drain from Sebastian's face as the truth hit him. His eyes widened and a pained expression entered them. Sebastian's hand came up and reached for him. Beauregard stepped back until Sebastian lowered his hand.

"I never lied to you," Beauregard whispered.

"I didn't know, Beauregard."

"You didn't ask." Beauregard's jaw tightened. "You never even gave me the chance to explain. You just assumed I was guilty and kicked me out like I meant nothing to you."

"Oh, bunny, I—"

"No!" Beauregard clenched his hands. "You don't get to call me that anymore. You no longer have that right."

"I'm sorry."

"And you think that makes it all better?" A sob escaped Beauregard. "I thought things would be different here, that I'd be accepted, that I'd have someone to love me as much as I—but it's even worse than living in the colony. They ignored me most of the time, but at least they never gave me hope."

"Please, I—"

Beauregard turned his back on Sebastian and walked over to look out the window again. It seemed like he looked out the window a lot. "I'd like you to leave."

Beauregard held himself together until he heard the door close behind Sebastian. He sank down to the floor and leaned against the wall as anguish filled every cell of his body. Deep, racking sobs shook his body as tears flowed so freely down his face that his vision blurred.

Grief and despair tore at his heart, making it hard to breathe, to move. He didn't even have the energy to protest when Galan lifted him up and carried him out of the room and down the hallway to the staircase.

When Galan carried him into Sebastian's quarters a few minutes later, Beauregard started to struggle. This wasn't where he was supposed to be. He'd been kicked out of these grand rooms.

"Sshhh, little one, you're going to upset the baby if you continue on like this."

"I want to go back to my room."

"This is your room, little one."

Beauregard shook his head. "This was never my room."

"Well, it is now." Galan set Beauregard down on the bed. "You need a safe place to have that baby, and this is the safest place in the entire castle."

"But—"

Galan squatted down in front of Beauregard. He smiled as he reached out to push a lock of hair back from Beauregard's face, tucking it behind his ear. "You need to think about the baby now, Beauregard."

"I'm not supposed to be here, Galan."

"This is exactly where you're supposed to be."

"He thought I lied to him." That knowledge twisted and turned inside of him until his head grew foggy with pain. He was suddenly cold. His teeth chattered, and his body began to tremble. "I'm tired."

"Come on then." Galan helped Beauregard lie back on the bed then pulled the blankets up over him. "You just go to sleep. I'll make sure all of your stuff is brought here for when you wake up."

"I need blankets."

"Are you cold?"

"No." Beauregard shook his head. "I'm going to start nesting pretty soon. I need blankets and pillows."

Galan smiled. "I'll see what I can get my hands on."

Beauregard grabbed the edge of the blanket and pulled it up to his cheek. "I don't want to see Sebastian."

"He truly is sorry, Beauregard. Maybe you should just talk to him."

"I have nothing to say to him."

"Beauregard—"

"I'm tired. I'm going to sleep now." Beauregard closed his eyes and prayed that it was true, that sleep would take him right away. He wanted to sleep for as long as he could so he didn't have to face life without the man he loved.

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The gifts started arriving the next morning. When Beauregard woke up, his room was filled with bouquets of flowers in every color imaginable. Beauregard carefully placed them outside his room.

After the flowers came the boxes of jewelry—a diamond necklace, a ruby bracelet, even a ring with a huge emerald in the middle of it. Beauregard looked at each one then closed the boxes without touching them. He placed them outside his room.

On the third day, chocolates arrived, boxes and boxes of them. There were silver boxes, gold boxes, boxes with rabbit-shaped chocolate. It was like chocolate nirvana. Beauregard placed them outside his door.

On the fourth day, a beautiful white fur cloak with matching knee-high boots and gloves arrived. Beauregard couldn't prevent himself from stroking his fingers along the soft white fur. A quick look at the label assured him that it was fake fur. Beauregard's heart ached a little when he carefully placed the fury gifts outside his door.

On day five, Galan arrived with a large white box in his hands. He just shook his head as he set it down on the bed. "You know, you're going to have to talk to him at some point."

"No, I don't."

"He messed up, Beauregard. That doesn't mean he doesn't love you."

"He can't buy my affections."

"I don't think that's what he's trying to do, little one. I think he's trying to show you how sorry he is."

"Like I believe that," Beauregard snorted.

"Now who's being unreasonable?" Galan asked, right before he walked out of the room.

Beauregard sighed. He was tired and cranky, and he knew it. And he couldn't chalk it all up to pregnancy hormones. He was still angry at Sebastian, and no amount of gifts was going to change that.

The gifts Sebastian was sending him were very romantic. Beauregard was sure most anyone would have been thrilled, but they weren't him. They didn't speak of his personality or that the giver had put any thought into them. They were gifts anyone would give.

Knowing that the last gift delivered had to be much the same, Beauregard picked up the box to carry it outside his door. He didn't even want to look. The sudden rattling inside the box caught his attention, however, and curiosity made him open the box.

Beauregard's eyes widened when he started pulling box after box of beads out of the larger box. They came in every shape and size. Next were the boxes of charms and jewelry-making tools.

By the time he was done, the bed was covered in everything Beauregard would need to make hundreds of charm bracelets and

necklaces, maybe even earrings. Beauregard sat there and stared, dumbfounded.

Beauregard smiled for the first time in days and reached for the first box of beads. Sebastian had found his one weakness, the one thing guaranteed to get through to him when nothing else would. Beauregard just had to wonder if his gift would get through to Sebastian.

Chapter 11

Sebastian sat behind his desk, the new one that had been put in since Derek's attack, and took another sip of his whiskey. He wished he could drink himself into a stupor, but he wanted to be alert in case something happened with the baby.

The baby—now there was something to give him another reason to take a drink. He was going to be a father. He had no idea when he mated Beauregard that it was even a possibility. Now that he did, he was still in a state of shock.

Sebastian set his drink on the desk then cradled his head in his hands. He didn't even have the joy of sharing Beauregard's news with him. He'd ripped that away from his mate and left an open, bleeding wound in its place.

He had fucked up so bad Beauregard was never going to forgive him. Sebastian's throat ached with defeat. He was never going to forgive himself. How could he even begin to think that Beauregard would betray him? It wasn't in his personality.

Sebastian had just jumped to the first conclusion when confronted by Beauregard's announcement. What did it say about him that betrayal had been his first thought? What did that say about the world he lived in?

He'd been trying for days to come up with some way to get Beauregard to agree to see him. He had sent gifts, all of which had been returned. He had hovered outside Beauregard's door. He'd even taken to sleeping on the couch in the hallway in case Beauregard needed anything in the middle of the night.

He was pathetic, and he knew it, but he couldn't think of any other way to get through to Beauregard beyond forcing his way inside and demanding Beauregard talk to him. Sebastian chuckled and leaned his head back on his chair. Maybe that was the way to go?

"Come," Sebastian called out when someone knocked on the study door. He knew it wasn't the one person he truly wanted to see.

Galan walked in, one hand held behind his back. "I have something for you."

Sebastian frowned and sat up straighter at the wry twist on Galan's lips. He nervously moistened his lips. "What?"

Galan held out a small patchwork bag with leather ties. It had more colors on it than Sebastian thought were in the rainbow. He took it, confused, and immediately noticed that it was weighed down. There was something inside.

Sebastian's curiosity took root. He untied the bag and peered inside. The light in the room shined off of something silver. Sebastian reached in and pulled the item out, surprised to find a bracelet in his hand.

"It's a charm bracelet," Galan said.

"I can see that." And he could.

Colorful beads decorated the bracelet. Sebastian recognized them as the beads he had painstakingly picked out at the bead store. He also picked out the charms he'd given Beauregard, but he hadn't chosen the charm dangling from the bracelet.

Sebastian held it up to the light to get a better look. When he did, a chuckle escaped his mouth. It was the first joyful sound he had uttered in days. The charm hanging from the bracelet was small and white and shaped like a bunny.

"Will he see me?" Sebastian looked up at Galan, hopeful. He felt his wish plummet when Galan shook his head.

"No, not yet." Galan smiled. "But it won't be long."

Galan started back for the door, pausing when he reached it to look back over his shoulder. "He's coming around, but he needs time,

and you need to give him that time. I'm not sure I would have it in my heart to forgive my mate if he did to me what you did, but I'm not Beauregard, either."

Sebastian nodded. He'd give Beauregard whatever time he needed if it meant he was allowed back into his mate's life. He just hoped his mate hurried. He was losing his mind being away from Beauregard.

He couldn't even use the mandate given to him by the elders that they had to consummate their mating at least once every twenty-four hours or lose their ability to shift permanently. According to the doctor, that had been negated when Beauregard became pregnant. It would start up again a little while after the baby was born, but until then, Sebastian had to wait on Beauregard's forgiveness.

It was going to be a long, excruciating wait.

* * * *

Sebastian arched an eyebrow when Galan walked into his office the next day, his hands at his sides. Galan had no little patchwork bag in his hand. He knew. He looked. Sebastian's shoulders slumped with disappointment, and he sat forward in his chair.

"What can I do for you today, Galan?"

Galan grinned and held out his closed fists. "Another gift from your secret admirer."

Sebastian opened his hand, surprised when Galan dropped a small charm into his palm. He held it up to the light. It was a black dragon. Sebastian chuckled and held his wrist out, the one that he wore the bracelet on.

"Would you mind?" he asked as he held up the black charm.

Galan grabbed the charm, carefully attaching it to the bracelet. Once he was done, he stood back and made a slight bow. "I shall see you soon, my prince."

"Will he see me yet?"

"Soon," Galan called out as he walked out of the office.

"Soon," Sebastian grumbled, his mouth thinning with displeasure. "Soon better get here really fast."

* * * *

Soon dragged on for days. Galan continued to bring Sebastian a new charm each day, attaching them to his bracelet. A small silver wish box with Celtic symbols engraved on it came the day after the black dragon charm arrived.

The shiny red apple he received on the third day made Sebastian laugh until his sides hurt. He started plans that day to plant Granny Smith apple trees in the spring.

The golden carrot charm arrived on the fourth day. Sebastian remembered Beauregard stating that carrots were an aphrodisiac for rabbits. The implications behind the charm made Sebastian squirm with need.

The white snowflake charm on the fifth day made Sebastian smile. The snow was still covering the ground outside. That day, Sebastian ordered more firewood be brought inside and then ordered another fur cloak, this one in black.

The silver baby booties Galan delivered on the sixth day made Sebastian clench his hands into fists and press his lips together until he could ask Galan to attach it without crying. After Galan left, Sebastian started shopping for a nursery.

The white pearl wrapped in silver filigree that arrived on the seventh day was confusing, but Sebastian knew it held some meaning to Beauregard, so he didn't question it. He did order a handful of small pearls to go between each charm.

When a small silver charm in the shape of a broken heart arrived on the eighth day, Sebastian broke down and cried. That night, he put Galan on baby watch and drank himself into a stupor.

When he woke up the next morning, his mouth felt like it was filled with cotton, and his head was booming. Even breathing hurt. He

sat under the hot shower spray until the water ran cold, then dragged himself into his temporary bedroom and got dressed. At least, he hoped it was temporary.

Sebastian was sitting on the side of his bed, tying his shoes when he heard a knock on the door. "Come," he called out.

He expected Galan, so he was surprised when a set of small, fur-covered boots stopped in front of him. Sebastian's breath caught in his throat as he looked up slowly. His mind barely took in the white fur cloak. All he saw was his mate.

"Beauregard."

Beauregard held out a clenched hand. Sebastian paused for a moment then raised his hand into the air, palm side up. Beauregard dropped something small into it. Sebastian didn't want to take his eyes off of his mate, but the small item was important enough for Beauregard to deliver personally, so he knew he had to.

Sebastian glanced down at his palm. Tears prickled his eyes when he saw the small gold charm in the palm of his hand. It was two hearts entwined together, two fully formed, unbroken hearts. He awkwardly cleared his throat and tried to find his voice.

"Would you put it on for me?" he asked as casually as he could manage.

He watched Beauregard with hungry eyes as the man took the charm out of his hand then expertly attached it to his charm bracelet. When he was done, Beauregard moved to sit on the side of the bed next to Sebastian. The lack of speech from his mate started to make Sebastian feel uneasy. The man hadn't said a word since he walked into the room.

"Do you forgive me?" he finally asked when he couldn't stand the silence anymore.

Instead of answering, Beauregard reached into his cloak and pulled out a binder and handed it to him. Sebastian frowned at first as he took the binder and flipped it open then his eyebrows shot up to his hairline.

"How to Properly Care for Your Bunny Shifter," he read out loud. The book was clearly handwritten, but what was it? The book was separated into several sections—foods, health, pregnancy, entertainment, and even sex.

Sebastian was surprised at the small smile on Beauregard's lips when he glanced over at him. "What is this?"

"You need to know how to properly care for your bunny." Beauregard reached over and turned to the first page. "You will notice the disclaimer. This instruction booklet will only work for bunnies that are mated to dragon princes."

Sebastian swallowed hard. He reached over and held out his hand, palm side up. He waited, hoping. Beauregard seemed to hesitate for a moment then laid his smaller hand in Sebastian's, entwining their fingers together.

Sebastian closed his eyes and just breathed for a moment, relishing in the feel of his mate's skin against his. He had never felt anything so precious in his life. He just had to figure out how to tell Beauregard how much he was cherished. He didn't even care if he sounded like a fool.

Sebastian opened his eyes and scooted off the bed, turning until he could kneel at Beauregard's feet. He bowed his head and brought Beauregard's hand to his lips. He didn't even kiss them, just held them against his mouth. A soft sob escaped his lips when he felt Beauregard's other hand stroke through his hair.

"I'm so sorry, Beauregard. I was a complete ass and…and…" Sebastian felt tears well up in his eyes when he raised his head. "If you forgive me, I swear you'll never be sorry. I'll spend the rest of my life making it up to you."

"I just want you to trust me."

Beauregard's voice was so soft Sebastian would have missed it if he hadn't been listening so hard. His chest tightened. He had to make Beauregard understand that he did believe him, he did trust him. He was just an idiot.

"Beauregard, love, I do trust you. I swear I do." Sebastian dropped his head as his shame overwhelmed him. "The mo—the moment when you told me you carried our child should have been a joyous one for both of us. Instead, I turned it into a nightmare. I can never take that back. I know that. But I…I…"

Sebastian buried his face in Beauregard's lap as the hopelessness of his situation struck him. No matter what he said, no matter what he did, if Beauregard didn't forgive him, Sebastian knew his life was over. He couldn't live without his bunny. He didn't want to.

"I'm so sorry, bunny," he whispered desperately. His heart thudded painfully in his chest as the weight of his sins started to drag him down. "I love you so much, and I know I don't deserve it, but please forgive me. I swear I won't ever doubt you again."

"I forgive you."

The words were whispered softly, but Sebastian heard them loud and clear. A strangled sob broke through Sebastian's clenched lips. It turned into another sob, then another, until Sebastian was crying in Beauregard's lap. Through it all, he felt Beauregard's fingers run through his hair, soothing him.

When he finally quieted down and regained control of himself, Sebastian sniffled, then raised his head to look at Beauregard. Tears were gathered on Beauregard's eyelashes. Sebastian inhaled softly and reached up to wipe them away.

"No, no, you can't cry."

"Honey, I'm pregnant. I cry at the drop of a hat." Beauregard chuckled then cupped his hand around the side of Sebastian's face. "I also throw up at the drop of a hat, crave some really interesting food combinations, and pee three million times a day."

For some reason, Sebastian hadn't even thought about the baby up until that point. He had been too worked up over Beauregard, maybe. But suddenly, the fact that his very pregnant mate sat in front of him hit Sebastian upside the head.

He leaned back and looked down at Beauregard's large, distended belly. He started to reach out to touch Beauregard but then hesitated, glancing at the man's face. "May I?"

Beauregard nodded. "It's your baby."

"I know." Sebastian's hands trembled as he reached down to touch Beauregard. His stomach was firm beneath his hands, rounded. "Is everything okay with the baby?"

"Yes."

"How far along are you?"

Beauregard frowned.

Sebastian quickly realized how he had phrased his words. "No, please, I…we never talked about it, and I don't know. I'm just trying to figure out how long we have until this little guy gets here. That's all. I swear."

Beauregard nodded. "I figure I have about two weeks or so to go, give or take a day."

"That doesn't leave us a lot of time then, does it?" Sebastian stood to his feet and held out his hand. "I have something I want to show you."

Beauregard looked quizzical as he took Sebastian's hand. Sebastian gently pulled him to his feet and led him from the room. Harlan and Omar fell into step behind them as they walked down to the second floor.

Sebastian stopped at the doorway next to the one that led to their quarters. He turned to Beauregard, afraid that the man might get angry for what he did. He just wanted to show his mate that he accepted their child, and this was the only thing he could think of.

"If you want to change anything, just say so, okay?"

Beauregard frowned, obviously confused. Sebastian opened the door and led his mate into the nursery he had created for their baby. Beauregard pulled away and stepped further into the room. He mouth dropped open as he stared at everything.

Sebastian stood by the doorway and wrung his hands together as he waited for his mate's verdict. Would Beauregard hate it? Love it? Feel jealous because he hadn't helped? Had Sebastian even done the right thing in designing a nursery without his mate's input?

"What do you think?" he finally asked when he couldn't stand the silence anymore.

"You did all of this?" Beauregard asked as he turned in a circle.

"Yes. I called the elder of your rabbit colony and made sure I had everything a baby bunny would need. I wanted to make sure that the little guy had everything to give him a good start."

"See?" Sebastian said as he walked over and pointed out the cloth play area he had put in. There were boxes to hide in and tunnels to climb through, all wrapped in colorful cloth so the baby wouldn't be hurt. "The elder said he would be born a bunny but be able to shift to human form after he was a week old. I wanted to make sure he had a safe place to play in either form."

"And the crib?"

Sebastian grinned as he looked across the room at the antique wooden crib. It was twice the size of a regular crib. "That was mine. My father made it for me when my mother was pregnant with me."

"That explains why it is so big."

"Baby dragons need lots of room to sleep."

"You've been busy."

Sebastian glanced around the nursery and tried to see it through Beauregard's eyes. The walls were painted a light blue color. A colorful array of animals, trees, and clouds were painted in a mural from one side of the room to the other.

The antique wooden crib had a matching changing table that was fully stocked. A mobile of flying dragons in several different colors hung over the crib. There were bookshelves full of books, a closet full of clothes, and toy boxes filled to overflowing.

His baby would want for nothing.

"Do you like it?"

"You seemed to have thought of everything."

Sebastian's heart sank. "I wanted you to know I was serious. I know you're carrying my child, a child I want very much. I wanted you to know that I believe you, that I know you were telling me the truth."

Beauregard's stare felt heavy. Sebastian swallowed hard. He quickly held up his hand. "Before you say anything I have one more thing I want to show you. I started this the day I brought you home."

Sebastian walked to a door on the far side of the room, away from the hallway entrance. He paused and waited for Beauregard to join him. "Close your eyes, bunny."

Beauregard frowned, but did as Sebastian asked. Sebastian waited for a moment then opened the door. He carefully escorted Beauregard into the middle of the room then pulled him to a stop.

"Okay, bunny, open your eyes."

Beauregard opened his eyes and almost instantly inhaled. "Sebastian."

"There's a door that leads back to our quarters, as well as the one to the nursery," Sebastian said. He pointed across the large room. "And those double doors lead out to our balcony. In the summertime, you can open them and get a cool breeze in here."

"How…how did you do this?"

"It took a little planning and a lot of workers. The architect had to retrofit the floor to hold the soil the gardener needed to plant the grass and trees. The flowers were a little easier, as they don't need much soil."

Sebastian started getting excited at the awed look on Beauregard's face. He started walking around, wanting to show Beauregard everything.

"And here, look." Sebastian pointed. "They figured out a way to put an irrigation system in so everything can be watered. The gardener will come twice a week for weeding and such, but he said that with the sun windows above, everything should grow just fine.

This way, you and the baby will have a place to run and play that's in a natural setting."

He walked back over to stand next to Beauregard, eager for his reaction. "It's safe here, Beauregard, for both you and the baby. No poisonous plants. No way for anyone to get inside. You can shift and come in here anytime you want."

"You did this for us?" Beauregard whispered. "For both of us?"

"Well, I…" Sebastian licked his dry lips. "You're a bunny. Our baby is going to be a bunny. You both need a safe place to run and play and just be. You need a place where you won't get too cold in the winter or too hot in the summer, and I thought you'd like this."

Sebastian glanced around and suddenly felt like he had made a big mistake. Beauregard wasn't saying anything. He wasn't even looking around the room. He was just staring up at Sebastian with a curious expression on his face that Sebastian couldn't decipher.

"Beauregard?"

"You do love me," Beauregard whispered.

"Yes."

A tear trailed down Beauregard's cheek.

"No, no, don't cry, bunny." Sebastian felt like a heel all over again. He knew this was a stupid idea. Who ever heard of an indoor bunny park? "You're not supposed to cry. If you don't like it—"

"I love it." Beauregard beamed. "And I love you."

Sebastian's eyes caught in his throat. Pure joy filled him. "Yeah?"

Beauregard grinned and started backing away, crooking his finger at Sebastian. His violet eyes started darkening. "I may not be as flexible as I usually am, but we can still break this place in. How do you feel about makeup sex in the great outdoors?"

Sebastian swallowed hard. He felt like his heart had jumped right into his throat. "I'm very much in favor of it."

Chapter 12

If he got his hands on Sebastian, he was going to kill him. Beauregard stormed to the door to their quarters as fast his increased girth would allow and flung it open. The two guards standing outside his door jumped and turned to look at him.

"Where is that no good, fire-breathing dragon that I'm mated to?"

"I…er…" one guard stammered.

"I believe he's in his study," the other one quickly answered.

Beauregard pushed his way past the guards and stomped down the hallway to the top of the grand staircase. He could hear the guards whispering to each other as they followed behind him. He ignored them.

"Sebastian Drakus," Beauregard shouted at the top of his lungs, "get your black scaly dragon ass up here right this minute."

The door to the study slammed open. Sebastian and Galan came running out. "What's wrong?" Sebastian asked as he started up the stairs. "Is it the baby?"

"You did this to me, you son-of-a-bitch," Beauregard screeched at the top of his lungs. "My ankles are swollen, I can't see my feet, and my back hurts. You damn well better be carrying the next kid because I'm not going to do it."

Sebastian blinked and paused on one of the steps. "Bunny?"

"I don't want to do this anymore," Beauregard started sobbing.

Sebastian was there in a second, his arms wrapping around Beauregard. "Ah, bunny, it's okay. It will be over soon and just think, love, we'll have a beautiful baby that will look just like you, with your big violet eyes and your soft white fur. He'll be beautiful."

"I'm huge," Beauregard wailed as he buried his face in Sebastian's neck. "I'm going to give birth to an elephant."

"No, love, I'm pretty sure it's just going to be a bunny."

"Bunnies are small like me." Beauregard looked down at his immense stomach. "This isn't a bunny."

"Didn't your booklet say that there could be more than one bunny baby?" Sebastian asked as he stood to his feet. He helped Beauregard up then started leading him down the hallway, back to their quarters.

"Yeah, but—"

"Then maybe we need to buy another crib, hmmm? We never discussed that. Maybe we're having twins or triplets."

"Triplets!"

"It's a possibility, love, you know that." Sebastian patted Beauregard's hand. "Remember what the colony elder said? You could have up to five kits in a litter."

"Five?" Beauregard felt his legs wobble. "What would we do with five kids?"

"Build a bigger nursery." Sebastian chuckled.

"I'm scared, Sebastian," Beauregard admitted for the first time. "What do I know about raising a baby?"

"We, love, we are raising this baby, not just you. And we'll figure it out. You won't be in this alone."

"No, but—aahhh!" Beauregard screamed as a sudden deep pain wrapped around his abdomen. He had never felt an agony so intense in his life. His knees buckled, and he grabbed for his mate. Sebastian caught him before he could hit the floor and swung him up into his arms.

"Beauregard?"

"I think…I think the baby is coming."

"Shit, shit, shit," Sebastian started swearing as he hurried down the hallway. "Galan, get the doctor. Beauregard's gone into labor."

The next few minutes were a blur of activity as Beauregard was rushed to the bedroom, undressed, and set up in the nest of blankets

and pillows he'd built in the corner of the room. He watched it all as if watching through a fog, the pain ripping through his abdomen all he could concentrate on.

The just as suddenly as it had started, the flurry of activity stopped. Beauregard felt a hand stroke his naked stomach and turned to see Sebastian stretched out beside him. He gave his mate a weak smile.

"Hey."

"Hey, bunny."

"I guess this is it."

Sebastian smiled. "I guess it is."

"The doctor is on his way?"

Beauregard breathed a sigh of relief when Sebastian nodded. He was scared to death that something would go wrong. He wanted this baby more than anything except maybe Sebastian. He couldn't live without his mate, and not just because UPAC said so.

The United Paranormal Alliance of Cooperation, or Council of Elders as most called them, had played their little game and won where Beauregard and Sebastian were concerned. They were two different shifter species that desired to spend the rest of their lives together because they loved each other, not because they had to.

"Do you need anything, love?"

Beauregard started to shake his head when another pain ripped through him. He felt it all the way down to his toes. He cried out until his voice broke. When the pain started to ebb, he noticed Sebastian gripping his hand. He glanced over, surprised to see the pained expression on his mate's face.

"Sebastian?"

"That was really intense."

Beauregard blinked. Sebastian's face was really pale. "You felt that?"

"Not like you did but—" Sebastian grimaced. "I really hate to see you in pain, bunny. I feel responsible."

A bark of laughter slipped through Beauregard's lips. "You are responsible, *daddy*."

"Daddy?" Sebastian started to smile. It grew and grew until his entire face lit up. "I like that…daddy."

"What did you think he would call you? Mom?"

Sebastian's face flushed. "I guess I never really thought about it."

"Well…" Beauregard grimaced as another wave of pain started. "You might want to think about it because this baby is on his way."

"No, no!" Sebastian said sternly, his eyes going wild. "Not until the doctor gets here."

Beauregard shook his head. He had the uncontrollable urge to push. "No choice," he panted.

"Beauregard, no!" Sebastian's voice was filled with panic as he glanced down at the lower half of Beauregard's body. "Cross your legs or something."

"Sebastian!" Beauregard shouted until the pain forced his voice into a high scream. By the time he came down, Sebastian was kneeling between his legs, beads of sweat dripping down his forehead.

Sebastian pushed his hands through his hair then glanced up at him. "Okay, we can do this. I read everything the elders could find on bunnies. I may not understand the whole temporary uterus and birthing canal thing, but I have every confidence that we can do this."

Beauregard would have felt a lot more secure in Sebastian's words if the man's hands hadn't been shaking. "I'm scared."

"There's nothing to be scared of. People have babies every day. We're going to do just fine." Sebastian's lips wobbled as they turned up in a weak grin. "And won't the doctor be surprised when he arrives and we no longer need him?"

Beauregard admired Sebastian's attempt at humor. He was just in too much pain to respond to it. It started at his abdomen and wrapped all the way around his middle to his back. Beauregard felt like claws were trying to rip him out from the inside.

"Okay, love, push."

Beauregard pushed. He had no other choice. He pushed and grunted, straining as he pushed the baby out. He heard Sebastian exclaim, but was panting too hard to look. He just closed his eyes and let his head drop back against the pile of pillows.

"Look what you did, bunny."

Beauregard opened his eyes and looked up. Sebastian had a small bundle wrapped in a blue blanket cradled in his hands. He laid it down on Beauregard's chest. Beauregard's mouth opened in awe.

"A black bunny," he whispered. "He's a black bunny."

"He is." Sebastian grinned like the proud new daddy that he was. "Part you and part me."

Beauregard started to reach up to touch the baby bunny when another pain ripped through him. He gasped. "Sebastian, I don't think we're done."

Sebastian was quick, much quicker than Beauregard would have imagined. The black bunny was carefully transferred to a waiting basket, and Sebastian went to work on delivering the next baby—a beautiful white dragon.

But Beauregard wasn't done. After the baby dragon was born, a third baby joined the family, one that mystified both Beauregard and Sebastian. It was a bunny, but he had wings like a dragon—a combination of them both, maybe?

Beauregard cradled him against his chest as Sebastian brought the basket over and pulled out the first two babies. He noticed tears trickling down Sebastian's cheeks as he stared down at the babies.

"Look at them, bunny," Sebastian whispered. "Look what we did."

Beauregard chuckled at the awe in Sebastian's voice. The man sounded like he had never seen a baby before. Beauregard still felt sore and woozy and more tired than he ever remembered feeling in his life. But he was happy, and he was with Sebastian and their babies. For now, that was enough.

* * * *

Beauregard laid the last sleeping baby down in the crib with his brothers then quietly tiptoed out of the nursery, closing the door behind him. He leaned back against the door and chuckled slightly.

It had taken forever to get the three little ones down for a nap. Shifter babies were nothing like human babies, especially ones that learned quickly that they had their father wrapped around their little fingers.

Sebastian was a sucker for a whimper or a cry. He'd come running at the smallest sound. It took the babies about a week to figure that out. Once they learned to shift into human form, there was no stopping them. They wanted Sebastian all of the time.

Beauregard was a little envious of that, but he had his own connection to the babies. They wanted him when they needed a cuddle or were feeling upset. They wanted Sebastian when they wanted to play or felt scared.

Beauregard figured it all worked out in the end somehow. Still, after just a couple of months, he had a hard time remembering what life was like before kids. He also often had a hard time remembering that he was mated and not just a parent.

The babies took up a lot of their time, especially when they learned the smallest and most special of all of them was a fire-burping bunny that could fly. There were now fire extinguishers in every room in the house, and never an open window.

Beauregard pushed away from the nursery door when the outer door opened. He smiled when he saw Harlan and his mate, Jeremy, walk in. "Hey, guys, I really appreciate this. Sebastian and I haven't had a moment alone in ages."

"Not a problem at all." Harlan grinned. "We love watching the babies whenever we get the chance."

Beauregard jabbed a finger at Harlan. "Be careful what you say, my friend, or I might take you up on that."

Jeremy laughed and purposely pushed against his mate. "Don't let the big guy fool you. He loves the babies, but more than a few hours and he starts pulling his hair out."

"Not to worry, Harlan, we won't be more than a couple of hours. Sebastian and I just need a couple of hours of adult time."

Harlan and Jeremy grinned. Harlan waved a hand at him. "Go, have fun. We'll be here. Galan is on call in case we need anything, and Carlos and Jenna are spotting us in a little while. We'll be fine."

Beauregard wasn't stupid enough to argue. He grabbed his little purse and clipped it on to his belt. It carried all of the supplies in it he needed to get laid. Now, he just needed to find his mate.

He waved good-bye and headed out the door. He suspected that Sebastian was in his study downstairs. That's where he usually was at this time of the day. Beauregard had a little bounce in his step as he made his way down the stairs.

He had just reached the bottom of the steps when the study door opened, and Sebastian walked out with another man that looked slightly familiar. Beauregard paused at the bottom step, not sure if he should approach or not. Sebastian was frowning.

"Sebastian?" Beauregard knew he probably shouldn't interrupt, but he didn't like Sebastian frowning. He'd prefer to be chastised than to see the frustration on Sebastian's face. "Is everything okay?"

Sebastian and the other man turned. Sebastian smiled the moment he spotted Beauregard. "Hey, bunny, come meet Elder Solaris."

Beauregard walked over, eyeing the other man suspiciously. Nothing good ever came from a visit by a UPAC elder. Still, Beauregard nodded respectfully. He would never shame his mate in his own house.

"Elder Solaris."

"Beauregard, isn't it?" the elder asked.

"Yes." Beauregard breathed a little easier when he felt Sebastian's arm wrap around his shoulders.

"I understand congratulations are in order."

Beauregard glanced at Sebastian for a moment then nodded to the elder. "Yes, thank you."

"And how are the little ones?" the elder asked. "You have three, am I correct?"

"Yes."

Beauregard wondered just how much Sebastian had told the elder. He wasn't concerned about the bunny or dragon babies he had given birth to. They would be accepted by all of shifter society.

His concern was for the smallest one, the hybrid of both him and Sebastian. Beauregard had spent enough of his life being different and ostracized because of that difference. He didn't want that for his child.

"I thank you for your interest, elder," Sebastian said. "All three are healthy and happy. I'd take you to see them, but it's their naptime, and it's few and far between that we get all three of them down at the same time."

Beauregard drew in a relieved breath. Sebastian wasn't going to tell the elder about the babies other than that. He should have known. Sebastian was fiercely protective of their children. Nothing was going to get through a dragon father.

"Well." The elder clasped his hands together in front of him. "I just wanted to stop by and assure you that Derek would no longer be a problem. His connection with you has been broken, and he's fully bonded with his mate."

Beauregard's eyes widened as he suddenly realized where he recognized the elder from. He was one of the men that had come when Derek attacked Sebastian. Despite the elder's words of assurance, Beauregard instantly went on alert.

"Where is he?" he asked.

"He is safe. His mate has taken him home to America. But not to worry, the connection has been fully broken. Derek is currently in the

midst of mating heat and fully bonded with his mate." The elder turned his attention to Beauregard. "Myron sends his regards by the way, and he hopes to be able to thank you for Derek's life at the next gathering."

Beauregard stiffened. There was no way he wanted go get anywhere close to Derek's crazy ass. He also didn't want Sebastian near him.

"We'll see," Sebastian said quickly. "I think we'll give it a little while before we agree to meet either of them anywhere. I won't have my mate placed in danger."

"Very well." The elder nodded. "I can understand your concern, but the next gathering isn't for another four years. There's plenty of time for Derek's bond with his mate to grow and strengthen, just as there is between you and your mate."

"Our bond is perfect," Beauregard protested. He was miffed that anyone would question the bond he had with Sebastian.

"Good, good," the elder said. "I'm glad to hear that. Not everyone has been as fortunate as the two of you."

"Then maybe you elders should have thought of that before you started meddling in our matings," Beauregard snipped.

"Beauregard!" Sebastian exclaimed.

"Oh please." Beauregard rolled his eyes. "You were thinking the same thing."

The corner of Sebastian's mouth twitched. "True, but I didn't say it."

"So sue me. I'm a bunny."

"Then it's a good thing I have such an attraction to your cottontail ass."

The elder laughed. Beauregard started to squirm. He could smell the arousal starting to pour off of his mate, and it was making him hard as a rock. If he didn't get away soon, he wasn't going to care that the elder was standing there. He'd attack Sebastian anyway.

"I need to talk to you when you're done here, Sebastian," Beauregard said as he pushed away from his mate's arms. "I'll go wait for you in your study."

He turned and smiled at the elder as best he could. "It was nice to see you again. Please give my regards to the rest of the council." Beauregard bowed his head then walked away as fast as his hard-on would allow.

Beauregard heard Sebastian saying his good-byes to the elder as he hurried to the study and shut the door behind him. He had his clothes off before he reached the desk. He folded and set them off to the side then grabbed his supplies out of his little bunny purse and set them on the desk.

They had three beautiful babies. For right now, they didn't need any more. Condoms were a definite need until they chose to have children again. Beauregard still remembered the pain of labor. It would be awhile before he was ready to do that again.

Once everything was set up, Beauregard draped his naked body over Sebastian's desk, butt plug firmly inserted in his ass. He laid his hands up over his head and planted his feet on the edge of the desk then spread his knees. He wanted Sebastian to lose his mind when he came in. This display should do it.

Beauregard had been counting the days until the doctor cleared him to resume sexual relations with his mate. The few jerk offs they had together since the babies were born were great, but they didn't make up for the connection Beauregard felt when Sebastian fucked him. That's what he needed.

Beauregard tensed when he heard the door open. He was so amped and ready to go, a stiff wind could have tossed him over the edge. His body ached to be touched, caressed. His ass ached to be filled as only Sebastian could do. It had been ages.

"Hey, love, what did you—" Beauregard grinned when he heard Sebastian inhale sharply. "Fuck me," the man whispered.

Beauregard leaned up on his elbows and winked at Sebastian. "I'd rather you fuck me."

"Is it okay?" Sebastian asked quickly. He seemed hesitant but his eyes were hungrily eating Beauregard up. "Did the doctor clear you?"

Beauregard held up the piece of paper the doctor had given him. He knew Sebastian wouldn't fuck him unless he was completely healthy. Sebastian was fanatical about taking care of him and his health.

"I have the doctor's note right here." Beauregard let the note flutter to the floor and grabbed his hard cock, stroking himself as incentive to Sebastian to hurry the hell up. He wanted something long and hard in his ass and soon. "And a condom."

Sebastian's sharp bark of laughter filled the air as he crossed the room, peeling his clothes off as he walked. "I always knew you were a smart bunny."

Beauregard beamed.

"Now," Sebastian said as he dropped the last of his clothing on the floor and leaned over Beauregard's body, "what else do you have for me?"

Beauregard grinned and brought his legs up to wrap around Sebastian's waist. "It'll be so much better if I show you," he said as he grabbed Sebastian's hair and pulled his head down for a kiss.

Sebastian let him have his way for about ten seconds before taking over the kiss, claiming Beauregard's mouth with a hunger that made him tremble. There was just nothing on earth like being claimed by a dragon.

"Missed you, Sebastian," Beauregard whispered when they came up for air.

"I haven't gone anywhere, love."

Beauregard tilted his head back when Sebastian began to nuzzle his neck. He felt hot. Little tendrils of electricity where winding their way through his body, igniting every nerve ending.

"Missed thisss," Beauregard hissed when Sebastian's lips trailed down to his nipple and latched on. He arched, pushing his nipple into Sebastian's mouth. Sebastian knew just how hard to nibble and lick to send ecstasy racing through Beauregard's body.

"I can see that you missed me." Sebastian grinned as he raised his head. "You brought me a present."

Beauregard inhaled sharply when Sebastian reached down and jiggled the plug in his ass, pushing it against his prostate. He tightened he legs around Sebastian's waist and lifted his butt off the edge of the desk.

"Sebastian," he cried out.

"Does my little bunny want something?"

"Yes!" Beauregard screamed.

"Ah, now see…" Sebastian pulled the plug free and dropped it on the desk. Beauregard felt him fumbling around and then a moment later, Sebastian's hot hard length pushed into him. "That was the sound I was waiting for."

A high-pitched cry fell from Beauregard's lips as Sebastian grabbed his hips and hitched them up further. Beauregard pulled his legs up, his knees bent up as high as he could get them. They brushed against his armpit.

"Grab your ankles, bunny."

Beauregard arched an eyebrow but did as Sebastian demanded, stretching his legs up until he could grab his ankles. Sebastian's hands covered his and pushed them up even further, until his ankles were up around his ears. It changed the angle of his body. Sebastian's cock hit Beauregard's sweet spot with every thrust.

"Fuck, I love how flexible you are," Sebastian growled as he pounded into Beauregard. "One of these days I'm going to tie you up like this, fuck you until you're unconscious."

Beauregard thought that was a grand plan. His hands gripped Sebastian's hair tighter then slid through the silken strands down to the man's neck. His nails came out and scored down Sebastian's back.

Sebastian roared and slammed into Beauregard. Puffs of black smoke started spiraling out of Sebastian's nostrils. The desk creaked under the power of Sebastian's thrusts. Beauregard's body ached. The world started to narrow down to the hard cock in his ass and the man hovering over the top of him.

When Sebastian's sharp teeth sank into Beauregard's neck, his scream filled the room. An orgasm of epic proportions seized Beauregard. Hot seed shot from his untouched cock and smeared between their bodies.

He whimpered and dropped his head forward when Sebastian suddenly picked him up into the air. His legs were dropped and strong hands grabbed his ass, pulling his butt cheeks apart as Sebastian continued to slam into him.

Beauregard expected Sebastian to sit in one of the study room chairs or at the very least, push him against a wall. He didn't expect the large man to just stand there, lifting him up and down, impaling him over and over again.

Beauregard glanced up at Sebastian. He felt ten feet tall when he saw the desire burning in Sebastian's eyes, the way his jaw was clenched. The man was close, so very close. Beauregard could see it. He could feel it in the tensing of Sebastian's body.

Without a thought of the consequences, Beauregard leaned forward and sank his teeth into one of Sebastian's pectoral muscles. A slight coppery taste filled his mouth even as Sebastian's ferocious roar filled his ears.

Fire licked along Beauregard's shoulders and spine. Powerful shots of lava-hot cum filled his ass. Beauregard cried out as his body warmed. He was surrounded, inside and out by a dragon's fire, his dragon.

Sebastian was panting heavily as he gently laid Beauregard back down on the desk and leaned over him. Beauregard could still feel small trembles shaking his big mate. He reached up and smoothed the sweat-drenched hair from Sebastian's face.

"Love you, Sebby."

Sebastian gave a halfhearted attempt at a growl then started laughing. "I fucking love being mated to a bunny."

THE END

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Stormy believes the only thing sexier than a man in cowboy boots is two or three men in cowboy boots. She also believes in love at first sight, soul Mates, true love, and happy endings.

Stormy lives in the great Northwest region of the USA, with her gorgeous husband and soul Mate, six very active teenagers, two boxer/collie puppies, one old biddy cat, and one fish.

You can usually find her cuddled in bed with a book in her hand and a puppy in her lap, or on her laptop, creating the next sexy man for one of her stories. Stormy welcomes comments from readers. You can find her website at www.stormyglenn.com

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