



Coffee & Cuffs

Rocky Lake Littles



Athena Steller

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to my found family within the MM romance genre. Your support is so appreciated. Thank you for the encouragement and always giving me the push I need.

Coffee & Cuffs: Book Blurb

Sam Stewart, manager of Rocky Lake Coffeehouse, bisexual little and pretty princess, has been searching for a Daddy at every opportunity. Living in Rocky Lake, Arizona, has been a refreshing change from the cold house he'd grown up in. He's found wonderful friends and is happy for the first time in his life. He's left the life of privilege and secrets behind to forge ahead on his own.

Only six weeks into his new position as the head of the narcotics division for Rocky Lake Police Department, Lieutenant Carson Cirillo is facing a formidable opponent that has already gotten away from him once. An attack on the employees of the Rocky Lake Coffeehouse not only thrusts Carson into the middle of a dangerous investigation but makes him face a past he thought he'd buried for good.

With Sam trying to recover from an attack, Carson attempting to protect Sam, and both men's pasts coming back, it seems like everything is against the two men finding happiness together. But when you have a determined Daddy and a sassy little willing to go into battle for each other, their foes should be worried.

Rocky Lake Little Collection

Welcome to Rocky Lake Arizona!

This collection of stories based in the fictitious town of Rocky Lake, Arizona, is filled with our favorite Daddy/ little dynamics.

Down in this small tourist town you'll find Rocky Lake Coffeehouse where three young men, littles, have forged a tight friendship with the need they have in common.

Coffee & Kisses

Caden Robb is a survivor. After arriving in Rocky Lake, Arizona, Caden found a home for the first time in his life. He's bonded and forged a close friendship with two other young men that introduced him to age regression. Now all Caden needs is to find the right Daddy that has the patience to help Caden through his past trauma.

For six months, Lincoln Daniels, narcotics detective, has been visiting Rocky Lake Coffeehouse to lay eyes on the small shy barista that calls to every Daddy instinct Lincoln possesses. Caden is barely able to speak to Lincoln on most days, so how is Lincoln going to show Caden what he has to offer?

When dangerous drugs hit the streets and a cartel threatens the residents of Rocky Lake, Lincoln has his work cut out keeping not only Caden safe, but everyone around him. It will take help from new friends to save Caden when the threat hits too close to home.

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Coffee, Cops, & Tattoos

Adam Carter is too big, too busy, and too tired to ever find the Daddy that he dreams about. He's had his heart broken one too many times to ever want to try again. With his two best friends, his job, and his schoolwork, Adam is fine with how he's living his life. He'd be completely happy if he could stop fantasizing about the two men who've been there for him during his darkest times.

Nash Johnson has been looking for love in all the wrong places. He puts his heart on the line repeatedly, only to be told he isn't worth keeping. Realizing he needs a poly relationship should have been the hard part. It isn't. Nash has just about given up on ever finding what he needs until he sees Adam at the Rocky Lake Coffeehouse and then is introduced to the hot tattooed giant across the street. Maybe Nash has found what he's been looking for after all.

Lucas Van Blair had barely been in town when he'd spotted trouble at the Rocky Lake Coffeehouse across the street from his newly opened tattoo parlor. He was in the right place at the

right time to save the three boys from the attack, but that night changes everything for Lucas. He's never considered having two partners at the same time but now he can't imagine not having Adam and Nash in his arms, heart, and bed.

Trigger Warning/ Content Warning

This book contains references to past child abuse, homophobia, drug use and overdosing death, living on the streets, parental abandonment, and more. If any of this could be a negative trigger, please do not read. Your mental health is the utmost important and the author wants you to remain safe and happy. All events are spoken about and not detailed and of course there is a happy ever after as the characters are survivors.

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Prologue

Sam

Ow! Ow, ow, ow, his fucking face hurt and Sam Stewart did not do well with pain. He tried to glare at the tall muscular man who'd somehow taken it upon himself to be Sam's guard for the night. Sam didn't know how he'd ended up in the emergency room with Lincoln and Nash's boss and he was too tired to figure it out. He just knew that he needed to get out of the hospital and the big man was stopping him. So the big man got the glare directed at him since Sam was in pain...and needy...and this sucked!

"He's in pain!" Lieutenant Carson Cirillo bellowed. "Get him something!"

The nurses were scrambling to get away from the big man's anger as they tried to take care of Sam as well. As the lieutenant grumbled more curses, pacing beside the hospital bed that Sam had been deposited on, Sam reached out and grabbed the lieutenant's sleeve.

The lieutenant frowned at him.

"Shh," Sam pleaded. "Too loud."

The lieutenant's entire presence changed right in front of Sam's eyes. The anger left him in a rush of breath that he blew out before his eyes filled with compassion. "Sorry."

Sam nodded. He continued to hold the ice compress against his cheek as he stared at the older man. He'd never met the attractive lieutenant previously but the few times that Lincoln or Nash had mentioned Lieutenant Carson Cirillo, they spoke with respect. Sam could understand why the two detectives liked their boss. The lieutenant was no-nonsense but had kind eyes and obviously cared that Sam was in pain. Maybe Sam should stop glaring at him after all.

The lieutenant's phone chimed, and he pulled it from his pocket.

“Caden? Adam?” Sam needed to know that his friends were okay. Wow, this was a mess. He hadn’t been able to see Caden as he’d been whisked away in an ambulance. Adam... Adam had been crying. Adam never cried. He was strong and resilient, and fuck...Sam wanted out of the hospital. He hated being separated from his friends.

“They are both fine. You’re the one that everyone is worried about,” Lieutenant Cirillo answered as he typed back a message.

Normally Sam would be happy as a clam with all the attention on him. He wasn’t happy now. He’d never been so terrified in his life when the gunman had forced his way into the coffee shop before hitting him. They’d messed up. Lincoln had warned them to be on the lookout for trouble, but Caden had almost been taken because Sam and Adam hadn’t been good enough to protect him.

It had been Caden who ended up saving them all.

There was a knock on the door and the doctor that Sam had been introduced to earlier stepped in.

“Good news,” Doctor Jones announced. “No broken bones. Your cheek is bruised, and I know you’re in pain, but you’ll be fine. I’ll get you some pain meds and release you.”

“I can go home?” Sam repeated. Yes! He really wanted to go home.

“Yes, Mr. Stewart. Give me about twenty minutes.”

Sam watched the doctor leave his room again. That was it? He’d been hit in the face with a gun and all he got was some pain pills and sent home? That was anticlimactic. Sure, Sam had been demanding to go home but he...just expected something else. And now that he could go home Sam didn’t know...maybe he didn’t have to go home. He could go by Caden’s apartment and check on his friend. Except Caden was probably with his Daddy. He didn’t need Sam to hover over him. Caden was the only one of them that had a partner to take care of him. Maybe he would go to Adam’s. Adam was as

alone as Sam. The two of them had been searching for a Daddy of their own ever since Sam had moved to Rocky Lake. They hadn't been as lucky as Caden to stumble across the Daddy of their dreams. Not that Sam was jealous of Caden. Okay, he might be a little jealous, but Caden deserved to be loved and cared for by Lincoln.

“Hey, are you okay? Did they check you for a concussion?”

Sam smiled. Then winced when smiling hurt his face. “You heard the doctor. I'm fine.”

Lieutenant Cirillo scowled. “We should get a second opinion.”

“Naw, it's fine.” Sam waved his ice pack around. “My dad always said I had a hard head.” That had been one of the better things that his father had said about Sam.

The lieutenant's lips twitched.

“Besides, I'm tired,” Sam admitted. Bone-tired and simply confused and a little scared.

“We'll get you out of here and home.” The lieutenant smiled and it made him look ten years younger. Not that Sam thought there was anything wrong with the way that the lieutenant looked. He was a tall muscular man with short brown hair with strands of gray around the temples. Sam loved that gray. It was the lieutenant's kind dark eyes that pulled Sam in though. He could tell the older man was attracted to him and Sam found that funny as he was definitely not looking his best.

Placing his head back on the pillow, Sam allowed himself to drift. He loved his life in Rocky Lake, and he never expected that he'd be injured or that a crazy gunman would target him or his best friends. There was a small part inside him that knew if he hadn't run away from home, he would never have had to deal with the trauma. Of course, his life would be much different than it was now. Instead of love and acceptance, Sam would have remained locked away from the

world. He might have been safe behind the closed door, but he wouldn't have been happy.

Sam hadn't known happiness until he'd moved to the small inclusive town in Arizona as far from his hometown as he could get. Sam didn't have to hide who he was any longer. Even if it meant going against another man with a gun, Sam wouldn't change anything.

"Hey," the lieutenant said softly as he brushed Sam's hair off his forehead. "The nurse is here to let you go."

Sam struggled to open his eyes. He must have been out of it more than he realized as he hadn't heard the door open, or the nurse speak. She must have spoken with the lieutenant as the older man held paperwork in his hand.

"Let me help."

He didn't argue as the lieutenant gently put his arm around Sam's shoulders and eased him into a sitting position. Sam slung his legs off the side of the narrow hospital bed then rose. Dizziness hit but the lieutenant was there for support.

"Hang on to me," Lieutenant Cirillo demanded.

"Mm," Sam murmured. "Boss me around, Daddy."

Lieutenant Cirillo's eyes widened and that was when Sam realized that he'd spoken out loud. Damn it, now the lieutenant was going to freak out. Instead, the lieutenant chuckled. "I think we'll make sure that your brain is not scrambled before we come up with nicknames for each other."

"I come up with the best nicknames," Sam claimed. Even he could tell his words were slurring.

The walk from the hospital, the drive to his apartment, even getting inside was kind of a blur. It wasn't until the lieutenant was undressing him that Sam realized that he'd sort of zoned out.

"Sam, you need to move your hands," the lieutenant told him.

Lieutenant hottie. Cuddly Carson. No! Lieutenant Daddy. He was such a Daddy!

“Hands, Sam!”

Hands? He had two hands, didn't he? Where were his hands? Sam looked down. Oh! There they were. Under Lieutenant Daddy's shirt. How'd they get there?

* * * * *

His bed was so soft. Sam loved his bed. He rubbed his good cheek against his pillow. Not that he was feeling that much pain. God bless the meds that the hospital had given him. Sam had never had any pain meds prior to this incident. He didn't like in drugs—at least anything stronger than over-the-counter—barely drank, and didn't see that changing. Not after hearing Caden's story about his mother and how drugs had affected Caden's entire life.

As comfortable as he was, Sam needed to pee.

Gingerly, he sat up in bed. How he got into bed, Sam had no idea. He really didn't remember much after arriving at the hospital. Sam kicked off his blankets and got off the bed. Huh, okay at least the room wasn't spinning. He thought the room had been moving earlier. Maybe not. He wasn't sure of anything.

Shuffling across the room as he slowly made his way to the bathroom Sam reached the toilet to relieve himself before looking down. He had on his favorite pink pair of silk pajama bottoms and a matching camisole top but couldn't remember changing into them. There was so much about the night that Sam would have to think about later, including his poor face. Even as he washed his hands, Sam avoided looking in the mirror. He did not want to see what his cheek looked like.

Having a dry mouth, Sam decided to get some water then he's head back to bed.

He shuffled his feet again out of the bathroom and across the room. His bedroom door was cracked open which was

weird. Sam did not normally close his door at all. He pushed the door open and stuck his head out, but nothing appeared out of place.

Sam went to the fridge and grabbed a bottle of water. As he closed the fridge, his gaze landed on the shape on the couch. The large shape on the couch. There was someone there. He walked cautiously to the back of the couch and leaned over it.

Why the hell was Lincoln's lieutenant sleeping on his couch?

Suddenly more memories of the hospital came back as well as some from his apartment earlier. Well shit. Sam had totally been hitting on the attractive older man. And he looked really good sprawled out in front of Sam. Which of course gave Sam some naughty ideas.

He quietly uncapped the water and drank half of it as he watched Lieutenant Carson Cirillo. Sam knew about the lieutenant but hadn't met him prior to that night. The night might have totally sucked but one good thing came from it. He'd met the lieutenant and Sam could not regret that.

Deciding that he would probably not get this chance again, Sam set the water on the side as he walked around the couch. He stood in front of the older man before climbing onto Carson's lap.

The lieutenant jerked upright, but Sam had been prepared and pushed on Carson's shoulders to lay his head down on Carson's wide chest.

"What's wrong?" Carson asked, his hand landing on Sam's lower back.

"Needed a hug," Sam told him. It wasn't a lie.

"A hug, huh?"

"A big hug," Sam confirmed.

"Okay, I guess you do deserve a big hug for everything you've been through."

Oh, this poor, poor man. He had no idea that giving in to Sam would be the beginning of the end. Sam was high maintenance and until he got what he wanted, Sam did not give up on things. He was a precious princess and should always be treated accordingly.

On the verge of falling back asleep, he hummed as Carson rubbed his back.

“Can I ask you something?” Carson inquired.

“Sure,” Sam mumbled. He didn’t care what Carson wanted as long as Sam didn’t have to move.

“I saw your name on the paperwork from the hospital.”

Sam stiffened while he started to sit up.

“No, shh.” Carson tightened his arms. “It’s okay. I just wanted to make sure you were safe. I saw your father on the news a couple of weeks ago. He’s a horrible man. I would never expect you could come from someone like that.”

“He hates everything about me,” Sam confessed. He never talked about his family. Ever. Not even his best friends knew anything about the life he’d escaped from. “He doesn’t know where I am though.”

“Okay, I just wanted to check.”

“Don’t tell anyone. Please!” Sam would beg if he had to. No one could know.

“I swear. No one else has to know.”

“Thank you.” Sam settled back onto Carson’s strong body.

“I got you,” Carson whispered.

“Mm.” This was perfect. Sam wondered how he could get the lieutenant to be his body pillow every night going forward.

Chapter One

Sam

“Are you absolutely sure, Susie?” Sam Stewart grasped the older lady’s hand with his and gave it a squeeze.

Susie nodded as she gave him a watery smile. “I am. I just can’t handle the thought of anything ever happening in the shop again. I know it will be safe with you.”

Sam wasn’t as certain as Susie, but he didn’t want the older woman to feel guilty for selling the coffee shop. It had only been a month since the attack from the drug cartel right in the middle of the coffee shop. The cartel had been after one of Sam’s best friends and co-worker Caden Robb, and Sam had been injured that night. Only a month but Sam felt like so much had happened in just thirty days. Susie, racked with guilt, even though nothing was her fault, had decided to sell the shop and approached Sam with her offer. Susie was one of the few people who knew Sam’s true identity. He blew out a deep breath then turned his attention back to the manager of the bank.

“Mr. Stewart.” Joe Allen, bank manager, smiled at Sam. “All the funding went through, and we just need a few signatures and you’ll be the new owner of The Rocky Lake Coffeehouse.”

Sam did his best to return the man’s kind smile, but his stomach was in knots. This was a lot of responsibility, and he still hadn’t told his two best friends what was going on. There was no way that Sam could keep his secret now. He just hoped Adam and Caden understood why he hadn’t said anything sooner.

He signed until his hand cramped and walked Susie to her car and kissed her cheek before he sat in his own vehicle and pulled out his phone.

Sam: Are we still on for this afternoon?

He sent the text to the group message thread he had with Adam and Caden.

Adam: Waiting on you.

Caden: Daddy made us snacks!

Caden's excitement was obvious even through the text message.

Sam: On my way.

Sam dropped his phone onto the passenger seat. He started his SUV, but before he put the vehicle in gear, Sam laid his head on the steering wheel and took a long deep breath. And then he took another. His phone chimed so Sam lifted his head and reached for the device again. He expected the message to be from Adam or Caden but perked up when he saw the name across the screen.

Lieutenant Daddy: Are you still going to tell Adam and Caden this afternoon?

Sam gave a little wiggle as he quickly swiped the screen to click on the message from Lieutenant Daddy. Okay, so Carson wasn't actually Sam's Daddy, yet. He wasn't Sam's anything but that didn't mean that Sam couldn't dream. He was all about manifesting his dreams and he often dreamt about the lieutenant wanting him.

Sam: Headed there now.

Sam sent the message before sending another.

Wish me luck!

The response came back fast.

Lieutenant Daddy: You don't need luck. They love you and they'll understand. Call me later if you need to.

Oh, Sam will be calling his lieutenant later no matter how his news was received.

Sam: Thanks. Talk later.

Just that small interaction was enough to give Sam the boost of confidence he needed.

Of course Adam and Caden would understand. They were Sam's best friends. No, they were more than friends. They were family. None of them had anyone else but each other and that was okay because they were enough.

He backed out of the parking space at the bank and headed in the direction of Lincoln's house. Caden had officially moved in with his Daddy and out of the apartment over the coffee shop. Technically, Sam now owned the apartment that Caden had lived in, but it wasn't like he was changing anything. If Caden ever wanted to return to the apartment, Sam wouldn't change the terms that Susie had set up.

The closer he got to Lincoln's house; the calmer Sam felt.

It wasn't like he'd meant to keep his secret from his best friends. It was just that he didn't tell anyone where he came from. Adam and Caden both knew that Sam wasn't in contact with his family any longer and didn't ask questions because they understood it wasn't something that Sam wanted to talk about. Sam hoped that didn't bite him in the butt.

Pulling into Lincoln's drive, Sam smiled at the fall decorations covering the porch and balcony. The leaves, pumpkins, and scarecrows were adorable, but Sam would bet that Lincoln had done it all for Caden.

They were all still learning more about Caden and the horror he'd gone through growing up. Sam wasn't the only one that wanted to give Caden everything that he'd missed by being homeless most of his life.

As Sam turned off the vehicle, the front door opened and Caden stood, hopping around. He had to be in full little mode. The adorable orange matching pajama bottom and top with black cats were perfect for Caden. Even the fuzzy orange slippers on his feet matched Caden's little outfit. Lincoln loved to spoil Caden, all of them, it wasn't only Caden who received fun gifts from his Daddy.

Sam couldn't stop smiling.

Lincoln had been wonderful for Caden and even took the time to lavish attention on him and Adam. The perfect Daddy in every way. Even as much as he and Adam tried, they'd never been able to fill the deep need inside Caden that needed a strong partner.

He turned off the SUV and climbed out before he raced up the walk and jumped up the stairs.

Caden launched himself into his arms and Sam caught him although he did stumble. Another hand on his back helped steady him and Sam lifted his head to see Adam there. Adam was always there when Sam needed him. Even as he continued to hug Caden, Sam turned his face and buried his nose in Adam's neck.

Why had he been so scared? There was no way that either Adam or Caden would turn their backs on him.

"He's been worried about you," Adam whispered in his ear.

Sam tightened his arms around Caden as he nodded against Adam's neck.

"It's nothing bad," Sam assured his friends. "It's just something I should have told you a long time ago."

Caden pulled back to peer up at him. "You know we love you. You can tell us anything."

"I do know that," Sam replied with a smile.

"Would you boys like to come inside and sit or is the party happening up on the front porch?"

"Daddy!" Caden pulled away then whirled around. "We're trying to show Sam how much we love him."

"I know, baby, but maybe you should come inside. You'll get cold."

Caden sighed but did shuffle closer to Lincoln.

Lincoln winked at him before lifting Caden off his feet and carrying him into the house.

“Come on.” Adam wrapped his arm around Sam’s neck, pulling him forward. “It’ll be fine.”

It would be.

They followed Lincoln and Caden into the house. Adam closed and locked the door behind them. He even set the alarm.

Of course Adam knew the alarm code. It was such an Adam thing to do. Even though there was no immediate danger to Caden or any of them from the cartel, that didn’t mean that they were safe. Rocky Lake had been changing over the last few years and not for the better.

Sam knew his way around Lincoln’s house so he headed to the living room where he could hear Caden talking. Walking in, he really looked at his friend. Caden had the cutest pout on his face as he’d been captured in Lincoln’s lap. Lincoln was dressed casually in a black pair of sweatpants and a white shirt with a silly pumpkin on it. Wow, just the beginning of October and it seemed that Halloween was already in the air. He turned as Adam walked in behind him in a new pair of pajama bottoms that were also orange but had leaves on them.

“I feel overdressed,” Sam quipped. He was not pouting. Not at all.

“Then you should go change.” Lincoln held out a pile of clothes to Sam and Sam was relieved that orange seemed to be missing from his clothes. He did hate that color although he enjoyed the fall decorations around town.

Sam grinned down at the pajama set then ran toward the closest bathroom. He really did have the best of friends and Lincoln was an awesome Daddy. It couldn’t be easy for Lincoln to not only have a new relationship with Caden but also understand that Sam and Adam came along.

Sam quickly undressed before he unfolded the set of clothes he’d been given. It matched the fall theme that was

happening but more Sam's style. The pink pants and shirt were covered with dancing witches, and he grinned. The clothes fit perfectly, and Sam folded up the jeans and sweater that he'd worn to the bank, leaving them on the counter for the drive home. One last deep breath and he turned toward the door and opened it.

He skipped into the living room and presented himself like the fabulous person he was.

Caden clapped, Lincoln laughed, and Adam rolled his eyes. Just the reactions he expected.

"Snacks and drinks are on the coffee table. I'll let you all talk." Lincoln started to stand but Sam held up his hand, shaking his head.

"Stay, please. This is something that I want to share with you too."

"If you're sure?" Lincoln settled back in his chair and Caden dropped back down onto his Daddy's lap.

Sam sat on the couch next to Adam, wondering where to start. The beginning was probably the best place, right? Adam reached over and captured Sam's hand before giving him an encouraging squeeze. "My full name is Samson Emerson Stewart."

Chapter Two

Sam

“Huh,” Caden said with a frown. “I always thought Sam stood for Samuel.”

He didn’t get it, but Sam wasn’t surprised. Caden didn’t keep up with current events and he never watched the news. The looks on Adam’s and Lincoln’s face showed Sam they knew what his secret meant.

“I had no idea,” Adam said. He cleared his throat. “I’m sorry.”

Adam shifted beside him on the couch and lifted Sam into his lap. He hugged Sam tightly and Sam knew that he really was loved. He really hadn’t had anything to worry about.

“I...what am I missing?” Caden whispered.

“Sam will explain,” Lincoln responded quietly.

“Sam?”

Looking across the room into Caden’s confused but trusting eyes, Sam gave his best smile. “My father is Senator Emerson Stewart.”

Caden shrugged. “Okay? That means he’s some hotshot guy, right? You don’t talk to him though. What does it matter?”

“I haven’t spoken to anyone in my family except my grandmother, my mom’s mom, since the night that I graduated from high school and ran away from home.”

“Ran away?” Caden replied.

“The only person who knew I was leaving or where I ended up was my grandmother.” Sam gripped Adam’s arm. “My father started off as a fundamental Christian preacher before becoming very well known for his sermons shown on television. He then decided to get into politics.”

“Your dad was a preacher?” Caden asked with a frown.

“A very fire and brimstone kind of preacher,” Adam said. “All gays are heading straight to hell and all that.”

“Oh.” Caden’s shoulders slumped. “That’s terrible.”

“It was hell growing up in my house,” Sam shared. “My father was not one to spare the rod.”

Caden frowned again but Lincoln whispered into his ear and his eyes widened. “He hit you?”

Sam shrugged. “Hit me, beat me, locked me in my room, called me names. It started before I can even remember.”

Caden’s eyes filled. “Sam!”

“Everyone around us knew. Our family, the congregation, and even my father’s staff. It was something that no one stopped and by the time I was a teenager, I was fully rebelling. The clothes and makeup? If I was going to be beaten, then I was going to be beaten for being true to myself. The night before my high school graduation, my father found a pair of my pink thongs in the laundry, and I honestly thought he was going to kill me. I packed my bags that night and hid them in my car. I was supposed to meet my family for this big elaborate dinner to celebrate but after I walked the stage, I got in my car and drove like a bat out of hell. I didn’t stop driving for twenty-four hours.”

Across from him, Caden’s tears fell, and Sam’s own eyes filled up.

“I had to get away.”

Adam was hugging him so tight that it was getting hard to breathe.

“I stayed with my grandmother. She never told anyone where I was, but my family was getting increasingly suspicious. They threatened to come retrieve me, but my grandmother hated my father, was disappointed in the daughter she’d raised, and protected me. I was sent here to one of her best friends so I would be safe.”

“Susie,” Adam said softly.

Sam nodded. “My grandmother and Susie had been friends in college. She knew that I would be safe here and no one knew where Susie had moved to.”

“I’m glad you came here,” Caden said. “What if you went somewhere else and we never met?”

“We were always meant to be friends and we all came here for a reason,” Adam stated firmly. “But there is a reason that you’re telling us now.”

Adam was the smart one out of all of them. He’d probably even figured out what Sam had to say. It didn’t make the words any easier to speak though.

“No one other than Susie knows who I am,” Sam told them. “Oh, and the lieutenant. He knows too.”

“My lieutenant?” Lincoln asked.

“Yeah, he saw my paperwork at the hospital and my full name. He knew immediately.”

“I still don’t get about the name thing. How everyone knows?” Caden said.

“My father is very outspoken about his view on homosexuals and how awful we are. He’s heading the movement to get same-sex marriage overturned and illegal again.”

“He’s that awful man on television calling us abominations?” Caden asked.

“Yes.” Sam cringed. “And he’s running for president in the next election. It was announced last week.”

“Does he know where you are now?” Lincoln asked.

Sam could see the protectiveness flowing out of Lincoln.

“I don’t think so, but I’m worried about him trying to find me now that reporters are asking more about his family and his missing son.”

“You’ve covered your tracks? There shouldn’t be a reason he’d look here though, right?” Caden asked.

Here was the other big news. He looked at Caden. “I’m still the same guy that I’ve always been.”

“Of course,” Caden said.

“I’m rich. I have a trust fund from my grandmother. She never told anyone where I went but she also left me most of her money. My family tried to fight the trust, but she had lawyers set up at her passing and they took care of everything. I never had to go to court myself.”

“You’re rich?” Caden repeated. “Like *rich*?”

“Yeah.”

“But you work in a coffee shop,” Caden pointed out.

“Because I like the job but mostly because Susie needed someone she trusted running it as she aged.”

“That makes sense,” Caden said. “And you do live in a nice apartment. I just thought you were good at saving your money.”

Sam laughed. “I am. My grandmother had bought me both my apartment and SUV. I live off my salary at the coffee shop and had no reason to touch my trust.”

“I hear a but coming,” Adam encouraged when Sam didn’t continue.

“After what happened, Susie decided to sell the coffee shop,” Sam told them.

Caden gasped. “What? We’re closing? But...”

“I don’t think we’re closing,” Adam corrected. “Are we, Sam?”

“No, we’re not.”

“We’re not?” Caden sounded so hopeful.

“I love the coffee shop. I enjoy working there, the customers are great, and it’s where I met you all. I couldn’t let

it go. Plus, Susie can do some traveling now like she always wanted.”

Caden’s eyes widened. “You bought the coffee shop?”

“I did.” Sam hoped this would be okay. His friends had taken the news about his family and his money well, but would they want him to be their boss?

“That’s so great! I was so scared I wouldn’t see you guys every day! I would be lost without you.”

“Nothing is going to change. I’m not making an announcement or anything. We want it to be a smooth transition.”

“Of course!” Caden responded.

Sam turned to look over his shoulder at Adam.

“I don’t know,” Adam told him quietly. He pressed his lips tightly together as he frowned.

Sam’s heart sank. He’d expected Adam to be fine with the change.

“Can I get a raise?”

“Oh!” Caden held up his hand. “Me too! You’re rich—you can afford it. I can buy more stuffies, and jammie sets, and... and...”

Sam gasped, shocked, while Adam, Caden, and Lincoln all started to laugh loudly.

“Screw you all,” Sam growled out.

“Of course, we’re okay with it,” Adam assured him. “We love you. You already do everything around the shop, place the orders, make the schedule, and take care of all of us. No other job would allow my ridiculous school schedule. Once again, you’re stepping in to take care of us because that is the wonderful guy that you are. You are nothing like your father or the rest of your family. Except maybe your grandmother. She sounds awesome.”

“I love you too.” Sam turned to throw his arms around Adam’s neck.

“Me too!” Caden shouted and climbed onto the couch to hug them both.

Sam laughed as Caden and Adam each kissed a cheek.

“Wait. There is more thing,” Sam said.

“Ugh.” Caden threw himself onto the couch cushion next to him. “Too much serious stuff.”

“One last thing,” Sam told him.

“Okay.” Caden waved a hand. “Hit me with it.”

“I don’t think my father has any access to the money my grandmother left me, but I wouldn’t be surprised if he was paying someone to keep an eye on it.”

“You used some of your trust to buy the shop,” Adam finished for him.

“Yeah.”

“You think he might come here?” Adam questioned.

“It’s a concern,” Sam admitted.

“Let him come,” Caden said fiercely. “My Daddy will run him out of town!”

Lincoln laughed but agreed.

Carson had pretty much promised the same thing, but Sam didn’t share that with the others. His relationship, or non-relationship as it was, would currently stay between him and the lieutenant.

Sam didn’t know what was going to happen, but he felt good about the future. It wouldn’t be easy going from managing the coffee shop to owning it, but Susie promised to help. He had his friends by his side and a gorgeous older man that had caught his attention. Even if his family did find him, Sam had something worth fighting for and he wouldn’t let anyone in his tight circle be hurt.

“Snacks!” Caden shouted as he popped up off the couch. “We should celebrate with snacks.”

“Maybe we need fancier snacks now,” Adam teased. “We have Mr. Moneybags here now.”

“He’s still the same guy!” Caden argued. “And we got him Goldfish too!”

“Yeah, I’m still the same guy.” Sam pinched Adam’s side. Sam climbed off Adam’s lap and dropped onto the carpet. There was a bowl of Goldfish and Sam needed him some cheesy goodness.

“Juice, Daddy!” Caden called.

“Boy! He is getting bossy,” Adam said before he slid off the couch to sit on the floor next to Sam, pulling Caden down with him.

“Don’t worry. I’ll make him pay for it later,” Lincoln said as he rose. He smirked at Caden while passing but Caden merely smiled in return.

“It’s okay,” Caden whispered. “Lincoln doesn’t get mad at me. He might put me in the corner but that’s it.”

Sam patted Caden’s back. Caden was coming into his own as a little and it was wonderful to see. Sam was a bit of a brat, Adam was stubborn, but Caden was a sweet boy that deserved the best Daddy in the world. What worked for one of them wouldn’t for the others and that was okay. They all found their own ways to be little and that was what was so great about the lifestyle. Which of course made Sam wonder about his own non-relationship. Ever since the morning that Sam had woken up lying on Carson’s chest, Carson had been keeping his distance.

If he hadn’t been so caught up in everything that was happening with Susie and the coffee shop, Sam would have shown up on Carson’s doorstep. Or maybe not. He didn’t actually know where the lieutenant lived but he did know where he worked. Maybe it was time that Sam worked on getting the man he wanted along with the future he deserved.

Chapter Three

Carson

As hard as he tried not to, Lieutenant Carson Cirillo could not help but keep glancing at his cell phone. He knew that Sam would be okay with his friends but ever since that night four weeks ago, Carson worried constantly about the younger man.

He'd thought he'd put his instincts and that obsessive need behind him when he'd moved to Rocky Lake Arizona from Las Vegas. Carson had intended to move on and never look back at the past he was running from. That was not what he was getting. It appeared no matter how far he'd run, Carson found himself facing his biggest mistake and heartbreak.

Rising to his feet, Carson slipped his phone into his pocket and made his way toward the window. He'd really been lucky to find a house on the lake, overlooking the water but away from the docks. His place was quiet and peaceful just as Carson had wanted at the time. Just because it was often too quiet didn't mean Carson had made a mistake. He just needed to get used to a slower pace of life. Staring out the window onto the calm lake, Carson wondered what Billy would think of the house. No, he knew what Billy would have thought. Billy would have hated it there. If there was one thing Billy couldn't stand, it was being away from the action.

His boy, his first and only, the man he'd thought he'd always love, had been Carson's complete opposite. For the first two years of their relationship, Carson had thought he could save Billy. There had been so much that his boy had needed from him. The final year, yeah, that had been bad. Instead of leaning on Carson, Billy had ended up hating him. Hating him so much that the decisions Billy made led to ruining them both.

In front of the window was a tall slender table with one drawer. There was only one thing in that drawer. One frame. One picture. His fingers shook as he brushed them against the cool metal handle.

His phone vibrated in his pocket and Carson jerked his hand back from the drawer. He hadn't opened the drawer since he'd moved into the house, but he'd been close tonight. Instead, Carson pulled his phone out.

Sam: They still love me.

Carson snorted. Of course Sam's friends still loved him. Just in the little amount of time that Carson had known the young man, Sam had proved to be very loveable. The moment Carson had laid eyes on the younger man, it was almost as if he'd been electrocuted. Carson's breath had left him, and he'd made his way directly to Sam's side. Carson hadn't known who he was at the time, but it hadn't mattered. Not when Carson's instincts had been screaming MINE.

The entire time the EMTs had been working on Sam, he'd been more worried about his friends and especially Caden Robb. Carson had seen photos of Caden during his investigation and knew he was dating Carson's detective, so his attention had been on Sam.

Having Sam crawl into his lap and sleep against his chest had brought back so many memories and feelings that Carson had thought maybe he'd been torn open by a knife right in his heart. From that moment forward, Sam owned a little piece of him. Carson was keeping his distance. He hadn't laid eyes on the boy in weeks, but he couldn't stop himself from checking in. He sent a text to Sam every morning, heart in his throat until the boy responded. He sent a police cruiser to the area of the coffee shop and Sam's apartment even though he knew the immediate danger was over.

The danger wasn't completely gone though. Carson doubted that the Munoz cartel wouldn't be back. They'd return to Rocky Lake for revenge and Carson would be ready for them.

Years of experience would be utilized in order to keep the residents of Rocky Lake safe. Carson would ensure the safety of Sam Stewart and his friends above all else.

Be safe driving home.

Carson sent his message and smiled as three dots appeared.

Sam: Having a slumber party. Caden is feeling a little needy and to be honest so am I.

Good, Carson trusted that Lincoln would keep all the boys safe. He had been working with Lincoln and the other detectives for a brief time, but Lincoln was a smart and diligent detective that was totally in love with his boy.

Sleep well.

Carson sent the last message. He closed the curtains blocking his view of the lake. He needed to get ready for bed himself. Sam was safe and inside for the night under Lincoln's watchful eye.

It was beyond weird that Carson had tried to leave his past behind only to find himself surrounded by men with the same desires and needs that Carson had wanted to forget he had. Being a Daddy had been a huge part of his life for so long that Carson hadn't even tried to hide it in Vegas. Billy was known all around the city as his boy, which had made the last year of their relationship beyond difficult.

Seeing Lincoln and Caden together made the ache inside him and the regrets flare to life, but Carson was too damn old to kid himself. Something was happening between himself and Sam, and Carson wouldn't be able to fight it much longer.

Carson turned to leave the room as the phone in his hand began to ring. He answered quickly when he saw one of his old detectives' names flash across the screen.

"What's up, Remy?" Carson barked out. He was keeping in contact with his old detectives as they all worked on cases connected with the Munoz cartel.

"Saul Perez was found dead in Mexico this morning," Remy answered without preamble. Neither one of them liked

to beat around the bush and both worked on being direct and efficient.

“Fuck!” Carson ran a hand roughly down his face. Saul had been Victor Munoz’s favorite nephew and the only good part of Munoz’s life. “Do they know who did it?”

“No, but word on the street is that Munoz is going after any enemy that he’s ever had. He’s out for blood and doesn’t care who gets hurt if they get in his way.”

Munoz was a vicious bastard and wouldn’t care about casualties. “It’s going to be a bloodbath.” It really would.

“We don’t think he has any reason to target your town but you...that’s a different story,” Remy said.

“Yeah.” Carson sank down into the soft overstuffed chair.

“I hate bringing this up but after what happened with Billy.” Remy cleared his throat. “Very few people managed to hurt Victor Munoz like you did.”

He tried not to let his mind slip back to the horrible night. He could still smell the scent of sweat and vomit, feel the burn from the smoke, and see the dead eyes that stared up at him.

“Carson.” Remy said his name quietly.

“I’m here.” It was all he could do to hold the phone. His fingers shook and he wanted to throw away the stupid phone that was connecting him to his past.

“Let us come out,” Remy requested. “We’ll have your back.”

“No,” Carson replied quickly. “You need to protect yourselves as well. You were with me that night.” They hadn’t stopped Carson. When Carson had gone after the cartel leader his team had his back and even though Carson had crossed a line they’d never judged him.

“Boss.”

Carson laughed. He wasn’t Remy or the other detectives’ boss any longer, but they still called him that. They hadn’t

quite forgiven him from running away and Carson could admit that he did run. He couldn't face the same streets that had broken him. Every reminder had been another stab in the chest.

"Are you going to be okay?" Remy questioned when Carson's chuckled died off. He sounded concerned and Carson didn't blame him.

"Yeah." He didn't know if he was lying to himself or both of them.

Remy sighed. "I don't want anything to happen to you."

It wouldn't be anything that he didn't deserve but Carson knew how to protect himself. "I'm good."

"How are the boys?" Remy asked, changing the subject.

Carson snorted. "Fine."

"And Sam? He's fine too?"

"You don't need to worry about him," Carson responded. One thing about being friends with his detectives was that they knew all of Carson's weaknesses.

"Because you're looking out for him, boss?"

Carson growled.

"It was nice to see you with him." Remy cleared his throat. "It was almost like having you back again."

If anyone understood, it was Remy. Remy had been by Carson's side the night his world fell apart. Carson wanted to tell Remy that he had no intention of claiming Sam but Carson couldn't lie to his oldest friend. "I'm figuring it out."

"Good." Remy's words were sharp. "And if you need me ___"

"Watch your own back. Victor is not going to forget that night. If he's looking for revenge, he could just as easily come after you."

“I hope he does,” Remy said with a laugh. “I’ll be ready and waiting.”

“Let me know if you hear anything else,” Carson requested.

“Will do.”

They disconnected and Carson dropped his phone on the cushion beside him. He didn’t need Victor Munoz out running wild and crazy. Fuck his life.

Chapter Four

Sam

Using the new code, Sam entered the back door of the coffee shop and was welcomed by the scent of fresh baking wafting toward him. He grinned at Adam moving pastries from a sheet onto the display tray but had to bite his lip to keep him from laughing as he spotted Detective Nash Johnson sitting on the stainless-steel counter next to Adam. No doubt, Nash had already tried to get Nash off the counter but the detective had his favorite spot.

As much as Adam protested that nothing was happening between him or Nash or Adam and their tattooed business neighbor Lucas Van Blair, there wasn't a morning that Adam was alone opening the shop. Either Nash or Lucas was right there with Adam. There were so many questions that Sam had but Adam refused to answer anything about the two men. Still, Adam didn't kick them out of the shop either.

"Morning, Adam. Morning, Nash." Sam closed the back door and reset the alarm. Lincoln had drilled it into all their heads how important safety was. The cartel that had threatened them had disappeared, but no one believed they were gone for good.

Nash whistled, bringing heat to Sam's face. "Looking fancy there. Date?" He wiggled his eyebrows and stuck out his tongue.

Sam snorted. Nash was a riot. Always acting silly and making them all laugh.

Adam narrowed his eyes. "You do look more dressed up than usual. What's up?"

"Nothing." Sam shrugged before he hung his bag on the designated hook and grabbed his apron. The apron was brown with white writing and the picture of a coffee cup was cute and familiar. Sam had no intention of changing anything about the Rocky Lake Coffeehouse now that he owned it.

Adam wiped off his hands as he continued to frown at Sam.

Sam sighed. Adam would keep looking at him suspiciously until he came clean. “I had a rough night so I thought I would dress up this morning to make myself feel better.”

Immediately Adam’s face softened, and he threw the towel on the table before crossing to Sam. Adam pulled Sam into his arms and Sam buried his face in his best friend’s neck. Adam always smelt so good, like vanilla and spices, and it was a comfort that Sam relied on often. Sam was a touchy-feely guy, and it was a good thing that Adam had no problem attaching himself to him. Caden was a little harder to hug on, but Caden was getting better especially now that Lincoln was in the picture.

“You do look very pretty.” Nash’s arms came around both Sam and Adam. “I like the pink on your eyes.”

Tilting his head back, Sam smiled up at Nash. The detective was quickly becoming a good friend and part of their core group. “Thanks, Nash.” Sam had colored his eyes, cheeks, and lips with his new shade of baby pink that matched the long-sleeve shirt he wore.

“Is there something silky under those jeans?” Nash asked while waggling his brows again.

Adam growled, pushing Sam and Nash away. “Don’t talk about his underwear.”

Was that jealousy? Adam wasn’t usually so obvious around Nash.

Nash grinned unbothered at Adam. “Oh, baby, you know I only care about what’s under *your* jeans. I was just asking. I find it helpful to have something under my clothes that no one else knows about than me.”

Interesting. Sam had not known that about Nash.

Neither had Adam by the way that Adam's eyes widened before he dropped his gaze down Nash's body.

"Wanna see, baby?" Nash flicked a thumbnail at the button of his jeans.

"Don't call me baby," Adam snapped. Now that sounded more like Adam.

"That's not a no," Nash pointed out as his grin grew.

"I need to finish getting the baked goods out so I can get to class," Adam said. He stomped his way back to the table, but Nash was right on his heels.

"I could show you later. We could have dinner and then you could see for yourself."

"Nash!" Adam barked.

Nash huffed but stopped talking. He jutted his bottom lip out as he leaned next to Adam. The puppy-dog face just silly on a tattooed, six-foot-tall, shaven-headed man.

"I'm opening the front," Sam stated as he walked past the two other men. He patted Nash's shoulder in encouragement, letting the big detective know he was doing an excellent job.

Nash and even Lucas's interest in Adam was obvious and fun to watch. It was obvious that Adam didn't know what to do with the attention of the two men. Adam's current solution was to ignore the attention of Nash and Lucas but that wasn't working out too well for Adam. It was an endless amount of amusement for Sam and he made sure to tease his best friend every single day.

"Linc's picking me up when he drops off Caden. Will you let me know when he gets here?" Nash called behind him.

"I got you," Sam assured Nash before he entered the front of the shop and flipped on the lights.

The front entrance glass had been replaced with thicker glass and the door was industrial with two deadbolts and an alarm that chirped each time the door opened. A professional

cleaning company had been called in on the night of the attack to wash away and sanitize the blood and mess.

Sam tried not to let his gaze move to the place where the cartel leader had stood, next to the gunman threatening Caden, but he was unable not to go back to that time. The fear he'd felt that Caden would be hurt still haunted him.

The nightmares were still occurring and even though he knew Caden was safe, it was hard knowing that the cartel boss hadn't been located. The nightmare the previous night had kept Sam from falling back to sleep. He'd even given in to his desperation and texted Lincoln to check on Caden. He hadn't wanted to wake either Lincoln or Caden, but he'd had to know that Caden really was okay.

He'd received an adorable picture of Caden sleeping in Lincoln's arms with Caden's mouth open and a little bit of drool on Lincoln's shoulder. Even though he'd been reassured, Sam hadn't been able to go back to sleep, so he'd changed into a pullup along with his pink bunny onesie and had a tea party. Allowing himself to fall into his little headspace had been just what he needed. When it'd been time to get ready for work, Sam had indeed pulled on a thin purple silk thong and under his shirt wore a matching tank. Nash had been right—when Sam had his sexy clothes under his boring work-safe clothing, he felt good about himself.

Sam went about making sure they were fully stocked for the morning rush then headed to the office to grab the money drawer. He unlocked the safe and pulled out the drawer before returning to the front of the shop.

He entirely ignored the fact that Nash was being fed a pastry by Adam. That was flirtier than Sam had seen in the past. He hurried along so that he didn't disturb Adam and Nash. He had plenty of time to get everything ready before he had to unlock the door.

Switching on the radio at a low volume, he danced around as he went about his preparations. Adam came up at one point

and filled the display cases. Without a word he'd returned to the back to clean up before he had to leave for class.

His phone vibrated in his back pocket and Sam pulled it out. Excitement made his hand unsteady when he noticed the message from Lieutenant Daddy.

Lieutenant Daddy: Hey. I came by to check on you? Are you at the shop?

Holy shit! Sam almost squealed. He quickly typed out his response.

Sam: Yes! Are you here?

Lieutenant Daddy: Out front.

Sam raced to the door and put in his code then unlocked the door. Sam pushed the door open and there his man stood on the front walk in a pair of dark gray slacks and a long-sleeve shirt. Damn, but Carson was one hot older man.

Carson frowned at him. "Someone could have stolen my phone and texted you to open the door pretending to be me."

Sam rolled his eyes. "We have cameras."

"Did you check the cameras?" Carson asked with a lifted brow.

Well, no he hadn't. Sam had been too excited. "Adam and Nash are in the kitchen."

"Still wouldn't have helped if I just grabbed you and took you away."

That didn't sound terrible. Sam fluttered his lashes. "Where would you have taken me?"

Carson snorted. "Over my knee if you're not good."

Fuck! Sam wanted to bend over right there.

"Should we come back?"

Sam about fell over at Lincoln's voice coming from around the corner. Sam was still in the doorway with Carson

nearly over the threshold but apparently Lincoln and Caden had arrived.

Carson pressed his twitching lips together as he turned. “Hello, Lincoln. Caden.”

Sam peeked around the lieutenant’s big body to see Caden wave with a mischievous look on his face. Uh-oh. Caden wasn’t a brat, but he was getting freer with his teasing.

“Spankings don’t work on Sam, Lieutenant Cirillo. You should put him in the corner.”

Sam gasped. “Hey! Don’t be giving away my secrets!”

“Is it really a secret though? I would say it’s kind of obvious you’re a naughty boy,” Carson said in his ear as he pulled Sam to the side, allowing Lincoln and Caden to enter.

Twirling, Sam batted his lashes as he looked up at Carson. Of course, Sam had to run his hands up Carson’s wide chest. He just couldn’t keep his hands to himself when Carson was around.

“Wait! Where are we going? I want to see if Sam gets a spanking!” Caden’s voice floated away from him.

“Come on, naughty boy, and let’s find Nash or you might end up in the corner instead.”

Caden whined before Sam was alone with the lieutenant.

“Sorry about that.” Sam knew he was blushing. He didn’t get embarrassed easily unless it came to someone that he really wanted. “We...might have no boundaries between any of us.”

Carson chuckled then cupped the back of Sam’s head. “I already knew that. You look tired.”

Sam sighed; he was tired. He wanted to snuggle up to Carson’s chest like he’d done before but he had to remember they weren’t alone. No matter what his best intentions were, Sam wasn’t sleeping well. Even at the slumber party, he’d woken up, needing to see his friends. In fact, he hadn’t slept

fully since the night he'd climbed on Carson's lap and allowed himself to be held in his sleep.

"What do you need?" Carson drew Sam away from the front of the shop to the corner table and sat pulling Sam onto his lap.

He had to blink tears away. Sam was trying so hard to keep everything together. It was a lot of pressure knowing that his best friends and other employees would now depend on him for their very livelihood. Plus, the worry that somehow utilizing his trust would bring his family back into his life left him utterly exhausted. "I'm okay."

"I know you are. I'm proud of you. You are doing fantastically but that doesn't mean that you don't need help. It's okay to ask for help, baby boy."

Had anyone ever said they were proud of him? Sam sniffed as he closed his eyes. He had needed to hear those words.

"What time do you get off tonight?" Carson asked.

"Around seven."

"How about I bring you dinner and we have a relaxing night?" Carson cupped Sam's face to draw Sam's eyes up. "I'll take care of everything, and you can just be."

"That sounds like heaven," Sam confessed.

Carson brushed his lips over Sam's forehead. It wasn't the kiss that Sam wanted but he had time later that night to work on getting a real kiss. "Now it's time for both of us to get to work."

Sam whined but he slid off Carson's lap.

"Can I come out now? I need to make my Daddy's coffee!" Caden shouted.

"Yes!" Sam called back. He rolled his eyes at Carson, who smiled. At least Carson didn't appear to be bothered by Caden or the teasing.

“Can I get you a drink?” Sam offered.

“Flat white, please.”

Sam wiggled and danced behind the counter. He got to make Carson’s drink and now he understood why Caden always insisted on making Lincoln’s coffee order. There was something about making a drink that he knew Carson would take with him and every time Carson took a sip it was something Sam provided. Yep, totally an addictive feeling.

He waited until Caden had finished making Lincoln’s drink before he went to Caden’s station to start the lieutenant’s order.

“I’m walking Adam to his truck,” Nash called from the kitchen. “I’ll meet you out front, Linc.”

“You got it, man,” Lincoln yelled back.

Sam grinned. They weren’t even open yet, but this morning had been better than any of the rest. Their little core group coming together.

The front door opened and Lucas in all his tattooed glory came rushing in. “Are Adam and Nash still here?”

Sam pointed toward the back. “Just leaving.”

Lucas sent him a quick grin before he jogged toward the kitchen. Yep, Sam might have had to make his own family, but he wouldn’t trade them for anything in the world.

Chapter Five

Carson

The first time that Carson had seen the upscale apartment complex that Sam lived in, he'd been suitably impressed. It made sense that Sam could afford such a residence once Carson knew what family Sam came from. It had put Carson's back up, realizing the amount of money the young man had, but over the last few weeks, Carson began to understand that he needed to let go of the past.

Sam wasn't Billy, and even though there were some similarities, Carson was pushing past the fear.

He'd made the decision to go to the coffee shop that morning and bringing Sam dinner was a new beginning. It wouldn't be easy. Carson wasn't kidding himself. There would be times that the memory of Billy would come back but that was something that Carson would have to work through. It had been three years and for the first time Carson believed he was ready to move on with his life.

Shifting the food bag into his left hand, Carson knocked on Sam's door with his right.

The door opened seconds later, and Sam smiled at him.

Carson's breath caught at the sight. Sam was wearing a silk purple V-neck top tucked into his jeans, and his pale skin shone under the light of the hallway. Carson lifted his gaze to Sam's face to see that he'd expertly applied his makeup. Gorgeous. Sam was the prettiest boy that Carson had ever laid eyes on. "Hey."

"Hi." Sam reached for Carson.

Carson enjoyed that Sam didn't seem to be able to keep his hands to himself. Every time that Sam was near him, Sam petted or cuddled up to him. It had been years since Carson had felt anyone's hands on him. "I brought you dinner."

Sam slid his hands up Carson's chest. "Thanks. Come in."

He missed Sam's touch the minute that Sam removed his hand but still followed the boy into the apartment. The door opened to a small entry with a table that held a set of keys then opened to a large spacious living room, kitchen tucked to the right, and two doors that were closed. Carson had seen Sam's bedroom the night he'd brought Sam home from the hospital, but he didn't investigate the other room that he suspected was an office or something similar.

Sam led him to the kitchen island where he had plates, silverware, and two glasses set out in front of two bar stools. It was a nice set up but not what Carson expected. Sam didn't hide the fact that he and his best friends engaged in the little lifestyle. Carson sat the bag on the island while peering around the open concept apartment.

Other than a small table with a fancy tea set there was nothing in the apartment that spoke of Sam's little side. That was unusual in itself but the apartment was rather plain as well. No bright colors, toys, anything that matched Sam's personality. Either Sam was hiding a big part of himself or something else was going on.

"What did you bring?" Sam opened the bag to look inside.

"Caden said the Chinese place by my office was a favorite of yours," Carson informed him. "I got you beef fried rice, egg rolls, and sweet and sour chicken."

Sam licked his lips. "All my favorites." He started to dig into the bag.

Carson thought about stopping him and addressing the lack of little items but decided to let the boy fill his belly first. They had time to get to know one another and Carson didn't want to pressure Sam if he wasn't comfortable sharing with Carson yet.

He took over filling the plates and Sam walked to the fridge.

"What would you like to drink?"

“Water, please,” Carson answered. He wanted a clear mind and didn’t drink soda.

Sam pulled out a bottle of water and a jug of lemonade. He set the water in front of Carson then poured himself a glass of lemonade. They sat beside each other on the bar stools.

“Thank you so much for bringing me dinner,” Sam said.

“You are quite welcome. You looked tired and I wanted to do something nice for you.” He made Carson feel like he’d done something absolutely wonderful even though all Carson had done was pick up some food and bring it over.

“Yeah.” Sam moved the food around his plate. “I haven’t been sleeping well.”

“Nightmares?” Carson asked. They had talked briefly about Sam having nightmares by text but when Carson tried to bring it up lately, Sam would say he was fine. Carson suspected that Sam wasn’t dealing with what happened properly.

Sam shrugged.

Carson hummed but didn’t push any further. He wanted them to have a satisfying meal and honestly they weren’t even dating. Carson had no control over Sam, and even though he wanted nothing more than to spoil the young man, they needed to have a serious talk before they engaged in any kind of relationship. “Eat. When we’re done, we’ll relax on the couch and talk.”

“Can...can I sit on your lap again?” Sam asked quietly.

“If you’d like.” Carson wasn’t used to hearing the hesitation in Sam’s voice. Sam was usually sassy and teasing but Carson was good at reading people. Sam hid himself from even his friends and was it wrong that Carson wanted to be the one that Sam opened up to?

“I feel safe there,” Sam whispered. He finally took a bite of food.

Carson had to remind himself to eat as well. He wanted nothing more than to pull Sam into his lap right then and there, but he had to stand by his word. They ate slowly, talking about their days and keeping things light.

Once he was satisfied that Sam had eaten enough as Sam pushed the remaining food around on his plate, Carson leaned over and took the fork from his hand. Sam's bright eyes met his as he blushed.

"Why don't you go sit on the couch while I put the food away and clean up?"

"I can do it," Sam argued.

"I know you can, baby boy, but I'm here to take care of it tonight. Go get comfy."

Sam nodded before he slipped off the stool and shuffled to the living room.

Thanks to the open concept apartment, Carson could keep his eye on Sam as he moved around the kitchen. The food was easily put in the fridge then Carson washed off the plates and silverware before stacking them in the dishwasher. He wiped down the island where they'd eaten then refilled Sam's lemonade and grabbed his bottle of water.

Flipping off the light of the kitchen, Carson strode around the room until he stood in front of the couch. He set both drinks down on the side table then held his hand out to Sam.

Frowning, Sam placed his palm in Carson's and Carson tugged. As soon as Sam was off the couch, Carson slipped around the boy to sit in the corner of the couch and pulled Sam into his lap.

Sam let out a long breath before he turned his head and buried his face in Carson's chest.

Carson cupped the back of Sam's head and closed his eyes as peace filled him.

Even at the very beginning of his relationship with Billy, Carson had never gotten to enjoy just sitting and holding his

boy. Billy had always been moving, anxious, high, or whatever had been going on with the boy at the time. Sam was still in his arms like he never wanted to move. Carson wouldn't force Sam to move if the boy wanted to stay in his arms. They needed to talk but that could wait until Sam was ready.

The couch was unbelievably soft and comfortable. Carson hadn't planned on spending that night on the couch but he'd wanted to make sure that Sam hadn't woken in pain. He'd drifted off before Sam had crawled into his lap. Even now Carson could feel himself drifting with the sweet boy in his arms.

Sam yawned. He pushed himself off Carson's chest although he remained in Carson's lap.

"Sorry, I almost fell asleep." Sam gave a little smile.

His boy obviously needed sleep. "That's fine. I can sit here and hold you if that's what you want."

"You wanted to talk," Sam pointed out.

"I did but it's not anything that can't wait. You need to sleep."

Sam was shaking his head even before Carson got done talking. "I'm fine."

This was the problem. Carson cupped Sam's face and forced the boy to meet his gaze. "How often do you say that?"

"Say what?" Sam furrowed his brows, showing his confusion.

"I get the feeling that you say the words 'I'm fine' way more than you should," Carson stated with knowing.

Sam's eyes widened before he glanced down.

"Look at me, baby," Carson demanded softly.

He smiled when Sam returned his gaze to his. "You are a smart, sweet, funny boy with a good heart. It's okay to lean on someone."

“I have my friends,” Sam pointed out.

Carson didn't remind Sam that they hadn't even known about Sam's family until recently. Instead he nodded. “You do. I also notice that you've taken on a big-brother role to both of your friends.”

“What?” Sam jerked back. “No.”

Carson raised a brow. He never released Sam's face.

“Maybe...maybe with Caden, but Adam...” Sam trailed off.

“With Adam, you make sure he has plenty of hours to pay his bills but also not too many hours that he's exhausted between work and school. I would also wager that if someone were unable to work their shift that you don't call anyone else in but take care of it yourself.”

“I'm the manager,” Sam replied. “Or I was before I bought the place. It's my responsibility.”

“It is, although most managers would have forced someone else to take that shift especially if they'd already worked all day.”

Sam narrowed his eyes. “How do you know?”

“I pay attention, boy. We've been talking for weeks now, and I know when you work both opening and closing.”

A soft sigh was his only response.

“There's nothing wrong with your relationship with your friends or how you run the shop. I'm extremely impressed. And I know that your friends are good guys that love you and would do anything for you.”

Sam closed his eyes and when he opened them, there were tears in the corners.

“What is it? What's wrong?”

His boy sniffed. “I'm not used to anyone telling me they're proud of me. You said it before and now you said you were

impressed. By me.”

“I wouldn’t be here now if I wasn’t proud and impressed with you.”

“Why are you here?” Sam asked softly. He quickly wrapped his fingers around Carson’s wrists as if he was trying to keep his hands on Sam’s face. “Even though we’ve texted and talked on the phone a couple of times, I haven’t seen you since the day after the attack at the station.”

“This is what I wanted to speak with you about,” Carson informed him.

“Okay,” Sam whispered.

“I had a boy previously. Once. It did not end well but when I saw you in that shop, gorgeous and bleeding, you reminded me so much of my...of Billy.”

“Oh.”

Carson shook his head then looked away. It hurt to think of how much Sam had reminded him of Billy. “My protective instincts kicked in and there was no way that I could let you go to the hospital alone.”

Sam dropped his hands and pulled away. “I get it.”

“No, baby, you don’t.” Carson drew a deep breath before he looked back at the boy on his lap. “You opened your mouth to demand answers about your friends and that’s when it hit me that you’re nothing like Billy. Even as the paramedic tried to take care of you, you were more worried about your friends. I struggled to understand since at first, I put you in the same box as I did Billy.”

“That’s why you were so cold to me at the station?” Sam asked.

Carson was not proud of how he’d acted that day. He’d driven Sam to the station to get his statement along with the others but when it was time for Sam to return home, he’d had a uniform drop Sam off at his apartment. It had bothered him

all day and when he'd gotten home, Carson had been unable to stop himself from texting Sam. "Yeah."

"I thought I'd done something wrong. That I'd overstepped—"

"I know, baby, and I'm sorry. It was my ghosts that I was struggling with."

"You kept texting me though," Sam said.

"I did. The more we spoke or texted—the better I got to know you—the more intrigued I became. You are amazing and I know I don't deserve a second chance with you but I'm here asking for one."

"I..." Sam shook his head.

Carson's hope sank.

"You want a second chance with me? Me?" He pointed to himself.

"Yes."

"Yes," Sam said so fast that Carson had to blink to make certain that Sam had really answered him.

"What?"

Cocking his head, Sam smiled. "Yes, please, Daddy?" Some of the wickedness returned to Sam's eyes.

Dropping his head back on the couch, Carson groaned. "So many spankings," he whispered. "You are going to be a handful."

Sam wiggled as he laughed. He straddled Carson's lap as he locked his eyes on Carson's mouth. "You have no idea. I am two big handfuls."

Unable to resist, Carson slid his hands behind Sam to cup his ass cheeks. "I can feel that."

"You should also probably know that I'd decided that I was going to track you down."

"You were, were you?" Carson enjoyed Sam's confidence.

“Yep. If you weren’t interested, I would have backed off but there was just one thing I wanted.”

“And what was that?”

“This.” Sam grinned. He lowered his mouth and pressed his lips to Carson’s.

Carson hummed as he cupped the back of Sam’s head, although this time he carded his fingers into Sam’s silky blond hair. He opened his mouth and sucked Sam’s tongue into his mouth, tasting the tartness of the lemonade that Sam had been drinking earlier.

He swallowed Sam’s moan even as Sam humped against him. Under the tight ass on his lap, Carson grew uncomfortably hard, but he pulled back.

“More,” Sam demanded as he tried to catch Carson’s mouth again.

“Not tonight, baby.” Carson tugged on Sam’s hair.

Sam shivered. “But…”

“Tonight, I’m going to take you to bed and make you sleep. We have time for more later.”

Sam pouted and Carson knew if he wasn’t careful, his beautiful boy would have him wrapped around his finger soon enough.

Carson lifted a brow and made sure that his face showed his seriousness.

“Fine.” Sam huffed before burying his face back in Carson’s chest. “If you insist.”

“I do.” Carson wasn’t an idiot. He was in for a rough night ahead of him. It would be near impossible to hold Sam all night and not take more but he was a patient man. Age did have its advantages after all.

Chapter Six

Sam

Driving to work, Sam hummed along with the radio, not remembering ever being so happy in his entire life. He'd finally slept all the way through the night, and he knew it was because of Carson holding him. He'd wanted more, a lot more, but it was nice that Carson stuck to his word and merely held Sam in his arms.

He wasn't used to being held when there had been no sex.

Sam wasn't a virgin. There was a club in town that catered to boys like him, and Sam had found willing partners but never quite what he needed. He's played, Sam was open with his sexuality, but most men were looking for a partner for a night or two. Very few wanted the commitment that Sam needed.

He didn't have a lot of relationships as Sam found it hard to trust other people. The fear that that the man Sam picked up would find out who he really was or, worse, the chance that he'd been sent by his family? No, Sam didn't trust very many people and although he'd been on the lookout for a Daddy, Sam was the one that put up obstacles.

The few men that had wanted more with Sam hadn't inspired the kind of trust that Sam required. That Sam already felt for Carson. Deep down Sam knew that this time was different. The lieutenant already knew who Sam was and instead of using that information against him, Carson had promised to protect him.

He giggled as he took the last turn that would take him downtown. Glancing in his rearview mirror, he spotted the black SUV behind him making the same turn. That wasn't unusual but Sam's stomach dropped and his hands shook. There was just something about that SUV that bothered him.

Luckily, Sam wasn't far from the coffeehouse, and he sped up a little even though he was already pushing the speed limit.

At least if he got pulled over, there would be a cop near him.

He didn't get pulled over and less than ten minutes later he turned into the alley behind the shop. The SUV passed him, and Sam let his shoulders relax. He wasn't being followed. That was silly. Who would even care enough about him to follow some guy that owned a coffee shop?

Sam pulled up to the back door then turned off the engine and climbed out of the car. He looked up at the iron staircase that led to the apartment that Caden used to live in. The apartment was empty now and Sam had no plans for it. He thought about offering the place to Adam who currently lived with two guys that he went to school with. They weren't really Adam's friends but instead guys that had needed a roommate. Adam's house was small, but it was bigger than that tiny apartment so maybe Adam wouldn't want to move? It was something to think about anyway.

He slipped his key into the lock and grinned to see that Adam had two helpers that morning.

"I might as well put you both on staff at this point," Sam said as he hung his bag up.

Nash grinned at him while Lucas winked.

"Or maybe we should have a rule about only employees allowed in the back," Adam grouched out.

"Aww, baby, you wouldn't do that to Caden. He wouldn't get his kisses if he couldn't drag Lincoln back here." Nash grinned.

Adam opened his mouth before he shook his head. "Fine."

Sam eyed his friend and didn't miss the fact that Adam had been dressing just a little sharper than he used to. Not that jeans or a long-sleeve shirt was fancy, but in the fall and winter Adam preferred wearing sweatpants, and Sam didn't think that he'd seen Adam's sweats at all this year. Adam hated to be cold and cooler weather was a time he hated.

His friend might not be ready to admit it, but he was interested in the two men currently watching him work.

Nash and Lucas were making their interest known and Sam wasn't sure how long Adam would be able to hold out. Nash was a good-looking guy, with a constant smile and kind eyes. He had tattoos up and down his arms, but they were nothing compared to the amount that Lucas sported.

All the men around them were big but Lucas was a giant. He was just big all over and his muscles had muscles. Even with fall in full season, Lucas wore tanks and shredded jeans that showed off the artwork that covered his body. Both Nash and Lucas were attractive, but Sam couldn't help but compare them to Carson.

Sam knew that Nash was in his mid to late forties and Carson was almost a decade older. Sam had always been attracted to older men and Carson was the type that he'd always been drawn too. The gray streaks in Carson's short hair made Sam's fingers twitch, wanting to touch.

"Sam! Hey, you okay?" Adam must have called his name more than once as he had set his gloves down and looked at Sam with concern.

"Fine." Sam waved his hand. Probably best not to admit he'd been lost in picturing how soft Carson's hair had been. Or how Sam knew that.

Adam frowned. "You didn't sleep again, did you?"

"Actually..." Sam beamed. "I slept better than I have in months." It was true. Even though Sam had been frustratingly hard, and Carson had refused to touch him intimately, as soon as Sam's cheek was laid against Carson's chest, he'd drifted off to sleep. And he hadn't woken up once all night.

"Really?" Nash drawled. "Is that so?" The twinkle in his eye was hard to miss.

"Uh, yeah," Sam replied.

“Because I can remember my L.T. here last night when Lincoln dropped me off to pick up my vehicle and him asking Caden what your favorite meal was.” Lincoln smiled hugely as he lifted a brow.

Adam’s eyes widened as they landed on him.

“Really?” Lucas asked as he crossed his arms over his chest. “Did you have company last night, Sam?”

“Hey! What is this?” Sam inquired. “I’m the boss here. Get to work.”

Lucas shook his head. “I don’t know, boss, maybe we should have a talk with the lieutenant to see what his intentions are,” he teased.

Sam knew he was blushing as he dropped his eyes. Oh, he knew what Carson’s intentions were and he was not upset about them at all.

“Holy shit!” Nash laughed loudly as he hopped up on the counter. “Linc owes me fifty bucks.”

“Off the counter.” Adam slapped Nash’s thigh. “And what are you talking about?”

“I knew the L.T. wanted our little princess. Lincoln thought it would take him more time to make a move though. The L.T. is really private about his personal life, but I could tell he was interested.”

“You’re jumping to conclusions,” Lucas scolded Nash.

Adam was still looking between Nash and Sam.

“Maybe.” Nash shrugged. “So...” He batted his lashes in Sam’s direction.

“I need to open the front,” Sam said, scurrying across the kitchen.

“Oh, come on!” Nash called. “I need those fifty bucks. I’m saving for a new tattoo.”

“I said to come see me and I’d take care of you,” Lucas admonished Nash.

Nash dropped his chin as Adam smiled.

So much going on between those three and Sam was dying to know so he could understand Nash’s interest in his own love life. They were a close group and that was what friends did. They teased but supported.

Sam went about his opening routine and his attention was caught by a black SUV driving slowly past the entrance. It seemed like it was the same SUV that had been behind him that morning on his drive.

He just couldn’t shake the feeling that he’d been followed, and it was weird to see the same type of vehicle again.

There was an uneasy feeling that he pushed away even though he knew better.

Quickly finishing up opening, he had just unlocked the front door as it was shoved open. Sam jumped out of the way smiling at Marcie. Marcie was one of his part-time employees that had worked there for a couple of months now.

“Hey, Marcie,” Sam greeted.

“Sorry, Sam. I didn’t see you through the glass.”

“It’s fine.” He waved his hand noticing that Marcie was upset. “Hey, what’s wrong?” He walked slowly over to his employee and wrapped his arm around her shoulder.

“I’m sorry, Sam!” Marcie wailed.

He stiffened. What would Marcie have to be sorry for? Sam led her over to a table in the back and gently guided her into a chair. Sam sat across from her before tucking his hands under the table. “What’s going on?” A thousand worst-case scenarios went through his mind as he waited for Marcie to speak.

Marcie wiped her eyes. “Bobby got a promotion.”

“That’s great!” Sam liked Marcie’s boyfriend, Bobby, and had thought he’d hear about an engagement soon.

“It is but it means we have to relocate to California.”

“Oh.” His heart sank. Sam hated losing good employees, but he would really miss Marcie as well. She was a friend and an employee. “But it’s still exciting. You always wanted to go to California.”

“I know but I feel like I’m abandoning you and everyone else just as you took over,” Marcie said.

“Oh no sweetie!” Sam assured her. “Don’t feel that way. We’ll miss you but this is good for Bobby. He’s been working so hard.”

“He has and this is the position he really wanted.”

Reaching across the table, Sam gripped her hand. “Then we’ll celebrate this, and I’ll write you the most amazing recommendation letter ever.”

“I love it here and I’ll miss all of you.” Marcie sniffed.

Sam patted her hand until the door opened as customers entered. It was time to get to work and somehow he needed to find a replacement for Marcie.

“I got them,” Marcie said while rising from the table.

Sam watched her greet the customers as she moved around the counters. Weekends were the only time that Sam didn’t work with Caden on the opening shift. Adam came in early Monday through Saturday to get the baking done and he went to class or worked the opening shift. Sam employed several other students who worked weekends or evening shifts and while Marcie would be missed, they could get away without her until they found the right fit for their little family.

Susie had left hiring to Sam for a couple of years and Sam had always been happy with the people that had come into his life and the shop. He refused to have anyone in the shop that wasn’t a good match. While Rocky Lake was inclusive and a

safe space, there were still bad people in the world. The recent trouble with the cartel was proof of that.

Adam entered in front with Nash and Lucas on his heels. Okay, Nash was on Adam's heels following like a puppy while Lucas followed at a slower pace, watching them with amusement. Adam frowned in his direction, finding Sam sitting at the table, but Sam waved him away. They'd figure it out and everything would be fine.

After Adam filled the display case, he turned and almost ran into Nash.

Sam snorted.

Adam growled.

Nash grinned.

Lucas laughed.

Oh yeah, they might be a silly little family, but they belonged to Sam and he wouldn't bring anyone in that messed up the dynamic they had. Sam rose and stretched his arms over his head before he started toward the counter. He had a supply order to place, schedules to make, and if he was lucky, maybe he'd be able to steal a few minutes to text Carson.

Chapter Seven

Carson

The reports in front of him were starting to blur together and Carson rubbed his tired eyes. He had never been one of the people that complained about Mondays but after spending the weekend watching the news regarding a drug cartel practically burning down his old city, Carson was exhausted.

Victor Munoz was indeed taking out his revenge on anyone that had ever opposed him. The city of Las Vegas was currently experiencing the worst crime wave in their history and his old team were hurting. His detectives hadn't been targeted, yet, but trying to contain the danger was taking a lot out on him.

His cell rang and Carson grabbed for it, hoping that it might be his boy. Instead, the name Eric Smith flashed across the screen.

"Hello."

"Hey." Eric Smith sounded exhausted.

"Everything okay?" Carson asked.

"We lost him," Smith replied.

"What do you mean?" Carson demanded. He didn't even have to ask who Smith was talking about. They'd had Victor Munoz under surveillance since he'd left Rocky Lake.

"He's not at his house in the city, the apartment, and he hasn't crossed back into Mexico as far as we can tell," Smith answered. "The last sighting our men have on him was on Thursday."

"Shit," Carson spat. "He could be anywhere."

"With all the wars, he's starting it makes sense for him to disappear. He has the Italians, Russians, and Irish after him plus a couple of motorcycle gangs. He's hit them all and we still don't know who killed his nephew."

“He’s unraveled. He isn’t thinking straight.” Carson blew out a frustrated growl. While he didn’t mind the bad guys taking out other bad guys, it was the innocent civilians that were caught in the crossfire too often.

“Exactly. He’s not going to make it out of this alive and I think he knows it.”

Could that be right? Not that Carson would shed a tear if Munoz met his end. At one time Carson had wanted to take Munoz out with his own hands but that hadn’t been in the cards. He’d had to walk away or would have lost everything he’d ever worked for.

It hadn’t been an easy decision to leave his men and life behind but, in the end, Carson had done what was necessary.

“Where would he go?”

Smith’s voice drew Carson away from his own thoughts. “I don’t know.” He hated having to admit that.

“I feel like he’s still in town,” Smith admitted.

“Why?” Carson wasn’t questioning Smith’s feelings but wanted the detective to talk it out.

“Jesse Lambert,” Smith said.

“The casino owner? What about him?” Carson asked.

“He outbid Munoz on several projects and his casino has been the most successful new addition to the Strip in decades. I can see how Munoz would be bitter about that.”

“Trust your gut,” Carson advised.

“Yeah,” Smith responded quietly. “I know he’s still here.” He cleared his throat and sounded much better. “Thanks L.T. I just needed to talk it out.”

“I’ll always be here to give you someone to talk to. Get some rest. Get a healthy meal. You got this.”

“Yeah, I’m going to call Remy. Thanks.”

The call disconnected and Carson shook his head. Eric Smith was a good detective, but he was a hard man to get to know personally. It had taken Carson years to get through Smith's tough skin and finally reach the man. Smith was all about the job but now that he had his little brother home, Carson hoped that Smith was learning to balance his time better.

He looked up as Lincoln stalked into his office with his phone to his ear. He snapped his fingers and pointed toward the flat-screen television in the corner of Carson's office.

It took a minute to find the remote as Carson couldn't remember ever turning on the screen, but he hit the Power button and the channel was already on the news.

"Thanks, baby. I'll call you later," Lincoln said quietly but Carson's attention was already on the man speaking at a press conference.

Carson pressed the volume level higher.

"If the recent crime wave shows anything, it is that our world is paying for our past sins. Too long have we allowed the wretched and wicked to go unchecked. I vow to use all my resources to ensure the righteous citizens are protected."

"I thought he was a politician, not a preacher any longer," Lincoln said with a growl.

Carson snorted. It was difficult to watch the tall pale man on the screen and know that he was the father of Sam. There was hardly any resemblance between the father and son. Ice-cold blue eyes stared into the screen while Senator Stewart spoke in a sharp and nasal tone.

"The city of Las Vegas is burning, and I say we let it burn!" Senator Stewart lifted a fist and pumped his arm.

"Did he really just say that?" Lincoln asked in shock.

"That's..." Carson shook his head. How could any elected figure say something so horrible. Innocent people were being hurt and killed.

“What a slimy piece of shit,” Lincoln spat.

Carson couldn't have agreed more. “Was that Caden that called?”

Lincoln nodded as he continued to stare with a narrow gaze at the screen. “Someone had the press conference on a laptop at the shop. The conference was a follow-up to the senator announcing his presidential run. They asked about his family.” Lincoln finally turned his head in Carson's direction.

“Sam?”

“Caden said he locked himself in the office. Claimed he had work to do but he'd never leave Caden and Adam in the front by themselves on a Monday.”

Fuck. Carson wanted to go to his boy.

“Coffee run!” Nash stepped up to the door and jiggled his keys. “Can't seem to get the Keurig in the breakroom to work.” He winked. “Anyone want to ride along?”

“Shit, yeah.” Lincoln stomped toward the door.

Carson should really rein his men in, but hell, he didn't want to. “I'll follow you there.”

Nash nodded before he followed Lincoln down the hall. They were all protective over the boys of the coffeehouse and Carson knew how upset Sam would be. Even though no one other than their small circle knew about Sam's connection to the senator, the senator was targeting the majority of the residents who called Rocky Lake home.

He watched a few more minutes of Senator Stewart spewing hate before he clicked the television back off and grabbed his keys off his desk.

In less than ten minutes Carson pulled up in front of the coffee shop located in the middle of downtown. For several years Rocky Lake had been a small tourist town that was welcoming to the members of the LBGTQ+ family. The town had grown until it began to resemble one of the bigger cities in the state but kept the small-town charm.

The first time that Carson had driven down the main road leading to downtown, his heart had been bruised and he'd been hurting. The feeling of home had shocked Carson so when he'd been offered the job there in the city he'd accepted.

Now he couldn't imagine how different his life would be if he'd had stayed in the city that had broken him. He wouldn't have met the sweet boy that needed him at that moment.

Climbing out of his SUV, Carson could see how crowded the little shop was. He entered the shop to find Caden busy steaming milk and a long line of cups growing at his side. Adam was busy taking orders, handing out pastries, and working the register. Lincoln called out names from the cups Caden passed over as Nash walked out of the kitchen with a tray of muffins.

Carson grinned. His boy was hurting, and their friends were stepping in to give Sam the break he needed. As he strolled from the door, Adam glanced up and relief washed over his face. He nodded then pointed toward the back.

He hadn't been behind the counter or in the kitchen, but Carson didn't waste time. Moving through the crowd, Carson could tell that the customers might have been in a hurry, but it didn't appear that anyone was upset with how long it took to get their drinks.

Carson entered the kitchen and peered around until he spotted the small hall to the left. He headed in that direction and passed a bathroom, a supply closet, and finally came to a closed door.

He tapped at the door even though he wanted to bust in and take his boy into his arms.

"I'll be right out," Sam called.

"Open the door, baby," Carson called out firmly.

Something crashed. The door opened a crack and Sam peered out. "Carson?"

His boy looked wrecked. "Can I come in?"

“I...” Sam looked over his shoulder. “I...”

“Baby boy, let me in.”

Sam nodded but Carson had to gently push the door open. He slipped through and closed and locked the door behind him. It was obvious from the redness in his eyes and cheeks that Sam had been crying.

“Come here.” Carson didn’t give Sam time to move and instead grasped Sam’s shoulders and pulled him close.

Sam’s breath shuddered.

Carson guided Sam over to the desk chair. He sat pulling Sam onto his knees. The laptop was open and the press conference that Carson had seen was paused on the screen. Carson slammed the top of the laptop closed before wrapping both arms around Sam and hugging tight.

He didn’t speak as he held and rocked his baby boy.

Sam was such a strong person and even though Carson could only guess what he’d been through in his young life, Sam made him so proud.

Hot tears dripped from Sam’s eyes before landing against Carson’s neck. Carson didn’t shush his boy and instead let Sam get out all the negative feelings. Carson had always been a firm believer that instead of holding feelings in, a good cry or temper tantrum often helped cleanse a body.

Slipping his hand under Sam’s shirt, he soothed his hand up and down Sam’s back.

The silence in the room was only broken by Sam’s quiet sniffles.

Carson didn’t care how long they had to sit there. His boy deserved the time to collect himself. His boy’s skin was warm and smooth as Carson continued to pet him. As Sam drew back, Carson reached for a Kleenex from a nearby box and wiped his face.

Sam laughed. He took a Kleenex from him and finished cleaning his face. “Thanks. I needed that.”

Carson nodded. “Of course.”

Sam’s gaze went back to the closed computer. “He’s such a horrible man. He actually said we should let Las Vegas burn and cleanse the ground after. There have been four bombs and my father said not to do anything.”

“That will never happen. Las Vegas will survive and your father looks like a fool.”

“How can anyone be so...”

There wasn’t a word to describe Sam’s father. “I know, baby.”

“What if he actually becomes president? He could take so much from us,” Sam said. He curled his hands into Carson’s shirt. “He hates people like us. He hates me.”

“He’s a sad and bitter man. I’ve met plenty of men like him and in the end people always come together. It’s not a perfect world but it is mostly good.”

“I’m scared. And horrified. I came from him. His genes were passed down to me.”

“You couldn’t be more different from your father. You’ve told me stories about your grandmother and that’s whose genes you should think about. She never turned her back on you and if she could see you now, she would be so proud.”

“You think so?”

“I do because I’m proud of you.”

Sam nodded. “I avoided all contact with my family and even though I’ve read some articles here and there I hadn’t heard his voice since the night that I ran away. I wasn’t prepared. I was joking with Adam when all of a sudden I heard him say the word abomination. I swear I thought he was inside the coffee shop and I froze.”

“That’s understandable,” Carson assured him.

“I should be over it though. I got away.”

“You did but that doesn’t mean that there aren’t still some lingering feelings. You’re human, baby, and you need to give yourself a break.”

Sam smiled. “What are you doing here anyway? How did you know I needed you.”

“I didn’t but I saw the conference and Nash came up with an excuse that the Keurig wasn’t working.”

Sam snorted. “Just plug it in when you get back.”

Carson frowned. “What?”

Pressing his lips together, Sam tried but couldn’t hold back his laugh.

“Are you kidding me?” Carson growled. He thought back to all the times that Nash or Lincoln had gone on a coffee run.

“What can I say?” Sam teased. “We’re irresistible.”

“Yes, yes you are.”

Sam’s cheeks turned a pretty pink.

“And you look very pretty today.”

Sam perked up. “You like?”

Carson nipped Sam’s pointed chin. “I do.”

Sam enjoyed bright colors and did his makeup to match perfectly. Carson also hadn’t missed that under his shirt, as Carson rubbed his back, Sam wore something silky.

Was there anything sexier than a pretty boy wearing something silky? Carson didn’t think so. He could imagine dressing his baby boy up and running his hands all over Sam’s tight body.

Sam sighed. “I should get back out front. I kind of abandoned the guys and Mondays are busy.”

“You can take your time. The boys have it handled and even Nash and Lincoln were helping out.”

Sam's eyes grew wide. "Really?"

"We have your back sweetheart. Take your time."

"I shouldn't have let myself forget that my real family is here."

Carson smiled proudly. "That's right." Leaning forward, he took his time to press his lips against Sam's before gently slipping his tongue inside Sam's mouth then sucking on Sam's tongue.

Sam moaned and grasped Carson's shirt tighter.

Carson loved how responsive Sam was and how the boy didn't hold back with Carson. He didn't have to wonder how Sam felt or if he was happy. They drew back and smiled at each other, but it wasn't enough. He pulled Sam back in for one more deep hard kiss then patted Sam's back.

"Why don't you go clean up your face, fix your pretty makeup, and I'll check on the front? Come out when you're ready."

Sam lifted a shaky hand to his eye. "You think my makeup is pretty?"

"Yes, baby, gorgeous."

Sam beamed at him. "Okay, give me a few minutes."

Carson gave his baby boy one last kiss before he had to adjust his erection so he would be suitable for the public. Sam watched his hand move but Carson shook his head. He was really trying to take his time and get to know Sam, but he was only human, and his dick was starting to hate him.

Chapter Eight

Sam

His silk ruffled skirt and matching camisole top in a pale yellow was one of Sam's absolute favorite outfits. Under the skirt he wore a diaper and finished off the outfit with a pair of sandals. After his breakdown earlier he'd tried to get back to work but Adam had sent him home, and for once Sam didn't argue. Sometimes Adam forgot who the boss was but Sam loved that about his friend.

The day had all been too much so Sam listened to Carson and his friends when they said they would handle the shop and that Sam needed to take the day for himself.

While Sam preferred playing with his friends, he didn't mind being alone after such an emotional upheaval.

After pulling out his Strawberry Shortcake dolls and setting up the tea tray, he and his dolls spent the day in his princess room. Sam loved having a space in his home that was full of all his favorite things and the fact that he didn't have to hide them.

His phone chimed and Sam slowly crawled out of the doll pile where he'd been reading a book out loud. He squealed and showed his dolls his screen where Carson had texted.

The phone chimed again and he giggled. Oops, he should probably answer the text message.

Lieutenant Daddy: I was hoping that I could come by?

Oh, Daddy wanted to come over! Wait, he wasn't actually Sam's Daddy yet. And Sam was quite little. Licking his lips, he tasted the strawberry gloss he'd put on earlier. Should he say no? He didn't want to say no. Sam also didn't want to change either. He was pretty!

The phone rang in his hand and Sam shouted and dropped the expensive device. Uh oh, now his Daddy was calling.

He glared at the closest doll. "I'm answering," he griped.

He swiped his finger over the phone screen before bringing the device up to his ear. “Hi!” Wait, that was too high. That was his little voice. “Hello.” He tried again.

Carson’s warm laughter filled his ear. “What are you doing, baby?”

Sam bit his lip. He really liked his strawberry gloss. Adam had found it for him and he wished he had another one.

“Sam?”

“No-thing,” he sing-songed.

“Hmm,” Carson said. “Is my boy playing?”

Gasping, Sam looked around. How did Carson know that? Did he have secret powers? Like looking through walls?

“I’m going to take that as a yes. I don’t want to interrupt if you’re playing but I did want to check on you. Are you okay?”

“Mm-hmm.” Sam was fine. Of course, he was fine. He was full of tea and little sandwiches. And cookies. So many cookies! “Cookies!”

“You have cookies or you want cookies?” Carson asked.

Oh no, he couldn’t eat any more cookies. His stomach ached. “No more cookies.” He didn’t think he’d eat another cookie for a long long time. At least a full day.

“Okay, baby, no more cookies.”

That was right. He’d eaten too many already. “Tea though?”

“Tea?”

“Tea party!” Sam said happily while clapping. He dropped the phone and frowned at it. Picking it back up, Sam could hear Carson talking but didn’t know what he said. “You come to tea party?” he asked.

“I would love to come to a tea party,” Carson responded. “Can I come now?”

“Come now, we have tea.”

“Okay, baby, I’m on my way.”

“K.” Sam hung up the phone. Suddenly he remembered that he was still dressed up. And his hair wasn’t even done. How was he going to have a tea party with his Daddy if he hadn’t fixed his hair?

“Sad, sad, sad, sad,” Sam admonished himself. He didn’t have time to curl his hair pretty but he crawled across the room to the tall mirror and peered at it. “Pretty!” He really was a pretty boy. He picked up his brush and ran it over his hair until it shined. He applied more of his red strawberry lip gloss just as a knock came on the door.

“I get it!” He jumped up and raced toward the door. He didn’t waste time and pulled the door open while bouncing on his toes.

“Hey, baby.” Carson stood in the hall holding a pink box.

“What that?” He pointed to the box.

“It’s a present for my baby boy.”

“Me?” He pointed to his chest.

“Yes, you. Can I come in?”

“Yes!” He waved his hand and waited until Carson stepped inside and locked the door behind him before poking the box. “For me!”

Carson sat the box down on the table next to Sam’s keys. “First, I need to see my beautiful baby boy. Let me see your pretty outfit.”

Happily, Sam twirled around, holding the hem of his skirt out, and giving him a curtsy. Carson’s eyes darkened and Sam knew desire when he saw it. He smacked his lips. “Pretty?”

“Gorgeous. Absolutely gorgeous. You make a stunning little baby doll. And I like your shiny lips. How do they taste?”

Sam didn’t get time to respond, Carson leant down and placed his lips over Sam’s.

Oh, oh that was nice. Really nice. Daddy kissed so good! He ate at Sam's lips until Sam was breathing hard.

Pulling back, Carson licked his own lips before humming in approval. "Very nice."

Sam beamed. His gaze darted back to the pink box.

Carson laughed. "I picked this up for you before I knew you'd eaten too many cookies."

Sam groaned. "More cookies?"

"Not quite, baby." Carson opened the lid of the pink cardboard box and Sam gasped.

Two large cupcakes, one vanilla and one chocolate, with beautiful pink icing and sprinkles. Sam bounced as he clapped. "Pretty!"

"Why don't I put these in the kitchen for later and you get our tea ready?"

"K! Hurry, we have parties in the princess room."

"I can't wait to see the princess room. I'll be right there."

Sam whirled and around to hurry back into his special room. He had to make room for his Daddy to sit so he moved his dolls around. They'd already had three tea parties, so it was okay that they missed this one.

Sam laid his dolls in the dollhouse and got them all comfy. He turned back to the door where Carson was standing. He'd taken off his suit jacket and rolled up the sleeves of his white button-down shirt. He'd also removed the dress shoes that he'd arrived in.

"Can I come in?"

"Yes, can't have a tea party out there."

Chuckling, Carson stepped inside. "That's true."

He looked around the room and Sam wondered what he saw. It had taken years for Sam to get his room perfect and he loved the small space. He'd taken the guest bedroom and

painted the walls a soft shade of pink with white accents. There was a giant dollhouse on one side of the room. Sam was a huge fan of Cabbage Patch Kids and Strawberry Shortcake dolls. He enjoyed the old-school toys from his childhood.

Sam had been so jealous of his cousin Jenny and the toys she'd carted over to his house when she'd visited. Sam had wanted to play with the dolls but the first time that his father had caught him, Sam had paid. It had hurt.

Never again would Sam hide that part of him.

There was nothing wrong with the fact that Sam liked to feel silk against his hand and play with dolls. He even had a whole school set up, with a small chair and table, a chalkboard, and little workbooks.

His favorite part of the room was the pretty little vanity set up in the corner with white lace trim and a large mirror. He kept all his makeup and hair products on the surface so he had enough room to play.

"I love it." Carson trailed his finger across the top of the large dollhouse. "This room is perfect."

"It's mine!" Sam claimed proudly.

"Yes, it is." Carson dropped down to his knees in front of the fancy table.

Sam hurried over. He'd already dressed the table with a full setting so he dropped on his padded bottom to serve the tea. Sam was glad that he'd pulled out his grandmother's good tea set to play with.

He poured the tea from the pitcher into the white porcelain cup before he placed it on the white plate and passed it over to Carson.

"Thank you, baby." Carson accepted the cup and brought it to his mouth.

Sam poured himself half a cup since he really was full, but he didn't want to miss out sharing this time with Carson. He really wanted Carson to be his Daddy so that they could do

this all the time. Adam and Caden often visited, and Adam had tea with him while Caden babysat the dolls. Caden was too worried about spilling or dropping the teacups so even though Sam told Caden it was okay, Caden was too nervous to really enjoy the teatime and relax so that left it to him and Adam. It was nice having Carson there with him.

Carson sipped on his tea as he watched Sam with a small smile.

Yes, having Carson here was the best. Next time they could have the little sandwiches and cookies together. When Sam hosted a party, he usually went all out but he'd just needed to relax and be for a few hours, so he hadn't been fully prepared. He really hadn't expected to see Carson and what a delightful surprise that was.

Chapter Nine

Carson

It had been a long time since Carson had been so happy and full of peace. Sitting in the gorgeous little room with Sam fulfilled a dream that Carson had long ago given up on.

He helped Sam clean up the playroom before he slipped his hand around Sam's waist. Carson had been pleasantly surprised by the gorgeous outfit that his boy wore. Carson had suspected and gotten a few quick looks at some of the pieces of lingerie that Sam owned but he had not expected how amazing his boy would look in a skirt and matching top. Carson didn't miss the diaper under the skirt and since he'd spotted that, his dick had not gone down.

Diaper play was not something that every little was interested in exploring but Carson loved it. There was something just so intimate about being able to take care of his boy's every need. Billy had not wanted to use diapers and that had been okay. Carson would never pressure or demand that a boy do anything that he was uncomfortable with but Carson hoped maybe Sam felt the same way he did about the diapers.

Sam closed the bedroom door and sighed.

Carson tugged Sam to his chest. "Can I ask why you keep all of your little stuff in the spare room?"

Frowning, Sam shook his head. "What do you mean?"

Slowly throughout the evening, as Sam grew tired, he'd been slipping in and out of his little persona, unlike when Carson had arrived, and Sam had been fully in little mode. Carson hadn't wanted to pull Sam from his safe little space so he'd resisted asking questions. "You have all of your toys and little stuff in the room and not in the rest of the house." He waved his hand around the modern and gorgeous room.

"Oh." Sam blinked. "After I left and moved in with my grandma, I bought my first doll. She didn't care and even gave

me her fanciest tea set to play with. I still have it and pull it out for special occasions. I swore when I had my own place that I would dedicate an entire room to little me.”

Relief washed through him. Carson had been worried Sam might feel uncomfortable or hide that special part of him. “That’s wonderful. I never thought of it that way.”

Sam shrugged. “When Adam and Caden come over we tend to spread out more, but I don’t really like cleaning. I’m not Cinderella.” Sam laughed. “So it’s also easier to play in my room.”

Carson needed to remember that Sam was the exact opposite of Billy. Sam was proud of his little self while Billy had used being little as a way to manipulate Carson and never wanted anyone else to know what they did. Billy would act like Carson’s boy in public but when they were alone, he turned into an absolute brat. Carson enjoyed brats but the relationship was supposed to go two ways.

“I’m so glad I came over. I had a wonderful time.” Carson kissed Sam’s forehead.

Sam laughed. “I guess you’ve seen it all. It usually takes me a while to go fully little with someone, but I was already so deep.”

“I liked it,” Carson assured him.

Tilting his head back, Sam peered up at him. “This is me. I can go a while not being little but when I go under, I really commit.”

“It probably helps that you’re with Adam and Caden so much. Caden seemed mostly little to me.”

“It’s how he feels the safest,” Sam explained. “We’re trying to encourage it more and more.”

Carson nodded. He didn’t know Caden’s full story but from some tidbits he’d overheard and what he’d seen, Caden hadn’t had an easy time of it. Carson suspected that Caden, Adam, and Sam all had something in their pasts that had

connected them. He mostly knew Sam's story but there was still so much he wanted to learn. "What would you like to do now?"

Sam bit his lip and Carson wanted to cover his lips with his own. "Anything?"

"Yes," Carson responded. This night was all about Sam and them being together. Even if he ended up just holding Sam again. After leaving the coffee shop earlier, Sam had been on his mind all day.

"After playing, and when I go little so deep, I like to relax in a bath." His cheeks pinked.

"That is something that I would love to help you with." Damn, Carson would really like that.

"You would?"

Sliding his hands down, Carson slipped his palms under Sam's skirt and gripped his bottom. He squeezed tight and the wrinkle of the plastic diaper had him smiling. "Daddy wants to take care of his baby boy."

"Da...daddy," Sam repeated with his voice full of hope.

"If that is what you want. I'd like to see where this can go between us. You've given me so much hope."

Sam took a deep breath, and he stared up into Carson's gaze. "I've waited for so long to find someone I can trust to be with this way. To accept me and enjoy the same things I like."

"I have too," Carson replied softly. "I hate that you were hurt that night we met but I will be forever grateful that you came into my life."

"Kiss me," Sam begged. "Please, Daddy."

Flexing his arms, Carson lifted Sam by his ass, while bending at the same time. He claimed Sam's lips with his own. Slipping his tongue inside, Carson closed his eyes and gave himself over to the feeling of Sam pressed against him and the taste of his boy.

He drew away slowly watching as Sam blinked his eyes open. “Let me take care of you.” Carson lifted Sam higher into his arms, walking toward the master bedroom and attached bath.

When he’d brought Sam home from the hospital, Carson had found the drawer full of sexy pajamas, so he knew where a few things were. He hadn’t made it into the bathroom yet. Carson took Sam to the threshold of the bathroom before he switched on the light.

“Nice,” he murmured. The large space was a surprise even though Carson should have expected the nice room to match the rest of the apartment. He really liked the mint green accent in the bathroom. Pretty, modern, and all Sam.

He set Sam on the counter and pecked a kiss to his nose. Strolling over to the large whirlpool tub, Carson turned on the water, having to fidget with both faucets, until he deemed the water temperature perfect. Turning, he ran his gaze over his boy who sat wiggling and kicking his feet. “Bubble bath?”

“There.” Sam pointed to a shelf above the tub.

Several bottles were lined up and Carson picked them up and gave each one a sniff before deciding on the lavender. He poured a good amount from the purple bottle then replaced it back on the shelf.

The water had filled the tub halfway already, so Carson turned on the jets.

He could see himself utilizing the whirlpool, maybe with Sam between his legs, after a grueling day of work.

Excitement filled him as he pictured the future that he could share with Sam.

Carson waited until the tub was a third of the way full then turned off the taps. He returned to Sam, who watched him with hooded eyes. “Time for a bath, baby doll.”

“Yes!” Sam wiggled and lifted his arms.

Well, this was fun. Carson loved how much Sam enjoyed life. He'd come from a monster but had made himself a nice life. Lifting the hem of the silk cami, Carson pulled the fabric over Sam's head. He unbuckled the sandals and dropped them to the floor before he pulled Sam off the counter.

Reaching around, Carson unzipped the back of the skirt then he allowed that material to drop. His boy stood in just a diaper with cute green dinosaurs in the front.

For the first time since they'd entered the bathroom, Sam seemed nervous. He fidgeted like he was going to put his hands over the diaper—not that Sam would be able to hide anything from him. Carson couldn't have his baby boy embarrassed.

He stepped forward and cupped the front of Sam's diaper. "Daddy likes this."

Sam's cheeks pinked.

Carson rubbed at Sam's plastic-covered cock.

His boy made a small sound in the back of his throat while pushing his hips forward.

"Daddy can't wait until we get to spend an entire day together and maybe Daddy can put you in a diaper and take care of everything all day. I would spoil you rotten and make sure that you didn't have to have any big boy thoughts."

Sam continued to rock against Carson's grip. "I...I've only ever spent the day with my friends. Sometimes we have slumber parties at Lincoln's but...but he doesn't..." Sam whined.

"But he's not your Daddy so he doesn't take care of all your needs," Carson finished for his baby.

"Yes!" Sam hissed.

Carson discreetly undid one Velcro side of the diaper. "You don't have to worry about that with me. All my attention will always be for you." He undid the other Velcro tab and

allowed the diaper to fall. Wrapping his hand around Sam's straining shaft, he gave his boy's cock a few more strokes.

"Does that feel good, baby?"

"So good." Sam clutched Carson's shoulders as he rode Carson's hand.

"You have been such a good boy today that you deserve a real treat." Carson kissed Sam hard and hot then dropped down to his knees in front of his boy.

Sam wailed and shuddered.

"Is this okay?" Carson asked before blowing across the tip of Sam's dick.

"Oh! Yes please, I'm clean. I can show you—"

He didn't need to hear anything else. Carson collected the drop of precum off the tip of Sam's shaft before he lowered his mouth and pressed the hard member against the back of his throat.

"Fuck!" Sam shouted as he thrust his hips forward.

Carson gagged but for him there was nothing better than gagging on a cock. He backed off before diving back down and taking Sam's cock even further. Sam tasted just a sweet with a hint of bitterness that Carson had been expecting. His dick was hard and the boy trembled as if he was barely hanging on. Carson wanted to work for his own treat. He used his tongue to rub at the vein under Sam's cockhead before swirling his tongue around the mushroom head.

It was so easy to get caught up in the gentle rocking motion of Sam's body and the delicious taste he was gifted with the amount of precum that Sam was releasing. He added a finger in his mouth to soak the digit with his own spit before he reached around Sam's body and ran the digit between Sam's ass cheeks.

Sam curled over the top of him while spreading his legs.

Carson pressed the tip of his finger inside and sucked Sam hard.

Sam cried out with pleasure as Carson was finally rewarded with his own treat. He drank down every bit of spunk before he knelt back on his heels.

Face red and eyes shining, Sam dropped down in front of him and attacked the front of Carson's slacks. Sam fumbled but with Carson's help was able to get his belt unbuckled and his slacks undone.

Sam stuffed both hands inside Carson's underwear and jacked him hard and fast.

"Good baby," Carson praised. He pushed his underwear down and shoved his cock through Sam's grip and rode the wave of ecstasy until he was coming. Panting, he leaned forward to pepper gentle kisses over Sam's cheeks before laying his lips over Sam's.

They kissed and finally Carson could catch his breath again. Drawing back, Carson was proud of the look of awe on Sam's face.

"Now you really need a bath," Carson told his boy. He rose and held out a hand to lift Sam as well. Carson fixed his clothes then guided Sam over to the bath.

Sam held on to him as he stepped into the hot water and his moan had Carson's cock twitching. Not that Carson could do much after that amazing orgasm, but his dick was interested in hearing all the sounds Sam would give him.

Sinking beneath the bubbles Sam appeared relaxed and sated. Resurfacing Sam's cheeks were pink from the heat while he laid his head back.

"You are so gorgeous," Carson said.

"You make me feel that way."

"I always want you to feel proud of yourself. Inside and out, you are amazing."

“I’m all tingly and happy.”

“Good, baby. You relax and I’m going to go pick out your jammies.”

“Pretty jammies?” Sam batted his lashes.

“You know it.” He kissed Sam’s cheek then rose.

Once back in the bedroom Carson took several deep breaths to get control of himself. He hadn’t planned on moving things so intimately quite yet but when he was around Sam, all reason left him. He didn’t regret anything that happened between them that night. The more time that he spent around Sam, the better Carson felt about the future that he could have with the boy of his dreams.

Chapter Ten

Sam

Rolling over, the first thing that Sam noticed was that he was alone in bed. He huffed as he opened his eyes, really hoping that somehow, he was mistaken. Nope, Sam was alone in bed. Reaching out a hand, he could tell that Carson hadn't been gone long. There was also the unmistakable scent of bacon cooking that drifted into the bedroom.

He sat up before stretching his arms over his head. His body was sore but in that good way where he would remember the wonderful feeling of Carson's hands on him the previous night. They hadn't done anything more than what had happened in the bathroom but after such an emotional draining day, Sam's body still felt the stiffness from his episode.

The door opened and Carson stuck his head around the frame. "I thought I heard you moving around in here."

"Pretty sure I could smell the bacon in my dreams."

Carson's low chuckle warmed Sam. "Take care of your morning routine and I'll plate up breakfast."

Beaming, Sam scrambled out of bed in his purple nightgown. "Deal!"

He hurried to the bathroom to take care of his most pressing need then washed his hands then brushed his teeth. Once all of the tasks that needed immediate attention were completed, he skipped his way into the kitchen.

His daddy already had full plates on the island with tall glasses of orange juice. Carson turned off the water then turned to Sam with a gorgeous smile. "I was so proud to find healthy food in your fridge so I could make you breakfast."

The praise felt amazing.

"Although I think we might need to discuss the drawer full of candy."

Oops, yeah, Sam might hoard chocolate goodness for when he needed a pick-me-up or when he hung out with Adam and Caden.

“Now sit down and eat for me. I’ll help you dress for work. I’ll need to head home to shower and get myself ready for the day soon.”

“Yes, sir!” Sam gave a sassy little salute before rushing over to his stool.

Carson held his arm as Sam climbed up on the stool, showing how much a daddy Carson truly was. For as long as Sam had been hoping and praying for a Daddy, it was still hard to believe that he’d caught the lieutenant’s attention.

Once he was sitting on his butt, Carson dropped a kiss to the top of Sam’s head. Sam tilted his neck and smacked his lips, receiving another smile and a soft press of Carson’s lips against his.

Even though Sam tried to deepen the kiss, Carson pulled back as he shook his head. “I wish I had more time this morning, boy, but we need to eat quickly so I can help you dress.”

“Fine, Daddy.” Sam only pouted a little.

They ate quickly and as much as Sam wanted to be lazy and just enjoy having Carson in his space, it was later than Sam realized. Damn, he had slept through the night again. Sam wasn’t exactly caught up on his sleep but he sure felt good after a night of being held in his Daddy’s arms.

Once they had both cleared their plates, Sam rose and rinsed the plates off before placing them in the dishwasher. Carson followed with their empty glasses. Sam didn’t keep coffee in his apartment since he got his fill at the shop.

“How about I help you pick your outfit out?” Carson offered.

“I would like that,” Sam replied. He slipped his hand in Carson’s and tugged him into the master bedroom. They

walked to the closet together.

“Do you always wear jeans? I think that’s all I’ve seen you in at work.” Carson pushed the hangers down the rod.

Sam danced in place, which must have drawn his Daddy’s eye. Carson straightened before giving Sam his complete attention.

“Sam?”

“I…” He licked his lips nervously. “I used to wear some of my skirts but—”

“But what, baby?” Carson turned then cupped his face. “Did someone give you a hard time?”

“No.” Sam shook his head. “Nothing like that. When Caden first started working with me, I could tell he was nervous and scared, and I thought it might be my clothes.”

“I know you’ve had slumber parties with Caden. Hasn’t he seen any of your favorite outfits?”

“Yeah, he has now, and of course I learned that Caden’s nerves had nothing to do with my clothes. I just got out of the habit, I guess.”

“Well, baby boy, I would never pressure you to wear anything you didn’t want but if you’d like—”

“Yes!” Oops, Sam might have been a little loud. However, now that Carson had brought up going back to wearing some of his pretty clothes, he really wanted that again.

“I’m so proud of you.” The kiss he received right after those words made Sam’s toes curl. If being himself was what helped him get kisses like that, then Sam was going to be himself all the time.

Having the support of Carson was also just a tad overwhelming. Sure, when he talked to Adam and Caden, Sam said that he wanted a Daddy who would choose him pretty outfits, but dreams and reality were often very far apart.

Stepping back, Sam shuffled his way to the bed until he could sit on the side of the mattress. He watched as Carson smiled and sorted through the clothing. Carson looked so happy doing that and Sam found himself in awe.

Finally, Carson turned, holding out a long black skirt with lace around the bottom and a deep burgundy flowing top with a scoop neck and puffy sleeves.

His breath caught. That would look amazing together and Sam had the perfect pair of velvet flats that would match. Carson held up the choices.

“Yes, please.”

His Daddy strolled over and laid the outfit on the mattress. “I’ll drop by sometime today and I can’t wait to see my baby doll all dressed up.”

Baby doll. He’d never been called something so sweet, so meaningful, so...right. “Baby doll?”

Carson laughed. “I’ve been calling you baby boy, but I think baby doll just fits you better. That’s what you reminded me of last night when you were dressed up. It’s a special name that I’ve never used with anyone else as well.”

“No one’s ever called me that but yes, it is perfect.” Sam found himself getting emotional.

His Daddy pulled him up off the bed before taking Sam into his arms. “You make me happy. I want you to know that.”

Sam squeezed back with all his might. Carson even grunted. Words failed him but he wanted his Daddy to know how much what Carson said meant to him.

* * * * *

Sam

Sam laughed along with the crew of Twisted & Tangled Tattoos, Lucas’s newly opened shop across the street, as he and the crew watched Lucas flirt with Adam. Adam for his

part was mostly ignoring all of them but Sam didn't miss the small smile on his best friend's face.

Caden and the tattooed crew's only piercer, Trick, were huddled along the other counter watching, but not teasing like them. Trick was as shy and quiet as Caden and the two of them had hit it off immediately. Trick's huge tatted-up six-foot-seven boyfriend, Mack, stood between Caden and Trick and the rest of the room. Even though he joked with them, his attention never strayed far from his boy and Caden. Protective and a solid wall to stop anyone from getting close to the boys.

All of the drinks had been made, and really the crew should leave to open the shop, but Lucas was chatting Adam up while trying to ignore all of them.

The door opened and Mack's brother, another tattooer, threw his head back and laughed loudly. "This keeps getting better and better."

Glancing over, Sam saw Nash and Lincoln enter the shop. Behind them, Carson stepped inside and Sam grew giddy with excitement. His Daddy had kept his promise and come to see him!

Sam glided around the counter, his long skirt tickling his ankles, as he hurried forward. Carson already had his arms open. Sam slipped into his Daddy's hold then pushed up on his tiptoes to meet Carson's mouth. Everything and everyone else disappeared as Carson's tongue rubbed against his.

It was unfortunate that he wore only a small thong, so Sam had to pull away before his cock grew any harder. The clinging black material of his skirt would not hide his reaction to kissing his Daddy.

"You look beautiful," Carson said as he cupped Sam's face.

Sam's hands were gripping the front of Carson's suit jacket. Sam liked that Carson was always touching him, his face, or anywhere else. "I feel beautiful. Caden cried when he saw me. He was as happy as I was, and Adam told me how

relieved he was to see me in my favorite clothes again.” He spoke quietly even though he could hear Nash loudly joking behind him.

“That’s good, baby doll,” Carson replied. “It’s important to surround yourself with people who accept you.”

Baby doll. He let out a sigh. He loved that nickname. “I think I let myself forget that for a while, but I feel much better now.”

Loud laughter pulled Sam away and he grabbed Carson’s hand, towing him closer to the crowd. Nash caught his eye and winked before bowing deeply. “You look amazing. That is a gorgeous color on you.”

Sam found himself blushing, but he patted Nash’s arm as he passed. He had to let go of Carson’s hand as introductions were made between Carson and the tattoo crew. Hurrying around the counter, Sam stepped up to Caden’s station just as Caden finished making Lincoln’s preferred drink. It had become a kind of tradition that they took care of their own guy’s order. Caden always took care of Lincoln, Sam served Carson, and even though Adam never admitted it, he always made the drinks for Nash and Lucas.

Caden slipped around him and headed to Lincoln as Sam began to brew two shots of espresso.

“It’s nice to meet you, Lieutenant, and if Nash gives you too much trouble, you can find me across the street,” Lucas stated firmly with a glare to Nash.

Nash’s shocked gasp was totally unbelievable.

Adam snorted and received a pout from Nash but a smirk from Lucas.

“It has been my absolute pleasure to meet you, Lucas,” Carson responded with his own wicked grin.

This time Nash’s groan was heartfelt as he rolled his eyes while pouting.

“I did warn you that you were playing with fire,” Lincoln said while nuzzling Caden’s neck. “They were bound to meet eventually.”

Nash huffed then rolled his eyes before turning a pout toward Adam. “You’re on my side, right, baby?”

Adam crossed his arms over his chest.

Shaking his head, Sam finished Carson’s drink. He took it over and leaned against Carson when his Daddy wrapped an arm around his back.

“We need to get the shop open,” Lucas stated. “We’ll talk to you all later.”

With the tattoo crew leaving, and only one table occupied but a regular, things quieted in the shop. Sam looked around for Caden but he and Lincoln were missing. Caden had probably dragged his Daddy into the kitchen for private kisses. Possibly Sam should put a stop to that but instead he wondered if he could talk Carson into his own private kisses. Maybe his office? Yeah, that would work even better. Less chance of them being interrupted.

He had just opened his mouth to make the invitation when Carson’s, Nash’s, and a phone in the kitchen all sounded an alert.

“That’s work, baby doll,” Carson said. “We need to go.”

Sam received a quick kiss, Nash waved at Adam, and Lincoln rushed out of the kitchen. All three men were gone before Sam even knew what was going on. Caden came out of the kitchen obviously upset.

“What happened?” Sam asked.

“That’s the alert that they have set up on their phones if someone spots Victor Munoz or one of his men.” Caden trembled as he spoke.

Adam was there to hug Caden just as Sam practically jumped across the distance. The cartel that had not only targeted their town but Caden as well hadn’t been heard from

since that night. Sam wasn't ashamed to admit that he was terrified that they'd be targets again.

"It's okay," Adam told them. "We're better prepared now. We have a new door, new locks, and a security system. No one is going to let anyone hurt us."

"He almost got us once," Caden whispered.

"But he didn't," Adam reminded him.

"You and Sam got hurt," Caden said stubbornly.

"Yeah." Adam breathed deep.

There wasn't really any way to argue with Caden. Sam, himself, was sick to his stomach. He'd just barely been sleeping since the attack and now the bad guys could be back?

"It could be nothing though." Caden perked up. "Lincoln told me the alert was set up between their department and other departments close by. With the feds refusing to come in and help, the lieutenant reached out to the other precincts, so they could protect each other. They might have been spotted as far as Glenwood."

That actually helped Sam calm down.

"See the lieutenant and Linc and Nash are all determined to keep us safe. It's going to be okay." Adam squeezed them tight.

"I bet we would feel better if we had soup and sandwiches delivered from the deli," Caden announced. Little Caden was obsessed with the potato soup from the diner down the street.

Sam wasn't sure he could eat, though.

Adam's stomach growled and he blushed.

"I'll order our usuals," Sam promised as he backed out of the embrace.

Looking around, Sam spotted the young man who'd become a regular lately. He'd showed up about two weeks ago and almost daily camped out at one of the tables out of the

way with an old laptop or a book. He never bothered anyone and was quiet and respectful. Sam wondered about it but didn't pry. He knew all about people who had secrets.

"You okay, man?" Sam asked as he approached. "Sorry for all the drama."

The young man grinned. He'd taken one of his earbuds out. "It's always entertaining around here, that's for sure."

"That it is. Can I get you anything?" he offered.

"A cup of water?" the customer requested.

They gave free water and Sam would have agreed anyway. He liked the guy. There was something about him. His sad eyes called to Sam the same way that Caden's nervousness. The kid kept to himself and didn't talk to anyone except when someone on staff approached him. Did he not have any friends? Where was his family? It went against Sam's nature not to know those answers.

"I'll get it," Caden called out.

Just the fact that Caden interacted with the guy spoke volumes. Caden usually avoided all contact with customers.

"I'm Sam." He introduced himself.

The guy laughed. "Yeah, I know all your names. I'm Mickey."

Caden brought over the water and smiled at Mickey before scurrying back around the counter as the door opened and three middle-aged women walked in.

"Well, Mickey, welcome to the crazy house."

"Funny, I thought this was a coffeehouse," Mickey teased.

Sam shook his head. "Only some days."

The door opened behind him and Mickey's eyes widened almost comically. Sam spun around, not sure whether a threat or something else walked in behind him. He nearly tripped over his own feet in his rush.

Two men stood at the entrance and while they appeared to be scanning the hanging menu above the counter, Sam didn't miss the way their gazes roamed the room, or how they held their bodies stiff.

One man in a dark suit with a red tie and pocket square had his glossy black hair tied back in a small bun at the back of his head. He was big, tall and wide shouldered. The other, shorter guy, had on ripped jeans with a tight black T-shirt. He caught Sam's eyes and grinned.

"Hello, hot stuff," the shorter of the men said.

Sam rolled his eyes. Why did that man remind him so much of Nash?

The taller of the two glanced over, his eyes widened, and he smiled kindly.

Well at least the two strangers seemed accepting of Sam's attire, but Sam was wary of having strangers in the shop at the moment. Yes, they had a security system but that wouldn't help if these two strangers attacked them.

"Can we help you?" Sam asked professionally.

"We heard this was the place to get the magic bean juice," the shorter man replied. He pointed over his shoulder at the other guy. "Skinner gets cranky if he doesn't get enough caffeine."

Skinner grunted, knocking into the shorter man's shoulder. "Stop flirting and order my coffee." He strutted off to a table in the back as the other guy merely laughed.

Again, Sam couldn't help but compare this man to Nash. They were remarkably similar in antics and wide smiles. Sam checked over his shoulder to see what Adam was doing but he stood behind the counter with his arms over his chest. Adam's eyes were narrowed.

"So I'm Jackson and Mr. Cranky Pants over there is Skinner. We need caffeine and sweetness."

Sam motioned him to the counter before going around and trying to get past Adam to take the orders. Adam shifted until he stood between Jackson and Sam.

“Adam,” Sam warned. They were customers and it was their jobs to take care of them.

“Jackson and Skinner. Strange names,” Adam said talking to the customer and not responding to Sam.

“They are, aren’t they!” Jackson couldn’t stand still. “Do our names mean that we don’t get any magic bean juice? I wasn’t joking about how cranky Skinner gets.”

Sam checked out the other guy who sat with his back to the wall watching all of them. “That’s...not cranky?”

“That’s him right before he becomes hangry.” Jackson leaned forward and dropped his voice. “He also doesn’t like being gone from his boy while we’re in town for a couple of days.”

“Why are you telling us all this?” Sam had to question. It made him very suspicious.

“You all seem kind of wound tight,” Jackson replied with a shrug.

“We don’t get a lot of strangers in town,” Adam supplied. “We’ve had some trouble lately with men we don’t know.”

Jackson nodded. “We know! That’s why we’re here.”

Oh! Carson must have called in more backup like he’d done with the Vegas detectives.

“Jackson!” Skinner barked.

Jackson sighed.

Sam shoved past Adam and picked up a cup. “What can we get you?” He didn’t want to see a cranky Skinner. Glancing over his shoulder, Sam saw Caden hovering in the entrance of the kitchen with his phone in his hand. Sam nodded and gave him a small reassuring nod. They’d be cautious until they knew more.

Chapter Eleven

Carson

Making his presence known, Carson stood with his shoulders to the wall as Lincoln and Nash escorted three men down the hall in his direction. The last man, who squirmed in Lincoln's hold, was cussing in his thick accented voice. Even without hearing the voice, Carson knew who the young punk was. He'd recognize Arturo Munoz anywhere. Arturo had been Billy's drug connection and one of the reasons that Billy was gone.

He pushed off the wall and straightened as Lincoln was about to pass him.

Arturo spotted him and jerked hard against Lincoln.

"Fucking knock it off," Lincoln growled. "You're cuffed. You're not going anywhere."

Arturo wasn't even listening to Lincoln. Carson had all of Arturo's attention. He stepped closer, crowding Arturo between him and Lincoln.

"You're far from home, Arturo," Carson said quietly.

He enjoyed the look of fear that crossed Arturo's face.

"You know this punk?" Lincoln asked as he gave Arturo a shake.

Slowly he lifted his gaze to meet Lincoln's eyes. "He killed my boy."

Lincoln was too good of a detective to let his shock show. There would be questions later, but Carson was ready to share his story with his new team. He'd tried to keep his personal life away from his professional but that turned out to be impossible. His relationship with Sam was enough to ensure that he would be around Lincoln and Nash away from the office. He'd also learned to trust the other two detectives. They were good men and Carson was going to need their help to finally put the Munoz cartel out of commission.

“Let’s go.” Lincoln pushed Arturo forward.

“Take him into the interrogation room. Let the other two sit for a while. I’ll be right there.”

“You got it, L.T.” Lincoln disappeared down the hall and Carson let out the breath he’d been holding.

He’d known that someday he would come face to face with Arturo Munoz, but he hadn’t been prepared for the feelings that rocked through him. Carson made his way to his office to give himself a few minutes.

Closing the office door behind him, Carson leaned against it as his head spun. Billy had grown up rich and spoiled by parents who hadn’t had time for him and hadn’t cared enough to keep up with what Billy was getting into. Billy and Arturo had attended the same exclusive school and while they hadn’t exactly been friends, they’d known each other. Everyone had apparently known that Arturo was the nephew of Victor Munoz, and Arturo had no problem making money by selling his uncle’s drugs to the rich kids around him.

By the time that Carson had met Billy, he’d been on his own and doing everything he could to get his parents’ or anyone’s attention. Carson had fallen for those deceptive eyes and sweet manner that had turned out to be a lie. The first time he’d found drugs in his home, he’d punished Billy but had thought it’d been a fluke. Each time after that Billy rebelled and would take off for several days until he’d return broken and sorry. Carson had always taken Billy back, knowing there hadn’t been anyone else to help the boy.

The vicious cycle had continued and even though Carson had grown to resent Billy and what Billy put him through, Carson couldn’t leave Billy. He should have. He’d tried to put Billy in rehab, but he never lasted more than a few weeks, always returning, and begging to be back in Carson’s arms.

Carson hadn’t been strong enough to deny Billy and that had led to Billy’s death as well. That fact he had to live with, but Arturo had played a major part himself. It had been a

known fact that that the drugs the Munoz cartel had been selling had considerable amounts of fentanyl in them. Billy had heard the discussions of the deaths in town. Carson had warned him. Smith, Rawlings, and North had all warned Billy. Carson's detectives had come across Billy's addiction several times while doing their job. They never arrested Billy and instead had called Carson but that had been a mistake as well.

Smith had been the one that had called Carson when Billy's final high had led to his death. Billy had been gone for several days and they'd all been keeping an eye out but Smith had been the unlucky cop that had found Billy's body in a heroin den with several people who'd overdosed. Four men had lost their life with needles still in their arms and Carson's boy had been one of them.

The horror of seeing his boy in that abandoned house, rats chewing on him, dead on a soiled mattress had been too much.

Carson had lost his mind and even though Smith, Rawlings, and North had tried to stop him, Carson had gone straight to the Munoz mansion in Vegas.

He hadn't been a cop that night. He'd gone with the purpose of taking out Victor Munoz and his nephew. Arturo hadn't been home, but Victor had. The smirk on the cartel leader's face had been too much and Carson had attacked.

It had taken his three detectives and six armed guards to get Carson off Victor.

Carson should have lost his job. He should be in jail. Instead, his captain had arrived on the scene and taken Carson away. He'd been given a mandatory leave of absence and the incident had been brushed aside.

Victor Munoz had tried to get Carson fired but nothing came of it without Victor admitting he'd been selling drugs to begin with. Victor had sworn to get his revenge, but Carson hadn't cared. He still didn't. Carson wished he'd taken his gun that night instead of leaving it at his home.

His fists beating Victor's face had been therapeutic, but Billy was still dead.

Instead of returning to his position, Carson had run to Rocky Lake to take his new job. The Munoz cartel wasn't through with him though. They'd shown up in his new city and Carson would not lose anyone else he cared about to the gang or the drugs. It was time to face his past and the first step would be finding out why Arturo was there and where Victor Munoz was hiding.

* * * * *

Sam

"Thanks for bringing me home." Caden turned in his seat and smiled at Sam.

"Of course. Anytime. You know that," Sam assured his friend. It wasn't often that Lincoln couldn't pick Caden up but when Lincoln was stuck at work, Sam was happy to help.

Deep down, Sam had known things would change when one of them found a Daddy but he sort of missed having Caden around all the time. Sam, Adam, and Caden had become so close with it just being the three of them for so long. Sam felt like he was the big brother to Caden, but his little brother was spreading his wings and finding himself. Sam was proud even if he missed how things used to be.

"Do you want to come in? Daddy said for me to put the casserole in the oven and it's your favorite."

That perked Sam up. "Green chili casserole?"

"Yep, it's so good."

"I'm in!" Sam reached for the door handle. He hadn't heard from Carson but if Lincoln and Nash were still working then Carson was probably there as well. He could hang out with Caden until Lincoln got home then maybe he'd give Carson a call.

The relationship was still new enough that Sam wasn't sure if calling or texting Carson would be bothering the older man. It was obvious that something had happened with the three cops running out of the shop earlier and now Lincoln working late.

"Cool!" Caden wiggled in his seat before he opened the door and nearly fell out. It was a good thing his seatbelt was still buckled.

"Seat belt," Sam teased.

Caden flushed. "I'm used to Daddy doing it for me."

"Well, I'm not Daddy so you have to unbuckle yourself," Sam replied with a laugh.

"You'd make a terrible Daddy," Caden responded with a shake of his head. "Daddies would never give me as much chocolate as you do! Lincoln makes me brush my teeth two times when I come home from playing at your place."

That actually made perfect sense and Sam could see Linc ordering Caden to the bathroom to brush his teeth. He wanted that. Someone who put his needs before everything else even if it wasn't what Sam wanted.

They exited the SUV and Sam clicked it locked before he followed Caden up the sidewalk to the front porch. The decorations still made Sam smile. Who didn't love fall? Caden liked the cooler weather, Adam loved all things Halloween and anything spooky, and Sam enjoyed the beginning of the holiday season.

Growing up, holidays had sucked. The décor around the house and all the stupid dinner parties had only been to impress others. Even before he'd gotten into politics, Sam's father cared more about what the congregation thought about the family than how he treated his family.

His first holiday with his grandma and Susie had been small and wonderful. There had been so much love with just the three of them Sam had the best time of his life. Since moving to Rocky Lake, Sam had taken over hosting holidays

with Susie and Adam. When his grandma was still alive, she'd even driven down. Holidays were his jam and he hoped to include his very own Daddy this year.

Caden unlocked the front door before rushing over and turning off the alarm. His tongue caught between his teeth, Caden pushed buttons until the beeping stopped. He glanced over his shoulder and shrugged. "I get nervous that I'm going to set it off and the cops will come and Lincoln will be mad."

Sam closed and locked the door before he walked over to sling his arm around Caden's shoulder. "I can guarantee that even if that happened, Lincoln would not get angry with you. He'd be worried about you but never mad."

Caden nodded then turned to bury his face in Sam's neck.

"It's okay." Sam patted Caden's back. He'd let his friend hold on to him for as long as Caden needed.

"I know that Daddy won't get mad at me but sometimes I still feel like all this is just a big dream and I'm still living on the streets."

Shit! Sam hugged Caden tightly. "I promise this is all real. You deserve Lincoln and everything else good that is happening."

Pulling back a little, Caden tilted his head. Sam wasn't used to being taller than anyone, but he liked Caden looking up at him. "You deserve good things too. I want to hear more about you and the L.T."

"Reset the alarm and I'll tell you as we put the food in the oven."

"Oh yeah, I have to reset the alarm." Caden pressed more buttons until the system was activated.

Sam drew Caden through the house and into the kitchen. The front lights had been left on and he flipped the switch lighting up the space from above the long island. The large, homely kitchen gleamed spotlessly. Sam liked Lincoln and Caden's home even if he preferred his smaller apartment. He

couldn't imagine how much cleaning Lincoln had to do. Sam was quite sure that Caden never had to lift a finger around the house as it was a known fact that Linc enjoyed spoiling Caden.

Caden shuffled over to the fridge and pulled out a glass dish that he set on the counter. He seemed to know what buttons to use to preheat the oven. Once done he turned with a smile. "Drink?"

"Sure."

"We have orange juice!" Caden told him.

Apparently orange juice was something that had been lacking in Caden's life and he and Adam had never figured it out. Linc had been the one to tell them so now the fridge at the shop was always stocked with orange juice. Yep, spoiled, but Caden deserved all the orange juice he could ever want.

"Or water?" Sam asked.

"Of course, we have water. We always have water," Caden whined. "And if you drink a cup of OJ then you have to have water with dinner. Those are the rules."

Sam winked. "Won't tell if you don't."

Caden shook his head sadly. "Daddy will know. He always knows."

It was so hard to keep a straight face, but Sam nodded along with Caden. Poor Caden was forced to drink water because his Daddy cared about him.

After grabbing Sam a bottle of water and passing it over, Caden went to the cabinet next to the fridge and pulled down a blue sippy cup. He poured the juice into the cup but instead of screwing the lid on the cup, Caden picked it up and gulped down half. He refilled the cup before replacing the orange juice back in the fridge. He did put the top on his cup this time then looked over at Sam.

Sam lifted a brow.

"That only counts as one cup cuz the lid wasn't on."

“O...kay.” Sam knew that things didn’t work that way around here.

“Shush!” Caden told him.

The oven buzzed and Caden jumped.

Guilty conscience? Caden was going to tell on himself, Sam just knew it.

“Time to put dinner in the oven,” Caden told him.

Sam helped Caden get the lid off the dish and the glass container into the oven with the timer started before they took their drinks into the living room. Unlike his apartment, there were signs of little Caden everywhere around the house.

Caden dropped down to sit cross-legged in front of the coffee table before he pulled over his coloring books and crayons. He held out the Strawberry Shortcake book that Lincoln had bought especially for him and Sam sat beside his friend.

“Cartoons!” Caden said suddenly.

“You got it, buddy,” Sam often took the older-brother role with Caden, especially when Adam wasn’t with him. Reaching behind himself, Sam strained for the remote on the couch before he powered on the television.

The Cartoon Network was already on and with an old Bugs Bunny cartoon on that would work for both of them.

“Thanks,” Caden said distractedly as he continued to color. It looked like he was working on some sort of unicorn picture. It was quite cute.

Sam allowed himself to sink into the warmth of the house, the good company of Caden by his side, the spicy scents coming from the kitchen, and just to have a moment not to have any worries.

Once he got home, Sam would have to face sleeping alone in his apartment. It didn’t seem that his mind could rest when Carson wasn’t holding him in his arms. That was a worry for

later. At the moment Sam could color a pretty picture and eat dinner with his friend.

Sam's phone chimed and he hurried to get it out of his skirt pocket.

Lieutenant Daddy: Sorry I haven't been able to call. It's been crazy today

Sam: Is everything ok?

Lieutenant Daddy: Yes. We brought in some of the cartel men. They were pulled over for speeding but the officer saw a gun in plain view and they searched the vehicle finding drugs as well

Sam: That's not good

Lieutenant Daddy: At least we know they were here to drop off drugs and not something more

True and that did have Sam relaxing a little more.

Sam: Good

Lieutenant Daddy: I just wanted you to know that I was thinking about you.

Sam: Thank you! I knew you were working hard. I brought Caden home for Linc

Lieutenant Daddy: Are you still there? Lincoln just invited me and Nash for dinner

Sam: Yes! We're having my favorite!

Lieutenant Daddy: See you soon. Miss you!

Missed him? Sam reread those words. He liked that Carson didn't play games and always said what he meant. Sam hated having to guess how to please a partner. Yes, he was sassy and could be a brat, but Sam also wanted his partner to be happy in the relationship.

Sam: Miss you 2

He sent the last message before setting his phone down and nudging Caden's elbow. "Linc invited Carson and Nash

over for dinner.”

Caden frowned at him as he set the crayon down. “Why?”

Not the reaction that Sam expected. He shrugged.

Caden’s long sigh had Sam tilting his head.

“What’s the matter?”

“Daddy doesn’t usually invite people over,” Caden said.

“What are you talking about? Adam and I are here all the time. So is Nash,” he pointed out.

“Well yeah but you all know about...you know...”

“Us all being littles?” Sam guessed.

Caden bobbed his head quickly.

“Well Carson knows too. He’s even had a tea party with me,” Sam told him.

“He had a tea party!” Caden screeched, grabbing and shaking Sam’s arm. “You didn’t tell me!”

“It just happened last night. Carson came over and we had a tea party then he gave me a bath and we went to bed. He even picked out my outfit this morning for me.” Sam wanted Caden to be comfortable around his own Daddy.

“Is that why you’re wearing your pretty clothes again?” Caden questioned.

“Carson reminded me that I shouldn’t hide who I am. It doesn’t matter what anyone else thinks.”

“That’s true,” Caden replied. “And you’re so pretty!”

Sam had the best friends ever! “So, Carson will totally be okay with you no matter how little you are. When he came over, I had on my diaper and a pretty outfit, and he didn’t run screaming from the apartment.”

Caden giggled just like Sam had planned.

“And you got a bath? Daddy baths are awesome!”

Remembering the blow job he'd received before the bath, Sam flushed, but agreed. "Yeah."

"Oh!" Caden poked Sam in the arm. Hard. "Tell me!"

"Tell you what?" Sam hedged.

"Something sexy happened," Caden declared. "If you don't tell me right now, I'll call Adam."

"Bringing out the big guns," Sam teased. "Something might have happened."

"Tell me!" Caden wailed.

Chapter Twelve

Carson

“Are you sure it will be okay with Caden that I’m here?” Carson asked. He’d followed Lincoln home and up the front steps. The house was decorated with fall décor, bringing a cute charm to the old house. Would Sam like to decorate for the holidays? Carson hadn’t even thought about that yet.

Lincoln glanced back over his shoulder. “I didn’t miss the looks or touches between you and Sam. I’ve been wondering when you would get your head out of your ass and claim that boy.” Lincoln flushed. “Sir.”

Chuckling, Carson patted Lincoln’s shoulder. “When we’re off and with our boys I’m just Carson.”

Lincoln nodded. “So, you did claim Sam?”

“Sam is mine.” Carson would make sure there were no questions. Sam belonged to him and Carson would take care of his boy. After such an emotional-trauma-filled day, he needed to be around his little baby doll.

“Then Caden needs to be comfortable around you. Those boys spend every free minute together and I will not allow that to change. They might need that connection for varied reasons but Caden, Sam, and Adam need each other.”

“I get that.” Carson had come to the same conclusion.

“Then welcome to our family,” Lincoln told him, unlocking the door.

Lincoln hurried to the alarm as Carson peered around the small entry. The neighborhood was nice, the house older but cute, and it seemed to fit everything he knew about Lincoln. Sturdy, safe, and well built.

“Daddy!”

Running feet echoed before a small bundle of speed was passing Carson and straight into Lincoln’s arms.

Lincoln turned ready to pull his boy into his arms while Sam followed at a slower pace. Sam did walk right over to him then had his hands running up Carson's chest.

"Hello, baby doll." Carson leaned down to speak quietly even though Lincoln was whispering in Caden's ear, and neither were paying attention to him and Sam.

"I'm glad you came over," Sam replied softly.

"As soon as you said you were here, there was nowhere else I would be. I hated that I couldn't call you after we had to rush away," Carson told him.

"No, I understand. You are doing what you have to to keep all of us safe."

"Thank you for understanding. I'll be honest, my previous boy, he hated if I ever had to cancel plans or run out. He'd hold it against me for days." It was hard to talk about Billy with Sam, but Carson wanted to be honest.

"You don't have to worry about that with me. What you do is important. I don't want drugs in our community. I know that you probably haven't heard all of Caden's story yet, but it is important that our community fights against the drugs coming in. Plus, I won't have the same emergencies as you, but I am a business owner and things I need to take care of."

More hints about Caden's past. Carson was going to have to ask questions but after his big reveal to Lincoln earlier, Carson was sure Lincoln had his own questions. "I don't know how I got so lucky to find you."

"Good answer and that deserves a reward." Popping up onto his tiptoes, Sam brushed his lips over Carson's and kissed him deeply.

Carson didn't care who was around and ran his hands down Sam's slim back until he cupped Sam's ass and tugged his boy closer. Their cocks brushed and the thin material of Sam's skirt didn't contain the hardness presses against his own.

He let the kiss end slowly and when Carson glanced around, Lincoln and Caden had disappeared. "I guess we're being rude."

Sam snorted. "They probably want some privacy for their own kisses. We are needy, needy littles."

Popping Sam's ass, Carson narrowed his eyes. "You might be my little needy baby doll, but you will also behave when we are guests having a dinner with friends."

"Yes Daddy," Sam responded with a sassy little wiggle and a pout of his full bottom lip.

"If you're a good boy tonight, Daddy will give you a treat once we get back to your apartment."

That perked his little one up. "A treat? What kind of treat?"

"Not something that you can eat but it goes in your mouth," Carson taunted. He rubbed his finger over Sam's bottom lip. He wanted to see his cock disappear between Sam's lush lips. Just thinking about putting some flavored gloss on Sam before shoving in his cock deep had Carson's dick pulsing.

"Can we go now?" Sam asked sweetly. "Daddy, please, Daddy."

"No." Damn it, he loved this playful side of Sam but had to stay firm. "We are going to eat with our friends, hang out, and you'll be a very good boy for me."

"Fine."

With his hand to Sam's lower back, Carson guided him toward where he could hear voices. They stepped into the kitchen as Lincoln opened the fridge.

"Caden," Lincoln growled.

"Yes, Daddy?"

Lincoln picked up an orange juice bottle and shook it. "How much juice did you have?"

“I only had one cup, Daddy,” Caden replied quickly.

Even Carson could hear the hesitance.

Lincoln looked over at Sam with a lifted brow.

“I can confirm that Caden only drank one cup of juice.”

That didn’t sound quite right. Carson pinched Sam’s side but it was Caden who was giving himself away. He squirmed and looked down.

“Technically I did only have one cup,” Caden said softly.

“Baby, tell me.”

“I poured a cup but didn’t put the lid on and drank half of it then I refilled it,” Caden admitted.

Lincoln sighed then replaced the juice, closed the fridge, and walked over to Caden. “Baby, I know you like juice, but we discussed the sugar content and how you don’t sleep well after drinking so much juice.”

“I know. I’m sorry.”

Carson wanted to give Caden all the juice in the world with how sad he sounded. Lincoln was right though. Juice did have a ton of sugar and too much wasn’t good for anyone.

“I’m not mad. I just want you to stay healthy. You’ll have water for the rest of the night,” Lincoln told his boy.

“Okay, I couldn’t really enjoy my juice anyway because I knew you wouldn’t like how I cheated.”

“You are such a good boy. Thank you for telling me,” Lincoln praised.

“You are not a good boy,” Carson whispered in Sam’s ear. “You might need to be punished instead of a treat.”

“I didn’t lie,” Sam argued. “He only drank out of one cup.”

That was why he worded his response the way he had. “Hmm,” Carson hummed. He would need to watch his boy. Sam was a smart guy and would keep Carson on his toes. Just the way it should be.

Sam batted his lashes, still playing the innocent card, but Carson knew better and he had some ideas on how to make the night even more fun.

* * * * *

Sam

Holding the door open for Carson, Sam waited until his Daddy had stepped in and pressed against his back before closing and locking the door. Carson had made them stay over at Lincoln's house for almost two hours. Two absolute hours of torture.

His Daddy had an evil streak that Sam was both impressed and frustrated over because Carson had to know what his touches had been doing to him. Everyone had known because Sam's skirt hadn't hidden a thing. If he continued to wear such clinging material, Sam might have to invest in some fancy jocks or something. The thong he wore barely held him.

"You sure were wiggly and whiny tonight," Carson breathed in his ear. "Is that how a good boy acts?"

He immediately shook his head. "No, Daddy, I was bad." Sam was extremely curious what type of punishment Carson would give.

Carson's hand snaked around his waist to cover Sam's erection.

"Daddy doesn't believe that his baby doll is sorry about misbehaving at all." He squeezed Sam's shaft, causing Sam to release a low whine. It felt so good to have Carson's hands on him.

"But, Daddy..."

"Safe word?" Carson asked sharply.

Was he going to need to use his safe word? Sam had one—no one played at the club without one—but he'd never come close to needing it. "Traffic lights. Red, yellow, green."

“Go to your room and wait for me. Daddy will be right behind you.”

“Okay, Daddy.” Sam walked to his room knowing that whatever happened between him and Carson was going to be amazing. Yes, Sam liked being a good boy but there was a little side to him that liked to push limits. Tonight, he hadn’t really misbehaved and that was understood between him and his Daddy. This was more of a test of boundaries and hopefully some sexy fun.

The apartment’s warmth was a stark relief from the chilly night air on the drive home. A cold front was coming in and Sam was glad that he’d left his heater on. Shivering and turning blue was not a good look for him and probably wouldn’t get him laid. Sam really wanted to get laid.

Sam slipped off his shoes before looking down at his skirt. Carson hadn’t told him to undress so he decided to lie back on the mattress and wait as he’d been ordered. He didn’t have to wait long, which Sam was grateful for.

His Daddy entered the bedroom, missing his suit jacket, button-down shirt, and shoes and socks. In his slacks and undershirt with a wicked gleam in his eyes, Carson stalked forward.

“Good boy. I’m proud of you for listening.” Carson stopped at the side of the bed before bending down.

“I’m a good boy,” Sam lied, totally lied, and didn’t regret it.

Carson snorted. “You’re lucky that Daddy loves him a brat. You knew that Caden wasn’t supposed to have more than one cup of juice.”

Okay, admittedly Sam had been fibbing a tad. “I know.”

“Then you sat there in your pretty little skirt and sexy top all night teasing Daddy.”

Sam gasped. It had not been his hand under the table playing with Sam’s cock while holding a conversation with

Lincoln.

“Daddy couldn’t keep his hands off his baby doll because you are just too sexy.”

It wasn’t like Sam would complain that Carson wanted to touch him all the time even if it got him punished. “Sorry, Daddy.”

Standing over him, Carson shook his head. “Have you ever been tied up?”

Against his will, Sam’s hips rose as he humped up. “I’ve...” He licked his lips. “Never trusted anyone enough.”

“I would like to make you my captive for the night but only with your willingness. It’s okay to say no. It’s okay to change your mind later. I will not get mad. I will not leave. We can try this now or later. That’s up to you.” Carson sat beside Sam’s hip on the mattress. He didn’t touch but the heat hadn’t left his gaze either. “It’s okay to wait and talk about this more.”

Sam had also had the fantasy of being tied up and at his Daddy’s mercy. “I...I want to do it.” He blushed as he asked, “Would you use your cuffs?”

“Would you like that?” Carson ran his finger over Sam’s bottom lip. “To feel the cold tight metal clamp around your wrists?”

He groaned long and low. Yes! Sam wanted that.

“Not tonight, baby doll.”

“But—”

Carson tapped Sam’s bottom lip. “I would never use the cuffs that I have put on a criminal’s wrist. Those things don’t exactly get cleaned. Daddy will get you a brand-new pair of cuffs that will be just for you and me.”

“Really? You swear?”

“Yes, baby, I will. I don’t know how I’ll ever be able to cuff another suspect after using some on you but that’s a

problem for later.”

Sam giggled. He could just picture Carson springing a boner every time he cuffed someone. That would sure shock a few bad guys.

“It’s probably a good thing that I have detectives and uniformed officers to do most of the arresting for me.”

Sam nodded along. It would suck if he couldn’t get cuffed just because it turned his Daddy on.

“Now since I don’t have cuffs to use tonight, I have other plans. First, we need to get these clothes off you. Daddy can’t punish you if you’re not naked.”

He almost asked if he always had to be naked for punishments in the future but with significant effort managed to keep his sass inside. He really wanted to see what Carson had in mind for their night and not mess anything up.

“Now hold still. Let Daddy do all the work. That’s your punishment. You don’t get to touch.”

Sam almost scoffed. Being doted on and having someone take care of all his needs? Yeah, not going to argue with that.

“Hands flat on the mattress, baby doll.”

“No problem, Daddy.” Sam had this. This wasn’t going to be hard.

That thought lasted about two minutes into Carson undressing him. His Daddy didn’t just pull off Sam’s clothes. Carson moved one piece of item to the side before kissing and licking all of Sam’s body. It took forever for Carson to actually get Sam naked. By the time he was fully nude, Sam’s cock strained toward his bellybutton and he was sweating and moaning in pleasure.

If Sam lifted his hands off the mattress, Carson would pop Sam’s thigh hard enough that Sam’s breath caught. His erection only got harder with each smack.

“Pucker those plump lips for Daddy.”

Giving his Daddy his best sultry look, he puckered up.

Instead of Sam receiving a kiss like he expected, Carson picked up Sam's strawberry lip gloss and slathered it on Sam's mouth. Sam smacked his lips and smiled.

"Perfect," Carson stated as he rose. He strode over to Sam's closet and disappeared inside.

Sam contemplated giving his cock a few strokes while Carson was occupied.

"If you touch that pretty cock of yours, I will make you go to bed without coming for a week."

That sounded horrifying. Sam gripped the comforter under him just so he wouldn't tempt fate.

Exiting the closet, Carson held up two of Sam's silk scarves. "Are you ready for Daddy?"

Sam moaned out his answer.

Chapter Thirteen

Carson

If he'd ever been more turned on in his entire life, Carson didn't remember a time. He'd meant to tease and torture his baby doll, but it had been hard for him as well. Carson wanted to sink his cock in Sam's luscious mouth and tight ass.

Holding up the silk scarves he'd seen earlier, Carson did not miss his boy's reaction. Sam wanted this as much as Carson did.

He strode over to the bed to tease the silk over Sam's pert nipples. The pebbled nubs grew harder as Sam moaned loudly. Precum was already leaking from the tip of Sam's cock. One of the reasons that Carson enjoyed brats was for the punishments. He was never cruel and found more enjoyment for both him and his boy in games like this.

Carson left one silk scarf over Sam's nipples then wrapped the second scarf loosely around Sam's shaft, jacking him.

Sam lifted his hips, but Carson didn't correct that behavior. At least not yet. Very soon Carson was going to control every bit of Sam's movements. He stroked faster, knowing the precum was soaking into the silk, as Sam thrust up. Carson waited until Sam's was panting then let go of the scarf and Sam's erection.

"No! Daddy! I was so close!" Sam wailed.

"I know." He laughed then stood.

"But—"

"Too bad you're being punished. Daddy might like to watch you stroke yourself."

Falling back to the mattress, Sam whined.

Carson had tortured himself enough. He quickly shed his shirt, slacks, and briefs before straddling Sam's chest.

Reaching back, he removed the scarf he'd wrapped around Sam's shaft. Just as he suspected.

"What a dirty boy leaking all over of this pretty silk. What is Daddy going to do with you?"

"Whatever you want," Sam managed.

His poor boy was shaking so badly.

"That's right, baby doll." Carson teased the silk under Sam's chin. "Whatever I want."

Lifting Sam's right hand, he kissed his boy's wrist. "Safe words?"

"Red, yellow, green," Sam answered quickly.

"Where are you now?"

"Green, so fucking green."

"Language, boy!" Carson barked.

Sam nodded. "Green, Daddy."

Carson kissed the wrist again then tied it to the iron bar of the headboard. "The first time I saw your bed even though you were in pain and we'd just met, I wanted to tie to up and keep you there forever."

"I would have let you," Sam whispered.

"I know you would have. I wasn't ready then so I'm glad we waited. I don't want either of us to ever have any doubts about what is going on between us. This is not a short-term relationship. Daddy is going to make you all mine."

"Yes, you belong to me too. No other boys for you."

"Aww, baby. I haven't looked at anyone other than you since I moved here. You're right. I'm yours too." He secured Sam's other wrist. He gave both wrists a tug to ensure that the tying wasn't too tight, and Sam wouldn't be marked. Later he would love to leave his mark on Sam for everyone to see but that was something that needed to be discussed in advance.

“Do you know what else I’ve been fantasizing about?” he asked.

Sam shook his head.

“How pretty your glossy lips will look around my cock.” He grasped himself around the base of his shaft before he scooted up the bed.

With his gaze stuck on Sam’s lips, Carson ran the tip of his cock over Sam’s bottom lip, mixing his own precum with the gloss. “Daddy is going to feed you his cock. Are you ready, baby doll?”

“Yes, Daddy.” His boy sounded sweet, but the tongue Sam snuck out to capture the drops of fluid was not. Carson hissed as his entire body ignited with need. “Get ready, baby.”

Cautiously, Carson pressed his cockhead to Sam’s mouth and slowly pushed inside. He was thick and did not want any injury coming to his boy. Being well endowed, Carson was always careful until his partner either learned to take him or Carson knew the limits.

Sam sucked him in and the hot moist heat almost overpowered Carson’s control.

Pulling back, he watched Sam’s face for any discomfort, but Sam lifted his head to try to keep ahold of Carson’s cock.

What a beautiful picture Sam made with his arms up over his head, tied with silk, and chasing after Carson’s dick. Carson would always remember this moment with his little baby doll.

With his hand still wrapped around his base, he pushed farther inside Sam’s mouth. His boy was talented, using his tongue to press against the slit of Carson’s cock before rubbing at the thick vein under the mushroom head.

Thrusting in and out, Carson picked up the pace as Sam slobbered over his dick. The gloss was smeared over Carson’s cock and Sam’s chin, making a mess of his baby and it was fucking pushing Carson out of his mind.

Few partners could handle his massive shaft, but Sam was hungry for it.

The longer Sam bobbed, gagged, and slurped, the more confident Carson became. He released his cock, placing his hands over Sam's wrists and squeezing as he plunged deep. Sam choked but Carson kept pushing until he could feel Sam's throat close around his head. He didn't stay long. He pulled back and out of Sam's mouth, allowing Sam another breath, before he repeated the move.

Damn! Fuck! Carson was already too close to coming. He didn't want to lose this feeling though. Undoubtedly this was the best blow job that he had ever received.

Rocking his hips, he hammered his cockhead against the back of Sam's throat until the tip slipped down his throat again. Sam moaned the entire time, shooting vibrations from Carson's dick to the base of his spine.

"Yes, baby, so good, perfect," he murmured. Carson wasn't even aware of what words were escaping as he just praised Sam.

"Does Daddy's little baby like that? You like me hammering your throat? You gonna swallow Daddy's cum, aren't you, boy?"

His response was a hard suck and moan.

"Yeah, you love this. You can be Daddy's little cock warmer. I can slide inside this little mouth and just let you suck me dry every night. Would you like that? You wanna be my cock slut."

He'd never been much for dirty talk but as he thrust hard and deep, Carson couldn't stop the words. He needed to come and Sam's mouth was perfect.

"Daddy's going to come, baby. Get ready to swallow." He plunged deep, faster and harder until he was ready, pulling almost all the way out, leaving only the tip inside as he began to come.

Sam swallowed down every drop until Carson finally pulled out to peer down at him.

His boy was wrecked. Eyes watering, cheeks red, and his gloss over his chin, smeared around his lips, and even on his cheeks and the tip of his nose. Carson had no idea how that had happened.

“Gorgeous baby doll. I’ve never seen a more beautiful boy in my life.”

“Th...” Sam cleared his throat. “Thank you, Daddy.”

Reaching back, Carson grasped Sam’s cock to find it wet and limp. He glanced over his shoulder and grinned, seeing Sam’s own release over his stomach and thighs. He slid to the side so he wasn’t hovering over Sam any longer but didn’t release Sam’s spent shaft.

“Did you come, baby?” Carson stroked his boy. “I don’t remember giving you permission to do that.”

Sam shrugged as best he could with his arms still above his head. “I’ve never had such an unbelievable moment in my life. As soon as you came, I did too.”

“Without being touched?” Carson had never managed to do that for a partner. He’d actually thought it was more of a myth.

“That’s never happened to me.” Sam laughed. “Not that I’m going to complain. It was awesome.”

“Awesome,” Carson repeated. “I think we can do better than awesome.” Scooting down the bed, Carson cleaned Sam’s cum off his gorgeous body. He never stopped stroking Sam’s cock and the member hardened in his hold.

Once he licked his baby clean, Carson closed his lips around the tip of Sam’s shaft. He loved sucking cock. Even though he’d teased Sam about being his cock warmer and his cock slut, it was actually Carson who would prefer to have his boy’s dick in his mouth every night.

Carson had never understood tops who refused to pleasure their partner by sucking them off. Carson loved sucking cock.

Pressing his tongue inside Sam's slit, he kept sucking and pressing as he milked his boy. He was rewarded quickly with a burst of seed and then more. He made sure to drink down every drop only then released the cock in his mouth.

Sam stared down at him with wide glassy eyes.

"You okay, baby doll?"

A nod.

"I'm going to get you out of those ties now. I've enormously proud of you. You did very well."

Another nod.

Moving up the bed, Carson released Sam's wrist and rubbed feeling back in from shoulder to wrist. Then he repeated this with the left.

Sam continued to stare up at the ceiling.

"I'm going to go start us a bath."

A third nod.

Carson wasn't worried yet. Sam appeared blissed out and he would give his boy a little time to collect himself. After Rolling off the bed, he padded to the bathroom and to the tub. He started the water and tested the temperature, fiddling with the levers until it was perfect.

Checking out the impressive collection of bubble baths, Carson tested several scents before deciding on the milk and honey. It would be soothing. He poured in a full capful, the bubbles instantly growing, and waited until the tub filled.

He turned off the water then made his way back to the bedroom. As he expected, Sam hadn't moved an inch. Carson went over to the side of the bed, bending down and lifting Sam into his arms.

“Come on, baby,” Carson cooed. “Let’s relax in a nice hot bath.”

A fourth nod.

Carson chuckled. For someone who loved to talk, Sam seemed to have lost the ability.

He didn’t set Sam down when they reached the bathroom and only after he’s stepped into the tub and began to sink down.

Settling Sam against his chest, Carson leaned back and soaked up the heat. He was an old man now, especially compared to Sam, and he wasn’t used to so much activity.

“You alright?” He brushed his fingers over Sam’s temples and down his cheeks.

A fifth nod.

“I need words now, baby. You need to use your voice.”

Sam smiled. “You blew my mind. I’m sort of just floating and don’t want to talk right now.”

“That’s fine. As long as you’re okay.”

“More than okay,” Sam told him. “You’ve ruined me for all other men.”

Carson liked the sound of that. “Then just rest here against me.”

“K.”

He didn’t mind the quiet and it would never be a hardship to hold his boy. Eventually the water grew cold, and Carson quickly rinsed them down before helping Sam out of the tub. Carson rubbed Sam dry then gave himself a quick pass with the towel. He wanted to get his boy into bed before he got chilled.

He led Sam into the bedroom to get Sam settled under the covers before going around to the other side and joining him. Sam tried to turn into his arms, but Carson pushed him onto

his back before wrapping his arm around Sam's waist. He scooted down to rest his cheek against Sam's lower stomach and cupped his cock. Sam's shaft didn't respond but that was okay.

With Sam sprawled out on the mattress, Carson drew the tip of Sam's cock into his mouth as he closed his eyes. He gently sucked enough to keep the cock in his mouth as he allowed his mind to drift, knowing sleep would come soon. He was exhausted.

Chapter Fourteen

Sam

While shifting to grab a cup, Sam's cock gave a twinge at the angle he moved. He flushed and quickly straightened, grateful Adam and Caden weren't around to notice. A comic book that Adam had been waiting for had been released so they'd left during the afternoon lull to get Adam's comic book and lunch. The only customer there at that hour was Mickey who as usual had on his earphones while working on his laptop. It gave Sam plenty of time to get lost in his thoughts.

He'd never met a man like Carson, who seemed obsessed with having Sam's cock on his mouth. It was different than any other relationship he'd ever been in. As much as Carson teased Sam about being a cock warmer, it was his Daddy who'd suckled his dick for most of the night. Carson had also woken Sam with a long and amazing blow job. Admittedly Sam's cock was a little sore, but it was so worth it.

He made himself a hot chocolate before deciding to give Mickey a treat as well. Mickey always purchased a small coffee and a pastry when he arrived to hang out for the day but usually stuck to the free water for the remainder of his time there.

Sam didn't miss the signs that Mickey was done on his luck. His dark hair with the tips once dyed blue was faded and grown out. While his clothes were clean, they were torn and ragged. He still had a good feeling about Mickey though.

After finishing the drinks, Sam sashayed his way around the counter.

Due to the cold front, Sam had dressed for the weather with Carson's help. He wore a pair of leggings, knee-high boots, a long off-the-shoulder sweater accented with a wide belt and, yes, Carson had tied a silk scarf around his neck. The scarf was not one they'd used the previous evening, but it was a constant reminder of what they'd done. His cock might be

sore but when Sam caught his reflection in one of the pieces of gleaming equipment around the shop, he grew hard just at the memories.

He'd been so blissed out after their scene that Sam had barely been able to think about anything other than how good his body felt. His mind had been floating and nothing had mattered except being held by his Daddy.

If that was the life that Sam had somehow managed to capture, he needed to step up his game. He couldn't let Carson do all the work, but Sam did like having someone to take care of him.

Setting the hot chocolate in front of Mickey, Sam beamed at him. Mickey removed his earphones.

“On the house,” Sam told him. “Mind if I join you?”

“Not at all.” Mickey waved to one of the empty seats. “And thank you for this.” He picked up the cup then took a small sip.

“It's a hot chocolate kind of day,” Sam told him. He wouldn't make a big deal out of a simple cup of hot chocolate. Plus, he was the owner now so he could give away the product if he felt like it.

“Where did Adam and Caden go?”

Sam laughed. “Comic bookstore and to pick up lunch. It's a slow afternoon so I can handle the shop on my own. I have to make up a *help wanted* sign later, but I have time to hang out.”

“You're hiring?” Mickey perked up.

Perfect. Sam hoped Mickey would be interested. “Yeah, one of the employees that works evening shifts and weekends is moving. We try to give Caden weekends off and Adam has classes we work around.”

“What are the qualifications?” Mickey questioned.

“Honestly? Someone who will show up and that I can trust. The job is completely trainable, but we need someone who will fit with the crew here.” Sam took a sip of his hot chocolate, giving Mickey time to think about what he’d said.

When Mickey didn’t respond, Sam pressed his luck.

“You wouldn’t be interested in the job, would you?” he asked.

The look in his eyes showed Sam that Mickey was indeed interested, so he was shocked when Mickey shook his head no.

Leaning forward, Sam placed his hand over Mickey’s wrist. “Listen, we all have a story. This place, this town, we accept everyone and are willing to give people a chance.”

“I like it here,” Mickey said. “And I love your shop. I can come here and hang out and no one messes with me.”

“And no one ever will. We look after our own.”

Mickey’s gaze drifted off to the side as he sipped his drink. Sam wanted Mickey to tell him what was going on, but he knew he needed to be patient. It had taken months for Caden to open up to him and Adam but hopefully Mickey’s story wouldn’t be quite that horrible.

Sam wasn’t a patient man, but he was really trying here. Mickey needed them, Sam just knew it, and he wanted Mickey to let them help.

Mickey set the cup down and pushed it away. He wrapped his arms over his stomach. “I’m gay.”

“Okay.” Sam grinned. “So am I. And Adam. And Caden and Lincoln. I know you’ve seen the couples that come in here. That is not a problem here.”

“My mom said I’m going to hell,” Mickey informed him.

“Your mom is wrong.” Sam hated that parents couldn’t love their own child for something as small as who they were attracted to. A parent’s job was to take care of their children and love them. Preparing them to go out into the world with

the knowledge and tools to succeed. Sadly, in Sam's experience, that wasn't the case.

"I feel like she's wrong but there's still doubt. She kicked me out and said that I can't return until I decide to go to one of those conversion camps."

Anger, like nothing he'd ever felt, consumed him. "I thought those were outlawed."

"Not in Arizona. I have been trying to research being gay, but the internet is full of...well, it's full of a lot."

Sam groaned. "I don't know where you're researching but you should be very careful." A thought struck him. "How old are you?"

"Nineteen," Mickey supplied. "My mom let me stay until I graduated this past May."

"Where are you staying?"

Mickey squirmed.

Damn it! This was worse than he thought. "Do you have a safe place to sleep?"

"I'm okay," Mickey was quick to assure him.

Where was Adam or Susie when he needed them? "That's not what I asked."

"I bought an old car when I was in high school. I have some money saved from the fast-food restaurant I worked at when in school too. I'm managing."

Sam wanted to bang his head on the table in front of him. Instead, he took a deep breath to sort through all the thoughts rattling around in his head. The first thing was getting Mickey into a place to live. Sam had the apartment above the shop where Caden had lived. Then he would get Mickey some training and put him on the schedule. He'd seen Susie do this for people throughout the years, but Sam wasn't prepared for all of this. He knew what the right thing to do was and Sam

didn't have a choice but to step up. Susie had gone out of her way to help him and now it was Sam's turn to do the same.

"If you accept the job, we'll get to training you right away. There's an apartment upstairs that Caden just moved out of, and we'll get you set up there as well. It will be part of your pay so while you'll get less of a check, you'll have a place to live, and all the utilities paid."

Mickey's eyes widened while filling with tears.

"If you have any questions about the arrangement, I suggest you talk to Caden. He lived and worked and made it work, so he can give you some advice."

"Why would you do this for me? I'm a nobody."

Sam shook his head. "That's someone else talking. You are not a nobody and I need you to remember that. You are special and important and now you belong to us. You're part of the crew and like I said we take care of our own. We've all been through some shit, but it made us stronger."

Tears fell from Mickey's eyes. "I miss my family. And my friends. No one was willing to go against my mom. I've felt so alone for so long."

"I know." Sam rose and hugged Mickey to his chest as he rocked the boy. "You're not alone any longer."

The door opened and Sam patted Mickey's back. "Don't go anywhere. As soon as Adam and Caden get back, I'll take you upstairs and we'll make your schedule."

"Okay."

Sam hurried around the counter to greet the two older women who had bundled for the cold and were currently unwrapping the scarves from around their necks. He touched his own scarf as a reminder of his Daddy. He had so much to tell Carson and maybe get his advice on. There had to be something more they could do to help Mickey.

"Ladies, welcome in. What can I get you?"

The shop grew crowded, and Sam was running around trying to take orders, make drinks, and serve pastries. He didn't say anything when Mickey stepped behind the counter and quickly sanitized his hands before he plated up pastries that Sam had pulled from the display case.

Even without any previous training, Mickey helped Sam through the small rush. Once all the patrons were settled with their food and drinks, Sam nudged Mickey's shoulder. "Thanks for helping out."

Mickey shrugged but his smile was wide. "It's the least I could do after everything you offered me. I want to take you up on the job and apartment. I want to be part of the team."

"You already are," Sam assured him. "You did good."

The door opened and Sam sighed. Where were Adam and Caden?

Two men in cheap gray suits entered and Sam did his best not to give away anything on his face and put on his best customer service smile. The two men approached but Sam did not like the smirk on the first man's face or the way his beady little eyes watched him.

"Can I help you gentlemen?" he asked politely.

The front man's grin widened, which was just smarmy. "Samson Stewart?"

Sam gasped in shock. He hated that name and hearing it from this stranger was not going to be good.

"Ha! I knew it!" The man pointed at him. "You have not been easy to track down Mr. Stewart."

Dread filled him and Sam wanted to run away. He squared his shoulders instead. He wasn't really surprised that he'd been tracked down. He'd been both preparing for this moment and dreading it would happen. With his father's aspiration to become president, any good investigator could track him down. Sam wished he'd changed his name when he'd considered it years ago.

“Can I help you?” he repeated.

“You can!” The man seemed overly cheerful. “My name’s Jeffrey Middleton and I work with the Political News Station and I want to talk to you. Now.”

That wasn’t going to happen. “If you would not like to order anything, I will have to ask you to leave.”

“Not going to happen, Sammy,” Jeffrey crowed. “I’m not leaving now that we found you!”

“Sir,” Sam said sharply. “I am asking that you leave.”

“Are you going to make me?” Jeffrey looked him up and down with a disgusted twist of his lip. “What if you break a nail?”

This was not how anyone should act. Especially not in a city like Rocky Lake. This man was full of hate and did not belong in their town.

“Sir, you have been asked to leave. If you don’t comply, I will be forced to call the police,” Mickey said at his back. The boy was shaking hard but he spoke firmly.

The reporter laughed. “This entire town is a joke.” He glared at Sam. “I will be speaking with you, Mr. Stewart.”

“No, you won’t.”

Sam looked up to where Carson hovered in the entrance of the shop. He hadn’t even heard the chime on the door.

Jeffrey turned around as he puffed his chest up but immediately deflated when faced with Carson. It was probably the badge around Carson’s neck. Or the badges on Lincoln’s or Nash’s belts. Adam and Caden hovered behind the three cops.

His knees went weak with relief and Sam had to grip the counter to hold himself up. Mickey grabbed his elbow and squeezed hard.

“There is no problem here, officers. I was just having a conversation with Mr. Stewart. No need to get involved,” Jeffrey said with his hands in the air.

“Lieutenant.” Carson stomped forward with Lincoln and Nash at his back. Adam guided Caden away from the men and behind the counter where Sam felt them press close. “Lieutenant Carson Cirillo. Your conversation is over and as you’ve been asked to leave these premises, you will go.” He gestured over his shoulder toward Lincoln and Nash. “These two detectives will ensure you leave.”

Nash stepped forward. “It would be my pleasure.”

Lincoln growled, jerking his head toward the door. “Now, gentlemen.”

Jeffrey glanced over his shoulder and glared at Sam one last time. This wasn’t over and Sam didn’t know how he was going to handle men like that reporter coming in to harass him.

The door closed behind the reporter and the other man, with Lincoln and Nash following them out.

“You okay, baby doll?” Carson asked quietly from the front of the counter.

Sam nodded. Thought better of it and shook his head. Then he just allowed himself to sink to the floor.

Chapter Fifteen

Carson

He rushed around the counter and four boys scrambled out his way so he could get his arms around Sam. Sam trembled in his hold and Carson wanted to track down those two men and show them just how protective a Daddy could be.

“They’re gone but I don’t think that we’ve seen the last of them,” Lincoln said as he returned.

Carson nodded, returning his attention to his boy. “What was that about?”

Sam struggled to explain. His mouth opened and closed but he didn’t make a sound.

“It was a reporter. He called Sam Samson and was being horrible,” a young man with faded blue hair said.

Carson had seen the young man in the store before but didn’t know his name. But a reporter? That was not good.

“I’m taking Sam home. Can someone handle the shop?” Carson asked.

“We got it.” Adam stepped up. “Just get him out of here. He shouldn’t have to deal with this shit.”

“Wait!” Sam curled his hand in Carson’s suit jacket.

“What is it, baby?” he asked softly.

“I need to get Mickey set up in the apartment upstairs and on the schedule.”

Mickey? Who was Mickey?

“It’s okay, Sam. You go. We can go over everything later,” the young blue-haired kid said.

Sam was already shaking his head. “It’s important.”

“I can show Mickey the apartment and help him get settled,” Caden offered. He bounced on the tip of his toes.

“Right, Daddy? We’ll help?”

“Of course we will,” Lincoln hurried to agree.

“I’ll put him on the schedule with me so I can train him,” Adam offered. “He can even pick up a few hours tonight before we settle him in the apartment.”

“There, your friends will take care of everything. Let’s go.” The decision was made and with the shop covered, it was time that Sam put himself first instead of worrying about everyone else. Carson helped Sam to his feet.

“Are you sure?” Sam bit his lip although he wasn’t looking at any of them.

Caden shuffled to Sam’s side. “I’m glad you’re hiring Mickey. I’ve been worrying about him. I swear I’ll take good care of him until you get back.”

Sam hugged his friend.

“We got this.” Adam joined the hug and kissed Sam’s temple. “I’m sorry that happened to you. We’ll keep them out going forward.”

“If they found me, so will others,” Sam whispered.

“Let them come,” Adam said. “I’ll gladly get rid of all of them.”

While Adam was pretty fierce and protective, this was something that Carson needed to get control of. Sam had gotten away from his family and these reporters were not going to put his boy in danger.

The door opened and he stiffened, ready to take on the reporters or anyone else. The big tattooed man from the shop across the street entered.

“Everything okay in here?” He strolled forward, running his gaze over both Adam and Nash.

“It is now,” Carson confirmed. “I was just taking Sam home.” He had to extract his boy from the arms of his friends and bundled Sam against his chest as he started for the door.

He'd pulled his car to the front of the shop and hit the key fob to unlock the vehicle.

"My car?" Sam asked quietly.

"You're parked in the back?"

Sam nodded.

"I'll have your friend Mickey look after it for the night, but we are leaving it here. I'll bring you back to work when you're needed."

"I should work. This is my job, and everyone depends on me."

"We'll discuss that later, baby. Right now, I want to get you away and let you relax."

He ushered Sam into the SUV before pulling the seatbelt over him. Leaning down to brush his lips over Sam's forehead, he breathed in his boy's sweet scent. His nerves had just started to calm but he still had anger radiating inside him.

"I'm okay," Sam said.

"I know you are, but I didn't like seeing you that scared. It's my job to protect you."

Sam nodded. "I'd protect you too."

"I know, baby. Let's get home." He closed the passenger door then hurried around to his side and climbed behind the wheel. "I'd like to take you to my house. It will get you out of town for the night. I want to send a uniform around your apartment to make sure there're no reporters hanging around your place."

Sam's eyes widened. "I hadn't thought about that. I don't want to deal with anyone else tonight."

"So my house?"

"Yes, please."

Carson started the car and made sure the heater vent was pointed at his boy. He hadn't been out of the SUV long enough

for it to get cold on the inside, but they had a bit of a drive ahead of them.

He eased into traffic and headed toward the lake.

“Who’s Mickey and why is he moving in the apartment above the shop?”

Sam smiled as he filled Carson in on the conversation he’d had with Mickey and all of Sam’s worries about the younger man.

One of the reasons that Carson had taken his position in Rocky Lake was because he wanted to live in a city that didn’t care about two men being together. Vegas had been great because as many tourists that they dealt with, there had truly been little hate crimes. Surprising but true. Rocky Lake was another city that Carson would be safe holding the hand of a male partner and not getting bashed. It was a freedom that should be awarded to everyone no matter who they love. Carson would fight for that equal right.

Carson enjoyed being responsible for keeping the residents safe and took his job seriously. That was why having the Munoz cartel anywhere near the area worried him. He’d seen the damage that the drugs could do.

Listening to Mickey’s story or at least what they knew for sure broke Carson’s heart. That boy appeared so young and even though Sam said he was nineteen, Mickey sure didn’t look even that old. He worried about what would have happened to the young man if he hadn’t found a safe place at the coffee shop. He was also proud of Sam for reaching out to help. His boy had such a good heart.

As Sam spoke, he seemed to perk up and his color had returned.

It had frightened Carson when he’d arrived to surprise his boy. Caden had been talking to Lincoln as he was running errands with Adam. Since they were picking up lunch as well, Lincoln had ordered food at the same place and they’d all

met up. The plan had been to have lunch with their boys but that was until he'd seen how shaky Sam was.

Carson would still have to come up with lunch for Sam but at least they could be comfortable. He also needed to call into the station and take the rest of his shift off. Carson's position afforded him more leeway than most others. He worked more stable hours and rarely called out into the field. All the detectives in his unit knew they could always reach out to him, but they were competent officers and mostly just needed his approval at times.

The cases they were working on low-level drug dealers had slowed when the Munoz cartel had left town. Now that they'd taken some of Munoz's men, including his nephew, into custody on outstanding warrants, hopefully they stopped that drug run coming in. The amount they'd confiscated had been significant.

"How far out do you live?" Sam asked as he peered through the front windshield.

Carson chuckled. They had been driving for about fifteen minutes now. "We're almost there."

"In this neighborhood?" Sam questioned. "Right on the lake?"

"My house is on the lake. I have my own private dock although I don't have a boat." Carson had even considered buying a boat until recently.

"Wow." Sam turned wide eyes toward him. "You have a lake house!"

The fact that Sam could be so excited warmed him especially since Sam lived in one of the most exclusive apartment complexes in the city. It would have been hard for Carson to afford a unit in Sam's complex.

"Keep in mind that the houses out here are smaller than the ones in town." Smaller and yet more expensive.

"But it's on the lake!" Sam gushed.

“Do you like the lake, baby?”

“I love water. I used to swim all the time when I was growing up. It was one of the few activities that was approved by my parents. I was even on the swim team but after it got really bad at home, I had to drop out.”

“I’m sorry to hear that. Like I said, I have my own dock and there’s a semiprivate beach area for residents. This summer we can have bar-b-ques and invite the boys over for a day of playing in the water.”

Sam bounced. “That would be so awesome! Neither Adam or Caden like the water as much as me but this will give me chance to work on them.”

“Did they tell you why they don’t like the water?” Carson asked. If his baby wanted to have his friends over to play, then Carson would do whatever it took.

“Yeah.” Sam sighed. “Adam doesn’t like to take off his shirt and Caden doesn’t know how to swim. Caden will get in up to his ankles and he really wants to go deeper but it’s a whole thing.”

“We’ll let Lincoln know and I’ll bet he’ll help Caden.”

“Oh! I’m sure he will. Once he finds out that Caden wants to learn to swim, he’ll probably put him in lessons or something.”

“And we’ll work on Adam. He had nothing to be ashamed of. Hell, I have almost thirty years on you boys. If I can go out there, then so can Adam.”

Sam dropped his gaze while biting his lip. “I really like those thirty years on you. You look good.”

“I appreciate that,” Carson responded. He kept in shape but at fifty-five he didn’t have the same body as he did in his thirties or forties. He was the old man of the group but thankfully Sam liked his men older, or Carson wouldn’t have stood a chance. “The house is coming up on the right.”

Sam quickly glanced out the side window. “It’s so cute. I love the blue trim!”

There hadn’t been much he’d needed to do to move into the house, but Carson was totally going to take credit for his house. “Wait until you see the inside. It’s been recently renovated with new flooring and cabinets.”

“This is so great! Thank you for bringing me here.”

Carson turned into the drive then stopped in front of the wide wraparound porch. He put the SUV in Park before turning toward Sam. “I want you here, baby. I haven’t brought any friends or anyone else here. This is my sanctuary and I want to share it with you.”

“Okay.”

Carson climbed out of the SUV and made his way to the passenger door. He managed to catch the door offering his hand to help Sam out. Sam’s fingers threaded with his and Carson urged his boy forward.

He held Sam’s hand as they walked up the front steps and onto the porch.

“I love the swing,” Sam told him. “A couple of pillows and a blanket and we could cuddle out here and see the stars. You can’t really see the stars in the city.”

“That would make a perfect evening for us.” That sounded like heaven to him actually. A nice quiet cuddle session under the stars. “Maybe when it gets a little warmer.”

“Yeah.” Sam shivered. “I hate the cold.”

As adorable as Sam looked in his outfit they’d picked out together that morning, the weather had turned colder than Carson had expected. He tugged Sam toward the front door and unlocked it before pushing him gently inside.

Carson closed out the cold and locked the door. “I can start a fire if you’d like.”

“You even have a fireplace? That’s one thing that I wish my apartment had.”

“I do. I had it cleaned after I moved in and it’s functional, but I haven’t used it yet. Tonight would be a perfect time to try it.”

“Thanks. I’d really like that.”

“Come inside the living room then.” The furniture was big brown leather and comfortable. He guided Sam down into the overstuffed chair before grabbing a blanket off the couch and placing it over Sam’s lap.

It took Carson far too long to get the fire started but once it was blazing, he sat back and smiled. He had never had the need for a fireplace in Vegas as even in winter it hardly got cold enough, but he was proud of his accomplishment. He might have been showing off a little.

Glancing over his shoulder, he met Sam’s gaze, who looked at him like Carson was the best thing ever. Since he was already on the floor, Carson crawled over to his boy. Reaching him, Carson ran his hands under the blanket and up Sam’s thighs.

“Hello, baby doll.”

“Hi, Daddy.” Sam leaned forward. “I know I already said it but thank you for bringing me here. I feel so special knowing that I’m the first one to visit.”

“The first and most important,” Carson assured him. “I hope you visit me many more times.”

“I’d like that. I want us to sit under the stars, to have summer days here, and be with you as often as I can be. My apartment is great, and I don’t think I would enjoy having to drive so far to the shop every day, but this would be the perfect getaway for just the two of us.”

“Then that’s what we’ll do. How are you feeling?”

“I’m okay. I freaked out but now that I’ve had time to think about it, I knew it was coming. Someone was going to be

searching for me. If they had the right resources, I'm not that hard to find."

"I'm surprised your father hasn't used his own resources to find you."

"I talked to my grandmother about that before she passed. We think my father probably does know where I am. I'm not sure about the rest of the family but it's my father that I'm most concerned about. It's possible that if I don't cause him any trouble, he'll leave me alone."

"I hope so, but I don't think the reporters will leave easily."

"I won't talk to them. I don't care what they threaten me with. I have no comment."

"Did that man threaten you?" Carson demanded.

"He wasn't nice and while I got threatening vibes from him, he didn't outright say anything."

"You need to be careful. Don't allow them in the shop."

"Oh, I won't."

"Good boy. Now how about I take your mind off this afternoon?" Carson moved his palm to cup Sam's cock. "It's been hours since I've had you in my mouth."

Sam dropped his head back with a groan. He lifted his head quickly. "Then what?"

"What, what?" he responded then laughed. "That was weird."

Sam laughed with him. "It was. But if I let you suck my cock, what do I get in return?"

Oh, his boy wanted something? Carson would give Sam everything. "What do you think you deserve?" It would take some time for Sam to realize how much Carson really enjoyed having a cock in his mouth. Once Sam realized he would get anything he wanted by sticking his cock in Carson's mouth, the boy would be unstoppable.

“You get to swallow my cum now then I get your cock in my ass later.” He paused, swallowed hard, then blushed. “Without a condom.”

Carson stiffened. He couldn't help it. He'd never gone without protection, not even with Billy.

“We're committed to each other, right? Exclusive?”

Carson nodded even as lost for words as he was.

“It's not something that has to happen tonight. We can discuss it more. Get tested together if you want. I can show you my test results from a month ago and I haven't been with anyone in almost a year.”

“You want that with me?” Carson asked hoarsely. “I've... never...”

“Neither have I. I want that with you,” Sam said. He cupped Carson's face. “I trust you.”

That was what this conversation came down to. Carson trusted Sam as well. Even though he'd loved Billy, there was a part of him, deep down, that knew Billy was never faithful and he hadn't stayed clean. Sam was the opposite of Billy, and this was more proof. Billy never asked for this.

“Yes, no condoms. We'll exchange results but we're both clean.”

“Thank you.” Sam leaned back. “This thing with you means everything to me. I don't want to pressure you, but I won't get what I want if I don't ask.”

Sometimes Sam surprised him by how mature he really was. Billy acted childish every minute of every day. Carson had mistaken that for his boy wanting to be little. That hadn't been the case. Sam loved being little, but he was also responsible, hard-working, and dependable. Sam was perfect.

“Now suck my cock, Daddy!”

Carson chuckled. “Are you warm now?”

“Getting hotter by the second,” Sam replied with a wink.

“Take your sweater off for me? Daddy wants to see his boy’s body.”

Sam unwrapped the scarf from his neck and Carson remembered tying it there that morning. It had been a reminder to both of them of what had taken place between them the previous night. Next Sam unsnapped the wide belt and dropped both items to the floor on the side of the chair before he grabbed the hem of his long sweater.

While Sam slowly peeled the sweater off, Carson leaned forward to pepper kisses down Sam’s pale chest and didn’t stop until he reached the waistband of the leggings.

“Lift your butt,” Carson ordered.

Bracing his hands on the chair’s arms, Sam lifted his hips.

Carson pulled the black leggings and Sam’s thong off in one move. Beautiful. His boy was something special to look at. As gorgeous as Sam’s appearance was, his kind heart and amazing soul were the most attractive things about his boy.

With his gaze locked on Sam’s, Carson sucked the tip of Sam’s cock into his mouth, never breaking eye contact.

Chapter Sixteen

Sam

Slow, wet, suckling on his cock drew him from a hot fucking dream and Sam was instantly awake when he felt a slick finger rubbing against his hole. Spreading his legs wider, Sam moaned, while lifting his hips.

Instead of getting fucked like Sam had really wanted the night before, he'd fallen asleep watching a movie as he lay in Carson's arms. His Daddy must have carried him to bed sometime during the night as the soft mattress under him was unmistakable. The cool cotton sheets did nothing to calm the heat inside him.

"Are you awake now, baby doll?" Carson asked after popping off his dick.

"Uh-huh," Sam managed. He tried to push down against the finger circling his hole, but Carson moved his hand away.

"You sure you want this?" The finger returned, teasing, but not entering. "Once I get my finger inside, I'm not going to stop until my cock is buried deep and you're full of my cum."

"Yes, please," Sam begged. "I want that." God, he wanted that. Not that Sam didn't like blow jobs—who didn't—but he really wanted to feel Carson stretching his hole and pounding into him. He shivered. "Please."

"Whatever my baby wants."

The slick finger finally breached him, and Sam didn't know if anything had ever felt better.

"Hold your knees to your chest. I want in this hole," Carson ordered.

Lifting his legs, Sam tucked his knees to his chest before he wrapped his arms around them. Carson's slick finger glided in and out of him as he once again took the tip of Sam's cock into his mouth.

Dual sensations assaulted him.

Fuck! Damn! So good!

Pushing his hips up forced his cock deeper down Carson's mouth but also pulled Carson's finger loose. He whined trying to get that finger back rubbing against his prostate.

Carson withdrew Sam's cock from his mouth. "If you would hold still, I can take care of this for you," he said with amusement.

Sam grunted. His Daddy was moving too slowly!

"Behave, boy!" Carson growled.

Damn it. Sam squirmed before receiving a smack to his thigh.

Carson deep throated his cock as two fingers were thrust deep inside him. Sam shook with the need to move but if he wanted to get Carson's cock in his ass, then he needed to be a good boy. At least until he got what he wanted.

His Daddy had no problem taking Sam's shaft deep and hard. Bobbing his head in time with his fingers showed that Carson was exceptionally talented indeed. Every few times when Carson took his cock he would gag. Wow, that...yeah, that was something. Gagging with his throat closing around Sam's dick. He was going to cum!

"Please!" Sam cried. "I'm going to come but I want you inside me!"

Carson released Sam's cock and he wanted to weep. He didn't get a chance as Carson spread his fingers, still inside Sam, before pushing them in and out. His sweaty hands were barely able to hold his own knees to his chest.

"You've got to be able to take three fingers comfortably, baby." Carson withdrew his fingers before he added more lube to three digits. "Here it comes."

The burn was slight, and Sam was far too turned on to even care about that. "Daddy! Need!"

“I know what you need, boy!” He dove up from the end of the bed to land over Sam. Carson’s fingers remained buried while his tongue pushed into Sam’s mouth. Carson crushed Sam’s legs to his chest, but the weight didn’t matter as much as the fact that with Carson on top of him, Sam couldn’t move to fuck himself on Carson’s fingers.

Carson chuckled into his mouth before kissing him again.

If this was how he was woken up every morning, Sam might never leave the bed again.

The constant rubbing on his prostate was nearly torture.

He whimpered against Carson’s lips.

“You ready, baby?” Carson rubbed off against Sam’s legs. “I want inside you so bad.”

Frantically, he nodded his head. Sam was more than ready.

Carson pulled out his fingers, which left Sam feeling strangely empty, before Carson’s weight was also lifted off him.

Sam peered up and even though it was hard to focus with how turned on he was, he tried his best. Carson didn’t appear in much better condition than him. His Daddy’s hair was messy, eyes glazed, and his cock red and trailing precum across Sam.

“You are so gorgeous like this,” Carson said softly. He leaned in to kiss Sam sweetly even as he cupped and squeezed Sam’s ass.

“Want you,” Sam pleaded.

Carson grasped Sam’s legs to help lower them to the bed. “I want to watch your face this first time that I enter you. Don’t hide anything from me, baby doll. Daddy wants to see every reaction.”

“Pr...promise!”

Grasping the base of his erection with one hand, Carson added lube to his shaft with the other.

Sam locked his gaze on the glistening cock he was about to take. Even though it about killed him to have to wait to be prepared properly, Carson had known better what Sam needed.

Looking up, he gasped at the intensity in Carson's eyes.

This meant something to his Daddy. They weren't playing around; this wasn't a romp in a club. Carson was going to claim him, and Sam would let him.

Carson dropped the bottle of lube onto the mattress before shuffling forward until his knees hit Sam's ass. He lifted Sam easily while positioning Sam right where Carson wanted him, the tip of Carson's dick only just brushing Sam's hole.

Leaning forward, Carson pressed another kiss to Sam's lips as he finally pushed his cock inside. The burn was a rush, sending pings of pain toward Sam's lower back, but he could handle it. Sam could handle anything as long as he was finally claimed.

Carson rocked back and forth, his shaft entering deeper a little at a time, slowly stretching his hole, at a maddening slow pace. Just as Sam was about to lose his mind in frustration, Carson shoved all the way inside.

He arched, his nails clawing at Carson's back, while Carson remained still. Buried as deep as he could go. Connecting the two of them in the most intimate of ways.

"Your hole, baby doll. Hot. Tight." Carson gritted his teeth. "Too good."

"Move," he begged. "I need you to move. Fuck me!"

Carson gave him a wicked grin and then he really moved.

That was when Sam realized that his Daddy had been teasing him all along. The power of each hard thrust shook the bed and shocked Sam into not thinking any longer. His mind blanked at the brutal fast pace that Carson plunged that massive dick inside him. All Sam could do was hold on to Carson's shoulders and pray that he survived this wild ride.

For some reason, Sam had expected that having sex would be nice and sweet. Instead, Sam had unleashed a monster on himself, and he was not going to last long. He should have known better. Carson was perfect for him and even though Sam loved to be spoiled and doted on, he also loved to be fucked hard. This was beyond that.

Babbling and unsure what words were even leaving his mouth, Sam begged in his own way to come. To finally be pushed over the edge and get the release he'd been chasing.

Each time Carson's cock rubbed against that special spot inside him, Sam's tip would release a stream of precum.

By the time that Carson wrapped his hand around Sam's cock, it was already too late. Just one stroke and Sam was coming. His seed soaked Carson's hand to drip down his fingers as Sam screamed in gratitude.

Carson never slowed his powerful thrusts as his pace became more erratic before hot fluid filled Sam in a way that he'd never experienced.

With Carson still stroking his erection, Sam gasped as a smaller, but still powerful, orgasm rushed through him. More seed covered Carson's hand.

"Good boy." Carson thrust and paused. "You give Daddy every bit of your cum." Thrust and pause. "Don't you hold back on me boy!" Thrust and pause. "Give it up!" Thrust and pause.

He whimpered. Sam didn't have anything else to give and his cock was oversensitive.

"Good boy," Carson repeated then released Sam's cock. Leaning forward, Carson kissed Sam sweetly like he hadn't just ravaged Sam like a madman.

Sam peered up at his Daddy, seeing him in a whole new light.

"I didn't hurt you, did I?" Carson asked.

“That. Was. Amazing. No,” Sam corrected himself. “What’s better than amazing? I can’t think. You fucked my brains out. Daddy!”

Carson chuckled but smiled. “I guess I didn’t hurt you.”

Quickly shaking his head, Sam wanted to make sure that Carson had loved every minute of that.

“Good.” Then he shoved his messy fingers into Sam’s mouth.

Cold cum wasn’t his favorite thing but Sam willingly sucked and licked his Daddy’s hand clean. Carson pulled his fingers from Sam’s mouth to replace them with his tongue.

They kissed lazily until Carson gently pulled out of him.

Sam couldn’t help but hiss. It might not be comfortable at work later that day, but Sam had no regrets.

“Shower?” Carson asked.

Sam huffed. “Sleepy.”

“Messy,” Carson corrected. “And the alarm is going to go off in two minutes.”

“Two minutes of sleep is what I just heard.”

“How about I start the shower and come get you after your two minutes are up?” Carson offered.

He knew he would regret it, but Sam nodded while closing his eyes. Could a power nap be two minutes long? He’d find out.

Except by the time Sam snuggled into the mattress, Carson was there, pulling him up. Mean Daddy!

Chapter Seventeen

Sam

Walking across the shop with three pairs of eyes watching him. Sam attempted to ignore the and snickering. Yes, Sam was moving slowly. His ass twinged if he moved wrong, and his best friends and Mickey had been making comments all morning. Luckily, it was almost the end of their shift, and they would all be going their separate ways for the night. Okay, so maybe Sam was excited to spend more time with his Daddy and didn't mind the teasing. But he did have a reputation of being a fussy princess to act on.

“Are you sure you don't want me to get that table clean for you,” Adam teased. “I don't want you to hurt yourself... bending over.”

He turned his head to glare at Adam. “Really? That's the joke you've been holding in?”

Caden giggled so Sam glared at him as well.

“Dude, I've been waiting all day for you to bend over to make that joke,” Adam told him. He leaned against the counter with a smirk.

Sam straightened. “I think you've been hanging out with Nash too much. That was totally a joke he would have made.

That wiped the smirk off Adam's face.”

“Oh my God!” Caden gasped. “It totally is!”

Adam huffed. “I'm not spending that much time with him.”

Sam shook his head. “He is here literally every morning while you do the baking.”

Grumbling, Adam headed toward the kitchen. Sam didn't need to hear the words as the blush on Adam's face said enough.

Sam let his friend go. They needed to restock cups for the evening shift, and he was certain Adam would grab them while he was in the back. With Adam out of the way, he turned his sights on Caden.

He could deal with the teasing but really enjoyed giving it back. It felt nice that he had something so special to share with his friends. They'd talked about finding Daddies for so long that Sam didn't think it would ever happen to them. It was happening though and that meant with Caden and Sam needed to get Adam on board with the two men that had made it more than obvious they were interested in their friend.

"I'll go help Adam!" Scurrying to the back, Caden didn't even wait for Sam to respond.

That only left one more troublemaker. Mickey hadn't given Sam nearly as many smirks, but he had laughed.

Holding up both hands, Mickey backed into the counter. "I didn't say anything. I'm new here!"

Sam laughed. "True but that doesn't mean you didn't enjoy them teasing me."

"They're excited for you." He glanced over his shoulder before lowering his voice. "They were talking last night as they showed me the apartment how much you deserved a good man like the lieutenant and how happy they were."

That reminded Sam he should have checked in with Mickey sooner. Damn! He'd been so wrapped up in the amazing morning he'd spent with Carson that he hadn't thought about everything that had happened the prior day.

"Did you get settled in okay?" He wiped down the table as he'd been planning on doing in the first place but kept an eye on his newest employee.

"I did." Mickey grinned. "Adam and Nash helped me move my stuff from the car to the apartment. Lucas had some extra bedding and towels he brought me. Caden and Lincoln took me to the grocery store. It was...it was like having family again."

Finishing his task, Sam stuck the towel into his apron to hurry around the counter and pull Mickey into his arms. “That’s because we are family.”

That statement was something that Sam needed to remember himself. It was okay to ask for help. He’d needed a break and to spend time with his Daddy, and his friends and their partners had stepped up. That was what family should do. Sam should be able to count on the people closest to him and not feel guilt or like he needed to pay them back.

Mickey’s hug was strong, and Sam allowed himself to sink into the embrace. It was okay to lean on other people.

“What did we miss?” Adam demanded as he returned.

Caden squirmed as he carried one sleeve of cups while Adam had hauled the rest up front. Sam knew what his friend needed.

“Group hug!” Sam exclaimed.

Cheering, Caden dropped the sleeve of cups rushing over. Sam opened his arms to include Caden in the hug then waggled his brows at Adam.

Unlike Caden, Adam did not drop all the items he carried, but he did set them on the counter before he joined the hug. In the middle of the giant snuggle pile, Sam found peace. The only thing missing was his

Daddy, but he was going to see Carson soon and they’d be going back to Sam’s place for the night. Carson had even promised to bring a suit for the next day, so he didn’t have to leave early to drive across town to the lake house.

“Uh, guys,” Mickey whispered. “Who the hell is that?”

Sam pulled out of the hug to look in the direction that Mickey pointed. To his horror, a news van pulled up before that asshole reporter Jeff jumped out of the passenger side.

“Fuck!” Sam spat. This was not good. Last time the reporter had been there at least there hadn’t been a news crew. He couldn’t say the same this time as he spotted several more

men and one of them holding a camera and another a microphone.

“Why is there a news crew out front?” Mickey asked.

“It’s a long story,” Sam replied distractedly. He needed to do something quick, but he was at a loss.

“I’ll go run them off,” Adam growled.

Sam grabbed his friend’s arm. “They want a confrontation. We can’t give that to them.” Narrowing his eyes, Sam watched as Jeff positioned himself right in front of the front door to Sam’s shop.

“I can give him a black eye,” Adam threatened.

“I’m calling Daddy!” Caden announced.

Shit. Sam didn’t know what to do. He smoothed his hand down his black-and-white-striped maxi dress. He’d added a large red belt and red boots and knew that he looked good. That was not what other people would think if they saw him though. The glass windows weren’t going to hide him from view as the camera panned in their direction.

“Hey!” Adam caught his chin. “You look amazing. Gorgeous. I’ve known you for several years now, but I’ve never seen you shine like you have this last week. You glow and it’s so pretty.”

Sam blinked away tears that formed in the corners of his eyes.

“You have a lovely home, great friends, a fantastic business, and a good man. Do not let people like that asshole reporter or your father change how you see yourself. Fuck them.”

“Fuck them?” Sam repeated with a smile.

“Fuck them!” Mickey parroted. He really was too young to curse. Sam should work on that with him.

“Fuck them!” Caden whispered harshly. He never cursed and his cheeks reddened, but he held his head high.

Once again, Sam was reminded that he did not have to face this alone. He had a family even if it wasn't one that he'd been born into. Rolling his shoulders back, Sam nodded. "Fuck them."

"That's our boy," Adam praised.

He stomped around the counter to the door where a crowd had already gathered. The residents of Rocky Lake knew Sam and he always treated everyone with respect. He hoped that worked in his favor. He couldn't hear what Jeffery was saying, but the expressions on the onlookers' faces were not pleasant.

Sam opened the door while Adam remained glued at his side.

"Not only did we find the presidential hopeful's son working behind the counter of a small coffee shop, but this reporter has also witnessed what seems to be a concerning relationship between the young man and a much older police officer. I don't have to tell you how shocked I was..."

"Sir! You are blocking the entrance of this business, which I own, and I am asking you to vacate the premises."

Jeffery turned from the camera and his eyes glittered with excitement.

"Viewers! In this exclusive segment you get to witness for yourself the long-lost son of—"

The camera panned to him, but Sam did his best to ignore it. He interrupted the reporter once again.

"Sir, you are disturbing business and if you do not leave, I'll be forced to call the police," Sam said sternly.

"Yeah! Leave!" someone called from the crowd.

"We don't want to hear your hate! Leave!" someone else yelled.

What the hell had the reporter been saying?

"Mr. Stewart!" Jeffery leapt toward him. "Does your father know where you are? Does he condone this...lifestyle—"

“You were told to leave!” Lucas barreled through the crowd, and the cameraman visibly stepped away while Lucas placed himself in front of Sam and Adam, who gripped Sam’s shoulder hard.

“I’m simply trying to conduct an interview with—”

Sam didn’t hear the rest of what Jeffery said as a wall of large men barred his view when the other members of Lucas’s tattoo crew stood shoulder to shoulder with Lucas, keeping Sam hidden behind them. As they did that, a loud siren went off and a marked police cruiser stopped in the middle of the street.

Two SUVs screeched to a stop behind the cruiser. Carson and Lincoln’s vehicle. Just knowing that his Daddy had arrived was the assurance that Sam needed. No matter what happened, Sam was safe. His father might see this interview, but he couldn’t put his hands on Sam ever again.

Trick caught Sam’s hand and pulled him toward the door of his shop. “Come on, let them take care of this.”

Was it wrong that he was relieved that others were stepping in? Maybe. Probably. Sam didn’t care. He allowed Trick to usher him inside and with Adam never leaving his back, Sam was covered. He was okay. It would all be okay.

Hovering inside the door, Caden and Mickey waited. As soon as the door shut behind them, Caden threw himself in Sam’s arms.

“You were so brave,” Caden said. “But never do that again! I was so scared. I might have peed a little.” He said that last part where only Sam could hear.

Sam hugged Caden even tighter. While he loved being little and finally having a Daddy to take care of him, Sam also loved his relationship with Caden, and how he felt like a protector for once in his life. “Come on,” Sam said. “Let’s get away from the windows.”

“Kitchen,” Adam ordered, hustling them all into the back.

Sam agreed. No one was getting inside the shop while all the commotion was happening out front.

“What is going on?” Mickey asked, wide eyes as he huddled close to the large counter in the middle of the kitchen.

Sam hated, fucking hated, how all this drama was affecting those around him. It wasn't fair. Sam had been forced from his home, had to start his life with just his grandmother by his side, and he hadn't done too bad for himself. Now just because of his father's decisions, Sam's life was being turned upside down, and right when everything had been going so great.

The fear that his father would find him and mess up everything Sam had been working for was hard to push down, but this wasn't the moment to panic.

Even though his stomach was in knots and he wanted to hide, Sam lifted his chin. “My father is running for president and even though I haven't seen him since the night that I graduated from high school and ran away, it seems like people might have been looking for me.”

“You ran away? And your father is running for president?” Mickey repeated. “How? What?”

Sam shook his head. “My father never cared about me and hated that I was gay and spent most of his time trying to make a man out of me.”

Mickey winced. “That doesn't sound good.”

“It wasn't,” Sam admitted. “But I did have an amazing grandmother who helped me get away and I moved here with one of her friends. I always dreaded the day that my father found me. It might not be him, but with that reporter nosing around, I'm not sure how my father will respond.”

“What can I do to help?”

Someone banged loudly on the back door. They all jumped, even Adam, before Sam turned wide eyes to the locked door.

“Stay here,” Adam demanded as he stomped forward.

Part of him thought that he should be handling whoever was banging on the door, but he huddled close to Caden and Mickey to watch Adam.

Adam opened the door enough to peer through the crack. His shoulders relaxed. He swung the door open the rest of the way and Carson stepped in.

“Daddy,” Sam whispered.

Carson was by his side in an instant and Sam fell into his arms.

“That’s right, baby doll,” Carson murmured, cupping the back of Sam’s head and pressing Sam’s face into his chest. “I have you. It’s all okay.”

Wasn’t Sam just trying to convince himself of those very same things? Now that he was being held by his Daddy, Sam didn’t know if he could hold it together any longer. He was scared. He wanted the world to go away and just leave him alone.

“You should take him home,” Caden said quietly.

“I pulled around the back,” Carson said. He drew Sam back. “Want to sneak out of here?”

He hesitated. Sam had left earlier the day before. He couldn’t keep relying on his friends. He was the boss and—

“Don’t even think about arguing,” Adam pressed up against his back. “I know what you’re thinking, but it’s already at the end of shift. We’ll stay until things calm down, but you go.”

That was true. Sam had worked his full shift plus finished all the paperwork. Looking up, he nodded at Carson.

“Good.” Carson kissed his forehead then addressed the others. “Stay in here until Lincoln or Nash give you the all-clear. They’ll wait until the news crew is gone before they come in. Lucas has some of his guys stationed in front of the door, keeping everyone else out.”

“We’ve got this handled.” Adam patted Sam’s back. “You two get out of here while you can.”

Sam was ushered quickly out of the shop and into Carson’s SUV, which was still running. Wrapping his arms around his stomach, Sam rocked himself in his seat after Carson closed him into the warm vehicle.

He hated being so wishy-washy about things. He knew that he could depend on his friends. It was a constant reminder lately that he couldn’t do everything on his own, but he worried that all of this was going to be too much so soon in his relationship with Carson.

This much attention might be too much for Carson to deal with. That was even before his father got involved. What if his father made things difficult for Carson, threatened his job, or worse, actually got Carson fired? If Carson lost his job, then he would have no reason to stay around Rocky Lake.

The driver door opened, letting in a frigid blast of air, causing Sam to shiver.

After slamming the door closed, Carson turned to him. “You’re pale, baby. I hate seeing you like this.”

Sam nodded. It wasn’t something he was enjoying either. Sam wanted to be doted on and spoiled but all this drama was getting ridiculous. “I’m sorry.”

Carson sighed, long and loud. “I’m only going to say this one time.”

Shit, had Sam messed up already? Was Carson going to leave? “O...okay.”

“You never have to apologize to me or anyone else for things that are out of your control.”

What? What did that mean?

“Just as Adam can read you so well...well, baby doll, I can too. You’re sitting over there beating yourself up and worrying that all this will scare me away.”

Uh, yeah. Wow. Sam couldn't hide his wince. "Not... scared..."

"Then you think it might be too much for me to handle?" Carson asked.

Sam shrugged.

"Let's get you home." Carson turned his attention to driving them, which gave Sam time to think.

Having time to think that Sam didn't actually want.

Chapter Eighteen

Carson

His fingers tightly wrapped around the steering wheel were about the only thing holding him together. He was so angry and yet there was no one around to take his fury out on.

Carson's poor boy sat beside him in the SUV and even though Carson had the heater on full blast, Sam still shivered. Carson's experience told him that Sam wasn't shivering from the drop of adrenaline.

Pulling into the parking lot of Sam's apartment complex, Carson looked around for any signs of reporters or anyone else who might be a threat to his boy. It hurt his heart that Sam still had doubts about them, but Carson did understand. They hadn't even known each other that long. Been in a relationship for even a shorter amount of time. Sam didn't know that Carson had no intention of ever leaving him. Was it too soon to declare his intentions? Probably. Carson did have a way to show him though.

He turned off the vehicle then turned to Sam huddled in the passenger seat. "Ready to go up?"

Sam nodded, reaching to undo his seatbelt.

Carson covered Sam's hand with his. "Let me get it, baby. Then I'll come around and help you out of the car."

Sam's eyes widened.

Carson lifted Sam's hand and kissed the back before hitting the release on Sam's seatbelt. He undid his own prior to climbing out of the car.

A fine mist had started and although there was heavy rain in the forecast, it wasn't expected until later that night. Making his way carefully around the SUV, Carson kept his eye out for anyone who might cause them trouble. Sam waited inside the vehicle, staring down at his lap. Having to push his anger

down at seeing his boy so beaten down, Carson plastered a smile on his face.

He opened the door then held out his hand. “Come on, baby doll. Daddy has your night all planned out.” A small fib but Carson would figure things out as they went.

“You do?” Sam asked quietly.

“Yes, now hurry up before it really starts to rain and you get cold and wet.”

“Okay.”

When Sam placed his fingers in Carson’s hold, Carson gave him a little squeeze then hauled him out of the SUV. He tucked Sam to his side. Closing the door and hitting the key fob to lock it up, he’d get his suit and toiletry bag later. It was time to get his boy inside.

Hustling Sam across the parking lot and up the stairs, Carson was relieved they didn’t meet any resistance. As they stepped inside the apartment, Carson was glad he’d told Sam to bump the heater up, so they walked into warmth and comfort.

“Come on, baby, let’s get you dressed for the night.”

“I really don’t need you to—”

Carson placed his finger over Sam’s plump lips, regretting that the gloss Sam often wore was missing. “Daddy is here to take care of his baby doll. You worked a full shift and then had to deal with the bullshit of that reporter. Let me spoil you.”

“But you worked all day too and then had to deal with all that drama as well,” Sam pointed out.

Oh, his sweet boy. “And the best way to finish my evening is being the Daddy you need.”

Sam pressed his lips together while giving him a skeptical look.

Carson chuckled, drawing Sam down the hall to the master bedroom. He flipped on the light before continuing to the bed

where he sat and pulled Sam onto his lap. “Are you listening to me?”

“Yes.”

“The same way that you relax by regressing is how I relax by having a partner to take care of. So much is out of my hands on a daily basis, but here with you, I can be in charge and know that I can provide what you need.”

“I’ve heard our dynamic explained that way, but I can’t say I really understand it. I know what I get out of this relationship but it’s hard to imagine that you want to stick around for all this trouble. Because make no mistake, if that reporter did get me on tape, dressed like this, my father is going to be angry.”

This wasn’t the first time that Carson had to explain what his needs meant for him, but it was the first time that the answer meant so much to him. “I need to take care of you, Sam. It might sound horrible, but I need you to need me. I haven’t told you much about the boy I had before you.”

Sam’s fingers gripped his suit jacket. “I always got the feeling he wasn’t someone that you wanted to talk about.”

Carson sighed. This shouldn’t be so hard but admitting to his own mistakes made Carson feel like a failure. “It’s difficult for me to talk about. It’s not that I don’t want to share with you, but I also don’t want you to doubt that I can take care of you.”

He received his first smile since he’d walked in the kitchen.

“I have no doubts that you’ll be the best Daddy ever.”

“I appreciate that,” Carson replied. “I made a lot of mistakes with Billy but probably the worst was thinking I could fix everything for him on my own.”

Sam nodded in encouragement even as he rubbed his hand up and down Carson’s chest. It was actually very soothing.

“Billy came from a very wealthy family who gave him everything he could ever want. They ignored his unruly behavior to save face with friends and society. Because his family always had anything negative swept under the rug, Billy never had to face the consequences for his actions.”

Sam winced.

“He was so pretty, and I know now that I got caught up because he paid attention to me. I had no idea that he already knew I worked in narcotics and thought of me as a challenge. At least, at first, but I do think that he had some feelings for me.”

“Of course he did,” Sam responded. “He’d be crazy not to fall for you.”

Carson shook his head. “In the beginning, he hid his drug use from me but eventually I found out. I tried to get him help. I paid for program after program to get him clean. I should have walked away but I was convinced that if I loved him enough, if I took better care of him, he wouldn’t need the drugs.”

“That...that’s not on you,” Sam told him. “I’ve seen what drugs can do to people.”

“Billy got worse instead of better. The drugs...they had too big of a hold on him. He didn’t want to quit. He liked doing drugs and never had to worry about money or getting caught because of his family. Eventually it was too much and he overdosed.” That was as much of the story that Carson could get out.

“I’m sorry that you lost him. That’s terrible and I hope eventually you’ll be able to tell me about good times with Billy.”

Sam was understanding and such a sweet thing. Carson knew how lucky he was. He never expected to find another boy or trust himself again.

“One of the reasons I stayed away was because I was scared to start something with you when I knew that I would

need to take care of you. I'm a Daddy to my core. It's not something that I can push down. I've tried."

"But you still called and texted me."

"I made mistakes with Billy, and I can see that now. He wasn't ready for a relationship with anyone, especially not the dynamic that we had. As stupid as it sounds, he wasn't mature enough to healthily engage in a Daddy and boy dynamic. You were so different from the beginning. Even though you regress and engage in little behavior, you don't use that as an excuse for bad behavior. You take your responsibilities seriously, care about others more than yourself, and I can trust you. Deep down I never trusted Billy. You are so different and even with our unique dynamic can be a true partner."

"Even if I come with a shitload of drama and an evil father?" Sam questioned.

"We did meet because of a drug cartel that I failed to bring down," Carson pointed out. "I should tell you that Billy died from the drugs that the Munoz cartel supplied, and I lost my mind and went after Victor Munoz because of it."

"Then we both have personal reasons to hate that man."

That was true. "What do you say, baby doll? Can Daddy take care of you tonight?"

"Please." Sam fisted Carson's shirt with both hands. "I don't want to adult anymore right now."

"Perfect." Carson kissed Sam's neck then blew a raspberry on the soft skin.

Sam giggled and tried to jerk away but Carson captured him in his arms and then rolled them until Sam was under him, squirming.

Once his boy was laughing, red-faced and happy, Carson sat back. "Lie there, baby. Daddy is going to get a few things."

"K!" Sam threw his arms out to the sides. "I lie here."

He climbed off the bed and headed to the dresser where Sam kept his little stuff. Opening the top drawer, he spotted the stack of diapers that Sam kept there. If his baby didn't want to be an adult, that worked perfectly for what he had in mind. He wanted to take care of all of Sam's needs for the evening.

Next, Carson opened the second drawer and chose a purple silk shorts and tank sleep outfit. The material was soft and smooth and as long as they kept the heater up, it wouldn't get too cold in the apartment.

Pleased with his choices, Carson returned to the bed where his boy remained staring at him. He set the items on the mattress then slipped off his shoes and socks and placed them under the chair in the corner. He removed his suit jacket and unbuttoned and took off his dress shirt, leaving him in his white undershirt and slacks.

"Let's get my baby doll dressed for some playtime," Carson said as he returned to the bed.

"Play!" Sam clapped his hands.

"That's right, Daddy is going to play with his boy before we have din din."

"K, Daddy!"

Carson started to remove Sam's boots and found himself with a squirmy little. As Sam regressed, he grew sillier and happier, making Carson's heart soar. He liked seeing this side of his boy, knowing that the events of that afternoon were far from Sam's thoughts.

By the time that Sam was naked, Carson was already looking forward to their night and had the plans solidified in his mind.

"Daddy is going to put a diaper on his baby." He held up the diaper for Sam to see. "You can tell Daddy if you need a diaper change, okay?"

Sam nodded as he began to suck on his bottom lip.

“Does Daddy’s baby need a pacifier?” Carson asked.

Sam’s eyes widened then he giggled. “Ba ba?”

“I can make you a bottle after I get you dressed. Lift you bottom, please.”

Sam was a pro at getting diapered and dressed, not giving Carson any trouble. Sam embraced his regression without any shame or doubts. While Carson could walk a little through accepting this side of them, there was something refreshing knowing that even when Carson hadn’t been there, Sam had been true to himself. He didn’t need Carson—he wanted Carson and trusted Carson, and their needs fit perfectly.

Carson clapped his hands before offering his arms.

Sam clambered to his knees on the bed then launched himself at Carson.

Carson easily caught his baby doll then hauled him to the living room. He set Sam on the couch and covered him with a quilt from the back before strolling into the kitchen. He quickly made up a bottle of milk for Sam and grabbed himself a bottle of water before returning to where he’d left his boy.

He set the drinks down on the end table, picked Sam up then sat with Sam on his lap. Carson picked up the remote and found an old Tom and Jerry cartoon before he picked up the bottle.

“Lay your head on my shoulder. Let’s watch cartoons then you can prepare a tea party while I start dinner for us.”

“Tea party now?” Sam asked hopefully.

“Not right now, baby doll. Drink your bottle, then I’ll make dinner and we’ll have a tea party before bath time. We deserve it after the day we had.”

Sam nodded seriously. “Cupcakes?”

“If we split one. I don’t want you on a sugar high when it’s bedtime.”

“Promise? No forget tea party?”

“I promise, baby doll. We’ll eat dinner, then have a tea party and cupcakes before a bath.”

With a happy sigh, Sam rested his head on Carson’s chest. Carson lifted the bottle as he cradled his boy and brought the nipple to Sam’s mouth.

“Open up for Daddy,” he whispered softly.

Sam opened his pretty little lips as Carson gently set the nipple of the bottle into his mouth.

“Suck, baby doll.”

Sam’s eyes closed as he began to drink from his bottle.

The slow suckle of the bottle, the laugh track from the cartoon, and warmth and the feeling of home settled deep inside him.

Chapter Nineteen

Sam

Waking, Sam rolled over, surprised that Carson was still asleep beside him. Peering down at his Daddy brought a smile to his face. Other than the first night when Carson had brought him home from the hospital, Sam hadn't seen Carson sleep. His Daddy seemed peaceful, and Sam wanted to take some credit for that.

Learning more about the boy before him broke Sam's heart for what Carson had been through. He suspected that Carson hadn't shared everything but that was okay. Carson's eyes still held pain when he spoke about Billy. All Sam wanted to do was take all the bad memories away. That was what partners did for each other, wasn't it? Carson had given Sam the exact evening that he needed to put the day before him out of his mind. Sam had gotten to relax and rely on someone else to handle everything. All he had needed to do was eat what Carson had made for dinner and pour them tea. Daddy had even insisted they share the cupcake with Carson feeding him almost every bite.

He'd gotten a bath before being re-dressed in a diaper and his silk shorts and top. Sam had felt like the little princess he was, but now it was morning, and they would have to get up soon to face another day.

One part of his Daddy was already waking up though.

Sam wrapped his hand around Carson's morning erection and stroked. His Daddy wasn't the only one that enjoyed having a cock in his mouth. They'd fallen asleep after they'd played in the tub together but since he'd been re-dressed Sam's dick was covered. He quite enjoyed the feeling of his hard shaft trapped under the plastic of the diaper as he handled Carson's shaft. Sliding down the mattress on his stomach, he continued to jack Carson's cock. Rubbing against the bed, Sam rocked his hips while leaning in to lick up the precum escaping from the tip.

He toyed with the tip, sucking and licking, until fingers carded through his hair.

“Mm, baby doll. That feels good.”

Now that his Daddy was awake, Sam could extend his play. He slid his mouth down Carson’s long thick cock before backing up and sucking hard. His reward was a low moan as the fingers in his hair tightened.

“Keep going,” Carson encouraged.

Sam didn’t need any more instructions. While pumping his hand, he bobbed up and down Carson’s shaft, his own trapped cock happy with the hardness of the mattress as he humped his hips.

Carson started to lift up, shoving his cock farther down Sam’s throat, but he didn’t complain. He took as much of that thick rod as he could, and even when he gagged, he didn’t stop sucking.

“That’s it, baby doll, suck Daddy down. Good boy.”

The words soothed him as Sam did his best to get Carson off.

“Gonna!” Carson grunted out.

Instead of backing off, Sam shoved his nose down until it practically touched Carson’s skin. His reward of hot salty spunk flooding his mouth forced Sam to have to back up and swallow. Several streams escaped and covered his chin and cheek as Sam came in his diaper.

Resting his cheek on Carson’s thigh, he enjoyed coming down from the high as Carson continued to pet him.

Once they were both breathing normally, Carson hefted Sam up onto his chest before licking his own cum from Sam’s face.

Sam giggled but was rolled onto his back as Carson’s hand covered his crotch.

“Did my baby doll already come?” Carson rubbed hard.

Sam nodded, not ashamed that he'd humped the bed to completion. That was one of the best things about wearing a diaper. Easy cleanup.

"Hmm, I better look." Sitting back, Carson tugged off Sam's silk shorts before he undid the diaper. "Such a pretty sight."

He gasped when Carson leaned down and began to lick up the mess that Sam had made. Yes, it was just cum, but it was cold and messy. His cock did not mind the attention at all, and it didn't take long for him to get hard again.

Carson chuckled. "Oh, to be in my twenties again. I can't leave my boy hard though." He sucked on the head of Sam's shaft before taking him down.

Even though he'd just had a release, the attention on his sensitive prick was almost too much. Carson's tongue caressed his cock. Sam humped up, thrusting his cock in his Daddy's mouth, until he had a smaller but not less powerful orgasm.

Carson smiled down at him after popping off Sam's cock. "Good morning, baby doll."

"Morning, Daddy."

The alarm from Carson's phone began to beep and Sam groaned. Now he didn't want to get up.

"Perfect timing," Carson said, amused.

He snorted. That was such a Carson thing to say. It hadn't taken long for Sam to realize that his Daddy was a morning person. Now that Sam was sleeping better and the nightmares hadn't returned, Sam didn't mind morning as much. Although admittedly it was nice to have someone to wake up with.

"How about a shower and then Daddy helps you dress before I make us breakfast?"

Stretching his arms over his head, Sam yawned then nodded. "Okay. Will you pick something pretty?"

“I would like to. I wouldn’t be surprised if you have more visitors in the shop today, so I want you to be comfortable.”

Sam thought about that. Carson was probably right. “You like the way I dress. My friends and customers don’t mind. I might regret it later but right now I just want to be me. I shouldn’t have to change what I like.”

Carson leaned down to kiss him thoroughly before hugging Sam tight. “I’m so proud of you. I know it’s not easy when what you like isn’t socially normal, but, baby doll, you are so above all those normal people. If you start to get anxious or doubt yourself, remember that Daddy picked your outfit special just for you.”

That was what Sam told himself he would do. He just hoped he didn’t let himself or his Daddy down.

* * * * *

Sam

The morning rush was finally over. Sam wiped his brow with the back of his hand. It had been a busy shift, but luckily he, Adam, Caden, and Mickey had been able to handle the demand.

It appeared that everyone in his adopted town had wanted to stop by and show their support. Carson hadn’t allowed Sam to watch the news the previous night but Sam overheard snippets of people talking about his father and the increase in strangers in town. They closed ranks around the residents and strangers were getting very suspicious looks.

All morning Sam had been wary of someone saying something to him as he kept an eye on every person he didn’t know. Luckily, no one approached or made comments to him.

One member or another of Lucas’s tattoo crew had been in and out of the shop so they were never alone. It was nice knowing that the connections they were making meant something to those around him. Sam had lived in Rocky Lake long enough that he trusted the people around him.

As customers finally started to clear out, Adam and Mickey rushed to clean up the dirty tables. Caden was busy scrubbing down the espresso station and his area. Busy shifts were both a blessing and a curse for Caden. It was better when they were busy and Caden could get in a groove but too many people and the increase in volume also played havoc on his nerves. Caden was growing more confident every day with the support of Lincoln, but his trauma didn't go away just because he was happy.

Sam sidled up beside Caden. "You doing okay?"

Turning his head, Caden gazed up at him with wide eyes. "It was a lot of people."

"Yeah. You did great though and everyone was happy."

"They all seemed nice enough. No one yelled and I didn't get scared."

Leaning his shoulder against Caden's back, he lowered his voice. "I'm proud of you. You've really helped me out this week and I know you don't like being away from Lincoln this much."

Caden shrugged. "That's what we do for each other. Daddy understands and if he's not working, he hangs out with me. It's not bad."

Movement caught his eye, and he grinned as Mickey rushed over to help Adam clear a large table covered with cups. A group of middle school teachers had hung out there for an hour before heading into work. "Mickey seems to be settling in."

"He's a good fit," Caden responded. "He's really hit it off with Adam and even came in early to help with the baking this morning. He wants to get trained to give Adam a break sometimes. He just really wants to help. I like him."

Sam knew how hard it was for Caden to make friends. After being homeless for most of his life, Caden didn't trust very many people. For that matter, neither did Adam, although his story was more sad than tragic. Sam had always been a

people person though. Even as his father had tried to keep him locked away and out of the public eye, Sam had craved a connection with other people.

Mickey appeared to be much like him in that regard. Mickey gravitated to whoever seemed happy to talk to him. In his opinion, Mickey would do well there with them. Now that he had a safe place to live and an excellent job, Sam hoped Mickey would accept more help. He'd love to see Mickey in school or going after whatever he wanted in the future.

With happy thoughts in his head, Sam turned when the door chimed and two men walked in. He had to laugh at the shorter man in gray sweatpants and a long-sleeve black shirt who danced toward the counter. The older well-dressed man in a suit didn't smile like Jackson but Sam also didn't get a bad vibe from the man. He actually reminded Sam a lot of Carson. Of course, that made Sam's mind want to picture what kind of boy the suit-wearing stranger would choose. He didn't have long to ponder about that as Jackson began to talk.

"We leave town for one day and miss all the excitement?" Jackson complained.

Sam shrugged. "It's hopping around here, what can I say?" He needed to laugh and joke about his predicament just to survive.

Jackson laughed. "I heard your man and friends took care of things though." He leaned against the counter. "I would have loved to see that show."

Skinner grunted. "Coffee."

"Yeah, yeah, yeah." He waved his hand in front of Skinner before Skinner wandered away to sit at a table Adam had just finished cleaning.

"So, coffee?" Sam asked.

Jackson's sigh was comical. "I just want the gossip. Skinner has already had two cups of coffee this morning. He can wait." Placing his fist under his chin as he batted his eyelashes at Sam, Jackson was ridiculous. "So..."

Sam shook his head. "I have no gossip here for you."

"But...but...I missed it! From what I saw on the news, that reporter was a complete prick."

"He was," Sam confirmed.

"And all because your daddy wants to be president!"

"Don't call him that. My father—"

"Oh!" Jackson perked up. "Let me guess, your father might have contributed to your DNA, but your Daddy is another man. Maybe an older handsome lieutenant?"

His only answer was Sam cocking his hip and crossing his arms over his chest.

"Fun!" Jackson exclaimed. "And I thought my friends were the kinkiest bastards I know."

"I could put you over my knee and redden your ass if you don't get me my coffee," Skinner said casually from his seat at the table.

Jackson laughed. "I don't think your boy would like that," he sing-songed.

"I have your coffee here for you, Mr. Skinner." Caden held up the large cup with his hand only slightly shaking.

Skinner's entire being changed. He beamed at Caden before he rose and crossed over to accept the cup. "Thank you, young man. You are a good boy. Not some like brats round here." His glare was for Jackson.

Jackson smirked.

Sam laughed.

The door flew open with the commotion drowning out the chime and mostly everyone jumped. Sam knew he did until he saw who stomped inside and he froze.

From the corner of his eye, Sam saw Skinner take a protective stance in front of Caden. Adam pulled Mickey back from the table close to the door as Jackson straightened while

rolling his shoulders back and widening his stance. Sam remained frozen as two other men followed the first inside and closed the door behind them.

“You little faggot! I knew you’d find a way to ruin things for me!” Spit flew from Sam’s father’s mouth as he spat hate.

“Excuse me, sir. I’m going to have to ask you to leave immediately,” Adam said stepping forward. His voice shook but he stood firm.

Of course, Sam’s father ignored him. He stomped up to the front counter also ignoring Jackson’s warning growl to point a long thin finger in Sam’s direction. “I will not have you embarrass me further. Let’s go!”

That made Sam’s feet unfreeze. Everything around him slowed down as Sam peered at his father. The old man in front of him had no control over him any longer. He puffed out his chest. “I’m not going anywhere with you.” Sam was an adult who had been living and working on his own. Fuck, he wished Carson was there. No, he could handle this. He’d get rid of his father before celebrating with Carson later.

Sam’s father snarled. “There is a car out front ready to take you to a camp I have enrolled you in.” He looked Sam up and down with disgust. “You will stop this behavior immediately and become the son I need you to be. Let’s. Go!”

“Please leave,” Sam replied. He might be shaking and having his father in front of him might be flooding him with awful memories, but he would not back down. “Now.”

His father looked older than the last time that Sam had seen him, but he must have had some facial work done as there wasn’t a wrinkle visible in any of his features. He was also thinner, but it was his hands that Sam watched. Those hands that had hurt him many times.

“You don’t tell me what to do, you little shit.” His father reached for him, but Jackson snapped a hand out and caught his father’s wrist.

“Don’t touch him,” Jackson warned, deadly serious. The laughing and joking man was gone and he was a little scary. Probably a good thing he was on Sam’s side.

The two men with his father stepped forward, but Skinner intervened.

“I wouldn’t do that if I were you,” Skinner warned.

Caden gasped as the gun in Skinner’s hand appeared suddenly. Sam didn’t know where to look. Having a gun in his shop was terrifying after his last experience but it wasn’t pointed at him at least.

No one moved as Jackson held on to his father’s wrist and Skinner pointed a gun at his father’s head.

Skinner turned his head slightly to the side without taking his gaze off Sam’s father. “Young Caden, why don’t you go into the back and call your...partner?”

Caden glanced at Sam with wide and frightened eyes.

Sam nodded. “Call Lincoln and Carson for me, okay?”

“Okay,” Caden whispered before running into the back.

At least Caden was out of the way. He was probably already calling his Daddy and the reinforcements would be there soon.

“Get your filthy hands off me!” his father demanded.

Jackson snorted. “Trust me, I don’t like handling snakes but do not reach for your son again. You can leave now and not come back.” He tilted his head toward Skinner. “Or my friend and I can remove you from these premises.”

“I should have killed you when I had the chance!” his father spat at him.

“But you didn’t.” Sam had no idea where this bravado came from. He slammed his palms on the counter in front of him. “You couldn’t beat the gay out of me and now it’s too late. The entire world now knows you have a gay son who

likes to wear dresses. The cops are already on their way so you should leave and never come back.”

His father took a step back at the word *cops* as one of the men with him grabbed his shoulder.

“This isn’t over! I’ll get you and you’ll be sorry!”

“Actually!” Mickey piped up. “It is over. If you try to contact Sam again or do anything to him, this video that I just took of you threatening him will go to every news station in the country.”

Sam turned his head to see Mickey shaking Adam’s phone as he continued to hide behind Adam.

His father paled as the man closest to Adam and Mickey took one step toward them.

Jackson slid to the side, blocking the man’s path as Skinner turned the gun on the stranger. He might be his father’s security or staff, but he didn’t look like he wanted to tangle with Jackson or Skinner. Sam needed to find out who the hell Jackson and Skinner were and where they came from but as he heard sirens in the distance, that was a problem for later.

“Leave and don’t come back,” Sam told his father. “Or I’ll let them release the video and give an interview on why I ran away and everything you ever did to me.”

Sam was shocked when his father whirled around before pushing out of the shop. He collapsed against the counter as everyone else just stared at each other.

“Good job, buddy,” Jackson said turning to Mickey. “But I’m going to need that phone.” He held out a hand.

Mickey nodded quickly, handing the device to Jackson.

Sam turned to face Skinner who no longer held a gun as he sipped from his cup. “What just happened?” he had to ask.

“At least we didn’t miss the show this time!” Jackson said with a laugh.

Chapter Twenty

Carson

His heart thumped fast as Carson jumped from the passenger seat of Lincoln's truck after they skidded to a stop in front of the coffee shop. He should have known that Sam's father would show up. Carson just thought he had more time to prepare. The news report had just aired the day before. Sam's father must have already had plans to find his son.

Behind him, Lincoln and Nash scrambled out of the vehicle, but Carson was already pulling open the door. He stepped inside and paused.

Sam stood behind the counter as the man in front moved off to the side.

His boy looked...okay. Sam appeared fine. After hearing about Sam's father, a gun, and whatever else Caden had tried to say through his panic.

"Hi, Daddy!" Sam, his little princess, waved and smiled at him.

"What the fuck!" Nash demanded.

Sam smirked. "It seems we didn't need the cavalry after all."

"Caden!" Lincoln shouted.

"Here, Daddy!" Caden came running out of the kitchen.

Carson ignored the others as he stalked around the counter. Sam backed up until Carson had him crowded against the back counter. His boy was just as beautiful as he'd been when Carson dropped him off. In his black skirt and black tights in black boots with a long off-the-shoulder peach sweater, Sam appeared to be unharmed, although Carson could see the stress around Sam's mouth and eyes.

"Are you okay, baby?"

Sam nodded as he wrapped his fingers in the front of Carson's shirt. He'd discarded his jacket earlier at the office as he went over reports and hadn't stopped to grab it. "It was as bad as I expected but I feel surprisingly good."

"Your father, right?" Carson yanked Sam into his chest as he allowed his gaze to roam the rest of the shop.

Lincoln held Caden close as he whispered in Caden's ear. Nash had an arm around both Adam and Mickey.

"He stormed in, demanding that I leave with him. Two of our customers stepped in and besides being an asshole, my father didn't touch me."

"And he left?" Carson wanted to get his hands on the man who'd hurt Sam for so long.

"Mickey threatened to release the video he took if my father didn't leave or ever came back."

"That was smart thinking." No presidential hopeful would want a video that he suspected did not show the senator in a positive light released. "But who had the gun?"

"Gun?" Sam blinked up at him. "Oh! Where did Jackson and Skinner go?" He looked around the shop like he expected the two men to appear.

There was no one in the shop besides their group but Carson did remember seeing the man that had been at the counter when he arrived.

"They left through the back door," Caden said. "Skinner said to tell you that he'd make sure your father really left."

"Skinner?" Carson repeated. "Who were those men?"

"It's a long story. Maybe we should sit down?"

"I can make coffees!" Caden offered.

Carson watched as the young man came around the counter. "How are you, Caden?" He couldn't help but hold Sam tight to him, not ready to let go of his boy. What would

he have done if Sam's father had forced him to leave? He'd have gone after him, of course, but Sam could have been hurt.

"I'm okay. Better. The gun scared me because of the last time, but Skinner was nice to me."

Who in the hell was this Skinner guy? Why did he have a gun? And where could Carson find him? "Skinner?"

"Doesn't he work with you?" Sam asked. "Why did I think that Skinner and Jackson were helping you with the Munoz case?"

He stiffened although he tried to hide his reaction. "Let's sit and I want you boys to tell me everything. Every interaction and detail you can remember." He nodded at Caden. "You can make the drinks."

"Got it!" Caden gave him a thumbs-up.

He was an adorable little guy even if Carson preferred the prettiness of his baby doll.

"I made cherry turnovers this morning!" Mickey announced. "Adam showed me how and said they were good. I'll warm some up."

Mickey headed to the kitchen as Nash led Adam to a large table. He urged Sam toward the table.

It didn't take long for drinks and warm pastries to be placed in front of them and the stories began. Carson listened as he sipped his coffee with Sam on his lap. He would be holding on to his boy for a little longer. At least until he knew what was going on.

"Linc, can you pull up the security footage?" Carson asked. Lincoln had helped the shop get the security system up and working and had access to it. He needed to make sure that he could log in from anywhere like Lincoln could.

"Yeah, give me a minute." Lincoln pulled out his phone.

"Did I do something wrong?" Sam whispered in his ear.

“Wrong?” Carson looked over at Sam to see him chewing on his bottom lip.

“I meant to ask you about Skinner and Jackson earlier. When they first came in. I thought they were men you’d brought in to help like he detectives from Vegas.”

“You didn’t do anything wrong,” he quickly assured his boy. “Even if you had brought them up, I don’t know what I could have done. It’s interesting that they protected you from your father.” That also left the question of what they were doing there. If the men weren’t sent by Sam’s father, did they have a connection to the Munoz cartel?

“I know it sounds crazy because of the whole gun thing, but I don’t think they want to hurt us,” Caden said.

“The man had a gun, baby,” Lincoln said.

“It wasn’t pointed at us though,” Caden argued. “And Skinner sent me into the back, away from danger, to call you.”

“He has a point,” Nash agreed. It was the first time that he’d spoken.

To him, Nash didn’t get enough credit for his intelligence. Sure, Nash joked around and often reminded Carson of a big kid, but when it came to his job, Nash was one of his best detectives.

“If those Skinner and Jackson guys aren’t with Sam’s father, why are they here? The only other thing we’re dealing with is the cartel,” Nash said.

“They’re not with the cartel,” Adam said quietly.

“How do we know for sure?” Mickey questioned. “I know I’m new here and I wasn’t around for all this cartel business, but those men knew what they were doing. Skinner brought out that gun from nowhere. And Jackson? He seemed like a clown, but he knew how to handle Sam’s father.”

Carson studied the young man. He might be new to the group, but he was smart and paid attention.

“I agree. Being on the streets for as long as I was helped me read people. I don’t know what Skinner or Jackson are doing here, but I trust them.” Caden straightened. “I need you to trust my gut, Daddy.”

Lincoln sighed. “I want to, baby boy. I do. We have another problem though.” He set his phone on the table. “The video from this afternoon was altered.”

“Altered? What do you mean?”

Lincoln pressed Play on the screen.

Both he and Sam sat forward. The volume was turned down, but Carson could clearly see when Sam’s father stomped into the shop. The weird thing about the video was the two figures who were blurred out.

“Damn it.” Carson snatched up the phone and tapped the screen, but nothing happened. The video continued to play. Sam’s father reached for him, but a hand reached out and caught Sam’s father’s wrist.

He set the phone back down on the table. “How?”

“I have no idea, but I intend to find out,” Lincoln swore. “What did they touch?” he asked Caden.

Caden firmed his lips before crossing his arms over his chest.

“Baby.” Lincoln reached for Caden, but Caden pushed his hand away.

“No, I told you I needed you to trust me. They aren’t here to hurt us.”

“They could be with the cartel. Maybe they don’t want to hurt you but what about us?” Lincoln asked. “Would you risk my safety on your gut?”

Those were harsh words and Carson wasn’t the only one that flinched.

Caden lifted his chin. “Yes, Daddy.”

Lincoln nodded. “Okay, baby. You know I trust you and that means I trust your gut too. If you say we’re safe, I believe you.”

“Thank you, Daddy!” Caden crawled into Lincoln’s lap and kissed him.

Carson ignored the beep of someone’s phone as he rewatched the video. This time he paid attention to Sam’s father and not those around him. It was hard to watch a man filled with so much hate for the boy that Carson had come to care about. He went to rewatch it a second time when Sam laid his hand over the screen.

He handed Carson his own phone with a message already pulled up.

Blocked: Your father has left town and we gave him something to keep him and his advisors busy. I wouldn’t worry about him for a while. No one else will hurt you either. J

Carson reread the message. “You know who this is from?”

“I suspect it’s from Jackson.”

So did Carson. He looked up to the camera in the corner and narrowed his eyes. For some reason he knew they were being watched. Carson just didn’t know what to do about it. At least not yet.

Chapter Twenty-One

Sam

Excitement filled him as they drove closer to the lake house. Both he and his Daddy had the next two days off and it couldn't have come at a better time. His father had returned home and announced that he was spending time with family while evaluating his future prospects. He had no idea what Jackson and Skinner had done to his father, but Sam was happy to once again be left alone.

Carson had spent the last three days trying to find any connection between Skinner, Jackson, and the cartel. He'd grown so frustrated that Lincoln had ordered Sam to keep Carson out of the office for the entire weekend.

Reaching out, Sam placed his hand on Carson's knee, causing his Daddy to jerk the wheel before he quickly corrected the vehicle. Carson huffed out a laugh. "Sorry, baby doll. I was lost in my thoughts."

"Are you still worried?" Sam asked. He tried not to ask too many questions or butt his way into Carson's work, but he hated how stressed his Daddy had become.

"Not worried," Carson responded. "More confused than anything else."

"What do you mean?"

Carson shook his head. "I've been trying to connect those two friends of yours with the cartel but I'm coming up empty. I've checked all the security cameras in the area, but I can't find them on any."

The frustration leaked through the words.

"Then this morning I began to get emails of files about the cartel. From an untraceable email."

"You think it's from them?" Sam asked.

“I don’t see anyone else giving me that much intel. Most of what I received connects the cartel to some major crimes. Things that I didn’t even know about.”

“Does it help you with your cases?”

“Yes,” Carson replied. “When we find Victor Munoz, he won’t see the light of day again. Even now I have the team in Vegas rounding up the cartel members. Whoever is feeding me this intel has something on all the major players.”

Sam smiled. “So maybe it’s not something to worry about.”

“You’re right.” Carson turned into his drive. “With the next two days with my baby doll I am going to enjoy every minute of our time together.”

“And what are we going to be doing?” Sam waggled his brows.

“Tonight, we’re going to cuddle together on the porch and watch the rain come in. Some hot soup and my baby on my lap. I can’t think of a better way to relax.”

“That sounds fantastic,” Sam said. He was looking forward to more time at the lake house with his Daddy.

They pulled up in front of the house and Sam smiled. He loved his apartment, but it was nice being out of the middle of town, far from the strangers in town that everyone worried about.

No one had been able to relax yet as more news crews had moved in, but Adam had barred any reporters from the shop. It helped to keep the pressure off Sam as Carson had been working late hours. But now he would have all of Carson’s attention for the next two days.

Carson turned off the engine and undid his seatbelt before leaning over and kissing Sam deeply.

Sam clung to the front of Carson’s shirt as his mouth was ravished. By the time that Carson was pulling away, Sam was trying to climb out of his seat with his hard cock throbbing.

“Not in the car, baby doll,” Carson said. “We have a perfectly good house that I plan to eventually have you in every room.”

Excitement coursed through him. “Oh yeah?”

“Come on, baby.” Carson opened his door as Sam fumbled to undo his seatbelt.

His door opened with Carson leaning over to help him.

“I love how excited you are, baby doll.” He got the seatbelt to unlatch before helping Sam from the SUV.

Sam grabbed Carson’s hand as he danced his way up the steps. The porch was lit warmly and Sam could already see himself wrapped in Carson’s arms. The swing beckoned him as Carson tugged him inside.

“Daddy!” Sam whined.

“I need to warm up the soup. You can gather pillows and blankets for us and put them on the swing. I think we have just enough time to eat before the rain starts.”

“Okay!” Sam already knew what blanket he wanted to choose. There was a super soft red one that Sam had fallen in love with.

Carson unlocked the door and Sam raced inside. “I get started!” he hollered.

“Be careful running, baby. You don’t want to fall.”

Sam waved a hand over his head. He wore his favorite pair of tan Ugg boots with a pair of fall-themed leggings and a tan sweater. His Daddy was the best at putting outfits together for him. Nothing was too girly or colorful. Carson embraced Sam’s wardrobe in a way that Sam hadn’t enjoyed in years. Having his Uggs on was good because he could run and dance around and not get hurt.

He skipped into the bedroom and to the bed. His favorite blanket was folded on the end and Sam picked it up before

bringing it to his face. He inhaled the scent of his Daddy and was in heaven.

Sam threw the red blanket over his shoulder before he grabbed the comforter as well. That should be plenty of covers. He rushed from the room and to the front door. Sam dropped off the blankets on the swing before heading back inside the house.

“Close the door please,” Carson called from the kitchen.

He had to backtrack and close the door but that slight turn had his eye catching on the pillows that were lined along the long couch in the living room. Those were perfect and he could line the back and sides of the swing with them. Sam managed to grab half the pillows then headed back out the front. It took him a little time to get the pillows situated so he could head back into the house.

“Door!” Carson yelled again.

Sam sighed but closed the door again. It wasn't like he wasn't going right back out. Still his Daddy had rules and Sam didn't feel like pushing boundaries at the moment. Another night? Sam might have to show Carson his bratty side.

He collected the rest of the pillows then headed back. It would have been a lot simpler if he'd been able to keep the door open. He fumbled and dropped one pillow as he finally managed to tug the door open. He took a step forward as something metal touched his forehead.

The rest of the pillows tumbled to the ground.

“Not a sound.” Victor Munoz pressed the barrel of the gun harder against Sam's forehead.

He whimpered involuntarily before his instincts kicked in and he tried to slam the door closed.

Laughing, Victor pushed Sam back into the house, following as Sam hit the floor. Sam stared in horror. The only other time he'd seen Victor Munoz had been in the coffee shop

when the cartel leader had attempted to kidnap Caden. Now the evil man was pointing a gun at him!

“Baby? You okay?” Carson called out.

Shit! His Daddy! Sam opened his mouth the scream at Carson to run but Victor crouched down and slammed his hand over Sam’s mouth. Like that was going to stop Sam. He bit down on Victor’s hand then yelled.

Carson came rushing into the entry with a towel in his hand.

Victor backhanded Sam and he slammed back against the ground again before Victor lifted him by the neck.

Sam tried fighting, kicking, and scratching but Victor’s hold was too strong. Carson had stopped with his hands up in the air as Victor picked him up and held Sam with his back to Victor’s chest. The arm around his neck tightened.

“Let him go. It’s me you want,” Carson said calmly.

“We both know that me hurting your boy will hurt you more than anything I can do to you. I would have thought you’d have learned after the last boy you loved died.”

Carson’s mouth tightened and fire burned in his gaze.

Sam continued to struggle but Victor was too strong. Why was he so strong?

“Back up,” Victor ordered as he waved the gun in his hand around.

Carson took several steps back and Sam was dragged along with Victor. They returned to the kitchen where a big pot of soup simmered on the stove. He could smell the garlic from the soup but it didn’t settle his stomach. Instead, he wondered if that was the last thing he’d ever smell. He didn’t want to die.

Tears prickled at the corners of his eyes.

“You got me in here. Let him go.” Carson set the towel on the counter. “This is between me and you.”

“But it’s so much fun to play with pretty boys like this.” Victor brushed the gun against Sam’s cheek.

“If you touch him again, I will kill you with my bare hands,” Carson threatened. He even bared his teeth at the cartel leader.

As inappropriate as it was, Sam was a little turned on by the possessiveness of Carson’s tone.

Victor laughed. “I should have killed you the night you came after me. Or the day after. I never should have let you leave.”

“That was your mistake.”

“One I won’t make again.” Victor raised the gun and pointed it right at Carson’s chest.

“No!” Sam tried to stomp on Victor’s foot. Tried to elbow him. To do something to save Carson but nothing he did helped. This couldn’t be happening! Why? Why now when Sam was finally happy? Tears fell down his cheeks unchecked.

“Shoot me then,” Carson said. “But you better hit my heart because if you don’t kill me instantly, I will kill you and I will make it hurt.”

Sam could tell that Carson was getting ready to charge. It was in the way Carson’s gaze kept flickering to him and the ground.

“You might be crazier than me, my friend,” Victor taunted.

“I am not your friend,” Carson snarled.

Sam took a deep breath in preparation for what was to happen. He needed to get out of Carson’s way. His Daddy was trained for this and Sam so...wasn’t.

All three of them froze when tapping started.

Carson frowned, moving to the side although he was trying to keep Victor in his line of sight as Sam looked toward the kitchen window. Victor jerked against him and that fucking arm tightened further.

“What the fuck!” Victor spat.

Sam could barely breathe.

Maybe he was hallucinating Jackson standing at the kitchen window waving at them. He gasped as Jackson met his eyes then pointed down. What in the hell?

Jackson tapped the glass again, three times, then disappeared from sight. Somehow Sam understood what he was meant to do. He took a deep breath before allowing his body to go limp and threw himself to the floor. Seconds later he heard glass shatter and Carson was covering Sam with his bigger body.

Sam yelled as Carson covered his head with his arms. He clung to Carson’s waist until he felt his Daddy start to pull away.

“It’s okay, baby. Don’t look.”

Don’t look? What did that mean? He found out a moment later when he turned and saw Victor lying on the kitchen floor with a small round hole in the middle of his forehead.

“Sam! Sam!” Carson wrenched Sam’s head in his direction. “I need you to go lock yourself in the bedroom. I need to find the shooter.”

Sam wrapped his hands in Carson’s shirt, shaking his head. He knew that Jackson and most likely Skinner would already be long gone.

“Baby, I know you’re scared, but I need you to listen to me—go lock yourself in the bedroom.”

“It’s okay. They’re gone.”

“Who’s gone?”

“Call Lincoln,” Sam ordered. “I don’t want a dead man in the kitchen.”

Carson was looking at him like he was crazy and maybe Sam had lost his mind, because he started to laugh. To laugh

and laugh until he was bawling and Carson was rocking him from side to side.

Chapter Twenty-Two

Carson

He could hear his baby doll puttering around the living room as he packed for his Halloween sleepover at Lincoln's house. It would be the first time that they'd sleep apart since before Victor Munoz had been killed in his kitchen. Even though he hated that they'd be apart for the night, it was important that Sam spent time with his friends, and the Halloween sleepover was tradition.

They were trying to give the boys a sense of normalcy even though none of them felt normal. Even with most of the Munoz cartel locked away, there were unanswered questions like who had killed Victor Munoz in his kitchen with a sniper rifle.

Carson had told his captain that he didn't know the man who'd been at his window but had left out that Sam did know him. Carson couldn't find anything on Skinner or Jackson or where they might have disappeared to. As Carson continued to try to piece everything together, they still had boys that needed to be taken care of.

Tonight was the night that the boys had been planning and excited for. Lincoln was in charge of watching over the boys as Carson and Nash made a quick trip to Vegas in order to touch base with Carson's old team. He needed something to tie everything together—he just didn't know what.

That didn't mean that he would let his boy go off without giving him something to think about for the night.

"Hey baby doll! Can you come into the bedroom for a minute?" Carson called out.

"Coming, Daddy!"

Not yet he wasn't but it wouldn't be long. Carson stood next to the bed with his present dangling from one finger.

"I'm here!" Sam danced in.

Carson loved how happy his boy had become since Victor Munoz was now permanently out of their lives and his father had announced that he was retiring from politics to spend more time with his congregation and family. They both knew that Sam's father didn't care at all about family and was hiding something. It didn't matter to them as long as he never returned to Rocky Lake.

“What's that?”

He smirked at his baby. “What's it look like?”

“For me?” Sam batted his lashes. The sassiness had been in full force all day.

“I did make you a promise,” Carson responded. He would keep each and every promise he ever made or would make to the sweet and sassy beautiful boy that he had fallen in love with.

“What about the sleepover?”

“If I do things right, you'll have gorgeous marks on your wrists, to touch if you start missing me tonight.”

“You know I'll miss you,” Sam told him.

“I know baby. You'll just have to cuddle Adam and Caden.”

“And Mickey. It's his first year joining us.”

“And Mickey,” Carson agreed. The young man that was the newest member of the boy club had been spending more time with them all. He'd even spent a night at the lake house last weekend and spent the entire time playing with Sam. Learning about his own little tendencies. Sam had been so excited to introduce another friend to tea parties.

“Now are you going to be a good boy and behave?” Carson teased.

“What do I get if I don't behave?”

“You get to watch me put my shiny new cuffs away until I feel like taking them out again.”

“I’ll be good,” Sam promised.

Carson doubted Sam’s sincerity. “Undress and get on the bed. If you’re not in position by the time I return, you don’t get to play tonight.”

Sam was already yanking off his clothes as Carson strolled to the bathroom. He closed the door behind him then set the cuffs he’d ordered on the counter. Looking in the mirror, Carson still couldn’t believe that he had a young man that had stolen his heart outside the room waiting on him. How had he gotten so lucky?

Carson had made plenty of mistakes in his life but falling for Sam was the best thing he managed to do. He had a place there in Rocky Lake. A distinguished career and a found family of sorts. It didn’t matter that he was a tired fifty-five-year-old man. The only thing that mattered was the way that Sam looked at him in the morning. How Sam reached for him in the middle of the night. The kisses they shared. The connection. This was it for Carson and he knew it. Sam was his future.

He undressed slowly, knowing that anticipation would have Sam’s nerves singing. Once he was naked, Carson picked up the brand-new pair of cuffs then opened the door.

His little baby doll made the perfect picture.

Sprawled out on his back with his arms outstretched over his head, cock hard and leaking, with a smile on his face.

“Are you ready, baby?”

“Yes, Daddy.”

Sweeter words had never been spoken. Carson let the cuffs dangle from his fingers as he strode toward his boy.

His boy shook with need. Carson placed one knee on the mattress as he picked up Sam’s wrist. He peppered kisses over the pulse point then snapped one end of the cuff around his wrist.

Sam began to pant.

Carson leaned down to kiss across Sam's chest before he lifted Sam's other hand. He threaded the chain of the cuffs through the slats of the bed frame then closed the other end around Sam's slim wrist.

"Test them," Carson ordered.

Sam tugged and twisted his wrists before he nodded.

"Safe word?"

"Traffic system, red, yellow, green."

"Good boy." Carson threw his leg across Sam's waist. He settled on top of his thighs. He ran his palms up Sam's chest. "Now I can touch you all I want."

Sam groaned. "Please, Daddy."

"Please, Daddy?" Carson teased. "Please what?" Wrapping his hand around Sam's erection he stroked. "Touch you? Is that what you want?"

"Yes!" Sam tried to thrust into his hold but with Carson's weight on his legs he wasn't able to manage much movement.

"What about my mouth? Do you want Daddy to suck you."

"Oh God, yes!" Sam whimpered.

"It's a good thing that I want that too." Carson slid down Sam's body until his mouth hovered over Sam's cock. "Let see how many times you can come in my mouth before I fill you with my cock."

Sam shuddered hard.

Sucking the head of Sam's cock, Carson closed his eyes to allow himself the enjoyment of having Sam's shaft in his mouth. There was something about having a dick in his mouth that Carson couldn't really explain but loved. He teased his tongue under the mushroom head then began to lick down and back up. He resisted sucking hard like he knew that Sam wanted. They had plenty of time and he wanted to play.

He ran his palms up Sam's thighs forcing Sam's legs farther apart. Lowering his mouth, Carson nibbled on the sensitive skin around Sam's dick before kissing his balls then continued lower. He spread Sam farther until he had the perfect little hole that he wanted to destroy. In the best way.

Carson dipped his tongue inside, moaning at the dark earthy flavor of his boy.

Above him the cuffs' chain rattled, but Carson didn't stop. He licked then sucked at that hole before driving his tongue inside.

Sam bowed his back, the cuffs rattled again, and Carson ate his boy's hole. The thighs under his hands trembled while Carson thrust his tongue in and out using his spit and tongue to open Sam up for him. He had to release Sam's left leg to add a finger into their play, but Sam set his foot on Carson's shoulder, leaving himself spread.

He didn't know how long he plunged his tongue deeply in and out until Sam screamed and his hole tightened around Carson's tongue. He tongue fucked Sam through his first orgasm then dropped Sam's other leg around his own shoulder and cleaned up the cum from around Sam's cock and off his stomach.

His baby doll hadn't gone completely soft. Carson sucked Sam's cock down his throat before he began bobbing his head. He deep throated Sam until he was rewarded with another blast of seed on his tongue. Carson sucked down every drop.

Lifting his head, he grinned at Sam's red-cheeked, wide-eyed face. "That's only two. I want more."

* * * * *

Sam

Sam laughed as Caden opened the door wearing a full-body fuzzy onesie of a unicorn. "Oh my God! You're so cute!"

Caden hopped around while giggling. "You're late!"

He did his best not to blush. Yeah, he was more than an hour late, but Carson had promised that he'd already called Lincoln. Turning, he waved at Carson who waited in the drive. Carson honked the horn before backing out of the drive.

“Let him in, baby,” Lincoln came up behind Caden. “It’s cold out there.”

“K!” Caden grabbed Sam’s hand tugging him into and through the house until they reached the living room.

Pillows and blankets were piled up on a massive air mattress in the middle of the living room. Adam sat on the mattress munching on popcorn. Behind his head on the cushions, Midnight, Caden’s rescued cat, was curled up, batting at a piece of popcorn. The large television screen was paused on one of Adam’s favorite 80s horror movies.

“Bout time you got here,” Adam mumbled.

“Yeah, uh, we got caught up doing...something.”

Adam grinned, his eyes sparkling. “Something?”

“That’s okay.” Caden rushed to the mattress flopping down on his stomach. “We just started the movie.”

“Here, let me take your bag.” Lincoln took the strap from Sam’s shoulder before he disappeared down the hall.

They’d had many sleepovers, but this was their Halloween tradition. They’d been getting together on Halloween night to watch old horror movies and cuddle since Caden came to town.

So much was changing in their lives. Sam was happy, loved, treasured, and everything he’d ever secretly wished for was finally coming true. Caden was thriving. And whether Adam wanted to admit it or not, he was getting attached to two men who were just as interested in him. With the changes it was nice to be able to fall back on their traditions though. To know that no matter what happened between him and his Daddy that Sam still would have his friends by his side.

The three of them had been through so much in the past few months. Their bond was still as strong as ever even as more people were added to their little family.

“Where’s Mickey?” he asked.

“Here!” Mickey walked into the room in a pair of too-big lounge pants and a large T-shirt. Mickey was shorter than all of them and Sam was fairly sure he was wearing Caden’s clothes. Caden had tons of playful pajama sets and Lincoln was always spoiling him with more. Mickey settled on the other side of Adam.

“Well...make room for me!” Sam joined the other three boys on the air mattress.

He cuddled close to Caden before reaching for the bowl of popcorn on Adam’s lap.

The lights were turned off. Sam glanced over his shoulder to see Lincoln in the doorway.

“You boys holler if you need anything,” Lincoln told them. “I’ll be in my office but I’ll leave the door open.”

Sam nodded back.

“Thanks, Daddy!” Caden replied.

He turned back around as Adam started the movie. It was one that they’d all seen already. Sam and Caden weren’t huge horror fans but it was easier since they’d already watched this series dozens of times so Adam could still have his fun night too.

Laying his head on Caden’s shoulder, Sam relaxed against his friend, warm and safe in their little bubble. Adam and Mickey were cuddling next to them. It was Halloween night, and he was with his bestest friends. This was just about perfect in his opinion.

Discreetly, he rubbed at the mark left behind by the cuffs he and his Daddy had played with earlier. A little reminder that even when Carson wasn’t with him, Sam wasn’t alone any longer. He’d never be alone again. He had his very own Daddy

and there would be more coffee and cuffs and love in their future.

Thank You

Thank you for reading *Coffee & Cuffs: Rocky Lake Littles Book 2*

Sam and Carson's relationship was a fun one to explore. You'll see more of them in the next book in the series, *Coffee, Cops, & Tattoos*. (Pre-order now!)

If you enjoyed reading this book it would be helpful if you would leave a review to help other readers find this book. As a self-published author, it really helps when readers share the books they enjoy.

Did you notice the appearance of a few characters from previous books?

You can read Caden and Lincoln's story in *Coffee & Kisses: Rocky Lake Littles 1*—keep reading for a snippet from *Coffee & Kisses*—now available from Amazon.

Skinner has his own book in the *Daddy's Boy* series—keep reading for a snippet from *Skinner: A Daddy's Boy/ Hitman Novel*.

Jackson will soon be getting his own book in the *Daddy's Boy* series, and we hope for release in early 2024.

Coffee & Kisses: Rocky Lake Littles 1

You can purchase this book on Amazon now!

Caden Robb is a survivor. After arriving in Rocky Lake, Arizona, Caden found a home for the first time in his life. He's bonded and forged a close friendship with two other young men that introduced him to age regression. Now all Caden needs is to find the right Daddy that has the patience to help Caden through his past trauma.

For six months, Lincoln Daniels, narcotics detective, has been visiting Rocky Lake Coffeehouse to lay eyes on the small, shy barista that called to every Daddy instinct Lincoln possesses. Caden is barely able to speak to Lincoln on most days, so how is Lincoln going to show Caden what he has to offer?

When dangerous drugs hit the streets and a cartel threatens the residents of Rocky Lake, Lincoln has his work cut out keeping not only Caden safe but everyone around him. It will take help from new friends to save Caden when the threat hits too close to home.

This book contains MM sexual content (men having sex with each other), Age Play, Daddy/little relationship, ABDL, and age gap relations. This book is an exploration of a relationship between two (male) consensual adults that are looking for love and acceptance. All characters are over the age of consent. No cheating or cliffhangers.

Caden

Caden Robb silently repeated the three orders he was making so that he didn't mess up, again. He hated yelling and even though his co-workers went out of their way to shield him, some customers were just so loud when they got upset or all the time.

Once he finished with the three complicated coffee orders, he placed them in front of Sam, one of his best friends, the manager of Rocky Lake Coffeehouse, who called out the names written on the cups.

Caden turned back to his station to wipe down the equipment. It didn't take exceptionally long at all to do a quick clean-up before starting on the next order of five drinks. Caden couldn't work at a messy station and most of his co-workers understood so they helped when they could. It was too busy now for most of the other employees to be concerned about drips or spills, but Caden's mind wouldn't let him move from one task to another until he'd finished.

Luckily, if anyone was complaining about how long it was taking Caden to make the drinks, they were doing so quietly. Caden read the drink description scribbled in Adam's messy scrawl carefully then started up fresh espresso shots.

He enjoyed it the most when the shop was flowing, not allowing him to have much time to think or worry. Everything stressed him out. Caden thought he was getting a better handle on his anxiety, but it appeared that as soon as he took a step forward, he'd end up three steps back. He'd stopped biting his nails then found himself wanting to go back to the childhood habit of sucking his thumb. The few times he'd ended up with his thumb in his mouth by mistake, Sam or Adam would gently remind him that it was worse than biting his nails. Caden was trying, he really was, but life was so hard!

Finishing the five-coffee order, he placed the cups in front of Sam and smiled. He'd done it! He'd got through the entire two-hour rush without spilling one drink. He gave a little wiggle in celebration before he picked up his rag. Now that he had time, he could give his machine a good scrub down in preparation for a later rush.

Caden was already deep into rubbing the steaming wands on his equipment when someone screamed.

Without thought, Caden dropped to the ground to wrap his arms around his head. He had to cross his legs hard to stop

from peeing a little. There was more commotion, but he was shaking too badly to be of any help to his co-workers. The cursing and yelling from across the shop didn't stop.

“Shit!” Adam growled. “It’s that girl and her boyfriend again.”

“Get them out of here!” Sam hollered. “And this time they’re not allowed back. Every week they’re tearing things up fighting.”

“I’m on it.” Adam brushed against Caden where he crouched as he went to take care of the two troublemakers. Adam was a big guy, and even though he was a soft teddy bear, his size usually worked in their favor.

Caden knew who they meant. The college-aged couple often got into arguments when the girl would flirt with all the men around them. The boyfriend would get mad and yell. The girl would start to throw things. Caden didn't understand why they would fight like that then return the next day like nothing had happened. He hoped Adam would really kick them out for good this time.

“Hey, bud.” Sam rubbed his back while squatting in front of him. “It’s okay. Can you look at me?”

Embarrassment and regret filled him. Last week when he'd gotten scared, he'd run to the kitchen. That had been better than dropping down right behind the counter. His reflexes hadn't let him think of an escape plan this time. Caden had just been so pleased with his morning that he hadn't been prepared for the sudden scream.

“Hey, none of that.” Sam gripped his shoulder firmly. “Even I jumped. There’s no reason to be embarrassed.”

Caden shook his head. Of course, there was—Caden was a weirdo.

“Hey, Sam. Hey, Caden.”

Caden froze. No, no, no, it wasn't fair! He'd been having such a good morning. He almost had his shit together. Okay,

maybe not together, but he hadn't been freaking out as much.

"Please no," he whisper-begged to his best friend. He looked up, hoping that he hadn't heard that muscular voice.

The grimace on his best friend's face was enough to want Caden to bury his head back in his arms.

"You two okay? I helped Adam get rid of that couple. I told them not to come back."

Sam patted Caden's leg before he rose. Caden wanted to drag his best friend back down but knew that wouldn't work for long.

"We're good, Detective. Thanks for helping Adam."

"I've told you to call me Lincoln," the detective responded with a laugh. "And it was my pleasure. They don't need to be acting that way here. I heard the yelling before I even stepped inside."

"Yeah, they can get loud," Adam agreed as he walked back behind the counter. He flashed Caden a bright smile and winked. "And your coffee is on the house today."

"That's not necessary," Detective Lincoln Daniels quickly replied. "Happy to help."

"We insist," Sam told him.

"Oh well, thanks. My usual, please, then."

Sam took a step toward the machine on the side of the counter that they used when they were busy, but Caden stood.

"I got it." He was the one that made the detective's usual. He knew just how hot and how much flavor to add.

"Thanks, bud." Sam patted his shoulder. Sam was fully aware of Caden's crush on the attractive detective.

Caden grabbed a large cup and started the familiar ritual. During one of his braver moments, Caden had made adjustments to the detective's usual order and had him try it. Okay, he asked Sam to have the detective try it, but the

detective had agreed that it was better the way Caden made it. He started to order his drink as *his usual* done Caden's way. It made Caden happy.

Now that the shop had slowed down, Adam went out to bus and clean the tables as Sam started to refill their supplies. That left Caden with the issue of getting the drink he'd made to the detective. Caden hated calling out orders. It drew too much attention to himself.

Caden carefully walked the cup over to the pickup counter. He was about to motion for Sam when a big hand appeared under his face.

"Is that mine, Caden?" The detective's strong voice always sent shivers down Caden's spine.

Caden nodded as he pushed the cup closer to that big hand. The detective was a large guy, over six feet tall, with wide shoulders and tattooed and muscular arms. He couldn't help but admire the detective's thick thighs before allowing his gaze higher to the slim waist with the gold badge pinned to his belt. He continued running his gaze up that wide chest and settled it on the detective's chin.

"You sure you're, okay?"

"Fine," Caden whispered.

He could tell the older man smiled since Caden was focusing just below his mouth. He liked to watch the detective's lips when he spoke.

The detective lifted his cup and took a drink.

Caden bit back a whimper when he saw those strong long fingers gripping the cup. He wanted to feel those fingers on him. He'd once felt the detective's hand on his elbow when he'd almost slipped on a spill but that had been so long ago. Months at least.

"This is as good as usual, Caden. Thank you."

Against his will, Caden's gaze jumped up to the detective's eyes. The detective's black hair was shaved on the sides and

longer at top, leaving a couple strands to fall above his mossy green eyes. Once he looked, Caden couldn't look away, his gaze caught, even as his face heated.

“There are those gorgeous brown eyes,” Detective Daniels said quietly. “That’s better.”

***If you would like to continue reading, please purchase
Coffee & Kisses today!***

Skinner: A Daddy's Boy/ Hitman Novel

You can purchase this book from Amazon now!

The Boy

Marco is a service sub, but knowing what he needs doesn't make it any easier to find. There is one mysterious man that comes into the restaurant where he works that makes every desire inside Marco bubble just below the surface. The man that Marco craves to call sir and Daddy might be the only one to ever satisfy his unique kink. The more Marco learns about Skinner, the more certain he is that he's found his forever person. He just needs Skinner to trust him in return.

The Daddy

When he looks in the mirror, Skinner still sees a starving street rat reflected back. It doesn't matter how expensive his suits are or how often he dines in expensive restaurants—inside he'll always be that abandoned toddler. He knows he should leave the sweet waiter from his restaurant alone. Stalking really is wrong. No, not stalking, protecting. Skinner can't let Marco slip through his fingers. He has secrets that might come to light, but maybe Marco is the one that can help Skinner carry his burdens.

This book contains MM sexual content (men having sex with each other), age gap, Daddy/ boy relationship, and light BDSM. This book is an exploration of a relationship between two (male) consensual adults that are looking for love and acceptance. All characters are over the age of consent. No cheating or cliffhangers.

Skinner

It wasn't stalking. It wasn't. Skinner was just looking out for the sweet young man that had become his favorite server. Skinner enjoyed his routines and Marco was a wonderful

waiter. Skinner just did not want to have to find another restaurant or deal with other people. It wasn't stalking. It was protecting.

Every night, Skinner parked across the street from the fancy restaurant and watched as the boy walked out his female co-workers before climbing into his old but clean and well-maintained silver Altima. His young man had such good manners, always making sure the females that he worked with arrived safely at their vehicles and taking off for the night. Marco was slim and on the short side, but Skinner had caught glimpses of his toned physique a few times through the uniform the boy wore. Unless Marco was hiding some expert martial arts training, there wouldn't be much the young man could do about a threat. That was where Skinner came in. He *was* trained to take danger out, permanently, without mess or fuss. Which was why he was parked in the deserted lot across from where his boy would be exiting the back door at any moment.

Skinner growled low when his phone began to ring. It was past eleven at night. He did not appreciate late-night calls.

"Yes?" he answered on the SUV's Bluetooth.

"What are you doing?" The whiny voice on the other end of the line had him holding back a sigh. Skinner really should have known better than answering.

"Did you need something, J?"

"I'm bored. Come play with me." Jackson sounded like a four-year-old inviting his friend onto the playground.

"Absolutely not." Skinner didn't even entertain the thought. He had plans for the night. They were the same plans he had every night that he wasn't on a job, but that was beside the point.

"You're no fun!" Jackson bitched. "Now that Creed is all cuddled up with his boy, we're the only two single ones left. Come play! I think I figured out how to get past Lance's update to the security system."

Skinner would never admit out loud that he found Jackson's antics amusing. There hadn't been much in his life that made Skinner smile, but his friends were an ongoing source of entertainment. "Didn't he lock you in the safe room last time?"

Jackson grunted. "He's testing my skills. That just means I need to get better."

"Then go practice." Skinner leaned forward as the back door of the restaurant opened and three figures walked out. There was his boy. Right on time. Marco strolled across the parking lot with two female co-workers. Each female peeled off to her own vehicle and waved to Marco before climbing inside.

As predicted, Marco waited outside his vehicle until the females had driven off. Only then did he unlock his car and slip inside.

"Are you listening to me?" Jackson screeched into his speaker.

"Of course, I am. You just haven't said anything that you need a response to. I believe you just called me to complain. You knew quite surely that I would not go help you break in somewhere."

"I left a present for Creed a couple days ago, but he hasn't been back to his motel room. Such a shame."

"Leave Creed alone. He needs time to bond with his boy."

"Bond?" Jackson snorted. "What is this, a bad vampire movie?"

"I don't watch bad vampire movies," Skinner pointed out. He didn't watch movies at all. He didn't even own a television. Frowning, he waited for Marco's headlights to come on. What was taking so long? His boy should have started the vehicle already.

"Whatever. If I can't mess with Creed or Lance, then that leaves you to distract me."

“Why don’t you go test Mac’s security again? That was fun, wasn’t it?” Skinner started his SUV and eased from his spot. Marco pushed the driver’s door open and climbed out. What was going on?

“That’s just mean!” Jackson sounded outraged. “And Mac has no sense of humor at all. I don’t even know why we let him in the cool kids’ club.”

Skinner knew. Because Mac was just like them. Broken. “What about that club you invited me to? I thought you found someone to catch your interest there.”

“It’s complicated,” Jackson replied sullenly.

Curious. Jackson sounded weird about that, but Skinner couldn’t give Jackson his full attention. Now Marco had the hood of his car up. “I must go. I have something to take care of.”

“Fine! But if I end up in jail, I’m calling you to bail me out. That’ll serve you for right for leaving all on my own.”

Skinner hung up without another word. He circled around the back of the lot to turn onto the main road. Marco’s vehicle was parked to the back but right by the street. Easy view from someone driving by. Not that there were many people driving this late. Perfect.

He drove past Marco at first, just playing the innocent, before pulling to the side. It should look natural. Leaving his SUV running, he stepped out of the driver’s side and walked around the back of his vehicle. A sidewalk and small patch of grass separated Marco in the lot and where Skinner idled on the main road.

“Marco?” Skinner called. “Is that you?”

Marco’s head popped up from where he bent looking under his hood. “Mr. Washington?”

Skinner nearly winced at his current fake name. Leaving the choice to Lance was never a great idea. Lance thought himself a comedian or he just liked messing with Skinner.

Jogging over, Skinner closed the distance between him and the boy. “I was driving past. I thought that was you. Is everything okay?”

The boy was smart to park under one of the tall lights in the parking lot, but Skinner could still barely make out the boy’s features. “I’m fine. My car...not so much. I think the battery is dead or something. It was fine this morning.”

“Do you need help?” Skinner offered. “I don’t know anything about cars, but I can call someone. Or offer you a lift home?”

“If you wouldn’t mind giving me a ride home, that would be great. My uncle has a garage, and I can call him or my cousin in the morning to come look at it. I hate to wake them up this late though.”

“I’d be happy to drive you home. Why don’t you lock your car up. I probably shouldn’t leave my vehicle on the side of the road.”

“Sure! Just give me a minute.” Marco quickly gathered what he wanted from his vehicle before locking it and returning to Skinner’s side. “It sure is a good thing you were driving by. What are you doing out so late?”

Years of lying and being comfortable with deceit had Skinner smoothly answering, “Late meeting. I was just heading home when I saw the hood up. I knew it would have to be someone from the restaurant.” he replied.

“Well, lucky for me.” Marco followed Skinner to the SUV still idling on the side of the main road.

If you would like to continue reading, please purchase Skinner today!

About the author

Athena Steller is a self-published author of MM & MMM Daddy kink books.

Athena Steller is the alter ego for MF paranormal author Crissy Smith. Under the name Crissy Smith, she has been published since 2008 with Totally Entwined Publishing, becoming an Amazon bestselling paranormal romance author.

Athena first entered the writing world in December 2019 with the release of the *Daddy's Boy* series. Writing the Athena books has given her a chance to explore an entire new genre. It's been an adventure so far and opening exciting new opportunities.

Athena/Crissy is the mom to a wonderful twenty-four-year-old daughter, dog mom to three crazy Labrador retrievers, and is addicted to coffee. Her dream is to one day get to write full time to share all the stories that are locked inside her. In the meantime, she will continue to release books as often as possible.

For more information about Athena's upcoming books, please visit the brand-new website: www.athenasteller.com

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