



Learning to Run

TO RUN

EDUCATION OF THE HEART 4

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USA TODAY BEST-SELLING AUTHOR

LEARNING TO RUN

The Education of the Heart, Book 4

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LEARNING TO RUN

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Written by M.A. Innes

Learning to Run

"How do you know if you're a hostage?"

Bates

His boys ask the most interesting questions, but Bates wouldn't have it any other way. They're fabulously curious and wonderfully unique, and they're quickly becoming the center of his world even though they haven't technically known each other very long. But there are definitely more important things than time when it comes to falling in love.

Gareth

It isn't his fault that life is weird and he has a growing list of questions, but thankfully, he has the best boyfriends he could've ever dreamed up because his list just keeps getting longer and longer. But Gareth knows questions are good and the answers are always fun, especially when some end with tails and playtime.

Cashel

How Gareth's questions led to his own switchy crisis, Cashel still can't quite figure out, but it just seems to be what happens when he's surrounded by crazy on all sides. And the insanity is contagious because Jude's acting even stranger and now Brady is asking his own growing list of the weirdest questions ever.

When a nosy neighbor falls for two curious cuties, it will take some kinky exploration and a bit of hostage negotiations to bring this family together forever.

Author's Note

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Chapter 1

Gareth

Jude was insane...and possibly angry about something.

“He’s glaring at me.” I hadn’t really tried to whisper, but I leaned closer to Cash, so it counted as being polite. “We’ve slept here for two nights. I want to come and I want to sleep with Bates again.”

Jude frowned deeper.

Yep, he’d heard.

But, considering he was only about five feet away and leaning against the front door, that probably couldn’t be helped.

So it wasn’t rude, just unavoidable.

“You talking about orgasms might be why he’s frowning.” Cash was trying to look serious but it wasn’t working. His eyes kept twinkling, and I could hear the way he wanted to laugh. “That kind of makes him weird.”

That wasn’t my fault.

“I’m not talking about anything kinky or private. Everybody orgasms. It’s like that *Everybody Poops* book. This isn’t rocket science.” My logic didn’t make Jude happy, but it didn’t make him any more frustrated, so I was counting it as a win of some sort. “We agreed to be here more. We did that.”

I’d thought they were frustrated about chores or making sure someone was here to feed Brady, but it wasn’t about anything practical at all. For some reason,

Jude and Brady thought we were *moving too fast* and *trusting too easily* and *smiling too much*.

Unsurprisingly, the last one had come from Jude.

“I’m not sure we should’ve agreed with that.” Cash’s answer was aimed at me but he kept his eyes glued on Jude. “I think we lost ground there. Do you think Bates would let us move in with him?”

It wasn’t what I would’ve done first to handle the weird situation, but it might not have been a bad idea if we could work out some of the details.

“I don’t know if he has enough storage space for three adults.” The one-bedroom apartments didn’t have enough closet space. “Oh, and he’s probably going to say we have to do the spanking thing first before we could live with him.”

And who would feed Brady?

We hadn’t even done a chore chart either, so there were lots of things we needed to talk about first.

But in the last few days, we’d gone through limits lists and definitions and Cash had come to the realization that the world wouldn’t end if he saw my penis. We were making good progress on a lot of fronts.

My spanking was just around the corner as long as being stuck in the apartment didn’t throw up any more conversations we were supposed to have had. Those always popped up out of nowhere and I was kind of tired of them.

“Good point.” Cash nodded, still looking at Jude and the door. “We need to remember to bring clothes for tomorrow. I’m tired of doing the walk of shame in my pajamas. We’ve run into that same guy way too many times.”

He thought we were funny and was always polite, so I wasn’t sure what Cash was worried about. Besides, he

looked good in his pajamas and there was no way I was the only person who'd noticed that.

"Maybe we should just bring a few clothes down there so we don't have to worry about that? I could pick up some extra toothbrushes and stuff tomorrow." That made Jude frown even deeper.

Something about good oral hygiene seemed to drive him crazy, but I had to take care of Cash like he took care of me so it was important.

"You're not moving in with someone you've only been on one date with." Jude was so worked up, if we'd been in a cartoon, steam would've been coming out of his ears.

Happy Doms really were much sexier.

"I think it's been at least two." Turning to Cash, I frowned. "Didn't it count when we brought him a sub?"

Cash finally looked away from Jude. "I thought so. Oh, and what about when he bought us Chinese food? That counts too if we're going by eating out in some way makes it a date."

Worked for me.

"Three dates." I tried to look happy as I pointed that out to Jude but smiling just made him more insane. "See? That's much better."

"You can't move in with someone after one date and two takeout dinners." Jude was smart for remembering our dates but just repeating what we'd already said didn't make him right.

"One of those was lunch." I thought being clear about that was important, but Jude just looked up at the sky and started mumbling about being saved. "And we've eaten regular meals at his place too. So that probably counts in some way."

Maybe there was some conversion chart, like three snacks equaled one dinner?

Jude was still mumbling up at the ceiling, so he wasn't in the right headspace to be productive. I couldn't decide if he was talking to Jesus, Santa, or another god he hadn't mentioned before, but I wasn't sure anyone was going to help. Santa didn't reward cranky people and I didn't think Jesus would either.

"Do you think Jesus helps cranky people?" I didn't bother trying to whisper, but I leaned closer to Cash again, so it still counted as being polite. "I'm not sure who he's talking to."

"He's not going to get what he wants no matter who he's talking to." Cash's grumbling tone made it feel like he was sliding more toward his Dom headspace.

Us being alone in our room at night never made him feel like a Dom, so I'd thought he just needed Bates around to find it. Clearly, that was an incorrect assumption. Getting pissed at Jude brought it out too.

Hmm, maybe that was why they always butted heads?

I knew better than to ask since Cash hadn't actually come out about being a switch yet, but I put it on my mental *let's talk about this* list...and asking if it was supposed to be a secret was going on that list too.

"Do you know what we're waiting for?" Jude had said he wanted to talk and I thought we were waiting for Brady. But he wasn't back from class yet, and Jude looked like he'd taken us hostage.

Hmm.

"How do you know if you're a hostage?" Jude rolled his eyes, so I just ignored him and picked up my phone again as I talked to Cash. "I know we technically live here but does that matter?"

Would Bates know?

Before Cash could answer, Jude glared more intensely and huffed. "I'm not holding you hostage. We're just waiting for someone, and if I walk away, you two rabbits will wander off."

Okay, maybe, but that was also something a hostage-taker would say too.

Wait. Who was coming?

"Do hostage-takers usually invite guest speakers?" If we'd been waiting for Brady, Jude would've said that, right?

Cash was just down to sighing and glaring back at Jude, so I didn't get much of a response from him. "No. But who knows at this point."

No one knew.

That was the problem.

"Do we need anything else besides toothbrushes and a few changes of clothes?" I figured I might as well get a few things planned out if we were stuck for a while. "Oh, did you want to bake anything for Bates? We need to make a grocery list."

"You're *baking* for him?" For some reason, cake made Jude mad too. "This is ridiculous."

Oh yeah.

Even Cash snorted, so he knew it was nuts too.

"Something chocolate and decadent. Bates has been good to us, so it's time to thank him *thoroughly*." Cash had a good idea because Bates liked chocolate, but it made Jude look like a really angry cartoon character.

Did he think baking was too personal?

Should he be eating anything Cash made then?

“I like thanking Bates.” Orally and otherwise. “Can I blow him while you feed him?”

Jude wasn't giving us enough privacy for me to ask that without an audience but watching his face get red was kind of fun.

However, I was saved from watching his head explode by a knock at the door.

That would've been messy and it was my turn to vacuum again.

“Should we take bets about who's going to be our hostage guest speaker?” I had no idea who it could be, but Cash was smart, so he'd probably already guessed.

And if I lost a blow job bet to him, I wouldn't complain...so it'd be a win either way.

He didn't have enough time to guess, though, because Jude whipped the door open like it was going to explode. “Thank you for coming.”

Oh.

Brady's mom.

“Hi, Brady's mom.” She always smiled when I said it like that. But she'd been just Brady's mom for so long that it was hard to remember she had a real name. Brady had just called her Mom for the first year we'd known him.

He'd forgotten she had a real name too.

“Hello, darlings.” She came in smiling and looking around like she was happy we remembered to keep the couch pillows looking nice. “It seems like you're driving poor Jude crazy.”

Right to the point.

“Do you know why?” Her smile had me hoping that she did, but she could smile through anything. She even seemed to like going to Walmart with a thousand kids.

Oh, the kids.

She was happy because she was actually alone.

Cash laughed, probably realizing why she was happy too. "I think she does."

She just smiled even wider and gave Jude a quick hug as she walked in. "I do. Let's talk about that."

Oh, there was Brady too.

As he came in behind her, Jude took a deep breath. "They kept accusing me of kidnapping them."

"Well, actually it was holding us hostage, but I don't know if there's a difference." As I shrugged, still not sure about the technical definitions, Brady sighed.

"Sorry, Daddy." He kissed Jude's cheek, knowing he could use his cheat way of making Jude less nuts. "Thank you for being so patient."

Brady's mom giggled, so she knew Brady was full of hot air too.

But it wouldn't be polite to point that out, so we stayed quiet as she came over and made us move apart so she could sit between us on the couch. When she was all settled and holding our hands, and Brady was perched on Jude's lap as the silly Dom pouted over something, she took a breath.

That wasn't good.

"We didn't do anything wrong. We've been polite and we've done our homework and our chores. I've even done Brady's too because he tricked me and I forgot to tell Bates it happened again so he could protect me from Brady." After being held hostage, I decided tossing Brady under the bus was fair.

Cash snickered as Brady huffed and looked offended. "Tattletale."

Maybe, but he hadn't been held hostage.

“It sounds like you’re very fond of Bates.” She smiled, looking back and forth between me and Cash. “Would he save you from being Bradied?”

“Yes.” Cash ignored Brady’s pout and nodded. “He’s very good at taking care of us.”

“There’s an *us*. In case you didn’t know.” I figured Brady had tattled, but I wasn’t sure until she nodded. “He decided me and Cash should date too so we’re all dating together.”

I wasn’t sure if she knew how fast he’d realized that, so I kept explaining.

“He’s smart too.” Hmm, I might’ve left out the important bits. “And not just because he knew we should date right away. He’s, like, math smart, not just people smart.”

Cash was nearly giggling as he leaned back against the couch and looked up at the ceiling. “What the genius over there is trying to say is that Bates is getting his master’s in mathematics and he’s actually really smart. Like genius smart.”

“Ah.” Smiling, Brady’s mom squeezed our hands and patted them on our knees like they were exclamation points. “Well, that does explain a lot.”

For some reason that made Cash snicker, but I nodded. “Yeah, smart people are weird, but we like his weird and he likes ours, so it’s working pretty well.”

“I’m so glad.” She might’ve been glad but she was looking at us like we’d done something sketchy and wasn’t sure how to say it without being rude. “But it seems like Brady and Jude are worried about how quickly he’s become important to you?”

That was probably an understatement.

Cash didn’t seem to trust me with this part because he jumped in and was finally helpful. “Yeah, he came up

to talk to us last week and introduce himself and we just clicked. We've gone out a few times and he's nice. Like the good kind of nice, not the creepy kind."

Jude snorted, but she smiled like Cash was brilliant. "That's wonderful. He sounds lovely. But do you know why the boys might have concerns?"

Cash looked like he was trying to find a polite way to answer her, but after being held hostage, I wasn't in the mood to be nice.

So I was helpful instead.

"Jude might not like that me and Cash are dating the same guy." There was kind of a long list of stuff he'd gotten worked up about, so I just told her all that I could think of. "Or that our guy is a Dom and he's our Dom. Or that he's going to spank me. I'm a sub, but not like Brady, I don't need toys and to cause drama to get attention. I'm a grown-up sub so I can just ask for attention."

I'd probably missed a few important parts but I remembered not to tell her that asking for attention usually involved blow jobs.

She probably knew that already...she had a million kids so sexy time couldn't have been a mystery.

"And we've kind of already spent the night." I shrugged when she frowned. "We knew his name first and he's really good at cuddling and we haven't had full sex yet. We're getting to know each other and taking that slow."

Technically, I hadn't lied.

Cash was groaning, no help at all, and Brady and Jude were just sitting there with their eyes getting bigger, but Brady's mom was back to smiling. "You've really thought about your relationship. I'm very proud of you."

Well, it was good that somebody was.

“Would you like to meet him?” Once Cash stopped being dramatic, he had good ideas. “He’s downstairs studying and he wouldn’t mind. He’s been excited to meet you.”

Oh, that was perfect.

Even Brady groaned.

“That sounds lovely.” Beaming, she did the pat our knees thing again. “Let’s do that. I would love to meet your partner. It’s always nice when you find your Mr. Right early in life...and you’ve got two.”

I knew I liked her.

Chapter 2

Cashel

I loved Brady's family, but Bates looked like he was shaking hands with a Hollywood celebrity. "It's wonderful to meet you. I've heard so much about you."

That just made Jude glare more, Brady sigh, and me almost giggle.

Of course, Brady's mom cocked her head and looked confused as she continued to smile. "That's so nice."

Since it didn't look like anyone else was going to explain things, I tried. "Um, when the window was stuck open, we were louder than we thought. So he heard a lot about you."

"And Brady talks to himself." Gareth decided that was the right moment to be helpful. "So Bates knows all about you."

"That's convenient." She managed not to laugh as she walked Bates over to the couch and sat him between us. She'd done the same thing the few times me, Gareth, and Brady had gotten into fights, so I wasn't surprised, but for some reason it just made Brady smile wider.

"I am always available to help supervise Walmart visits, and while I don't have a lot of experience babysitting, I like kids." Bates was feeling really helpful too.

Brady's mom patted his knees and sat down in front of us on the coffee table...probably so we couldn't escape. She was smart like that. "I'm sure that will be helpful when dealing with Brady."

Brady frowned like he couldn't decide if he should be offended or not, but Jude rolled his eyes as Bates nodded. "It does. I'm also familiar with littles, and even though I'm not a Daddy, I have no problem with the dynamic he shares with Jude."

It really was nice to date someone who didn't think Brady was nuts...well, Jude knew he was nuts but not about the little and wanting a Daddy thing.

"I bet that's made things a lot easier." We all got more pats and smiles as she studied us, but when she glanced over to Jude and Brady, I knew things were bound to get interesting. "But it seems to have produced some struggles as well."

"Yeah, like holding us hostage." Gareth's mumbled words got a dramatic huff from Jude and a barely controlled laugh from Bates.

Brady's mom didn't let us get distracted, though. "It seems like Jude and Brady are worried about how quickly things are moving between you three."

I kind of liked how she wasn't surprised at all three of us dating, and it made me wonder what it would take before she was shocked about something. But I had to remind myself that it wasn't what I was supposed to be focused on.

Hostage situations were more important than my curiosity.

Bates was good at keeping on track too. He smiled and nodded before glancing between the two of us like he was having so much fun he didn't know what to do with himself.

It looked kind of dangerous, honestly.

It was his *let's fuck with Jude* face.

"I wouldn't say we're moving quickly." Bates shrugged, dialing the smile back and looking confused.

“We’ve had a lot of very productive conversations. Gareth especially had questions that Jude wasn’t really comfortable answering, so I stepped in and we got to know each other that way. Family should always be available to answer the hard questions, but sometimes that isn’t possible.”

Oh.

The two nosy drama queens in question both sucked in a breath as Bates neatly tossed them right under the bus without looking guilty at all.

Smart people were amazing.

“Some questions just make people uncomfortable, but you’re such a wonderful mother I know that wouldn’t be a problem for you.” Bates smiled sweetly and even reached out to squeeze her hand. “Around Christmas, I heard Brady talking about how wonderful you were to check up on him and Jude and how their deflowering was going.”

Jude’s mouth dropped open as Brady looked like he was trying to figure out how Bates had heard that conversation, but he’d been so loud about it that most of the building probably knew when he’d gotten deflowered.

“Gareth and Cashel weren’t sure how you’d feel about their questions, though, silly boys, but I knew you would want someone to help them, so I took them out to dinner for a neutral environment and did my best.” He shrugged when she gave him a beaming smile and leaned over to give him a hug.

“Oh, that’s so sweet. Yes, some boys are silly about things like deflowering and being curious. All boys are curious.” She sighed like it was just something she had to accept. “I was very lucky that Brady was my most curious child and he was just looking for a Daddy.”

Yeah, that was pretty easy in the scheme of things.

“That one is fairly self-explanatory and Jude is a wonderful Daddy for Brady. He takes very good care of Brady and they communicate a lot.” Bates said it so nicely I couldn’t tell if he was being sincere or if it was some kind of sex joke.

Jude’s expression said he wasn’t sure either and Gareth just looked relieved that someone was making sure he wouldn’t get held hostage any longer.

My life was so weird.

“They’re so good together and he has a lot of patience with my Brady.” She was still smiling but clearly knew her kid was nuts.

“He does.” Bates was still smiling as he glanced over at Jude. “And he’s going to make sure Brady is doing his own chores and not talking Gareth into doing them.”

Brady’s dramatic huff had his mother trying not to laugh, but she was facing away from the drama queen little, so he didn’t know. She was so amazing there weren’t even any giggles in her voice. “Oh yes, I’m sure he’ll handle that with an appropriate consequence.”

I wasn’t sure if the way she didn’t say punishment was deliberate or not but I was glad no one else asked about it.

“I’m sure he will.” Bates was so smooth as he shifted his attention to us and gave us both knee pats. “And speaking of chores, how about we head over to the grocery store now instead of later?”

He aimed his sweet smile at Brady’s mom. “I hate to run but you know how the store gets if you wait too late in the day. It’ll be a madhouse and all the vegetables will be picked over. Cashel was talking about making soup for us and it sounds delicious. He takes very good care of us.”

And now she was smiling at me.

A very knowing smile.

What did she think she knew?

Hoping I wasn't blushing as much as I thought I was, I swallowed and tried to sound reasonable. "Bates takes good care of us too. He's answering questions and we're going slow. Promise."

That was Gareth's cue to groan. "Very slow. They're trying to torture me."

For some reason that made her grin come back in full force and she giggled. "I'm sure you appreciate all that attention, dear."

As Gareth nodded sheepishly, unable to deny his love of Bates's brand of torture, Brady sighed and Jude just buried his head against Brady's.

They deserved the oversharing, so I didn't feel bad either...neither did Bates judging by his big smile. "I'm so glad I got to meet you. You're the best mom in the whole building and we're all very jealous of what a good relationship you have with Brady."

God, we were so loud.

"You're so sweet. I can see why the boys are so enamored with you." We all got knee pats again as she gave us looks like we were chocolate cake cute. "It's so wonderful to see the beginning of such a wonderful relationship...and neither of you call him Daddy, so that won't get confusing at the next family dinner."

And that finally had her glaring at us.

"I'm going to be seeing you at the family dinners again, aren't I?" She wouldn't take the whole "Christmas was hard" explanation, so I just nodded.

"Yes, ma'am." Yep, I was not going to argue with her when she was about to aim that sweet frustration out on Jude and Brady. "I think I'm going to make Bates your famous chicken noodle soup. He'll love that."

We all ignored Brady's huff, including his mother. But that was probably because she'd launched into a lecture about stock and what veggies were in season. We finally escaped, though, with her having blessed our relationship, and we didn't have to listen to whatever lecture Brady and Jude would get.

"That was so much fun." Bates was grinning ear to ear as he ushered us to his car, either actually wanting groceries or realizing a thorough escape was best. "Thank you for letting me know you were being held hostage."

He was really...smart, yep, he was smart.

Gareth just sighed as we got to Bates's car. "We were polite, but Jude was just...he was very Jude, so tattling on him was the only option."

We had the weirdest life sometimes.

"He didn't seem to like that we were going to bring clothes over." Gareth charged into what should've probably been a more carefully constructed conversation. "Cash is tired of doing the pajama walk of shame, so we need to leave some clothes there."

Instead of thinking it was insane, Bates nodded like it was completely rational. "And toothbrushes and some extra phone chargers? Can you think of anything else?"

"You don't have much storage space, so we need to be careful." Gareth looked entirely too thoughtful. "When we move in together, we're going to have to take that into consideration."

"Very true." Nodding as he leaned against his car, Bates got the same thoughtful look as Gareth and now they were both making me nervous. "I'm glad we didn't have to explain that to Brady's mom, though. She might've thought that was moving too fast since Jude and Brady were...well, they were trying to get her wound up."

Oh yeah.

“Thank you for coming to help fix everything, but I hope we didn’t fuck up your schedule?” I still wasn’t sure if dragging him into the crazy had been the best idea but it’d been the most logical thing I could think of and...well, he was our Dom.

Gareth rolled his eyes as he stepped closer, completely being a snuggle slut for our Dom even though we were out in the parking lot. “He’s our Dom. It’s his responsibility to protect us from ridiculous people.”

Give him a little time to google and he got all kinds of confident.

Bates just loved it.

He gave Gareth a kiss and wrapped one arm around the drama queen to hug him tight. “That’s right, and I would’ve been desperately disappointed to have missed out on meeting her.”

Cocking his head, Bates glanced between us. “What’s her name? I think she was going to introduce herself when I came in, but then Jude got huffy and glary and everything got off track.”

Oh.

Probably looking guilty, I focused on my shoes and trying to remember the grocery list. “It sounds like I should probably make the chicken soup on another day when I can make the broth first. What about homemade mac-and-cheese? That’s a lot easier.”

Gareth snickered as Bates moaned. “I really shouldn’t let you distract me from what’s clearly a good story, but I guess for mac-and-cheese and maybe some special time with the best cocksucker ever, I could be bribed away from good gossip.”

They were both insane.

“I’ll do that and tell you the story because you’re a very special Dom and a great boyfriend and you saved me from being held hostage.” Gareth was smiling wide and somehow sounded very sincere, so I couldn’t tell what was him being honest and what was him fucking with everyone.

Bates looked thrilled. “Wonderful bribes and a good story. I have the best boys ever.”

His best boys both got kisses before he settled back against the car again, not looking like he was going anywhere until the story had been told.

Smart man.

Gareth was excited to make him happy and didn’t mind making us look stupid, so he started right in on it. “Brady only calls her Mom. His dad calls her sweetheart and stuff like that. The rest of the family isn’t any better about real names because Brady calls one of his brothers-in-law dickhead and everyone just knows who that is.”

Gareth shrugged because we hadn’t decided if it was mean to call him that or just accurate because the guy was a dickhead.

“So we only heard her name once the first time we went over.” Gareth frowned, sighing as he explained the problem. “But they had the whole family over and it was like fifty people and a madhouse and we’d never seen anything like it and now we can’t remember if it was Karen or Kathy or Katy or something that just sounded like a K and is really another letter and calling her Karen would be rude if she’s not actually a Karen so she’s just Brady’s mom.”

I couldn’t tell if the way he explained it made us sound less insane or more.

“Our families are small.” Now I was the one frowning and shrugging and trying to justify our stupidity. “We don’t even have cousins, so it was like walking into the

zoo where every animal was running around free. They're loud and everywhere."

Bates somehow managed to look sympathetic and like he wanted to giggle. But after a deep breath, he ended up going for understanding. "That would've been frustrating for you two and I bet Brady just thought it was some kind of idiosyncrasy that he was supposed to ignore so he wouldn't be rude or accuse you of being rude."

Oh.

"Huh, that's something I hadn't thought of." Gareth frowned at Bates. "I think we need to tell him it's okay to be rude sometimes. It seems like that would've made things a lot easier over the years."

Gareth was probably right, but I wasn't sure telling Brady it was okay to be rude was the smartest thing we could do.

He'd probably take that entirely too literally.

"We'll have to think about all the ways that could go wrong first." Bates's curious expression made me nervous. "I'll have to make a list."

Gareth sighed. "Does that one need to get figured out before I get my spanking?"

Pulling us both closer as he laughed, Bates hugged us tight and gave us more quick kisses. "No, my curious boy. No more lists for you."

But did that mean Gareth would get his spanking?

The vibrations running through Gareth said he thought it did but I wasn't sure. Bates had originally wanted to make sure he knew Gareth's limits and he wanted us to realize we'd already been a couple for a while.

Yep, we weren't the brightest bulbs.

But I had a feeling Bates had also been using the “we’ll go slow” stuff to tease Gareth and to draw it out so he was excited and slightly demanding, not nervous and worried.

Bates was smart enough to have figured out that logic right off the bat...but now what?

Gareth looked like he was trying to be patient but that didn’t work. He lasted about ten seconds before the silence got to be too much. “What does that mean? Is it no more lists but lots of questions? Do you know what you want to do? Do you think I’m ready? Am I supposed to tell you that I’m ready and not just be pushy?”

Huh, that might actually have been a good question.

Bates laughed, loving the insanity and dragging it out even more by giving Gareth another kiss and patting his ass. “I would never call you pushy.”

He was such a brat.

Just as Gareth was ready to explode and probably be so loud the whole building would know our plan, Bates put him out of his misery. “I think my curious boy is ready for his spanking, and I’m going to spend the rest of the day figuring out how to give you the best spanking ever.”

Gareth’s entire face scrunched up. “Am I supposed to thank you for being considerate or pout because you’re dragging this out again?”

Bates just grinned.

Yep, smart people were a pain in the ass.

Chapter 3

Bates

“He’s fucking with me, right?” Gareth was trying to be quiet as he pestered Cashel in the kitchen, but his voice carried a bit too well for that to have worked.

“Probably? But maybe not?” I could hear the shrug in Cashel’s voice as he continued to chop the veggies he’d picked out. “Planning a scene is important, but he does like driving you crazy.”

Laughing would’ve made me a terrible Dom but they were so cute.

“He’s making me insane.” Gareth’s pouting tone, and probably dramatic expression, had Cashel sighing.

“I think that’s the goal either way.” Cashel’s answer made me think he’d realized keeping Gareth slightly off balance kept him from worrying about the spanking. “But there’s a fine line between being curious and excited and being a pain in the ass. I’d recommend you not cross that line.”

Gareth’s groan had me imagining him curling into Cashel to get attention and cuddles. “But I don’t know where the line is. What if I already crossed it?”

“Then your spanking might go from *quickly get you an orgasm to your Master is going to drag it out and make you insane.*” Cashel’s tone was dry but I could feel his delight at the way he was getting to mess with Gareth.

His Dom side was definitely coming out.

“But I’ll still get an orgasm either way?” Gareth’s curious tone made me smile. “I kind of like the teasing,

dragging things out part. He does it really well and it makes me all squirmy inside. But I was promised an orgasm.”

And he wasn't going to let anyone forget it... including Brady's mother.

Meeting her had been fascinating, but it was clear Jude and Brady needed a few more boundaries because the boys were mine to take care of. And they didn't need saving from me. I was hoping they would understand that after their talk with Brady's mother but some people were stubborn.

“Bates doesn't break his promises. He just might drag it out and torture you first.” Cashel had decided to start the torture bit early because he seemed like he was enjoying making Gareth squirm.

“How? I don't even know how to research that. Do you know what comes up when you look up torture and BDSM online?”

Oh dear.

Cashel snickered, not worried about how scarred my curious boy was.

“You're insane. Stop googling shit.” He was still finding it entirely too much fun because he decided to be helpful again as he moved around the kitchen. “One. He's not going to really torture you because that wasn't on his list. Two. I mean, he might do things to drag out the scene and make you wait longer to come. He'd edge you and tease you.”

“I know that one.” Gareth seemed pleased about that but I could hear naughty curiosity in his voice too. “But how would he do it?”

He seemed to be already edging himself, but Cashel didn't point that out.

“Well, he might...” The thoughtful silence stretched out for a few seconds and I couldn’t decide if it was nerves, just another way of fucking with Gareth, or genuine thoughtfulness because he didn’t know what I would do.

When he finally started talking again, I still hadn’t decided, but he wasn’t too stressed, so I didn’t worry about it. “He could play with your ass between spanks, you know, finger-fucking you. Or he could just stop between spanks and be really sweet.”

I wasn’t sure what that meant, but Gareth explained it for me.

“Ugh, he’d ask me how I was doing and he’d make me talk about it.” Gareth’s dramatic groan had me barely holding back laughter.

“Yep, feelings and all.” Cashel nearly giggled but he kept it under control. “He might even do both, fuck you gently and talk to you and then start up again.”

“God.” Gareth’s sigh was the cutest thing I’d ever heard. “That would kill me.”

“Yep, so don’t cross the line because I kind of want to see how desperate you would get if he did it.” Cashel’s honest confession had silence coming from the kitchen for several seconds.

“Yeah, you’re a Dom, alright.” Gareth sounded like he was shuffling around. “Light switches. Man.”

Cashel snorted as Gareth finally came out of the kitchen and remembered I was on the couch. “Oh. Um, hi, Sir.”

How did other Doms manage not to laugh all the time?

“Hello, my curious boy.” Setting my books on the couch, I leaned back and spread my legs, setting a pillow on the floor. “Come kneel for me.”

It might keep him out of trouble for at least a few seconds.

“Yes, Sir.” Having something to do that would make me happy had him worrying less and he perked up as he walked over. “I was helpful in the kitchen.”

Cashel’s snort called that into question but I didn’t point it out.

“I’m so glad you were helpful.” I waited as he cocked his head looking at the pillow on the floor. It only took a moment for him to nod to himself as he studied it like he was getting ready to tackle someone or kick toward a goal.

When he had the motion right in his head, he lowered himself to the floor, more gracefully than I’d expected. I had a boy who’d clearly been doing his research because he even rested his hands on his knees and didn’t fidget for at least ten seconds.

“Beautiful.” Leaning in, I gave him a quick kiss. “Thank you for researching kneeling for me. It makes me feel special and I appreciate how seriously you took it.”

His smile was so bright it was almost glowing. “It made sense and wasn’t scary online. Oh, for future reference, don’t Google BDSM and torture.”

I was the best Dom in the entire world and didn’t laugh at all.

“I bet the results were disturbing.” God only knew what he’d run into. “I won’t do that.”

“Good.” He nodded, looking delightfully serious. “But searches for typical rules from a Dom and manners to use with your Dom weren’t bad. Some were confusing, though.”

That didn’t surprise me.

“I’m impressed with all your research, and I’m going to remind you that you can always come to me with any questions or if there’s just something you want us to look up together.” Just in case it was scarier than he expected.

Blinking, Gareth let out a sigh. “Yeah, I probably should’ve had someone do it with me, but I keep underestimating how weird the internet is.”

That had laughter pouring out of the kitchen.

Gareth shrugged, looking like he understood Cashel’s delight. “If Brady can look things up online, I thought I should be able to. But regular sub stuff is a lot more interesting than little stuff.”

Hmm, he had a point.

Some people would have trouble with things like diapers, but aside from that, it was easy and not scary in the slightest.

“But you are very brave by doing research and smart enough to know when to stop.” People did not always realize how important it was to know that limit.

Boundaries were for our brains too and Gareth needed happy limits around his imagination.

“I was smart.” He paused, then frowned as he looked at me. “Not fast enough with being smart, though.”

“It’s a learning curve.” Deciding he needed a distraction so he didn’t start remembering the scary things he’d found online, I ran my hand over his head and then slowly trailed it around his ear and down his neck.

As he shivered, I dropped my voice lower. “There are all kinds of fun things to learn about, though. Like looking sexy and beautiful as you kneel for me, and the toys like the small flogger I have in the bedroom.”

He'd thought that was fascinating, and I had a feeling he'd be willing to try anything that inched him closer to his spanking.

We both ignored Cashel's snicker but it was for different reasons. Gareth was looking at me stunned, so I wasn't sure he'd heard anything. It took a few seconds for him to process, but eventually, he nodded slowly. "Yes...I...yes, I'm curious about fun things."

It was such a wonderful understatement I gave him another kiss.

He was so vested in making sure he didn't lose the opportunity to explore something new he swallowed and licked his lips as I sat back. "I like learning."

"You do." I kept skimming the pads of my fingers over his head and down his neck, taking my time. "Would you like to learn a few new things with me?"

Gareth swallowed again, looking thoughtful as he glanced over my shoulder toward the kitchen.

Cashel.

"I...Cash is making dinner?" The question said everything and nothing, leaving me to guess what he meant.

"I am going to love spending special time with each of you but only if that's okay with all of us. Individual time between each part of our triad is important, but we don't have to rush." Kissing his cheek, I kept up the soft caresses.

My boys had done nearly everything together their entire life and I knew that wouldn't change just because I'd shown up with teasing caresses and some interesting answers.

"Do...do you think he'd be okay with it?" Gareth was clearly more worried about Cashel, which wasn't

surprising, but I knew Cashel could hear everything we were saying, so I just waited for a few seconds.

Yep.

He came around the corner, a bulge in his pants and a smile on his face. "Would I be okay with Bates keeping you from helping in the kitchen and destroying my soup? Yes."

Huffing, Gareth rolled his eyes. "You never put in enough salt. You know that."

They were adorable.

And mine.

Cashel threw up his hands and started mumbling about meddling brats as he headed back into the kitchen, making it perfectly clear to his curious boyfriend that there wasn't anything to worry about.

I couldn't decide if it'd been deliberate or just their wonderful way of communicating, but either way, Gareth was shaking his head. "He says it every time unless I remind him. He always tells himself that there's salt in everything in the soup so he shouldn't have to add more."

Yeah, that was logical.

"Soup math is weird. The salt disappears to another dimension if you're not careful." There was some kind of magic to it that I'd never figured out.

"See? Bates gets it too." Cashel's helpful commentary from the kitchen had Gareth rolling his eyes again.

"He just needs to add more salt. Magic isn't something he can combat just by complaining about it." Sighing, he glared toward the kitchen. "Kitchen magic is something that should be taken seriously."

Was he fucking with Cashel or did he think the kitchen was magic?

Life with them would never be boring.

“How about we let Cashel handle the kitchen magic and I make magic with you?” I had some edging to do.

I heard a snicker from the kitchen, but Gareth nodded, wearing an expression that said he thought it'd been wonderfully romantic. “Yes, Sir.”

So sweet.

Taking his hands, I gave him one last peck. “Stand up for me. Slowly and let me know if your knees hurt. You don't usually sit like this and I don't want to forget that just because of how sexy you look.”

Flashing me a grin, his entire body wiggled and made him laugh once he realized what he'd done. “I did it again.”

Adorable.

“Yes, and your gear is going to be here any day.” Then Cashel would get his turn to dominate our curious boy.

Rising from the couch, I wrapped my arms around Gareth and squeezed his ass. “I can't wait to see your pup side come out and play.”

He'd be excited and probably even more cheerful than his regular self was, but aside from that, I didn't want to make too many assumptions. I wanted Gareth to be able to figure out what his pup liked. “You're going to be so cute.”

He flashed me another grin before snuggling against me. “Cash says there's no right or wrong way to be a pup. I'm just supposed to have fun and do what feels right.”

“That's perfect advice.” Cashel was going to be a wonderful Handler. “And I bet he said that even if all you want to do is wag your tail and look cute, we'll be fine with that.”

“Yes, because I’m not scared of his fucking penis.” The slightly frustrated tone coming from the kitchen made Gareth roll his eyes again.

Sighing, Gareth dropped his voice into an actual whisper that time. “He kind of is but that’s okay.”

They were probably both right, but I just nodded. “He’s come a long way.”

Cashel was more worried about taking certain steps but caution was reasonable. A lot had changed for them in a very short period and there was nothing wrong with keeping that in mind. It hadn’t stopped him from going after what he wanted...sometimes there was just a bit of thinking time involved.

“He has, he’s been very brave too.” Kissing down Gareth’s neck, I smiled as he made a low, happy sound.

“He has. Does that mean he gets special time too?” Gareth seemed to think that was reasonable based on his relaxed tone but something that sounded like a spoon crashed in the kitchen. “He’d probably like going to a museum and then easing him into the good kind of special time.”

“Romance then fun. Got it.” Nibbling on his ear, I loved the needy sounds he was making even as he was planning Cashel’s seduction. “How about something like the art museum? They’ve got a new exhibit.”

Nodding, Gareth’s voice got low and dreamy like reality had taken a few steps back. “He’d like that, but don’t be too polite. Grope him a bit and make him feel sexy too. I don’t think I grab his ass enough.”

And the spoon went down again.

“I bet he’d like that.” Giving him one last kiss, I pulled back just enough to give his lips a peck. “Come on. I haven’t forgotten about all you want to learn.”

Education was a wonderful thing.

His head bobbed without him seeming to think about it and it took his brain a few seconds to catch up. "I like learning with you. Especially when it's things that are going to get me closer to my spanking."

He was closer to that than he realized.

Taking his hand, I led him back to the bedroom, sending a wink to Cashel as we walked past the kitchen. He was blushing but nodded and looked almost proud of us. Cashel's face was always very expressive, but I wasn't sure what was going through his head. Whatever it was, it seemed positive, so I told myself I'd touch base with him later as I gave Gareth's hand a squeeze.

"There are all kinds of things I can learn." My curious boy's helpful commentary had me fighting off a smile since I wasn't sure he'd meant it as cute as it'd come out. "You're a very good Dom to help me learn."

So cute and so manipulative.

He'd been taking lessons from Brady again.

"Thank you." Kissing his cheek as we headed into the bedroom, I decided to have him kneel again since it seemed like it would help him sink deeper into the right headspace.

But first...less clothes for my curious boy.

Stopping by the bed, I put a thick pillow on the floor and turned back to help him out of his shirt. "Now, you need to tell me if your legs or knees start hurting."

As the shirt popped over his head, I caught his smirk. "There are plenty of places I'm going to make you ache, my curious boy, but your knees aren't one of them."

Nearly giggling, he nodded. "Yes, Sir."

He was looking so playful, I gave him another kiss and pinched one of his nipples as he was distracted. Just the quiet way he sucked in a breath as I deepened the kiss made me hard, but I knew I was going to be just as

frustrated as he was by the end of our scene. Because neither of us was going to come yet.

I was going to save all that passion for his first spanking.

In just a few painfully long hours.

Chapter 4

Gareth

Bates was so cute when he was thinking naughty things.

Just his smile was enough to make me feel funny but then it would shift and he'd get a wicked idea in his head and it would get even better. When my smiling Dom touched me, well, that just took it to another world.

And as his fingers skimmed around my pants, teasing them lower and lower, he made me moan before he'd even touched my dick.

Magic.

Chuckling softly, he shook his head. "You won't tempt me into making you come. I've got plans for you later, and not even those sexy moans of yours will talk me into it."

I couldn't decide if that was a threat or a promise.

Since that seemed to be a skill most good Doms possessed, I decided I couldn't complain about it too much. Pouting that I had a good Dom seemed counterproductive in a lot of ways. I might actually talk him into being a terrible one.

"Your mind has found an interesting path, but I'm not going to ask about that either." Shaking his head, Bates looked wonderfully Dommy. "You are one fascinating distraction and I might have to find a punishment for that."

"A cage." Cash's call from the kitchen made me sigh.

He was smart and seemed like he was going to be a good Dom too.

That was tragic.

But since I was running into the same problem I had with Bates being a wonderful Dom, all I could do was sigh.

Life was hard sometimes.

Bates's smile looked wicked but he gave me a soft kiss. "Such a good boy for not arguing and such a lucky boy to have two Doms to take care of him...well, one Dom and one Handler."

That meant pup stuff.

Nope.

Bates said no distracting him.

"Let's see if we can turn that busy brain off for a while." Bates always had wonderful ideas and getting me naked was his next wonderful idea.

As my pants and the rest of my clothes fell to the floor, he kissed right under my ear, sending a shiver through me. "I'm going to have so much fun playing with you, my curious boy."

Yay.

"Thank you, Sir." Yes, that sounded much better than turning into the cheering section at a football game.

"Such good manners." After another kiss, he straightened and stepped back. "Let's see how long those last."

I couldn't decide if that statement needed a preemptive good boy promise or if I should try to look cute, but I was so hard I wasn't sure cute would work. "I'll be good, Sir, but you're...well, you're very distracting too."

Ha, true and it might get me out of trouble if I accidentally came.

Cash's groan from the kitchen might've made Bates doubt my sincerity just a tiny bit, but I got another kiss, so I wasn't too worried. "I think Dom Cashel is going to be a bit skeptical sometimes."

I shrugged. "Brady said Doms could be brats too."

Bates grinned. "Naughty boy, I'm not always going to be able to save you when you push Cashel's buttons."

I kind of wanted to see what he'd do when I made him crazy, so I just smiled at Bates. "I have the best Doms ever, Sir. I'm not worried."

He didn't laugh that time, but Bates shook his head and whispered, "Naughty boy."

But I was cute, so Brady said I didn't have to worry about it.

"Kneel for me." Giving me a soft kiss, Bates stroked my cheek before stepping back. "And no more cheekiness unless you want me to reconsider my plans."

Oh, that didn't sound good.

Time to pull out the big guns.

Aiming wide eyes at him that Brady said was really believable, I nodded and dropped my voice lower as I sank down as gracefully as I could. "Yes, Sir. I'll be a good boy."

Bingo.

Bates looked very Master, but I could see a sparkle in his eyes that said I'd done it perfect. "I hope so."

Ha, no more punishment threats.

Brady was insane but he was a genius.

Did subs come in the evil genius variety?

Bates walked around the bed and toward the dresser before I could decide if he was going to smile or not, but Brady logic said he was probably hiding his face to make sure I didn't see it. I wasn't sure if he was right in this case, but trying to decide was so distracting I forgot all about the flogger until Bates came back over, swinging it softly.

It looked almost innocent.

The strands seemed to be soft and it was so small... but Brady was small and kind of innocent looking and he was kind of dangerous, so I knew not to underestimate the toy.

Or my Dom.

He usually looked innocent too...but as he walked around me and trailed the soft ends of the toy over my shoulders, his wonderful wickedness came out. "Such a beautiful boy."

The velvety ends of the toy sent a shiver through me that raced right to my dick, making Bates chuckle. It was a sexy, rough sound that my dick liked just as much as he did the toy. But I had to admit, he reacted to everything Bates did and just being watched in general, so he might've had a low threshold.

Especially the way Bates brushed the tips of the strands over my nipples as he came around the front of me. Somehow just the look on his face made me feel even more naked and I couldn't help moaning. It was all too perfect.

He smiled, looking wicked. "Yes, you like that, but will you like what else it can do?"

It didn't seem to be a real question I was supposed to answer because before I could even begin to guess what he'd do and if I'd like it, the toy swished in his hand and heat flared through one nipple.

Oh.

I could feel my eyes going wide and my dick wagging back and forth like a tail, but I wasn't thinking enough to get words out before he tormented my other nipple.

Yep, just as interesting.

My nipples didn't seem to have anything negative to say and my dick was very curious, but I wasn't sure either of them had common sense. "That's...I don't know what that is."

Looking down at my chest, I marveled as he did it again. "I don't..."

I didn't have nearly enough words to figure out what I was supposed to say, but it felt like the whole thing needed me to say something.

"Just close your eyes and say whatever comes to mind, my curious boy." Bates leaned over and kissed my head as I obeyed. "Good boy."

The sharp heat flared again over my chest, somehow feeling like it'd gotten both nipples that time, but Bates's hand softly stroked down my face sending mixed signals through me.

"It's hot." That wasn't it exactly but I wasn't sure how to describe it. "Like when Cash makes the good chili... the hot one that makes you want to squirm but it's so good."

Oh.

As the idea rolled around in my head, Bates made a soft thinking sound. Part of me waited to see what he'd say, so I was completely unprepared for the flogger to come down on my thigh, high on the inside. "That's like a warm blanket."

It was good, but not as hot, and it was a softer warmth.

"That's a wonderful description." More gentle caresses seemed to be a reward for making him happy or

maybe just trying hard. "I love how you see the world."

More soft heat washed over me but that wasn't from the toy, Bates was just so sweet he always made me feel warm and fuzzy. I gave up chasing a good description of the feeling and nuzzled his hand as he cupped my cheek.

As he made another low hum, sounding pleased and maybe proud of me, he started a gentle rhythm with the flogger. It was so distracting and felt so good, I couldn't figure out the pattern but there had to be one.

The toy kept hugging me all over, my thighs, my back, my nipples, and it left the world feeling fuzzy even though it never got beyond the warm heat that might've been pain if the word meant something else.

Like the chili.

And my blanket.

And Brady's cuddles.

And Bates's kisses.

Yes, it was hot kisses that left tingly marks over me until I could feel the pleasure growing and I started feeling heavy. That was when the world went back to being far away and even the kiss it gave my dick didn't scare me, it just made me fall into the hazy pleasure that felt so good.

And then there was Bates and Cash, wrapped around me and keeping me from falling.

"Hi." For some reason, they both thought that was funny. "I like learning."

Cash giggled and I could feel him pressing his face into my neck as Bates had his arms wrapped around me. "You're insane."

And that surprised him?

“With my family, you’re lucky this kind of crazy is all you got. Count your blessings, drama queen.” My response had them both hugging me tighter as Cash snickered. “It could’ve been worse.”

“Yeah, I’ll take you driving me crazy any day.” Cash kissed my neck and snuggled closer. “Our families aren’t the healthiest.”

I knew he wasn’t really talking to me, but I nodded anyway. “But we’re turning out okay.”

Bates hugged us tight and scoffed, sounding offended and silly. “My boys are more than just okay.”

“He knows he didn’t raise us, right? He can’t be offended by that.” I was serious but Cash went back to snickering.

“It’s a Dom thing. Got to talk nice about something or someone that’s important to him.” Cash shrugged when I sighed. “I didn’t make up the rules.”

That was ridiculous. “It sounds like one Brady made up.”

Bates snorted, clearly not agreeing with that, so I decided distracting him might be a good idea. “I feel good but my butt is falling asleep. It didn’t get enough attention with the toy to keep the blood circulating.”

“That’s because it’s all in your dick, brat.” Cash’s tone was definitely brattier than mine. “But moving around might fix that.”

Sadly, he was right, but being hard wouldn’t kill me and it’d be worth it if I actually got my spanking later.

Besides, I wasn’t sure why but I liked the being made to wait part of all the BDSM stuff. It was like having lots of attention over and over, but never getting to the point where Bates wanted to walk away because he thought we were all done.

I liked not being all done.

“Let’s cuddle up on the bed.” Bates kissed the side of my head. “Once you can move safely.”

That seemed like a high goal, but being snuggled on the bed sounded much better than sitting on the floor, so I made it work.

And I was mostly safe so they really didn’t complain too much when I got slightly wobbly.

“Did it.” Without falling, too...once I’d remembered to open my eyes.

Yes, the bed had been a great idea.

I was so smart.

“You’re trying to give me a heart attack.” Cash’s drama was so cute I laughed as he curled into me.

“Nope. Pretty sure that was my parents.” I’d almost forgotten we hadn’t told Bates about them until he kissed me on the head.

“I keep forgetting you haven’t always been with us.” Frowning at how rude I’d been, I poked Cash. “You tell it better.”

He snorted but snuggled close and started explaining as Bates went very still. “That’s just because you jump around and end up telling the story in a thousand pieces that are all in the wrong order.”

Bates jerked with laughter, but we both got head kisses instead of giggles. “You don’t have to share anything you’re not ready for.”

I’d gotten over their brand of weird a long time ago, so I didn’t mind if Bates knew. Besides, he was our Dom, so he should know all the weird things about us.

Cash understood that too because he just shrugged and kept going. “Our moms were best friends growing up, like from diapers onward, and they married their high school sweethearts. They got houses next door to

each other and continued doing everything together, including having kids at the same time.”

“It’s honestly kind of weird.” I frowned up at Bates, interrupting Cash. “I mean, I get doing everything with Cash but they’re odd.”

Bates looked like he couldn’t decide if he wanted to sympathize or laugh. But Cash saved him from having to sort through his emotions when he continued our epic saga. “But neither woman was really interested in being a mom...Gareth’s was worse, though.”

I interrupted again, unable to help myself. “She kept forgetting me.”

Cash glared at me. “Who’s telling this?”

“You.” He was so dramatic, but he was leaving his part out so I helped. “His mom didn’t forget him, but she was more interested in doing stuff with my mom, so he was left with his dad a lot...and babysitters.”

Rolling his eyes, Cash ignored me. “His parents just kept forgetting they had a kid and mine didn’t really want one hanging around all the time. I remember when we were in elementary school and they wanted to go on vacation. My parents sent me to visit my aunt, but his parents forgot to ask anyone to take him.”

I’d ended up having to stay with the neighbors for a week.

It’d been awkward because I’d been sent over with just my school backpack with some clothes stuffed in it.

But honestly, that’d been one of the better vacations my parents had taken.

“Some people just weren’t meant to have children.” I was really glad that Cash’s mom only wanted one kid, though. “But you took good care of me.”

He never forgot me and he’d made sure his mother reminded mine that I existed enough for me to have

lunch money and stuff. So it'd all worked out in the end.

Looking up at Bates again, I jerked my head toward Cash. "He's always been kind of bossy and dramatic. We just didn't know it was because he had a Dom side too."

I wasn't sure what we'd have done if we'd realized it back in high school.

I wasn't sure what we'd have done if we'd realized a lot of things back in high school.

Bates let out a breath, looking slightly confused, but that was reasonable since it was all nuts. "I don't know what to say but I'm glad you had each other, and I think most Doms don't realize what they are until a bit later anyway."

He was probably right. "Yeah, there's so much else going on in high school like schoolwork and sports and paying bills and buying groceries that kids just don't have time for domination and submission."

Bates blinked and looked odd for a second before nodding. "You're right. And I'm starting to understand how Cashel got to be such a good cook."

Cash sighed. "Yeah, I had a lot of practice."

"I tried to help." I made a face at Cash when he laughed. "I do dishes very well."

Nearly giggling, Cash gave me a quick kiss as he smiled at Bates. "He's too distracted in the kitchen. He starts making dinner and then ends up leaving it half done and making cupcakes instead and then he'll forget to put those in the oven and start doing laundry."

"One time. I did that one time." Well, I'd done that exact scenario one time. But the distracted thing happened more than once for some reason. "There are a lot of steps in cooking and you're better at managing things like that."

Bates almost managed not to laugh.

When he was done snickering, he gave us both more kisses as he smiled. "At least you didn't set anything on fire?"

"Yeah. I'm not Brady." I was just easily distracted.

"That's only because he never gets to the oven turned on part," Cash tattled, looking happy to have thrown me under the bus. "But he's right, he does clean very well."

"Too well." Frowning up at Bates again, I sighed. "You have to save me from being Bradied."

"Deal." A few more kisses later and Bates gave us both one big hug. "That's definitely a Dom job, and since Cashel doesn't want to be rude to Brady, I will."

Thank goodness.

We definitely needed someone in our family who didn't mind being just a tiny bit rude...being nice all the time was hard work.

Chapter 5

Cashel

If he got any more excited, he was going to pop.

Gareth had a lot of great qualities, but being subtle was not one of them, even when he was trying. "I had a lot of fun learning new things with you earlier, Sir."

The way he was cuddled up to Bates on the couch was one of the most obvious attention whore moments I'd ever seen and even Bates was trying not to laugh.

"You have so much to teach me...both of us really... it's very special." Gareth was playing it so over the top he even kissed Bates's cheek.

He was such a brat.

"You're even teaching Cash to be a wonderful Dom too." Curling up against the Dom he was trying to manipulate, Gareth made a happy sound that actually seemed genuine. "I bet you're going to show him the best way to spank me. He's smart and he likes learning too."

He was so ridiculous, Bates was going to end up spanking him just to reward the over-the-top manipulation.

Ugh.

He was going to get rewarded for it.

"He's going to learn to take care of you in a whole new way, isn't he?" Playing along, Bates looked so sincere it took me a minute to realize what he'd actually said.

I was going to learn how to spank Gareth?

Was that what he'd said?

No.

I was going to hold him and kiss his head and make sure he felt safe and secure.

That'd been the plan, right?

When they turned to me, both looking entirely too innocent for the conversation they'd been having, I realized I'd stopped in the middle of the room on the way over to join them on the couch. "I..."

They seemed to think I'd have some response but nothing reasonable was going to come out because the whole thing was ridiculous.

Bates's expression was bouncing back and forth between understanding and eager, and I knew he was just as excited as Gareth. For a moment, I was worried that he would ask me what I thought or make me decide it was time for Gareth's spanking.

Thankfully, he either realized that would be stupid or decided to save me from myself because he made a much better choice. "Let's go cuddle up in the bedroom instead."

Deciding himself was definitely the best way to handle the situation.

It saved me from a heart attack and made sure he was the focus of Gareth's nearly out-of-control excitement.

"I'm going to be very good for you while we cuddle and you don't have to do anything but cuddle if you don't want to." Gareth was rambling and going a thousand miles an hour as he tried to look sweet and innocent for Bates.

Somehow, he seemed to think that would help him get his spanking, but I wasn't sure what logic had led

him there...and I wasn't going to ask because he might actually answer.

"You've been very good all afternoon." Bates gave him a quick peck on the cheek, deliberately keeping everything innocent as he reached for my hand to include me in their ridiculousness. "You were wonderful and helped me clean up the kitchen after Cashel's delicious meal, and you were great about letting me know there was a problem when you were held hostage, and you were very good when you learned all about how the flogger felt on your nipples and your cock."

Good grief.

I couldn't decide if his list was sexy or insane, but the way Gareth was staring at Bates like he hung the moon said he thought it'd been romantic.

His love language was nonsensical praise.

"Thank you, Sir." Kissing Bates's cheek, Gareth turned that sappy smile on me. "I can't wait to learn with both my Doms."

Shoot.

My love language seemed to be just as stupid because something about that smile turned me into an idiot.

"That doesn't work on me." Glaring, I refused to admit that it did indeed work on me. "I'm not the one you should be trying to manipulate."

Bates laughed but played dumb as Gareth just grinned. "No one is getting manipulated. We're just going to go cuddle."

"Naked cuddling?" Gareth batted his eyelashes at Bates and rested his head on our silly Dom's shoulder. "One of us should be naked and I volunteer as tribute."

Ugh.

Bates nearly giggled. "Oh, you're so sweet, but should we make sure Cash doesn't have a problem seeing your penis?"

I hated both of them.

Gareth nodded, biting his lips to keep from laughing. "Maybe not? He said he wasn't scared of it, so we're supposed to take him at his word unless he safewords."

He learned lessons at the weirdest times...and at very convenient times too.

"That's very smart." Bates squeezed my hand as I groaned. "He's lucky to have both of us."

I was?

That actually got another romantic sigh from the big lug. "I know. And I'm lucky to have both of you."

I'd fallen into some kind of parallel reality.

That was the only thing that made sense.

The stupid spider at Christmas had bitten me and I was in a coma hallucinating or had developed weird mental powers because it was magic or radioactive.

"I'm lucky to have you both too." Bates took his time giving Gareth a soft kiss before turning to me and tugging me closer.

My kiss was gentle and slow, but as his tongue slipped between my lips and he started making love to my mouth, the tenderness took an erotic turn. I was moaning as he pulled away, rocking against him and Gareth.

Of course, Gareth thought the whole thing was romantic and sighed again with that fuzzy-looking smile. "You guys are so sweet."

He'd clearly lost his mind when the spider had invaded.

“And you’re so sweet too.” Bates managed to keep the kisses to a quick peck that time, but I think Gareth and I would’ve both pouted if he hadn’t stepped back and tugged us toward the bedroom. “Cuddles with my sweet boys.”

“Naked cuddles.” Gareth’s eyes twinkled with excited desire as he gladly followed Bates toward the bedroom.

I had to admit, at least to myself, that part of me was holding my breath and worrying, but I’d mostly worked past the fears that had kept popping up. Gareth trusted Bates. Bates was a good Dom. He’d protected us from Jude’s drama and had even promised to save Gareth from Brady.

Our Dom was patient and thoughtful, and he’d gone through endless lists with Gareth to make sure he knew what Gareth was curious about. He’d even figured out several ways to test Gareth’s pain tolerance in sexy ways that showed how much Gareth loved a slow-building kind of painful pleasure.

And he’d made sure I could see the flogging without Gareth noticing. By having Gareth close his eyes and making sure he was right where I could see him as I peeked around the door, he’d given them privacy and let me understand the connection they were building.

If either of them had actually wanted complete privacy they wouldn’t have done it while I was in the kitchen, but the illusion was good enough for me to test out how I felt about it in general. I hadn’t been jealous, but I’d been just as curious as Gareth usually was.

I’d mostly felt happy for both of them though and a kind of warmth I couldn’t describe.

They were...they were beautiful together but that didn’t take away from what I felt for both of them...not that I could describe that either.

But as Bates finally pulled us into the bedroom, all of the other random thoughts fell to the back of my head and our *cuddling time* was the only thing I could focus on.

I wasn't sure I'd describe a spanking and aftercare as just cuddling, but whatever made them happy.

"You know..." As Bates stopped us near the bed, I gave Gareth a skeptical-looking side-eye. "I should probably be the one to take off the naked cuddler's clothes...just so he knows I'm not scared of his penis."

The things they made me say.

Gareth's head was bouncing up and down like a Bobble Head doll, but Bates was trying not to laugh and barely managing to control himself as he shrugged. "I think that's a good idea. Just to make sure he knows."

Vibrating with excitement like his whole body would just explode any second, Gareth nodded and threw his hands up in the air. "I'm very helpful too."

I wasn't sure if he thought that would get him a better spanking, a stronger orgasm, or a faster one, but either way, he was going to make everyone insane if he didn't get an A+ level spanking before the night was over.

Bates had endless patience for the nut, though.

He just gave Gareth another kiss, nodding toward me to start taking off the lunatic's clothes. As I worked the shirt up Gareth's torso, Bates gave him little pecks and teasing smiles. "You're very helpful."

More kisses were given after the shirt popped over Gareth's head and his arms. "You're very curious."

Which was definitely one of Bates's favorite characteristics about Gareth.

"You're very sweet." Another kiss distracted them both and gave me the perfect opportunity to start

working off Gareth's pants so I could prove once again that I wasn't scared of a penis.

Gareth moaned as his dick hit the air and the rest of his clothes started sliding down his legs. He'd long ago lost his socks and shoes, so it was easy to get him naked. Bates seemed to appreciate that fact too.

He reached around Gareth and pulled me close so we had our needy boy sandwiched between us. The height issue was a bit of a problem because I couldn't lean over Gareth's shoulder and kiss Bates like I wanted without looking ridiculous, but there were lots of places to kiss and distract Gareth.

So I sprinkled kisses over his shoulders and back, and forced myself not to overthink the way I was rocking against him. It was almost the perfect angle for me to fuck him and I couldn't get the image out of my head... especially when he moaned and pushed his ass back against me.

I managed not to freeze when my dick ground against him and he spread his legs invitingly, but the idea that he'd want me to top him hadn't been something I'd actually entertained. He was Gareth...athletic and funny and had wide, sexy shoulders and a muscular back that made his ass look incredible.

"Kissing..." Gareth made no sense at all as he almost moaned out the word before he made a needy whine and got another kiss from Bates.

And from me.

Yep, I was clearly a sucker for the brat too.

Ignoring that we were basically rewarding bad behavior, I trailed my fingers along his side and focused on kissing him. That was what Gareth wanted and he was confidently expressing it. There was no reason to worry about giving him what he wanted.

Well, no reason at the moment.

Eventually, it was going to make the brat a needy pain in the ass, but I'd worry about that problem later. At the moment, I had enough on my plate to randomly pick up extra things to worry about.

How we were going from kissing to spanking being one of them.

But I'd clearly underestimated Bates because as our hands brushed against each other and he started kissing along Gareth's jaw, his wicked gaze met mine. "I love watching Cashel grind his cock into your ass. But a bit of color on those cheeks will make it even sexier...and it'll feel so good when he does it against your pink, sensitive ass."

Bates didn't even get to ask what Gareth thought or what he wanted before the nut nearly gave himself whiplash nodding. "Yes, I'm ready. I'll be good. Making my ass prettier is a great idea."

Lunatic.

Chuckling softly, Bates nodded like the rambling was perfectly reasonable and stepped back to sit down on the bed. We were both transfixed by the way he leaned back, stretching his legs out for Gareth, but I managed to keep kissing him and running my hands over him.

Everything I'd read online said that keeping him in the right headspace would be best and I didn't want to do anything to throw Gareth out of the frantic neediness that was firing through him. Making sure he enjoyed his spanking and that we gave him a safe place to submit was the most important thing.

Kissing high on Gareth's spine, I reminded myself again that he'd made it abundantly clear that he wanted my touch and slowly reached around to caress his chest. "Look at him. Bates is going to make you feel so good."

Slowly nodding now and not quite so frantic, Gareth took a deep breath. "Yes...and you heard that I liked the

pain earlier, so there's nothing for you to worry about."

Clearly, I hadn't hidden my fears as well as I'd hoped.

"You're going to love it. I heard how you moaned and how needy you were." Feeling brave, I pinched his nipples and felt a rush of relief fire through me as Gareth let out a hungry moan. "You were Master's little pain slut, weren't you? Hmm, you were moaning and whimpering and you were desperate for more."

He'd even sunk into subspace.

Bates had said with all the pleasure building up and knowing there wouldn't be any relief, he hadn't been surprised. But I had. I'd expected Gareth to at least beg to come and probably to orgasm without meaning to if it was that good.

But nope, it was so good his brain shut down.

Yeah, he was going to love his spanking because that didn't seem nearly as overwhelming as the flogger thing to his cock.

Gareth nodded, rocking his ass back into me again as he watched Bates hungrily. "I liked that you could hear me and I can't wait for you to have special time with Bates too."

Oh.

What kind of special time did he think we'd have?

Nope. I wasn't going to let us get distracted.

"Right now, it's special time for all three of us." Feeling a bit more confident with some of the irrational fears gone and just the reasonable ones left, I nibbled on his shoulder and went back to teasing his nipples.

Being short fucking sucked sometimes, but I made it work.

"Go stretch out over Sir's lap." That sounded slightly awkward but not enough to pull Gareth away from his

excitement. "I can't wait to see you like that."

And continue to prove over and over that I was not scared of his dick or any other parts of his body.

Chapter 6

Bates

Cashel's confident *I'm a good Dom* tone was so well done I didn't think Gareth could tell how fake it was. He'd even played with Gareth's nipples and hadn't freaked out at the way Gareth was grinding his ass against Cashel's cock.

The not-so-subtle *fuck me please* seemed completely unexpected to Cashel.

I wasn't sure if the *Gareth's a total bottom* thing was surprising or if it was something else, but our curious sub wasn't going to wait much longer to be used and put through the wringer, so I had a feeling it was something we needed to talk about during my date with Cashel.

Which was a very good idea and one I'd have to thank Gareth for pointing out.

But for the time being, I'd reward him in other ways.

"You're being so good." Gareth was surprisingly well-behaved and hadn't even thrown himself on the bed like I was pretty sure he was imagining. "I can't wait to make your ass all pink and sexy."

That had a shiver racing through his entire body and even Gareth's dick bobbed its approval. Gareth took a deep breath and kept up the slow, methodical movements as he climbed up on the bed. "Thank you, Sir."

It took so much effort he was nearly shaking as he knelt beside me on the bed and mumbled something about being polite. I wasn't sure if it was a Brady lecture

or something Brady's mother had said, but clearly, Gareth had taken the *be polite to your Dom* thing to heart.

As he waited and shook, studying my lap like he was afraid I'd jump off the bed any second and make a run for it, it took Cashel a few long seconds to realize he had to climb up too. Gareth might be getting the spanking but they were both worked up over the scene.

But as Cashel sat down in front of me, legs nestled beside mine, Gareth let out another breath. His relief at having us both there was obvious, and I thought made Cashel feel even more confident because he reached out and stroked a hand over Gareth's back. "You're going to love it and I can't wait to feel you stretched out over our laps."

The faint prompt was all it took to have Gareth stretching himself over our legs and pressing his face into the bed as he sighed. "That's just..."

Since his words were technically working and he seemed to have just gotten stuck on how to describe what he was feeling, I didn't worry and just slowly started caressing over his back and down his ass. Sighs and moans were not safewords.

Cashel realized that too and smiled as he followed my lead and ran his hands over Gareth, mostly focusing on his shoulders and his head. I had a feeling that playing with Gareth's hair was one of Cashel's favorite things because every time his fingers teased the longer bits on top, he'd smile softly to himself.

We kept it up with smiles and sighs going around the bed and Gareth gradually losing the frantic excitement until it seemed like he was relaxed enough for us to get started. I knew what a relaxed Gareth liked, but I wasn't sure enough about the excited, frantic one to start from that headspace.

It might've been me worrying too much, but it all felt like it'd come together perfectly when I brought my hand down for the first time and he reacted beautifully. His entire body went stiff and jerked but then he moaned and it was as soft as a sigh.

Even Cashel's shoulders relaxed and his tender smile came back as he stroked Gareth's head. "That's right. I knew you'd like it."

Clearly, Cashel could feel how much Gareth liked it as easily as I could. Gareth hadn't started fucking our legs yet, but his eager cock was already at attention.

Gareth moaned, giving a little wiggle and making Cashel chuckle. "Remember. I like learning."

That seemed to be a cue for me to keep going, so I gave his other cheek a gentle spank and worked on finding a good rhythm for him. The first taps were too light, but once I found just the right pressure that made him moan and wiggle, his hips started rocking up and down.

Even Cashel couldn't hide his desire as he watched Gareth sink into the pleasure. I could see it in his eyes and the way he touched Gareth, but the way Gareth would wiggle side to side and make happy sounds as he nudged my erection made it clear he could feel Cashel's as well.

I couldn't help smiling and waggling my eyebrows in a bit of a leer as Gareth let out another needy, pleased noise and it made Cashel huff. "He's a brat even when he's getting spanked."

The most adorable brat ever.

And the happiest.

In every sense of the word because he giggled and another spank turned it into a moan as he rocked his cock against us. "That's so...That's so..."

He seemed to just have the same thoughts running around in his head, but whatever they were, I wasn't worried. The awe in his tone was enough to make his desire obvious even though he still might've been confused about how the pain and pleasure felt so perfect together.

"I know, right?" Cashel leaned over and kissed his head as I kept up the slow, steady rhythm that was starting to bring a beautiful color to Gareth's ass.

We kept up the caresses and kisses and spanks until Gareth was lost in the sensations and grinding his dick against us. When I knew he was right on the edge, I nodded to Cashel. It was more about making sure he knew that Gareth was ready than giving him instructions, but he had a different view.

As I gave Gareth a few more spanks, easing off again, Cashel ran his hand up Gareth's thigh and trailed a finger between his cheeks and teased right over our needy boy's hole. I didn't know if it was the pleasure or if it was about Cashel's touch but it shattered our boy's control.

We kept teasing him as he cried out and shook, but eventually, he'd wrung every drop of pleasure he could get from his spanking and sank boneless into the bed. All we got were soft sounds as we gave him more loves.

"I think I get it now, but it might take a few more times to make sure." Gareth's cheeky words had Cashel rolling his eyes and barely holding back a laugh. "Sometimes you need to practice stuff to learn it really good."

The most adorable brat ever.

"I think that's a very smart decision." Leaning over, I kissed his head. "We'll have to go through everything step by step to make sure you've learned everything important about it."

Gareth giggled, pressing his face into the mattress as he nodded. "Yes, we'll be thorough."

Cashel was trying to look like we were the biggest dorks he'd ever seen, but I could see the laughter hiding in his eyes. "Your ass will only tolerate so much thoroughness in a short period so don't try to be an overachiever."

I was the one now trying not to laugh but Gareth didn't bother hiding it. He snickered, waving his sexy ass and turning his head to give Cashel a cheeky grin. "I think you could find other ways to keep it busy."

The teasing mention of Cashel's sexy exploration had the drama queen falling back on the bed and groaning.

It delighted Gareth to no end and helped him find a quick second wind. There might've been a quiet groan as he went up on all fours but that could've been because he was sticky. Either way, he squirmed around until he was crouched over Cashel. "You did such a good job. I'm so proud of you."

Gareth always had to do things his own way.

"You didn't get scared and you cuddled me just like you said you would, and you were right, Bates did great and made me understand." At that point, he paused and cocked his head. "Brady's kind of kinky, isn't he?"

Had he just realized that?

Had he thought being little was vanilla?

What had he been looking up online?

Cashel sighed, probably thinking the same things I'd been. "Yep, he's a dirty bird."

That set off the giggles in Gareth and he sounded like he was about five and just discovered naughty words. He was so silly, he collapsed back and looked up at me, our limbs all tangled together and Cashel now slightly squished. "You're so good at explaining things."

He was adorable.

And probably more tired than he realized.

“Thank you, baby.” Helping him move over so Cashel wasn’t completely stuck, I kissed his head. “How about we work on the cuddling part of our plan, now?”

As he nodded, Cashel got free and climbed off the bed. “I’ll get him a washcloth.”

That was a very good plan but my pants were already a mess so I quickly shoved them off and tossed them toward the laundry basket in the corner. My missing set off Gareth’s giggles again and he looked punch-drunk as he sighed. “That was so...”

He didn’t make it any further, so I just stroked his head and nodded. “How are you feeling? Physical or emotional or just anything.”

Touching base with him when he was so giggly wasn’t easy, but his smile said I didn’t have anything to worry about. “My ass aches, but it’s not like a hurt when you stub your toe. Bodies are so weird.”

He had a good point.

“Because our brain is where pain gets translated into signals and emotions get all mixed in it too. Your emotions changed it from being toe-stubbing pain to being orgasm-inducing pain.” Of course, Cashel had to come in as we were talking about toe stubbing and he rolled his eyes.

“I can’t leave you guys alone for a second.” Shaking his head, Cashel came over to the bed and actually managed to wipe off Gareth’s penis without squirming.

Gareth couldn’t seem to help himself, though.

Just as he opened his mouth, Cashel’s hand came up and he pointed at Gareth. “Don’t say it.”

Gareth shivered. "He's such a Dom when he does that."

Was that actually the reason he kept pushing Cashel's buttons?

Cashel threw up his hands and headed back to the bathroom, returning with less of a frown and without the washcloth. "I'm gone ten seconds and you're already talking about ridiculous things when we're supposed to be cuddling."

He gave Gareth another glare. "Because you're so tired you got the giggles."

Gareth found that to be hilarious and it earned him another eye roll from Cashel. "Sorry, Sir?"

Oh, that had Cashel's eyes going wide and he didn't know what to say.

So, grumbling it was.

"I'm dirty and have a sub with a pink ass. What do you think you should call me at this moment?" It was a wonderful way to say he had no idea what Gareth should call him.

Gareth was still beaming and actually sighed. "You're so cute."

I loved the way he saw life.

"Come here. I haven't gotten enough cuddles today." It was my turn to be dramatic but it was a wonderful distraction, and Cashel even quickly stripped off his pants before climbing up with us. "That's much better. I haven't been cuddled in hours."

That had both of them snickering but neither called me out on my bullshit, so I rewarded each of them with a kiss as they snuggled up on either side of me. "Perfect and I have Jude to thank because otherwise, I don't think you'd have slept over."

No pants late-night cuddles definitely meant no one was leaving, so I wasn't surprised when Gareth nodded and Cashel groaned.

Our sexy drama queen covered his face with his hands and shook his head. "I'm going to be doing the walk of shame in cum-covered pants. God, someone just needs to shoot me."

"Would you feel any better wearing some of Bates's clothes?" Gareth might've been trying to be legitimately helpful, but the image he put in our heads was so bad Cashel started groaning again.

"I think the size difference might make it more noticeable." They were right. Both of my boys needed a few things over at my place so Cashel wouldn't have to keep meeting the neighbors in his pajamas...or in this case...cum-covered pants.

"I could do some laundry?" I was serious but Cashel immediately shook his head.

"No, it'll be fine. The guy just smiles and waves now. He won't be shocked." Cashel was still in a huff about it, but I just saw it as our neighbors being helpful and nonjudgmental...besides, Cashel was sexy when he was in a snit.

"I'll go up and get you clothes in the morning if you make out with Bates." Gareth's slightly sleepy-sounding bribe had both Cashel and me going still, which Gareth didn't seem to notice as he yawned. "I...I want to watch and you haven't come."

Seemed like a fair trade to me, but I waited to see what Cashel would say to the adorable manipulation.

He snorted.

"You can't bribe people like that. It's rude." Cashel's offended tone made Gareth grin, looking even more tired somehow.

“No, it’s a trade. That’s polite. It’s like saying I’ll do your chores if you do mine.” He shrugged, ignoring Cashel’s sigh. “And I got spanked, so I should get whatever I want. I didn’t ask anyone to make me dessert or buy me new toys. I just want to see my boyfriends have...hmm...is it having sex if you’re just making out and orgasming?”

“Yes.”

“No.”

Our conflicting answers had Gareth giggling again and Cashel looked over at me curious. Shrugging, I explained my thoughts. “It’s about the intent and the connection. We have both of those, so it doesn’t matter if Tab A isn’t going into Slot B.”

Back to looking punch-drunk, my explanation made Gareth snicker. “I want Tab B going into Slot A and Tab A going into Slot C.”

I lost complete track of what he actually wanted to see and experience, but whatever Cashel thought he’d heard made him blush...and Gareth was back to giggling.

“No Tabs in Slots.” Cashel managed a cheeky response even though his face was still pink. “You’re a menace.”

No, he was just hoping for a good show and to push his boyfriends along a bit.

It was understandable but all I was willing to do at the moment was the show portion of his fantasies because I could make that happen without Tabs going into Slots.

“He’s still on a high.” I leaned over to Gareth and gave him a kiss, winking and hoping he’d know to behave. “But I think he’s right about one thing, I’m severely deficient in Cashel cuddles.”

That got an eye roll from Cashel but he didn't protest when I turned toward him and stretched out over him. We both ignored Gareth's pleased sigh. He was definitely happy he'd gotten at least part of his wish list but now was not the time to give him attention.

"Gareth got all your loves today." Pouting and making him fight off a smile, I sighed. "I didn't even get kisses for all the hard work I did spanking him."

That earned me another eye roll, but he wrapped his arms around me and sighed. "I guess you have a point."

So much sass.

"But...I didn't get nearly enough attention for slaving away in the kitchen." He was just looking for a reason to get a reward and confusion flashed over his face when I made a Gareth-level sigh because it was just so sweet.

"No one has ever cooked in my kitchen for me before." Giving him a quick peck as his eyes went wide, I shrugged. "Even when I was living on my own after my bachelor's, guys wanted to be taken out for dinner or for me to cook for them. No one ever took care of me like that before."

As Gareth made more awed sounds like we were the cutest thing he'd ever seen, Cashel licked his lips. "I liked taking care of you, but honestly, it just felt right."

"Everything feels right with you." As I gave him another kiss, I felt Gareth's toes stroke my leg, his silent way of making sure I knew he'd felt included too.

Making love to Cashel's mouth, I nibbled on his lips and stroked my tongue against his. I could've stayed like that all night but we'd both been hard for years at this point, and Gareth was going to start snoring at any second.

So when I pulled back, I kissed along his jaw and started working my way lower down his neck. Cashel

was making soft, needy sounds and Gareth had gone very quiet. He was a smart cookie when he wanted to be.

Cashel was so lost in the kisses and whatever was going through his head, that it took him a lot longer than I thought it would for him to realize my goal. It wasn't until I was nuzzling my way down his chest that something clicked in his head.

He sucked in a breath, sounding surprised, but his hips thrust up against my chest, begging for me to go faster. I decided to listen to his dick since his mouth hadn't safeworded and I stayed right on target as I ran my hands over his chest.

By the time I made my way down to his cock, it was achingly hard again and Cashel had spread his legs, begging wordlessly. His whimpers were sexy and utterly adorable but it was the way he was looking at me that was absolutely perfect.

Gareth might've been his best friend but Cashel looked at me like I hung the moon.

"You take such good care of me." Nuzzling over his still-covered erection, I took my time now that I was at the prize. "You made me dinner and helped me get the kitchen organized."

He'd made it his kitchen.

I wasn't sure he'd realized what he was doing, but he'd staked his claim and made it his.

"You made Gareth feel safe when he was submitting for his first spanking, and you made me feel confident about it because I knew you were there with us and watching his reactions." I wasn't a mind reader, so it'd made the whole thing easier to know that Cashel was watching our boy.

"You even agreed to another walk of shame just because you knew I liked having you stay over." We all

liked that, but putting it back on myself made him smile.
“You are very good to me.”

And I wanted to be very good to him and to Gareth.

So it was showtime.

I kissed right above his briefs and tugged down the sexy underwear until the elastic was under his balls. Cashel moaned even before I'd kissed his erection, so I knew it was just the sight that'd pushed him higher.
“You taste so good, my feisty boy.”

Gareth made a quiet snort as Cashel shook his head.
“I'm not—”

His protest was lost as I teased his slit with my tongue and then slowly sank over his cock to take him deep. I started off slow, but with every suck and lick, I worked his cock harder and pulled his orgasm closer.

Cashel whined and squirmed, and as I teased the tip of his dick with the back of my throat, his head arched back and he reached out for Gareth who was right there waiting for him.

Wearing the sweetest smile, Gareth inched closer until his head was nestled right next to Cashel. “You're both so beautiful...how you look at each other...just the way our Dom is taking care of you like you take care of us so perfectly.”

As we pushed Cashel higher, me with my lips and touch, and Gareth with his sweet words, Cashel shook and was right on the edge. We could both see it but Gareth was the one who made the decision to push Cashel right over it.

“Let me see you come.” He sweetly kissed Cashel's cheek. “Let me see how good you are together.”

Cashel's cry was the only warning I got as his orgasm barreled through him. In seconds, I was swallowing his cum and doing my best to keep the pleasure going as

long as I could. When he was boneless and his cock started to soften, I finally released his dick and started kissing my way up his chest again.

Gareth was breathing deeply and completely out of it by the time I got to Cashel's lips, so I was careful as I stretched out on his other side. "Thank you for letting me know earlier when you needed help."

He leaned his head against mine and let out a quiet laugh. "That was crazy."

"Agreed, I know you could've handled it, though, but you let me come and play with your family and that made me feel very special." It wasn't every day that I got invited to save the day.

He shook his head, barely holding back another laugh. "You're just as insane as Gareth."

And that was one of the reasons he liked me so much, so I took it as the high praise it was.

"Thank you, light switch." Giving him another kiss as he groaned, I snuggled close and wrapped my arms around my boys. "You give the best compliments."

And the best cuddles.

Chapter 7

Gareth

“And what are you allowed to do on your date?” I did my best impression of a very stubborn Jude when Cash rolled his eyes for the thousandth time.

He finally gave up being dramatic and repeated the right answer. “Anything we want to except Tab A going into Slot B because we’re going to do that together for the first time.”

Before I could tell him that I was proud of him for remembering, he glared so cutely. “I’m not repeating that again. I know you’re not jealous and I know I’m not having sex...well, full sex with Bates.”

But making him say it silly over and over kept him from squirming.

Cash couldn’t be embarrassed when he was frustrated. It was a fun fact that I was going to use until he realized what I was doing.

Which might not be until we were ancient at the rate he was going.

“Alright.” Shrugging and looking innocent, I sighed. “I was just being helpful because I want you to have a good date with Bates. I want it to go well.”

“That’s because you planned it.” For some reason, he kept glaring as he said it, but it made me want to jump up and down.

“I know. I can’t wait.” He was going to have so much fun.

“I’d have more fun if I knew what we were doing and why our date had to start on Saturday morning. Are you sure we’re not going to the art museum you talked about?” Crossing his arms over his chest, he frowned even cuter and sat down on his bed in a huff. “There is no way this is dinner and a movie or something like that.”

“Ugh, would I make that your first special date with our Dom?” When we were all old and gray, I wanted them to have a nice story to tell...like how great my first spanking was.

“I don’t know and that’s the problem.” Studying me like he thought he could see the answer on my face, he leaned forward, his inner Dom coming out. “You’ve probably picked something completely insane and have a really good justification for it.”

Yeah, that sounded like me.

“So what you’re saying is that I probably picked something fun and slightly out of the ordinary that you’re going to love but wouldn’t have done yourself?” He knew me so well. “That’s exactly what it is.”

It would’ve been the art museum but they were having some kind of private event. But my boyfriends were going to have so much fun and would bond so well that we’d be able to have full sex soon...and Cash would start to realize that Bates was it for us so he’d stop worrying too.

And he was a dork about space and Bates was a dork about a lot of things, so they’d have fun and I wouldn’t have to walk around another museum.

Cash was kind of a control freak about plans, which made sense with the whole light switch thing, but he was going to make himself nuts before he actually went on his date if I didn’t distract him. “I need a kiss before you go. I might even need several so I don’t pout.”

I was going to study while they were gone which was a terrible way to spend a Saturday but it couldn't be helped.

He huffed, but he stood up and came over to me without arguing or complaining, so I knew he wanted a kiss too. "You're high maintenance considering this is my date."

"What can I say?" I shrugged as I wrapped my arms around him and hugged him as I leaned against the bedroom door. "I like attention."

And having two boyfriends made getting it so much easier.

"I think you're just disgruntled because we didn't sleep over at Bates's last night." Cash had a group project meeting that had gone late and I'd promised Brady I'd watch the new Disney movie with him while Jude had been doing his own stupid project stuff.

So I'd babysat while everyone else worked.

"I'm not an attention whore." Cash scoffed but curled into me and rested his head on my chest. "I don't need to sleep at his place every night. We're dating, not living together."

I was pretty sure that was debatable, but Bates had said not to drive Cash too crazy, so I was going to try to be good.

It was painful, though.

"He likes having us there. He says it helps him not to worry and he needs lots of cuddles too to be happy." So that made it our job to be around enough to give him all the cuddles he needed. "We don't have a choice."

That got a snort from the dramatic cuddler I was currently holding, so I kissed his head since that seemed to be an agreement to me. "But Bates said when you get back later from your date, we'll do something together."

I was hoping that meant another spanking or giving him a blow job, but if he had a specific plan, he wasn't telling me.

"Do you know if he wants to do anything specific? Do I need to run any errands?" I was hoping I sounded innocent, but Cash's snicker said I hadn't gotten it quite right.

"Nope." He straightened, looking pleased with himself and very distracted. "There's nothing you need to do."

"You know what he's doing." Now it was my turn to glare since the sweet attempt hadn't worked. "That's not fair."

Cash laughed. "Now you know how I feel."

He was such a brat.

"No." Shrugging, I tried not to smirk. "Because I know Bates is going to do something fun and naughty with us and all you know is that you have a date."

His groan and the way he crashed his head into me said I'd won.

Yay.

But he still needed distractions, so I hugged him tight and wiggled him against me. "Now all I have to do is decide if I'm going to get you hard before you leave or if I'm going to blow you."

Cash laughed as he shook his head. "Neither, brat. I'm not going to lunch or the park or anything else crazy you thought of with an erection, and if you make me come now all I'm going to be thinking about is telling Bates what we did."

So?

"That'll probably make you hard again and you'll blush and squirm. I don't see a downside because that's

going to make Bates hard too. He likes it when you squirm." I was just being honest that time but Cash groaned and smacked my chest.

"Stop that."

Hmm...

Wiggling a hand between us before he could realize what I was going to do, I felt him up before he jumped back and huffed. "Yep, you're hard. So I already won."

Two for two.

"I'm pretty sure I heard Bates tell you not to make me insane." Crossing his arms over his chest, Cash huffed and glared so cute it made me hard too. "This is making me insane."

"I wouldn't have promised that." Not without Bates doing a big guilt trip.

Besides, I'd promised not to drive him crazy.

There was a difference.

I was working on the best way to make him nuts while I pointed that out when the doorbell went off. "Your date! This is so exciting."

They were going to have so much fun.

Grabbing Cash's hand, I opened the door and dragged him out of our bedroom and through the apartment. Brady popped his head out of his room, frowning like the site of Cash going on a date was weird.

It wasn't, but then again, Brady saw things differently sometimes.

"Cash is going on a date. Wave bye." I couldn't tell if Brady was big or not, but he waved, so maybe he was little?

Telling myself I'd figure it out later, I dragged Cash to the door and opened it up to see a smiling Bates waiting

patiently. "I have your date and I didn't drive him crazy."

"He just made me insane." Cash glared at me again as Bates tried not to laugh. "And those aren't two different things."

He was so smart.

And cute.

So I gave him a quick kiss before I gave Bates one too. "He's very excited for your date and very distracted."

Bates coughed, barely covering a laugh as Cash glared. "I'm glad you were able to keep him distracted. I wouldn't have wanted him to worry."

"He hasn't been." He might've been ready to kill me but he wasn't worried. "I was very helpful and you might want to think about my reward for later."

Bates frowned and tried to look confused as he turned to Cash. "I don't remember promising a reward."

"You didn't." The drama queen tried to frown at me too. "He's fishing."

They were ridiculous...I was just making sure they remembered how good I'd been.

"And don't forget that I planned a great date for you." Kissing Cash's cheek to make sure he remembered how cute I was, I beamed at Bates. "Have fun."

And at some point, I owed him a blow job for not making me go too.

The twinkle in his eyes said he was thinking the same thing, but he managed not to say it. "We will and thank you for helping me plan the date."

"You're welcome." I got quick kisses from both of them before I shooed them out the door so they wouldn't be late just in case there was traffic.

Once they were headed out to Bates's car, I leaned back against the door and sighed. "Keeping him distracted was hard work. I deserve a reward."

"I don't understand." Brady's head popped out of his room again and that time the rest of his body followed.

"You don't understand a reward?" That didn't sound right but I humored him. "I worked very hard at keeping Cash distracted so he wouldn't worry about his date and hard work should be rewarded. And since I can't give Bates a blow job at the moment, I'm going to have an early lunch of ice cream."

Wagging my finger, I frowned at him. "And you're not going to tattle on me."

He liked tattling a bit too much.

"No." Frowning, he sighed like Cash and came out to sit on the couch. He wasn't little but he was holding one of his stuffed animals so he was sending mixed signals. "I don't understand you being happy about sending Cash off on a date."

Oh.

That was confusing?

"I don't understand what you don't understand." I wasn't trying to be an asshole so I went over and sat down beside him. "Try to explain it to me again but use different words."

Because just giving me the same ones over and over wouldn't help...we'd done that song and dance before and it was just frustrating.

"Okay." Bringing his teddy bear up higher, he thought for a few seconds. "I don't understand why you're not worried or jealous or something like that. Your boyfriends went off without you. I don't like being left, and if Jude went out on a date with someone else, I would be very upset."

He'd probably toilet paper someone's car.

"Well, that would be Jude dating a stranger and you not being involved. You like being involved." Understatement of the year right there, but he nodded and looked less confused. "I was involved because I planned their date and I got to help Bates surprise Cash."

I wasn't sure if I was doing a good job of explaining it, but Brady turned and leaned against the side of the couch, resting his chin on his knees. "But you got left."

He seemed stuck on that part.

"Bates said that we're like a triangle and the internet said the same thing." I'd actually found threesome stuff that wasn't weird or creepy and it'd been educational. "If each side isn't strong then the whole thing collapses."

It made so much sense even Brady had to nod, so I kept going.

"My side with Cash is really strong. I know that won't break. But our sides with Bates are new so we have to work harder at those...like those extra supports they add when building stuff until everything is finished." We'd seen them building a lot of new stuff across the street so Brady's head bobbed up and down. "Eventually they'll be as strong as mine and Cash's, but we've got to be patient and have special time together to build it up."

Or our building would crash and no one wanted that.

"And according to people on the internet, the two people on a date can do stuff that the third doesn't like. So I sent Bates and Cash off to the NASA museum over by the coast." Space was supposed to be exciting, I knew that, but Cash would want to read every single sign and would talk about it all day long.

I loved him a lot but Bates could love him more when it came to museums.

“Oh.” Brady straightened and leaned back. “You can do that? Like if you don’t want to watch a movie but Cash does then Bates could take him and you wouldn’t have to feel guilty?”

“Yeah.” I wasn’t sure why more people didn’t have relationships like it. “And if he wants food that I don’t think sounds good then Bates can take him.”

There weren’t enough blow jobs in the world to make eating raw fish worth it.

“Oh, that’s...” Brady cocked his head. “You should’ve explained that first.”

I thought that’d been obvious.

“There are a lot of benefits. What if I want to suck on a dick but Cash is busy? Well, there’s always a spare lying around now.” I shrugged as Brady’s mouth fell open. “I know. And there’s always someone to give me attention or to do stuff with or to cuddle. There are even more people around to divide chores.”

There were endless benefits and it looked like Brady hadn’t thought of any of them.

Well, it seemed like I’d figured out something else to do besides studying...educating Brady.

Chapter 8

Cashel

“Do I want to know why your phone is exploding or are we just going to ignore it?” Bates was trying not to laugh, but his grin made it clear he was finding the whole thing funny.

“Ignore it...in one second.” Shooting a quick text to tell Gareth that Brady was driving me insane, I quickly put it in a private mode where only Gareth’s messages would come through. He knew better than to drive me nuts by sending me a thousand texts in a row.

Brady didn’t.

“Okay.” Letting out a breath, I shoved my phone back in my pocket. “All yours.”

Bates finally chuckled. “I should’ve known our date wouldn’t be traditional.”

Our day at the Air and Space Center had been amazing and anything but traditional. But I’d been hoping the rest of it would go smoothly...I should’ve crossed my fingers or knocked on wood.

I tried not to roll my eyes but they had a mind of their own. “I should’ve known better than to leave Gareth and Brady alone without supervision.”

“What did they do?” Bates reached out and grabbed his water, taking a sip as I sighed. “Come on. Your phone has been going off like crazy for the last twenty minutes.”

It was ridiculous.

“First of all, Brady made sure I knew he’d waited and waited before texting me.” That had Bates snickering. “I know. But evidently, after we left, Brady asked Gareth why he wasn’t jealous.”

It might’ve been more convoluted than that, but it seemed to be what it boiled down to.

Bates pinched his lips together and nodded. “That must’ve been an interesting conversation.”

Oh yeah.

“Gareth was helpful, but now Brady wants to know all kinds of things.” But he would have to wait or I’d sic his mother on him. “But he’s going to be patient while we enjoy the rest of our date.”

Or day together?

At the very least, he was going to wait while we enjoyed an early dinner. Bates had picked a great little seafood restaurant, probably with Gareth’s help, and I wasn’t going to let Brady ruin it.

“I’ve certainly enjoyed it so far.” Bates reached across the small table and took my hand. “But I have to admit to being very curious...and I can’t help wondering what Jude will think of the questions too.”

“Ugh.” That sounded stressful. “You can deal with him. I’ll take Brady and I’ll make sure Gareth knows to watch him better.”

For some reason that made Bates laugh and shake his head. “You guys are great.”

I was pretty sure that was a polite way of saying we were insane, so I just ignored it. “Alright, before we were interrupted you had a question?”

I just couldn’t remember what we’d been talking about that led up to it. Brady was distracting as hell and he’d scrambled my brains.

But my reminder had Bates going quiet and he looked down at our hands. "I was actually going to ask about Gareth's past since he's not here, but now I'm wondering if that would be inappropriate."

He seemed to forget who he wanted to discuss.

"It's Gareth we're talking about. His level of inappropriate would be something completely insane. Me telling you about his past wouldn't even begin to approach that level." He wouldn't even understand why it was an issue. He'd made it clear Bates was family and that was it in his mind.

As Bates laughed, looking less worried, I shrugged and tried to explain. "Besides, he'd say that you're family and wouldn't understand why you shouldn't ask about something you were curious about."

Gareth just might not understand how to explain growing up with parents who kept forgetting he existed.

"Then he'd try and bribe me with a...reward." Bates's leering grin said he was thinking something wicked. "Okay, I won't get stressed over it."

Glad I could make the nosy Dom happy, I had to laugh even though the subject wasn't very pleasant in itself. "Good, Gareth wouldn't want you to get stressed if he wasn't here to fix it for you."

That got another wicked laugh from Bates before he settled back in his seat, barely caressing the tips of my fingers. "You took care of him a lot, didn't you?"

It wasn't where I thought he'd start, but I nodded. "Yeah, my mom wasn't as bad as his but neither of them really wanted to be parents. It was more about playing house and his mother just seemed to be the type to put her doll down and walk off."

Bates winced. "That's..."

As bad as he was imagining.

“One of my earliest memories is Gareth coming over to play and him saying his mom had left him alone. We weren’t even in kindergarten yet.” I had a vague memory of her running errands but it might not have been connected. “She and my mom wanted to do everything together, so she’d gotten pregnant too. She just didn’t know what to do with him after he was born. So my dad raised us like brothers.”

I couldn’t give him a lot of credit because he’d checked out once we were old enough to take care of ourselves, but that seemed to be more about the issues in his marriage than us. “And I took care of Gareth and he took care of me. He describes it as me being the parent, but it wasn’t like that. If I had problems with homework or something like that he’d help, and if he needed help, I was there.”

It’d all worked out in the end.

“And so when college came around you did that together too.” Bates hadn’t actually asked a question, but I nodded.

“Yeah, however, a big part of that was because we both got scholarships here.” I was pretty sure our essays had something to do with it, but I wasn’t going to apologize for telling the truth. “It made sense to go together even if Gareth hadn’t been adamant that we weren’t going to be separated.”

Trying to sound a bit less weird, I kept going. “We had a therapist our freshman year who was worried we were codependent, but she’d mostly decided we were just weird.” She’d dressed it up nicer but that was what it’d boiled down to. “Gareth couldn’t figure out why she was so worried, and eventually I just stopped making him go.”

I wasn’t sure it was the right decision but she’d been trying to give him issues where he didn’t have any, and missing the ones I thought he had.

“You made him go to begin with, didn’t you?” Bates didn’t seem surprised when I nodded, giving me a slightly bemused smile. “Why?”

“Um, well, I’d started taking a psychology class and realized how fucked up we could’ve been.” Even after a few years, I couldn’t decide if it’d been the right decision or not. “People always say to get therapy for your shit and ours seemed like it was piled up around us, but she just confused Gareth, and I didn’t like that she wanted to push us apart.”

As his eyes widened, I nodded. “We might be codependent on each other but I’m not bad for him.”

That sentence sounded weird, but it had Bates shaking his head. “No, I don’t think that describes your relationship at all.”

Settling into a thinking expression, he sighed and looked like he wanted to keep the headshaking going. “You’re family. Yes, you kept him sane and happy and probably fed, but you didn’t stop him from living his life. You supported him when he was dating stupid people, and nothing I’ve seen says you’ve been controlling his life.”

Yeah, I’d even supported his football passion in high school and hadn’t made him quit even when I’d realized how dangerous it was.

“Well, I control the groceries or he comes home with weird stuff, but when he wanted to be a history professor, I didn’t try to stop him.” I still wasn’t sure it was a completely logical goal, but with my finance degree, I knew I could support us if it came down to that.

Thankfully, when my mother had been in her *doting on the babies* phase, she’d made both families set up college funds. It’d been trendy or something in their women’s group, which I was very grateful for because

Gareth and I were both pretty well set even if he wanted to get his master's.

Bates chuckled, finally giving me a happy smile again. "I think between that and the mythology minor, it explains a lot."

I was pretty sure Gareth just saw the world a little differently, but as crappy as his parents were, I thought he had a lot of fun to make up for.

"We're probably odd but it doesn't seem to hurt anything and he's happy." And I was a lot less stressed lately, so I was happy too. "But sometimes I worry that I should've pushed him to stay in therapy."

I felt better when Bates snorted. "No. She doesn't sound like she understood either of you at all. I would tell you if I thought he needed therapy or if I thought he wasn't capable of making decisions. He is. He just knows when you do it better."

Bates grinned when I rolled my eyes. "Like keeping the family budget in order and picking out dinner. Every family member has different strengths."

And Gareth felt loved when I did things for him.

"He can go grocery shopping on his own for the most part or with Brady's mom, and he helps me set up the budget and we pick out recipes together. He's a functional adult. Just not a dominant one." Or always a logical one.

Bates must've been thinking the same thing by the way he grinned, but he nodded and didn't get distracted by whatever randomness floated through his head. "I agree...and you've had to take care of Brady."

"Yeah, that felt like a project sometimes." I shrugged as Bates started snickering. "As cranky as Jude is, I was really glad when Brady fell in love with a functional Daddy who could handle him and his family. Jude's nuts, but he's the right kind of nuts for Brady."

I just wished he was a bit less *intense* when it came to me and Gareth.

“Jude is a...he’s a natural worrier.” Bates’s understatement had me trying not to laugh. “But he’ll get used to the changes sooner or later. We’ve got the seal of approval from the big boss, so I’m not worried.”

Brady’s mom.

She’d liked Bates and that’d been obvious to everyone.

Chuckling, I nodded and thought about my phone. “And hopefully by all the weird text messages I got from Brady, he’s finally stopped worrying and has moved on to the inappropriately curious phase.”

Bates cocked his head. “I’m not sure if I should wish you luck on that or not.”

“Ugh. I’m going to need more than luck. I have no idea how I’m going to answer his questions.” Or even what was appropriate to answer. “And...I’m going to need to know your Brady limits.”

When all I got was confusion from Bates, I sighed. “You know...the what can I tell Brady and what do I just tell him to mind his own business on?”

“Ah.” Bates scrunched up his face. “I hadn’t thought of that.”

He should have.

“Definitely a strategic error.” Mostly seeming to be talking to himself, I just waited while he made thinking sounds and shifted in his seat again. “Okay, I don’t think I know enough to have good limits on this. So I’m going to use yours and let you know if that changes. If you don’t want to talk about it, then tell him that.”

This could get interesting.

“You’re sure? I don’t know exactly what he’s curious about but this is Brady.” An unsupervised Brady. “He’s

probably been looking shit up online.”

I wasn't going to downplay the chaos I could be walking into.

Bates sat straighter and looked like a soldier going into battle. “No, I'm brave. I can handle it.”

He was such a drama queen.

“Alright, but you were warned.” Now it was my turn to lean back and study him. “And I think there's something you should be warning *me* about. Gareth said you have a surprise for him and I had to look like I knew what he was talking about.”

Bates laughed, not looking apologetic in the slightest. “I'm sorry. The rest of the puppy gear came in yesterday and I was teasing him about it. I meant to tell you, but I got distracted planning our date.”

Alright, I could forgive that because they'd planned a wonderful day for us.

“You want to do his first scene as a pup tonight?” We were tucked away in the corner by a window with a beautiful water view, so I wasn't worried about being overheard.

“Is that alright with you?” Bates seemed to be questioning something, but I wasn't sure what he was worrying about. “I probably shouldn't have made the decision without you.”

Oh.

Because I was going to be the puppy Dom.

Handler.

Yes, Handler.

“I'm not offended or anything, if that's what you're thinking.” It must've been because just that simple statement had him looking more relaxed. “I honestly

expected you to be the one to make that call, so it never occurred to me to talk to you about it.”

And that had the confused face coming back.

“Um, I kind of see you as the higher Dom and me as the lower one. Dom 2.0?” How was I supposed to say that?

As he started snickering, I glared at him. “I don’t even know how to look that up online. What do I call myself? I have no desire to be the primary Dom and Gareth doesn’t expect it. You’re the head Dom.”

He managed to stop laughing but the effort had him shaking and he had to bite his lips to keep the giggles from escaping. After a few moments, he managed to take a breath, but it was a lot of work. “That sounds like we’re in some kind of dirty version of Harry Potter. Head Dom.”

And the giggles came back.

He was ridiculous.

And kind of adorable when he was a dork.

“When you’re done.” Waving my hand, I just let him shake and giggle for a few more seconds. “Still waiting.”

For some reason that just made his control even more precarious and the quiet laughter continued.

Utterly ridiculous...and also one of the reasons that he fit in with us so well.

“Sorry.” He didn’t look apologetic, but I pretended to believe him. “You’re just so perfect when you get all huffy and Dommy. I love it.”

Ugh.

That did not help my glare go away and it brought his giggles back.

He was lucky he'd taken me out on a fabulous date and had let me read everything I'd wanted. The karma points he'd built up would get him through at least one more round of giggles, but at some point, he had to behave so we could figure out the plan for later.

Because I might be the Handler but Bates needed to realize he was the one pulling the strings for the first scene. This wasn't something I was going to fuck up so Dom One needed to give Dom Two some instructions.

Ugh.

Now we sounded like something from Doctor Seuss.

It was going to be a long afternoon.

Chapter 9

Bates

“You’re back.” Gareth was nearly bouncing as Cashel walked into their apartment, but he didn’t throw himself at us like I could see he wanted to. “Is your date over? Brady said I shouldn’t kiss you guys until your date is over so I wouldn’t interfere.”

Oh, that wasn’t...

“We’re not taking relationship advice from Brady.” Cashel didn’t even look around to see if Brady was there or not, he just charged right into fixing the situation. “He means well but he’s not in the same kind of relationship.”

“That’s good. I wasn’t sure I could follow the rules he thought would make things easier in the long run.” Gareth’s beaming smile just got wider as he bounced over, hugging and kissing me and then Cashel. “That’s so much better.”

Cashel was right.

Someone needed to watch Brady closer.

“It is.” Giving both of my boys a quick kiss, I pulled them close so I could snuggle them while we figured out what Gareth thought of the plan. “This is also wonderful too.”

Cashel chuckled as Gareth nodded and made a happy sigh, resting his head on my shoulder so he could look cute as he peeked over at Cashel. “Did he like the idea? He did, didn’t he? I didn’t pester him all day long so I don’t know how much he loved it.”

As Cashel snorted, I tried not to laugh too much. “Well, Brady was the one pestering all afternoon. But yes, Cashel loved it and we had a wonderful time. He even loved the restaurant you helped me pick out.”

Wiggling excitedly and radiating pride, it took Gareth a moment to go still. “Wait. Brady bothered you?”

He sat up, studying us for a few seconds. “That’s why you told me to keep him occupied. But he was already with Jude, so I didn’t know what you were talking about.”

And that cleared up a few more things.

“He’s been texting all afternoon asking odd questions about our relationship with Bates.” Frowning, Cashel didn’t mind tattling on Brady. “He’s been a pain in the ass.”

“Sorry?” Gareth didn’t seem to know what to say. “I answered his questions and then he gave me advice that I wasn’t sure was helpful and then Jude came to get him for lunch. His Daddy was responsible for him after that.”

I tried not to laugh as Gareth made it sound like he’d been babysitting Brady.

“I’m not telling Jude to watch Brady better.” Cashel’s statement had Gareth making a face and shaking his head.

“No, it’s not worth the drama if we do it.” Gareth gave a wonderfully manipulative smile as he cuddled back into me. “But Bates can. They expect him to give firm boundaries because he’s a Dom and we haven’t told them you’re one too.”

“Because that’s private?” I wasn’t sure I’d guessed right, so I wasn’t surprised when I got headshakes from both of them.

“Because it’s confusing.” Cashel’s answer didn’t clear up much.

Gareth shrugged, not seeming to have the same logic. "He's not out of the closet on that...I think there's a closet for that. Right?"

Cashel went still. "Well, I guess there might be a closet, but it doesn't seem like something other people needed to know. Brady said stuff like that can be very private...and I didn't want to confuse him or argue with him."

So it would be confusing to Brady?

I could buy that logic.

So could Gareth. "Oh, yeah, he's never mentioned light switches before. What if he doesn't know you can go up and down?"

Cashel snorted, but for the most part, ignored the silly light comment. "I don't know what he knows and it just felt like the conversation would get a bit mixed up."

He probably wasn't wrong.

"I think we can come up with a good way to explain the situation to Brady, but we'll push that down the road a bit. For now, I can think of something else more fun we should be discussing." My teasing had Gareth nearly shaking with excitement and left Cashel trying not to laugh.

"My surprise." Gareth straightened, wiggling and looking like he was going to explode any second. "I was so good today. I helped plan a great date and I was patient and I did my chores and Cash's so we didn't have to hang around here and we could go back to your place for a sleepover."

His utter confidence that he was spending the night was adorable but it had Cash sighing. "You're supposed to ask, not just assume."

Gareth snorted, giving Cashel a look that said he thought he was being ridiculous. "He's my Dom and my

boyfriend and he takes care of me too. Of course, he wants me to sleep over.”

Confidence was so sexy.

Before Cashel could try to inject his own version of logic into the situation, I gave both of them quick kisses. “And clothes. We keep forgetting. No more walk of shames for Cashel.”

That got a groan from my dramatic boy but a bouncing nod from Gareth. “I remembered. Well, something Brady said made me remember but I have everything ready and I went and grabbed extra toothbrushes and phone cords for your apartment, so we’ll be all set.”

Cashel didn’t seem to know what to say but I didn’t have the same problem, so I gave my excited boy a kiss. “That’s wonderful planning. Now Cashel won’t be embarrassed and I won’t feel bad about having forgotten it again.”

In my defense, I’d never dated anyone that wanted to leave stuff at my place so I never thought about it until after we were mostly naked or already orgasmed and were in bed. It probably made me a bad Dom, but everything was different with them.

Cashel made a stressed sound and shook his head. “If it’s anyone’s fault, it’s mine. I’m the one who’s frustrated by it.”

Gareth didn’t seem to like everyone’s worries, so he distracted us both with cheek kisses. “Now no one has to worry or apologize and I even picked out your sexy underwear and not the worn-out ones.”

Cashel’s face went through several different colors of red before he settled on a cherry color and huffed. “Thank you.”

Laughing probably would’ve made his embarrassment worse, so I was the one distracting

everyone that time. “How are we getting your stuff downstairs? Suitcase? Carry it and confuse the neighbors?”

“Oh—” Gareth’s eyes lit up, but Cashel cut him off.

“Whatever you are thinking, the answer is no.” Glaring adorably, Cashel shook his head. “Duffel bag or something like that. We’re not moving or trying to become the talk of the building again.”

So I shouldn’t tell him that I’d been asked three times this week how things were going and if they’d gotten over the trauma of the spider?

“Fine.” Rolling his eyes, Gareth let out a dramatic sigh. “I’ll be boring.”

I managed not to laugh as Cashel gave him another glare and headed back to the bedroom to double-check Gareth’s work. Gareth waited until Cashel was out of sight and then perked right up, whispering softly as he grinned. “I was going to wrap it all up in trash bags like it was a dead body.”

Yep, we’d have been the talk of the building again... and probably the police station too.

“I’m not sure Cashel would let us do that, but it would get a good reaction.” And their walk of shame wouldn’t be the first thing anyone thought about any longer.

“It would.” The pout came back as he sighed again. “But Jude would probably kill us because everyone would think we’d killed Brady for doing something ridiculous.”

Probably.

“He’s not the type to want to be the talk of the building either.” He was slightly obsessive about keeping to himself, actually.

“Yeah.” Gareth’s pout didn’t last long and he smiled again. “We’ll find another way of driving him crazy.”

Because it was fun?

Revenge?

“Has everything been going good with him this week?” Most of the obsessive worrying seemed to have stopped, so I was glad when Gareth nodded.

“Yep, no weird lectures and only a few glares.” Gareth’s explanation had me wondering if I should laugh or have another talk with Jude.

“That’s good.” Keeping that mental debate on the backburner for the time being, I took Gareth’s hand and started leading him back toward the bedroom so we could check on a suspiciously quiet Cashel. “I think you guys not coming back home in pajamas or the clothes you were in the night before will help.”

And not coming back in my clothes would probably help too.

“You’re probably right but he worries about *everything* so I’m not sure.” Gareth shrugged like he just didn’t understand Jude. “Yesterday he was worrying about us being too quiet or something.”

Gareth didn’t always translate Jude-isms well so I wasn’t sure what he actually meant as we headed into the bedroom...but at that point, I lost all train of thought, so it didn’t matter.

Cashel was staring at the beds that were stacked neatly with clothes...lots of clothes. He finally looked over at Gareth who was smiling, obviously very pleased with himself. “This isn’t going to fit in the duffel bag.”

It would, however, have made a wonderful dead body.

Gareth looked between the beds, his head cocked slightly giving him a thoughtful expression. “Maybe we

could make a few trips?"

I knew he wasn't trying to move in because the closet was cracked open enough for me to see the rest of their clothes, but hearing his logic was going to be so much fun I just waited to see what would happen next.

"What did you pack?" Cashel finally stepped over toward his bed, studying his stacks before reaching out and leafing through what seemed to be his favorite pajamas and T-shirts, if I was remembering correctly.

"A bit of everything." Gareth shrugged and seemed to think that should've been obvious. "Enough pajamas to make sure you don't have to sleep in anything sticky just in case and clothes for now that it's still kind of chilly but then stuff for when it gets warm again."

Frowning, he studied the piles. "If it took us this long to grab clothes, I figured we should make sure we're taking what we'll need for the rest of the year too."

He wasn't wrong.

But I loved how confident he was about the trajectory of our relationship.

"And as long as we keep things folded neatly, it'll fit in Bates's dresser." He nodded decisively. "I measured."

That did not surprise me, but it did make me question when he'd done his measuring.

"The dresser is a lot emptier than the closet." My response didn't help Cashel's confusion but it pleased Gareth.

"You like hanging things up, so I left most of the fancier stuff here that Cash said I need for interviews and stuff like that. I even folded the jeans so they'll fit neatly in your drawers." Gareth looked so confident I had a feeling he'd taken very good notes about my storage options.

“That’s wonderful.” And adorable. “And if we need to make more space, they make a lot of under-the-bed storage options now. I looked at a few but haven’t bought any yet because I wasn’t sure what you needed.”

And I hadn’t wanted to appear pushy, but it seemed like that hadn’t been an issue I should’ve been worrying about.

Cashel was shaking his head like he wasn’t sure how we’d gotten to this point, but Gareth was ignoring it and smiled even wider at me. “We can plan that for phase two. I don’t think we’ll need anything now unless Cash wants to bring more than I planned for.”

Turning to his confused boyfriend, Gareth was back to being helpful and curious, without actually explaining what phase two meant. “Do you think you’ll need anything else?”

Cashel simply shook his head like he’d given up and just accepted being railroaded. “Um, I think the suitcase is the best idea?”

Well, it was certainly less controversial than the dead body approach.

And it got everything down to my apartment in one trip.

Gareth spent enough time mumbling about his idea being funny and practical that Cashel was about ready to kill him, but Cashel was smart and never asked what the idea entailed.

Yep, he was definitely brilliant.

He also caught the way Gareth was studying every inch of the dresser and then even poked his head under the bed. “What the hell are you doing? We’re not moving in.”

“Yet.” Gareth helping Cashel finish his sentence didn’t make Cashel any less insane. “I’m looking for my

surprise. I'm starting to think it's in the kitchen, though, or maybe it's something ethereal like a blow job."

"That word does not mean what you think it does." Huffing, Cashel glared at the cute nut as he wiggled his way back out from underneath the bed. "And do you think he'll give you your surprise, no matter what it is, if you're acting insane?"

"Yes." Gareth sat down on the floor, looking up at both of us like Cash was insane. "I wasn't rude."

His answer made me wonder if Brady's mother realized the long-lasting effects of her lectures.

Cashel changed tactics to get what he wanted. Sanity. "What if you'd found it and ruined the surprise?"

And Gareth deflated like a popped balloon. "That wouldn't be very polite."

"That's right." Cashel must've felt a bit bad about taking away Gareth's fun because he sighed. "Come help me finish getting everything put away and if you're very good, you might talk Bates into telling you about his surprise, or at the very least, he'll let you give him a blow job."

My life was delightfully fascinating.

Gareth's eyes widened excitedly, giving him a very good puppy expression. "I've been very good."

Cashel just rolled his eyes.

Gareth didn't care, though. He bounced up off the floor and threw himself at me as Cashel finished emptying out the suitcase. "And I didn't find anything to ruin the surprise."

I almost managed not to laugh.

Almost.

Cashel glared at me but I just took a page from Gareth's playbook and smiled and pretended I hadn't

noticed. "You didn't. But I'm so excited to see your reaction that I think a kiss might get it out of me."

Gareth was wonderfully eager to test that theory and gave me a long, heated kiss with lots of moans and puppyish wiggles. When he finally pulled away, he was hard and rubbing his dick against mine, while somehow still wearing a delightfully innocent expression. "I like kissing you even if I don't get my surprise."

Aww.

We both had to ignore Cashel's snort but it was still a very tender moment. "Because you're the sweetest sub ever and you're going to be the cutest pup ever too."

It only took about two seconds for his eyes to go so wide he looked like a cartoon character. "Really? My puppy costume came in? I'm going to get to play pretend? I'm going to look so cute and Cash isn't afraid of my dick anymore, so that's going to make it even better."

As Cash crashed face-first into the bed, groaning, Gareth kissed my cheek. "I'm going to be the best puppy ever and have so much fun wagging my tail that you'll want to watch me over and over. So my costume is actually a very good investment too."

Gareth logic was the best logic hands down.

"You're going to be the cutest and happiest pup ever."

There was no doubt about it...and we'd get started as soon as Cashel decided he was done being dramatic.

Chapter 10

Gareth

“That’s cheating.” Bates had hidden it in the kitchen?
“It has to be cheating.”

I’d have never found it above the fridge. I didn’t even know that cabinet actually opened. I’d thought it was like the pretend drawer under the sink. “That opens?”

It did.

For some reason, Bates was nearly giggling as he opened the cabinet and removed a small duffel bag like the one Cash had somehow thought would fit all our clothes for Bates’s place. “Yes, that opens.”

As he brought the bag down and set it on the counter, he frowned curiously at both of us. “You guys do so much cooking, how can you not use that cabinet? There isn’t really anywhere else to put a stock pot or something big like that.”

Cash must’ve found the whole thing embarrassing because his face went fiery red and he started groaning again. But I didn’t know what we were supposed to be embarrassed about. “What’s wrong with the cabinet? Is putting stuff in there dirty?”

Bates was still smiling but it looked almost like he was watching a TV show and found it hilarious. “No, nothing’s dirty. Cashel just can’t reach it.”

Oh.

“That explains it then. He doesn’t like being reminded that he’s short. But he’s taller than his mother, so he’s actually lucky. He could’ve ended up even

smaller." My mother had always been jealous of how tiny Cash's mother was, but I thought that was stupid.

She couldn't reach so many cabinets in their house, they had to hire a housekeeper when Cash moved out.

"I'll put stuff up there if you need me too, Cash." Wait. "Is that why we have big pots under the sink and the kitchen cleaning stuff in the bathroom?"

Cash sighed but nodded. "Brady can't reach it either."

Did that matter?

"I can, so you just get bossy and Dommy and tell me when to get it in and out." Yes, we could make this a game where he got to let his Dom side out. "If I do a good job, you can blow me or you can let me blow you."

That did not help his color go back to normal, but for some reason, it got me a kiss from Bates. "I think that's a great idea, pup."

Oh yes, I was going to be their pup.

"We'll figure out blow jobs later." We had more important things to figure out...tails. "I'm ready."

Wait.

"No, I'm green." Yes, that meant I was ready because yes could mean no and no could mean yes. "Green."

Bates was almost back to giggling but it seemed to be because he was so excited too. "I'm so glad you're green, pup. I'm green too."

"Because Doms and lights need safewords too." Even Brady said that was important.

"That's right." Bates gave me another soft kiss. "Anyone can get overwhelmed or worried in a scene."

Dropping my voice, I tried to whisper but I wasn't sure it would work. "Do you think the Dom side of Cash knows that?"

His groan said he did, but I was glad when Bates nodded. "Yes, he and I have had that discussion."

"Great. Because I want us all to have fun and to be happy." And Cash liked to worry.

He was really good at it.

"Because you're a sweet sub and a very loving boyfriend." Bates gave me another kiss, that time on my forehead, because he was so loving too.

"So is Cash." He needed a kiss too.

Bates was smart and knew Cash needed a kiss. "He is."

Pulling me close to one side, Bates snuggled Cash on the other and kissed his head, telling him how wonderful he was as Cash grumbled under his breath. "You are very sweet and a loving boyfriend too."

"Very loving." We couldn't forget that.

"Very loving." Bates was wearing an ear-to-ear kind of grin and seemed very excited at how loving we all were.

It was probably because he loved us a lot, but he didn't let us get distracted.

"Time for our pup to play." Bates gave us both more forehead kisses and a hug before he was ready for me to go play, though. "Playtime."

Yes.

Nodding, I grabbed their hands. "Now can I see my gear?"

It'd come in a thousand different boxes and pieces and we'd been waiting on the last box for days and days. Bates had wanted me to wait and see all of it at once but it'd taken so much patience. "I thought the box wasn't supposed to get here until next week."

It'd seemed like the universe, or the delivery people, had been fighting against me getting my tail but we'd won whatever karmic battle had been playing out behind the scenes.

Bates shrugged. "Yes, you can see it now and it came in yesterday. The tracking website still shows it being stuck somewhere up north, though, so I have no idea how it got here."

Magic.

"I'm going to be such a cute pup." Dragging them out of the kitchen, I stopped. "Where do we do it?"

Bates chuckled but squeezed my hand. "The living room has more space for you to play and I think those blinds close tightly enough that with the curtains it'll protect our privacy."

Turning toward the window, I frowned. "Did you always have curtains?"

As I tried to remember what his living room had looked like the last time we'd been over, Cash shook his head. "No."

Bates was back to almost laughing. "No, I put them up earlier in the week because I wanted to make sure we had enough privacy for you to run around."

"And for all the blow jobs we end up having in here." Cash's response had me and Bates both nodding.

"Yeah, that's a good point. The neighbors probably wouldn't mind watching, but we don't have their consent, and Brady said that's really important." For some reason that had Cash's eyes going scary wide and Bates got lost in the giggles.

We were never going to find my pup side if they couldn't stay focused.

Pointing that out would be rude, though, so I just waited patiently until they remembered they were the

Doms.

It took a lot longer than it should have.

But when Bates could breathe and Cash had managed to close his mouth, I was rewarded with another kiss from Bates as Cash shook his head. "You are fascinating, pup."

Yep...and patient.

"Thank you, Sir." But my ability to wait quietly would only last so long and I could feel it escaping. "I've been very good too."

I didn't want him to forget that part with all his laughter.

"You have and you've been very patient." Bates set the duffle bag on his chair as I smiled at him, proud he'd realized how amazing I'd been. "But now we're going to dress you up and we'll see how it feels."

Yes.

It wasn't hard.

Barking. Balls. Tail wagging.

"I can do it." None of it was rocket science and I didn't even have to talk. "It'll be fine. You don't have to worry."

Cash sighed, clearly already worrying. "We're supposed to tell you not to worry."

"Why?" As Bates started pulling out all the pieces of my outfit, I tried to stay focused on Cash. "You guys worry more than I do."

Bates wasn't quite as bad as Cash but he was still an overthinker.

Smart people always were.

But maybe overthinking made them skip the obvious parts?

“I just have to play pretend and wiggle and wag and remember not to talk.” It was the easiest, less-stress BDSM thing I’d ever seen. “The talking part might be hard to remember but the internet said I just have to find the right space in my head where my pup lives. I must’ve been ignoring him because I didn’t know he was there.”

Cash looked like he was bouncing back and forth between wanting to sigh and wanting to worry more. “It’s headspace.”

That was what I’d said.

“All set, come check it out.” Bates was so happy when he had everything laid out, even I knew it was a distraction to keep Cash from being too sassy, but I let him get away with it because he probably didn’t want to pull rank and punish another Dom.

Praise in public. Censure in private.

“Yay.” Wiggling between them, I looked down at my costume. “I’m going to look so good.”

I even had a wiggly tail the internet said would give me great orgasms if I wagged it right. “I’m going to be the best tail-wagger ever.”

Scrubbing his face with his hands, Cash was back to being embarrassed about seeing my dick, but Bates just gave me a wicked grin. “That’s what I’m hoping, pup.”

Cash was working on finding his right color again, so I let him get not-embarrassed as I kissed Bates’s cheek. “I’m going to have so much fun and make Cash really proud of me.”

“I’ll be proud of you no matter what.” Cash managed to stop being nuts long enough to give me a hug and curl into me. “But if you’re just saying that to make me stop squirming, I’ll kill you.”

“I’m being very good.” That wasn’t a lie, so I didn’t feel bad about ignoring his drama.

Bates was coughing but it didn’t sound believable and it seemed to make Cash start mumbling about everybody driving him nuts.

I was pretty sure he’d taken himself down that road, but I didn’t think pointing that out would be helpful or polite.

So I was very good.

Yep, I totally deserved lots of praise and rewards and orgasms.

Once Bates stopped coughing, he took a deep breath and hugged us tight. “Alright, we all know that no matter what headspace Gareth finds, this is about having fun and exploring something new.”

“And orgasms and attention.” He couldn’t forget the most important pieces.

“Yes. Exactly.” Bates gave me a quick peck on the head. “I can’t forget such important parts.”

As I nodded, Cash straightened and glared at me. “But if you want attention and orgasms then there’s no more talk of making me proud or worrying about finding your pup. We’re having fun and then you get an orgasm if you don’t worry.”

I was not the worrier in our family, but I wasn’t going to argue with the man who might be in charge of my orgasms. “Yes, Sir.”

Somehow my being good made him blush, but I’d stopped trying to figure out why that happened. He was complicated. That was one of the reasons that I loved him but it didn’t mean that I had to understand him.

Bates’s laughter was going to fall into that category too.

I loved how happy he was and how he always saw the bright side in life, but he was just as confusing as Cash in his own way. That was probably why they got along so well together, though. Yep, everyone had bits you just had to love them for.

“Now can I be a pup?” Waiting for them to stop being them might take too long so I tried to give them both a tiny push.

Bates barely managed not to laugh, and Cash almost managed not to scowl but neither could control themselves that well.

They were very lucky to have someone as patient as me in their life.

“Yes.” Bates worked hard to get it down to random chuckles, though, so I had to give him props for that.

And I decided he deserved something extra special when he reached for my hood and held it up. “You are going to be so cute.”

I really was.

“Let’s get our pup naked first, though.” Bates leaned over and kissed Cash’s cheek that time. “Will you start taking off his clothes while I check the curtains?”

That was probably a good idea, so I wasn’t surprised when Cash nodded. “Of course.”

Getting me naked or maybe just having something else to focus on did wonders for Cash. He looked confident and sexy and almost happy as he started taking off my clothes and even helping me strip out of my pants.

He didn’t even blush when he saw my penis.

I was so proud of him.

I was proud of Bates for thinking of the curtains too, but it didn’t seem to be the time to praise them since I

was supposed to work on the whole not-talking thing.

Dogs got the praise, they didn't do the praising.

But I could cuddle them and play with them and give them lots of attention in other ways.

Yes, I could take care of them and make it so they could see they didn't have to worry. I just had to relax and find the space in my head where my pup was hanging out. I'd just never realized I was supposed to look for him.

It made me wonder how Brady knew he was supposed to look for his little side.

No, I had to stay focused on not thinking about anything but my pup.

Deciding that might be the hardest part about finding him, I let out a deep breath as Bates gave me another forehead kiss. "You're doing great, pup. Just relax and get down on all fours for us."

I could do that.

And it'd make Cash feel taller.

Perfect.

Yeah, he looked a lot taller from the floor.

"Give Cashel your front paws, pup." Bates sat down beside me on the floor and ran his hand over my head as Cash put on mitts that gave me cute paws. "Good boy, pup."

As the mitts came on, Bates kept petting me. "Now, your color safewords still apply, but if you can't find the words, you can always raise up one paw and we'll know that we need to pause and figure out what you're thinking."

"Raise my hand like I'm in class. Got it." I could remember that. "Oh, that feels...I've got paws."

I was going to look so cute.

I'd never played dress-up before and I had a feeling that was part of why my pup had stayed mostly hidden. He'd never been invited out, so he'd just peeked out sometimes when he made me wiggly.

This was going to be so much better for him.

"Look at Cashel, pup." Bates's instructions made me realize I'd gotten distracted because I hadn't even seen Cash grab my hood. "Good boy."

Bates started stroking my back as Cash slipped my hood on and it was like it called to the pup even more... and it called to Cash because his eyes were back to being wide, but it was like when I'd gotten him his favorite books for our first Christmas as real adults.

For some reason, he'd thought that just because our parents weren't going to buy stuff for us anymore, Santa wouldn't come, so I'd made sure he knew he was still special.

Did my being his pup make him feel Christmas special?

Aww, I was going to be his present.

Yes, the pup definitely liked that...I knew there was nothing they needed to worry about.

Chapter 11

Cashel

He looked so...so excited.

And a bit insane with the way he was talking to himself...or was he talking to his pup side?

It was kind of hard to keep track because it seemed like he saw his pup as an entirely separate person... entity?

Why I'd thought this would go any more normally than anything else in our life, I'd never know.

Bates was managing not to laugh as he kept petting Gareth and telling him all about what a cute pup he would be, but once the hood went on Gareth, he didn't seem to hear most of it. "You're a cutie, pup. Yes, this fits you perfectly."

That seemed to be more about the personality of the pup hood and not the physical fit of it, but Gareth was more interested in moving his head from side to side and looking at his paws. If he heard half of what Bates was saying, I'd have been amazed.

"That's right. Let's finish getting you ready and then we can play." Grabbing a small red ball off the chair that was designed to be squishy enough for Gareth to hold with his mouth, Bates showed it to Gareth who lit up like it was Christmas. "Knee pads first, then your tail."

I managed not to blush or squirm at the tail talk, but Gareth just started wiggling all over, clearly excited and probably very curious. Thankfully, neither one of them thought my commentary on tails was necessary, so I

focused on the practical side of getting Gareth ready while Bates teased and distracted him. "Oh, I think our pup is going to love wagging his tail."

Gareth didn't bark but his rambling commentary had stopped so I thought that meant he'd slipped deeper into his pup headspace. He certainly looked like he was, at the very least, if the wiggles and squirms were anything to go by.

Bates seemed to be enjoying every second of it and nothing in his expression or what he was saying in general made it sound like he was worried. He was just smiling and radiating excitement too which made it easier for me to push my slightly irrational fears to the back of my head.

Some fears were healthy and warranted, but Gareth was having fun exploring and figuring out what mental closet he'd lost his pup in. So it seemed like most of my worries were unnecessary and I was going to do my best to remember that.

"Yes, I bet that's much better, pup." Bates gave pup Gareth a hug and ran another hand down his back. "We want our pup to be comfortable when he's running around and wagging his tail."

Yep, still no worries about tails from Gareth.

His naked ass wagged back and forth making Bates laugh which just made the pup more excited...in every way. Pup, regular sub, or boyfriend, he liked being naked and showing off, and it was good to see that hadn't changed.

It was distracting, though.

"That's right, happy boy." Bates gave Gareth another hug before reaching up behind him again. "Do you want your tail next or your collar?"

The collar we'd picked out was just for puppy playtime, and I had to keep reminding myself of that,

but it had my breath sticking in my throat. Somehow, out of everything, that made it feel the most real to me.

Gareth knew it too because he nudged at it with his puppy nose and then turned to me, aiming wide and delightfully manipulative eyes at me.

There he was...even as a pup he was still trying to get his way.

“Oh, do you want your collar?” I couldn’t resist giving his head a kiss as he wiggled and let out his first bark.

God, he was perfect.

Bates must’ve known how incredible the moment was for me because he gave us both big hugs and made the happiest sound as he squeezed us tight. “My boys.”

Once we each got kisses and a few more hugs, I took a deep breath and took the collar from Bates. They were both vibrating with energy and excitement as I carefully wrapped the collar around Gareth’s neck, getting a bark from Gareth and a sigh from Bates.

Gareth was the most incredible pup I’d ever seen and he was mine...and he was also still wagging on his tail, because as soon as he got used to feeling the collar around his neck, he started doing his whole-body twitch again.

“I haven’t forgotten.” He was dramatic no matter what form his submission took.

He barked again as I rolled my eyes, a happy and somehow slightly sarcastic sound. “You’re lucky you’re cute.”

More wiggles made him look like he was laughing, and judging by Bates’s snickers, I wasn’t the only one who thought so. Gareth didn’t mind, though, and the attention he started giving Bates put his ass in the right

position and gave me a second to remind myself that he loved the idea of a tail.

“Yes, you’re going to love your tail. Yes, you are.” The almost babytalk sound to Bates’s tone delighted Gareth and seemed to take his love of praise to a whole new level. “That’s my good pup. You look so cute and you look so good in your collar, pup.”

That got almost model-level squirms from the attention whore as he cocked his head to show off his collar, but it let me grab the small packet of lube without making Gareth any more excited than he already was.

His enthusiasm made it impossible for me to even remember why I’d been worried to begin with...well, right up until I started playing with his ass.

I was playing with Gareth’s ass.

Yep, I remembered why I’d been worried.

But Gareth made a low whine as my finger circled around the tight ring of muscles and even Bates almost moaned as he nuzzled against our pup. “Yes, that’s what you’ve been waiting for. Such a needy pup and you want to wag and show off what a happy bottom slut you are.”

That had our pup barking happily again and pushing his ass up to nudge my finger deeper...and since I could take a hint, I gave him what he wanted. Our attention whore made a happy sound, wiggling and letting out another bark as we both gave him lots of love.

One finger didn’t make him very happy, though, and it wasn’t long before he was clenching around it and whining.

Yep, not subtle in the slightest.

Bates was chuckling and giving the desperate pup more head kisses as I added a second finger which just

had Gareth rocking his ass back and making a frustrated bark.

The way he could make his emotion so clear made me marvel, but it was also a good push for me to stop dragging my feet.

Our pup wanted his tail.

So I eased my fingers out and spread the lube on the base of the toy and brought it to him. I kissed our pup's head and snuggled closer as I pressed it gently into him, loving the low sounds he made. "That's our good pup. Relax and let me give you your pretty tail. You're going to feel so good and you're going to look so cute."

Bates was echoing my sentiment and hugs as I finally seated the plug completely into Gareth and watched as the wiggles started in earnest.

I might've underestimated how much he'd love his tail, but I'd gotten how perfect he would look right. I'd known he would be the most wonderful pup as soon as I'd found them online but I'd never actually thought he would be *my* pup.

"Such a good pup for your Handler." Bates was looking at me as he stroked Gareth's head, making it clear that was me. "Wag your tail for him."

Doing a full-body wiggle, Gareth was trying to figure out how to wag the tail and probably getting the feeling of it all. He shifted his ass back and forth before arching and letting out a frustrated bark.

He knew what he was supposed to do, but in all the excitement or maybe just the newness of it all as he found his pup, he'd pushed it to the back of his mind. I could see Bates debating on whether or not to remind him, and I was having the same mental conversation, but before we could push Gareth in the right direction, he got it.

As he clenched down and his tail wagged, his entire body lit up and it almost came off the floor. He did it again, barking and wiggling as he thoroughly enjoyed wagging and the attention he got. He was perfect...the perfect pup and perfectly Gareth.

“Good job, pup.” Bates reached out and ran his hands over Gareth’s back, beaming and obviously proud of him. “You did it.”

Wagging a few more times, Gareth turned to me and barked before bumping his head into my chest, nearly sending me tumbling backward. “I’m so proud of you.”

Giving him a hug to make sure he didn’t tip me over, I laughed when he wagged and did another full-body wiggle at the same time, clearly showing off. “Such a smart pup.”

He looked so at ease, like he and his pup had enjoyed a nice long talk, that I kissed his head and pointed to the ball that Bates was holding. “Do you want to play?”

Did he want to perform and get even more attention?

It’d probably been a stupid question because he barked and bounced as he turned back to Bates and lowered his head down, clearly inviting Bates to throw the ball. Bates laughed as he rolled the ball across the living room, careful to make sure it would land where Gareth could reach it.

Gareth barked and then charged off to go get the ball, but he took maybe two steps before he froze and a shiver raced through him. He let out a curious bark and started again, only getting another few steps before he wagged his tail and let out a needy whine.

Part of me wanted to laugh but a bigger part thought it was hot as fuck.

“You look so good, pup. Try to go faster. I think you’ll like it.” He seemed to be enjoying himself but he was

obviously distracted by the sensations that raced through him every time he moved. "Wag your tail, pup."

He clenched and whined as another shiver raced through him, but I knew he wanted more or was at least curious for more. After a second, he crossed the final few feet as fast as he could and wagged like there was no tomorrow.

Gareth got the ball and he almost got his orgasm too.

His cock was wagging as fast as his tail and he whined around the ball as he raced back to give it to Bates. Then he dropped down in a dramatic heap and humped the floor, making Bates laugh. "Oh, good boy, pup."

"You did it." And enthusiastically too. But I knew he wasn't done yet. "Let's play some more."

Bates tossed the ball again, getting a theatrical whine from Gareth before he got up and raced for the ball, everything wagging back and forth as the pleasure fired through him again. By the time he got back to us, precum was beading at the tip of his dick and he was nuzzling both of us, going back and forth to get attention.

"Yes, you were so fast." Bates smiled as his praise got another round of excited wagging from Gareth. "You've got such a pretty tail, pup. Wag it for us again."

Gareth didn't need much encouragement to wag his tail as we ran our hands over him and continued the praise, but I wasn't sure it would be enough to come. Bates seemed to be on the same page because all it took was one glance at the ball for him to nod and give it another toss. "Show us how fast you are, pup."

Showing off was a temptation he couldn't refuse and he raced over to the ball, going back and forth with each throw, getting more turned on and trying to wag his tail

even faster. He managed to make it for almost five minutes before he had a hard time picking up the ball.

I couldn't decide if it was because he was distracted or if it was about how close he was, but it took him several tries to pick it up. He raced back just as fast but there was a swing in his gait that hadn't been there before.

"Look at how fast you went." Petting his back, I ran my hand down his ass and teased the tail, getting a sound that was a cross between a whine and a bark. "That's right. You've been so good."

Bates kissed his head, running his hand over Gareth until he was caressing our pup's stomach or maybe something lower judging by the cow eyes Gareth was making at him.

They both looked so innocent when they were being naughty. But Gareth had worked hard...and he liked his tail...he liked showing off his dick too.

So I kept running my hands over him and kissing his head as I teased around the tail, encouraging him to wag faster. It didn't take long before he was rocking between us, rubbing his head against our chests and doing his best to make his tail go ninety miles an hour.

In just a few more seconds, he gave a low, almost growl and his orgasm barreled through him. Bates must've kept jerking him off faster because Gareth's hips kept thrusting as he pressed his head into my chest and whined.

When he finally collapsed between us, his head on my lap and his body curled around Bates, the teasing stopped and we both just slowly petted him as he drifted. I wasn't sure if it was subspace or not but it probably didn't matter. He'd clearly enjoyed himself and that was the most important part.

And now the most important part was letting him soak up all the good feelings running through him. So we kept cuddling him and kissing his head, and when he just made quiet, happy hums, we let him float and Bates gave me a kiss. "Such a good pup and a good Handler."

I finally blushed, making Bates's smile even wider. "And the sexy Handler gets even cuter when he blushes"

Gareth made a soft huff kind of sound that felt like a laugh and had me rolling my eyes. "One day the Handler is going to stop doing that."

The cheeky pup and the nosy Dom both found that to be hilarious.

"I said one day." It just wasn't going to be anytime soon, but I didn't think either of them would mind. They were annoying enough to like my reactions but cute enough that I couldn't kill them.

Life was hard sometimes.

"Let's not rush it." Bates snuggled closer, clearly wanting a kiss and more cuddles. "I like it when you blush and I know Gareth does too."

The biggest pains in the ass always got away with murder because they were too cute.

"How about you like it when I'm competent and confident?" There probably hadn't been many of those moments, but it didn't mean Gareth should start donkey laughing.

It was so funny I could see his pup fading into the background again and suddenly it was very much his human cheeky side staring up at me. "How about we just say we like all your sides? I think that's more polite than the truth."

Brat.

It was Bates's turn to donkey laugh which got Gareth started all over again. Ignoring their ridiculousness seemed like the best option, so I took off Gareth's hood and started de-pupping him. He finally stopped snickering when I took the plug out, but taking the plug out made me blush again and that just got them going again.

It was a vicious circle that finally ended with big sighs and enough hugs to make me realize killing them would take a lot of work...and it felt like it'd been a long day already. Just thinking about it made me yawn which had Gareth sitting up and wrapping his arms around us to pull us all in close. "Cuddles."

Bates snorted and held up his slightly sticky-looking hand. "Clean up. Then cuddles."

Refusing to even think about what he'd been doing to my innocent pup, I focused on the plan for the rest of the evening. "Clean up then snack then cuddles. I was promised dessert, and so far, I think Gareth is the only one who's gotten a treat."

His giggle said he agreed.

But that was fine with me. Gareth had found his pup side and figured out his tail and learned that he had a whole new way he could play and submit. He'd deserved all the sweet things we could give him.

Chapter 12

Bates

“What did you guys think about the puppy play stuff? Was I a cute pup? When do I get to wear my collar? Was Cash talking about a food treat or an orgasm treat? I thought I knew, but now I’m not sure.” Gareth jerked like he was trying to turn around, nearly tipping us both over in the shower because the damned thing was too small for two grown adults.

“If he wants an orgasm, we need to do something special for him because he was such a good Handler for me when I was a pup, but if he wants dessert, you’ll help me make something special for him, right?” The flood of questions continued before I could take a breath and Cashel wasn’t any help.

From his perch on the toilet where he sat watching me wash Gareth, he nearly giggled and waited to see what I would do since it seemed like I was in charge again. “Well—”

Before I could get anything else out, Gareth’s brain just kept going. “Does anyone know how often I’m supposed to get really clean? You know what I mean. Does the tail count as a cock? Do you have to wash as thoroughly when you play with toys as you do when you play with fingers and dicks?”

That’d taken an interesting turn.

Cashel’s eyes kept getting wider, but luckily for the sexy Handler, Gareth distracted himself as I turned him around to wet his hair. “At what point can I ask for penetrative sex? I know we’re having the nonpenetrative

kind and I know we're making love and I'm really glad you both love me so much, but when is it okay to ask to be fucked into the mattress?"

I couldn't tell if Cashel liked that question any better than he had the hygiene one but he seemed to have decided there were worse discussions than to fuck or not to fuck.

"We've dated and had a lot of discussions and we've even introduced him to Brady's mom." Cashel's odd answer and the vague shrug that came after it had Gareth nodding like it all made perfect sense.

"Yeah, that's probably right." Gareth's response didn't make any more sense than Cashel's answer had.

Luckily, it didn't seem like I had to answer anything yet because as I started working shampoo through his hair, Gareth just kept going.

"But I think Bates is the kind to need romance and flowers and stuff. Do you know where we get rose petals?" Gareth's mind was a wonderful place and just kept getting more and more interesting. "Do you know how we should organize it to get the most penetrative play possible? Should we use some of Brady's action figures to model it out?"

Pulling away and popping his shampoo-filled head around the shower curtain, Gareth aimed a wonderfully serious frown at a slightly stunned Cashel. "Is that what we call it? Play seems to go at the end of nearly everything in BDSM—I think it's to make it sound nicer to people searching weird things online—but I'm not sure when we use it and when we don't."

He had a good point...maybe several.

"I..." Cashel paused like his brain had run into a brick wall. "Um, I think there are several ways we can organize who gets what done to them but we need to define goals first?"

His brain was equally as interesting.

And it seemed like he didn't know the answer to the play question either.

"Oh, that's smart." Straightening, Gareth turned in a circle, completely forgetting that I'd been washing his hair. "Do you have an opinion?"

On which part?

All of it?

Trying to decide where to start, I did my best to find the beginning as I moved him back under the spray to get the shampoo out. "I thought our first puppy play scene went very well. I thought you were adorable and the puppy collar is going to be just for when you're a pup because it's too big to be a regular daytime collar."

Based on the strangled sound Cashel was making, it would give him a heart attack.

Even if he wasn't the one wearing it, just walking through campus where Gareth would want to show everyone how cute he looked in his leather collar would be too much for Cashel.

He would be sexy, though, and I couldn't help caressing right around the base of his neck as I finished getting him all clean.

"If you'd like a collar because you want to feel our ownership of you all the time, we can pick something out that's more subtle for when you're a regular sub and not a pup." The first word that had come to mind was human sub, but since he wasn't an alien or a real dog when he was a pup, that didn't feel right.

I probably just needed more sleep...or an orgasm...or both.

What else had Gareth asked about?

Oh, treats.

“I really did promise him dessert, so technically he could mean that, but I think he’d like some attention from us. He’s probably flexible on what kind of attention he gets, though.” And judging by the groan he made, I was right. “There are a lot of ways we can make him feel special for being such a good Handler, though.”

I knew there were a lot of questions in the middle but they all got lumped together with enemas in my head, and I wasn’t sure Cashel was in the right frame of mind for that discussion, so I jumped ahead a bit.

“As far as making love to you goes or even fucking you into the mattress, I’m confident in our relationship, and I don’t think you’d just be using me for my dick or taking advantage of me.” They’d brought me home to meet Brady’s mother...that said I was family. “I’m not sure where you get rose petals, though.”

“Are you allergic?” Gareth asked another random but smart question. “I knew a guy in high school who got hives from them but he didn’t realize that until his girlfriend got him flowers for Valentine’s Day trying to be sweet or maybe a Dom of some sort.”

He cocked his head, getting distracted by the memories. “Never mind. That doesn’t matter. I’ll figure that out later.”

Giving him a kiss, I didn’t doubt he’d figure out the details of the other couple’s relationship. “To the best of my knowledge, I am not allergic to any flowers and I’ve never broken out in hives.” I could feel my allergies a bit in the spring when the pollen was bad but that didn’t seem like the same thing. “I’m not sure I can help with the boy and his possible Dom girlfriend, though.”

Some people figured that stuff out earlier than others.

“Thanks.” He gave me a cute peck on the cheek before pushing back the curtain. “Shift change.”

He was adorably insane.

Cashel sighed, clearly not appreciating the romance of being treated like a short-order cook. "You're dripping."

Gareth scoffed, grabbing a towel with one hand and his dick with the other. "Not anymore. I already came."

For some reason, Cashel didn't find him as entertaining as I did, so I was the only one who laughed. That had him rolling his eyes as he stripped off his underwear and climbed into the shower. "Why are you encouraging him?"

"Because he's cute." Shrugging, I did my best to look straight-faced as Cashel sighed. "And he's funny."

"You're both insane." He might've sounded like he was an eighty-year-old man who was getting ready to yell at me and Gareth to get off his lawn, but I got a kiss and there was a twinkle in his eyes. "And you do it deliberately."

Taking a page from Brady's book, I gave Cashel wide eyes. "I don't know what you're talking about. We're all just very interesting people and that can't be helped."

From the other side of the curtain, I could see Gareth's head bobbing up and down so fast I was worried about whiplash.

Cashel was not impressed, judging by his cute glare. "That ridiculousness is not going to help him to behave. He was just egging me on with some of those questions."

Oh yeah.

"But the question really comes down to which ones?" I knew I'd gotten him when Cashel huffed. "I'm not sure I could tell but I could take a guess."

Did Cashel want to play that game?

"Evil. Evil Dom." After another glare, he pulled the ultimate Brady and changed the subject completely. "You're not going to get clean this way."

Picking up the loofa and body wash, Cashel kept up his adorable glare as he started scrubbing my chest and it got even more frustrated looking when he banged his elbow into the wall. "This shower is too small."

Making him pause his scrubbing long enough for me to kiss his booboo and make his eyes twinkle again, I nodded. "Agreed. Especially for the number of kinky people in one place. Someone didn't realize how often we'd want to bathe together."

Cashel was trying not to laugh but Gareth was wonderfully Gareth and piped up with his own fascinating logic. "I think that might've been deliberate so we didn't waste water by having sex in the shower constantly. Our school seems like the type of place to plan something like that out."

Hmm.

The whole idea made Cashel's brain start to whirl, but Gareth wasn't done yet. "In our next apartment, I think we need to make the bathroom a priority because bathing everyone in shifts is going to get old eventually. What if I want shower sex once we're at the pounding me into the mattress phase of our relationship?"

As I was pondering the steps in his relationship ladder, it seemed that Cashel was on the same page because he actually stuck his head around the curtain to study Gareth. "Is sex a precursor to moving in together for you? It doesn't sound like it is."

Since I'd been wondering the same thing, I just smiled when Gareth scoffed. "Of course not. I'm not going to pressure someone into a sexual activity that they might not be ready for."

"But you will pressure them into moving in together?" Cashel's slightly sarcastic question had Gareth sighing.

“Yes, because that’s a healthy step that we’ll need to take eventually.” Gareth seemed sincere as he kept going. “You really don’t see how much you love someone until you have to deal with their stinky feet every day.”

Who had stinky feet?

“Okay.” Cashel seemed to give up on arguing with Gareth about the logic of us moving in together and straightened so he was completely in the shower again.

As he finished washing down my chest and gently over my dick, he frowned thoughtfully. “I think you should be very grateful that you don’t have enough storage space for us to move in with you.”

I wasn’t sure if I was grateful or not, honestly.

I gave him a quick kiss as he motioned for me to turn around. “Well, I’m not sure there are any bigger apartments open right now, so we’ll have to make do and just work on keeping the walk of shames to a minimum. We can figure out the rest later.”

Cashel just sighed as he started washing my back, so Gareth happily took the opening. “We’ll need to figure out what kind of commute you can reasonably do once you finish your master’s. I don’t want you exhausted because of driving too much. That will drastically cut down on the amount of sex you’ll want.”

“Oh, good point.” He was a very good planner. “And we’ll have to work out the details on what kind of apartment we’ll need. Like, I’m not sure if you guys will need a home office or not.”

Cashel seemed to have decided to ignore the conversation altogether because he simply kissed the back of my neck when it seemed like he was done with the back of me. “Switch places with me. Let’s wash your hair.”

Bath time was the best.

Turning around and carefully shifting us so that I was under the spray, I gave him another quick peck. "Thank you."

He shook his head like he thought I was insane but did his best to pretend to ignore the conversation. "You're welcome."

"I don't think we'll need something right off the bat, but if I'm actually going to become a professor, I'm going to need to go right into getting my master's." Gareth sighed adorably. "But we need to make sure I have a good study space that won't interfere with you guys doing stuff together. Just because I need to study doesn't mean you guys won't want to do other stuff together after your regular workday ends."

Good point.

Cashel seemed to agree because he stopped pretending that he couldn't hear our wonderful plans. "So at least two really big bedrooms in an apartment, one for an actual bedroom and one that can be made into a multi-use study or office space? We'll probably need the second closet area anyway."

Yep, he couldn't ignore us for long.

But as he started massaging shampoo through my hair, I moaned and lost track of the conversation going on around me. "Yes...I..."

I heard Gareth giggle. "Yeah, he's good at that."

"I need to work on my technique." I hadn't made Gareth moan when I'd been washing him, but then again, he'd been slightly distracted and orgasmed out for the moment.

Cashel's fingers got just a bit firmer and sent waves of tingly pleasure through me. "You're both just being ridiculous."

He said ridiculous but he didn't hurry things up and fuck with his technique, so I had a feeling he liked the compliments.

"But it's so good..." He hit another hot spot and I moaned again. "I really wish I wasn't standing up for this."

Cashel gave a soft laugh but Gareth seemed to agree with me. "I think we need to look for a shower with a seat in our first big apartment together. Then when it's your turn to be pampered I could give you a blow job and Cash could wash your hair. It'd be amazing."

Agreed.

"Yes...seat..." The wonderful mix of pleasures had my brain trying to decide if I was going to come or fall asleep and I wasn't sure which would've been better.

Sadly, neither were going to work, so I wasn't surprised when Cashel eventually eased up on the massage and moved my head to rinse off the suds. "Gareth, I might have to punish you for holding out on me. You should've told me about Cashel's magic hands."

Snickering and not sounding worried at all, Gareth piped up again. "Shift change. My turn to wash Cash."

We really needed a bigger shower...and a faster bathing routine.

Chapter 13

Gareth

Ignoring the way Cash was blushing, I focused on Bates because he was grinning ear to ear. “We could eat whipped cream off his dick?”

“That would be special, but would it be special for him or for us?” Bates cocked his head, being a good Dom and thinking it through. “We’d like to get him sticky but would Cashel like to get sticky?”

“Oh, good question.” Yep, there were a lot of good reasons why we needed Bates in our life. “How about we just go right to kissing all over him and skip the sticky bits? You can do that to me when it’s my turn to be special but not pup special. If we’re ranking things, pup time beats whipped cream, unless it’s your turn to be special and that’s what you want.”

No matter what everyone said, the hardest part of dating two people at once was the scheduling bits.

“I will keep that in mind.” Bates leaned back against the kitchen counter and pulled Cash into his arms as he paced by. “I’m not sure how I would categorize it but I do like whipped cream.”

Since that was good to know, I tucked it in the back of my head and focused on Cash. “So we’re starting at the beginning again. I didn’t want you to pick the dessert since it feels like part of it being special should be us making it for you, but I’m not sure that’s going to work.”

It was time for Plan B.

Cash leaned his head back against Bates and sighed, but when I just smiled at him, he gave me a cute glare.

If he thought I was going to apologize for making him embarrassed he was nuttier than I was.

“How about I thaw out some of the cookies I froze last week and we have those with ice cream?” Cash seemed to like having something other than sex to think about. He was so weird. “I think that sounds good.”

Cookies then sexy times.

Got it.

But where were the cookies?

“Did you freeze those here or upstairs?” All I remembered was being sad that he’d only let me have five before he’d frozen the rest.

My question seemed to be smarter than I’d expected because Cashel went very still before looking over at Bates’s freezer. “I don’t know.”

“I do.” Kissing Cash’s cheek, Bates grinned. “They’re upstairs. I remember because Gareth stole one of my cookies.”

Oops.

That’d been how I’d ended up with five.

Aiming for a Brady look, I widened my eyes and tried to look confused. “You make the best cookies, Cash, but I’m a good boy.”

Ha, one frown and one snicker.

And no punishments for cookie theft.

But it might be time to make myself useful. “But I’ll go get the cookies.”

Because my clothes looked the most like real ones and it’d be nice if they had a cuddly moment together since I’d gotten all the attention earlier.

“Be right back.” As I grabbed my keys off the table and hurried toward the door, Bates stopped me with important logic.

“Shoes, cutie. Don’t run barefoot through the building.” He had a good point, so I made a detour and grabbed his slippers.

“Thank you for thinking about me. Have fun kissing while I’m gone.” That had Bates letting out a naughty chuckle as I headed out the door and Cash squeaked.

I was hoping Bates had squeezed Cash’s ass as I bounded up the stairs, but there were a lot of other things they could’ve done that would’ve gotten the same noise. I’d gotten to *nibbles on Cash’s ear* as I got to the other apartment, but making my list got sidetracked as I headed in and found Brady and Jude cuddled up on the couch watching cartoons.

That didn’t tell me anything about Brady being little or not, because he always liked cartoons, so I just waved and tried not to disturb them as I went into the kitchen. “Freezer run. Just ignore me.”

I was really hoping they’d just ignore me.

They didn’t.

When I came back out with the rest of the cookies, Jude and Brady were looking at me funny. “The cookies were in the wrong freezer, but if you want dessert, there are some brownies hidden at the back that I think Cash forgot about. I won’t tell if you eat those.”

Ha.

Brady turned to his Daddy and gave him the best Brady smile ever. “I like brownies.”

Jude snorted. “What junk don’t you like?”

He had a good point and it almost let me get to the door but they both sighed in unison, making me freeze in my tracks.

Had they practiced that?

“Everything went okay with Cash’s date with Bates?” Since Jude had asked nicely and without growling, I kind of felt like I had to answer.

Manners sucked sometimes.

“Yes.” Turning around, I leaned against the door and tried not to look guilty or worried. “They went to the NASA museum place out on the coast and had an early dinner, so now we’re doing dessert.”

And...

I could feel they still had questions even if I hadn’t noticed the way Brady was looking at his Daddy.

Ugh.

What else was I supposed to say?

“We had a good evening so far.” That sounded awkward even to me but was I supposed to just announce I’d been a pup?

Was it like losing your virginity?

Was it like coming out of the closet?

I’d never really been in one, so I wasn’t even sure what I was supposed to do if it was closet-related.

As they stared and had some kind of silent conversation, I texted Bates and Cash.

I’m trapped. Not a hostage situation yet but they’re looking at me funny and asking about my day.

Okay, even I realized that didn’t sound traumatic but I wasn’t sure how to describe the weirdness.

Bates’s response popped up first.

Do you need to be rescued?

That was a very good question.

I don’t know.

Cash was the most helpful.

If they're just being curious tell them you need to get down here before the cookies start to thaw.

Oh, good idea. I didn't think either of them baked enough to know if that would be important or not.

Thanks. Oh, now they're looking at me again.

I needed better words to describe the stress of having both of them staring at me from the couch because my current vocabulary was not good enough.

"Um, hi." Okay, what would Brady's mom do? "Is this a write letters kind of situation because if it is, I don't know why we need to write one."

"No." Brady seemed offended enough that I felt better.

"Letters?" Jude looked confused, so I had a feeling Brady had kind of brushed over that punishment.

So I was helpful.

"Brady's mom makes us write letters to each other about why we're sorry and what we're feeling after we have an argument or there's a problem. He's had to write a lot over the years because he's a dramatic pain in the butt sometimes."

Ha, if he was going to be weird, I'd tattle.

Huffing, Brady crossed his arms over his chest. "You're so mean when your Dom dates someone else."

Huh?

"No, I'm just mean when you're being weird and dramatic." I crossed my arms over my chest so he could see how silly he looked. "I just came to get cookies."

"But you're frustrated and probably sad and I'm worried about you." Brady was clearly sliding toward

his little headspace because he wasn't making any sense at all.

Time for reinforcements.

Texting my boyfriends and the men who were currently my emergency plan if I couldn't save myself, I sent out a desperate message.

He's worried about me. I don't know why.

When Jude cleared his throat, probably thinking I was rude for texting, I just ignored him. If I was already rude a bit more wouldn't hurt.

I didn't appreciate Bates's brand of help.

Ask him why he's worried.

Cash's was better.

Just escape. Apologize later.

That sounded much better but then Brady sighed and he was really good at that.

Shoot.

"I'm fine." That didn't seem like it made a difference, so I tried to think of something else. I needed a distraction.

Can I tell him I was a happy pup? I think he'd like that and it would be a conversation that made sense.

Because the current one didn't.

They were silent entirely too long before Bates's message popped up.

Yes, and that's from both of us. You're a cute pup and there's nothing wrong with telling people like Brady. They're family even though they're really dramatic.

Bates was really smart.

They were dramatic.

“I was a pup for the first time. I was really cute and Cash was happy about it and Bates threw the ball. So we’re good.” Well, it was a distraction at the very least.

Brady’s eyes went wide and he bounced off the couch, completely ignoring the TV and his Daddy. “Oh, you’d be a very cute pup. Do you have a tail?”

“Yes. Thank you for asking.” At least he knew the most important part. “I have a wonderful tail and it was a lot of fun.”

Brady gave me a hug and made a *presents on Christmas* kind of squeal. “I’m so glad you found your pup. You’ll have to tell me all about him and tell me what kind of toys he likes for Christmas.”

Oh, I got more toys?

Human ones and pup ones?

This just kept getting better and better.

“I’m still figuring that out, but I’ll let you know what he likes to play with.” The ball had been fun but there were a lot of options. “It’s new, but I’m kind of wiggly so it works.”

I wasn’t sure what else he needed to know but so far I seemed to have made Brady happy.

“You are wiggly and very playful.” Brady sighed as he stepped back, finally not sounding stressed. “This makes so much sense. Pups are a lot of work with all the exercise and attention they need. Of course, you need two partners.”

Hmm.

“I do need a lot of attention.” That probably explained a few things. “And I liked my quiet time while they went out. Some pups need quiet time too.”

Right?

Nodding enthusiastically, Brady gave me a relieved-looking smile and nearly skipped back over to Jude and plopped himself in his Daddy's lap. "He's a puppy, Daddy."

Since Brady seemed to think that made everything much clearer, I waved and escaped before Jude could decipher what was going on in Brady's head. I figured that might take a few seconds at least, and I knew I was right when I managed to close the door and Jude was still looking confused.

Thanking the universe that some Doms needed more processing time than others, I hurried downstairs just in case Jude managed to get his brain working faster than I expected.

"Safe." Locking the door behind me, I slumped against it and smiled as they laughed. "For future reference, I think we need the buddy system. I didn't know what to say."

"Well, it looks like you survived unscathed." Bates came over and pulled me into his arms as Cash took the cookies.

He had his priorities straight.

"I did, but it was a close call." Curling into his chest, I sighed. "That was confusing. Brady was worried about something, but he stopped worrying when I explained that I was a pup. Evidently, that made everything clearer, and I think he knows why I need two boyfriends now?"

That sentence still didn't make sense, so I shrugged as I kept poking at it. "We seemed to have decided that I need a lot of attention, so that means he doesn't have to worry?"

Bates's chest jerked but he managed not to laugh at Brady's silliness. When he got his giggles under control, he took a deep breath. "Well, I'm glad Brady isn't

worried any longer, and you do like having both of our attention. So we can let him think that's why you need two boyfriends."

Nodding against Bates, I thought about that and liked it. "Yeah, it won't hurt anything."

If Brady didn't realize more love made everything better, then I probably wasn't the person to explain it to him...maybe his mother could?

Chapter 14

Cashel

“All done. Now it’s dessert and an orgasm.” Gareth nodded, mostly to himself as he tossed the dishtowel on the counter and smiled at Bates. “Since we don’t know exactly what he wanted, I think we need to give him both, just in case.”

He was ridiculous...but generous...so I wasn’t going to argue with him.

“I agree. It’s only fair.” Bates’s response had Gareth’s head nodding a thousand miles an hour.

“Yes, exactly.” Bouncing across the small kitchen from where he’d been doing dishes, Gareth gave me a quick kiss. “Do you have an orgasm preference?”

He asked me the most insane questions.

“No.” I didn’t think there’d be a wrong way to orgasm, so I wasn’t going to fight my embarrassment to actually figure out an answer.

Bates was trying not to laugh and doing a terrible job of hiding his delight, but eventually he managed to nod and get his excitement under control. “I think we should go back to our original plan of kissing him all over, but what do you think about getting out the cuffs again?”

Oh.

It didn’t seem like a bad idea, but it felt weird to have both of them turn their *I’m ready to play* looks on me.

“He didn’t safeword.” Gareth’s helpful tidbit as he curled closer and folded himself over to rest his head on my shoulder had Bates nodding.

“You’re right.” With a smile that was alternating between sweet and wicked, Bates leaned back against the wall that framed the opening of the kitchen. “He knows what they’re for too.”

I did.

He wasn’t wrong.

He was trying to drive me crazy, but he wasn’t wrong.

“We have a plan.” While Bates was looking relaxed and clearly organizing what he wanted to do, Gareth was nearly bouncing, he was so excited. “The cuffs are so much fun.”

“I might have something even more fun than the cuffs.” Bates’s wicked smile sent a shiver through Gareth. “Come on, pup. Help me get something ready for our light.”

Rolling my eyes, I ignored the teasing nickname. “I’m not sure I like the sound of that.”

Well, my head didn’t, but my dick wasn’t terribly smart.

Gareth snickered, kissing my head as he straightened and bounced over to our Dom. “Ready and willing to help with Project Mischief.”

He’d been watching too many government conspiracy movies lately.

Bates thought it was adorable, though, and gave the bouncing nut a quick kiss. “I love how helpful you are.”

They’d both been dancing around that word a lot lately, but no one had said it in the important three-word sentence way, so I pushed it to the back of my mind. Focusing on their wicked expressions was more important, especially when they turned to me and both tried to look so innocent.

“That’s not believable in the slightest.” Gesturing between them, I frowned because they really needed to try harder if I was supposed to play along. “I’ll go sit down on the couch.”

I hadn’t checked my emails today anyway, so it was probably a good idea, and it’d keep my mind off whatever ridiculousness Bates was planning. Anything that gave him that look was slightly worrying, but I wasn’t going to sit there and try to guess what he was going to do.

There were just too many options.

Ugh.

I was going to make myself crazy before they got a chance to do it.

Shaking my head, I grabbed my phone off the counter and wiggled my way past the grinning lunatics. Gareth didn’t seem to care about the specifics, he was just excited to explore something new and give me the orgasm he thought I deserved.

I wasn’t going to argue with the logic, because even though I didn’t think I was owed anything, an orgasm was always nice.

But the restraints...

Gareth’s giggles getting louder as they headed into the bedroom didn’t help my curiosity or my nervousness. Had Bates told him or was he still just excited? Did he think what Bates had planned was funny? Gareth’s sense of humor was questionable sometimes, so it didn’t help my overthinking.

The fact that their plan was taking several minutes to put into play didn’t help either.

What could they be doing?

Gareth even grunted one time.

What the hell took that much effort?

My brain filled in the answer to that question easily, and in vivid detail, but Gareth would've been a lot more rambling if slots and tabs were coming into play. That still left me with way too many options I knew he'd like.

So would I.

Yeah, we needed to figure out the tabs and slots discussion sooner rather than later because Gareth wasn't the only one who was ready for it. I just hadn't put in enough planning, as he clearly had, and I wasn't sure how the slots and tabs should come together.

Action figures?

Had he already tried using them to figure it out?

That could've been what made Brady crazy about all of it, but I'd thought Gareth's question had been hypothetical.

Hadn't it?

"Ready."

I was so deep in thought that Gareth's voice seemed to come out of nowhere and made me nearly rocket off the couch. I must've looked insane as I flopped back because he frowned and actually looked serious again. "We don't have to tie you up if you don't want to."

"No." Shaking my head as I tried to keep my heart in my chest, I forced myself to my feet so I could go kiss his worries away. "I was lost in thought and you just scared the fuck out of me."

One eyebrow shot up, but he hugged me tight as I curled into him and stretched up for a kiss. Being short sucked but I had to admit, most of the time I liked the feeling it gave me when he had to lean down to kiss me.

His lips softly brushed mine, but I could see he was still worried as he straightened. "Are you sure? You

jumped a foot.”

Ugh.

“I got distracted thinking about the comment you made about the action figures. I guess I was just thinking harder than I realized.” I felt ridiculous having to explain, but it was worth it when it chased his frown away.

“Oh, yeah, sex is distracting. I get it.” Gareth’s answer was sweet, but I did my best to ignore Bates’s giggles coming from the bedroom. “We just need a plan and then you won’t have to think so hard.”

I wasn’t sure a plan would help, but I nodded anyway. “Thank you for taking care of me.”

It was definitely a copout, but it made Gareth smile and it got me another kiss. “I like being able to take care of you. You and Bates are always taking care of me.”

And he wanted our relationship to be fair.

Thinking back to our first kisses with Bates made me smile and I felt lighter. “You take great care of me.”

He always had.

And he’d given me real family and a constant push to keep going.

Even with our fucked-up relatives, I’d never felt alone with him and bringing Bates into our family just made that feeling even stronger. “Are you ready to show me my surprise?”

That shifted his sweet smile into something eager and naughty. “Oh yes.”

But just as my nerves settled, he threw me for a loop. “But what are your thoughts on a tiny bit of pain?”

“I...” Swallowing, I took a second to find an answer to that question. “I put on my lists that I was okay with trying mild pain.”

It was the easiest response to get out, but it made Gareth frown. "That was kind of confusing."

Probably.

"I don't know." Shrugging, I ended up curled up against his chest feeling smaller than normal. "I like how much you like it and I'm kind of curious. It's just...new."

I wasn't sure if that made enough sense, but he was sweet and nodded anyway. "New is hard and being curious is hard too. But you know, being curious is what brought Bates into our life, so I think you should focus on that part and not the scary thoughts."

And he had another good point.

"I'm glad you were curious." I wasn't doing terribly well at giving Gareth a lot to go on, but he seemed content with that response because he kissed my head and led me back toward the bedroom without me having to answer anything else.

Probably because my answers were driving him crazy.

He'd consider it rude to actually mention that, but he didn't seem frustrated or confused when we finally got back to the bedroom to see Bates sitting on the end of the bed. "He's ready."

Gareth seemed confident about that and got a smile from Bates. "I'm glad."

They were both insane.

But since nothing seemed to require me to talk, I decided to be polite and not point it out. I just waited as Bates stood up and gave both of us quick kisses before nodding at Gareth. That seemed to be the cue Gareth was waiting for because he started stripping me out of my clothes, taking his time with lots of kisses in between each piece coming off.

Shoulders and cheeks got kissed, so did the top of my head and then my belly button as he moved around in front of me to take off my pants. Some were sweet and others were just designed to get a reaction, but he made me laugh and I'd completely forgotten why I'd been stressed.

Of course, I remembered when Bates came up behind me, and suddenly, I was naked and sandwiched between them. "Now...now what?"

Gareth still looked way too innocent and eager as he smiled for us to be talking about sex, but Bates's voice had already dropped lower and sexy as he kissed my neck. "Now we're going to take our light and give him kisses and make him sparkle."

How he managed to say that without sounding ridiculous I'd never know. It should've been stupid, but it just made my dick harder and a shiver raced through me.

"I can't wait to make you feel as good as you make me feel." Gareth's earnest response and the tender kiss he gave me had me melting into Bates.

He didn't seem to mind because he held me tight and kissed my head. "All you have to do is relax and let us kiss you."

I could do that.

Nodding, I closed my eyes and let out a breath. It seemed to be some kind of signal to them because their hands started caressing over me, not just trying to tease and relax me that time, and Gareth sprinkled kisses along my neck.

Just when I'd gotten to the point where their hands and lips were the only things I was thinking about, they slowly started inching us toward the bed. When we stopped, I opened my eyes, but I shouldn't have

bothered because they both picked me up and set me down on the bed as I grumbled.

They mostly managed to keep their smiles to themselves, but Gareth was just a bit too perky as Bates walked around the other side of the bed. It was a brilliant distraction and I didn't even realize what they were doing until they brought out cuffs from the sides of the bed.

Oh.

I'd forgotten about that part of the plan.

The cuffs came up from under the bed, or maybe under the mattress, and were soft as they wrapped around my wrists. If I was supposed to say something, nothing reasonable came to mind, so I was glad when they didn't need my input for much.

The closest I came to having to think and produce words was when Gareth leaned over the bed and kissed me softly. "What are your safewords?"

That somehow made it all more real, and while my brain slowed thinking down to a bare minimum, my dick waved around like a drunken sailor.

"Green, yellow, and red." I felt proud of myself for getting the words out, and once I started the rest came easier. "Red stops everything and I'm green."

I was feeling a thousand emotions, and probably radiating a confusing number of them, but I was technically green.

"Good boy." It was Bates's turn to lean over and kiss me, but his was slow and hot, and when his tongue stroked against mine, I couldn't help moaning and trying to lift my hands to wrap them around his neck. But I couldn't. That first real reminder of how trapped I was shot right through me and sent a jolt of desire that killed most higher brain functions.

It seemed to be obvious based on how pleased Bates looked as he pulled away, lightly trailing his fingers down my face. "Yes, you're going to be a very good boy for us, but I think I know what would make it even better."

I knew what he was going to say but it still made me blush.

"Would you like your blindfold?" Bates's smile flashed from wicked to tender as Gareth made an excited sound. "I think Gareth knows what you want."

I managed a nod.

It wasn't much but they were both so proud of me it made me blush, which made Gareth even more excited and had him kissing me again. "You're so cute when you get nervous and you're even cuter when you get growly. You're just the cutest boyfriend ever."

He'd lost his mind.

"I'm so glad you wanted to be my boyfriend too." He gave me a quick, innocent peck before straightening, looking like he had some kind of purpose in mind. But it took me a second to realize that was because Bates was back with the blindfold.

As darkness enveloped me, it made everything so much easier. Part of me wanted to poke at the reason why but a bigger part of me didn't care. There was nothing I could do and nothing I could see. Everything was up to Bates and Gareth.

Thinking about Gareth had his last words coming back to me, and they kept rolling around in my head. I probably wouldn't have poked at them another time, but everything was different in the dark. "I...thought about being your boyfriend before."

Hands caressed over me, but they didn't push me to keep going, which somehow made it even easier to keep

rambling. "That just didn't seem to be how you saw me, so I pushed it away."

Gareth made a soft thinking sound and kissed the top of my head. "I didn't know there was more than one kind of boyfriend. You were always more than that to me, so I thought it would be...I thought it would be like downgrading our relationship."

He'd thought we were already so much more that being boyfriends would be an insult.

As everything snapped into place in my head, confusing memories finally making sense, Gareth gave me another kiss as something soft and feathery trailed over my chest. "I think we were waiting for Bates too. We all fit together better than we would if we were just in pairs. I can't imagine just having him without you with us."

It felt like I was sinking into the mattress but I managed a nod I hoped they could both see. "We...we needed a push...confidence, maybe?"

I wasn't explaining it right, but the cuffs had zapped my brain.

Gareth didn't mind doing the talking for us, though. "Yeah, he gives you the confidence to let your Dom side come out and he's great at answering my questions."

I could hear movement and then the sounds of a kiss, with both of them making soft moaning sounds before Gareth chuckled. "And let's face it, I don't have enough dominance in me to have figured out how to make you submit or relax this much."

Since the laughter in his voice said he didn't have an issue with that, I didn't bother lying about it and neither did Bates. "But you knew what he needed and you made sure your special man got it."

"You." Gareth's smile came through in his voice and I knew it would be just as sweet and innocent as I was

imagining. "We both needed you."

It shouldn't have been that simple, but somehow, it was.

Chapter 15

Bates

Gareth's earnest belief that just being a boyfriend would've been downgrading his relationship with Cashel said everything about him and would've made me fall head over heels for him even if I hadn't already been in love with the cutie...and I knew from the smile on Cashel's face that he felt the same way.

Giving Gareth another kiss before leaning down and brushing my lips against Cashel's, I couldn't help smiling. "And I needed my curious boy and my light."

Cashel scrunched up his face and looked like he had to remind himself that he didn't want to do anything risky like stick his tongue out at me. "Thank you, Sir."

The most adorable way to call me a dick ever.

"You're welcome." He was so cute he deserved another kiss, so I took my time distracting him and helping him to sink back into the right headspace as Gareth trailed the soft ends of the flogger over Cashel's chest.

When I finally pulled away, I ran one finger down his cheek. "You're also feisty and funny and protective of the people closest to you."

The people he loved.

Like me.

The way his lips barely turned up at the corners like he had a secret said he knew it too. "You always sound like you've known us for a thousand years."

Before I could give him a cheeky reply, Gareth was adorably sweet and kissed Cashel tenderly. "Maybe he has. Maybe we've been reincarnated together over and over and that's why he felt right the first time he came up to talk to us."

I loved the way he saw the world and gave him another kiss to make sure he knew it. "You were both always sexy and adorable, but I knew you were both meant to be mine the first time you were standing in your living room looking so cute and confused."

Gareth nodded, still looking sexy and adorable. "And some of us still have lots of questions."

Like Cashel and if he'd like pain.

"We have all the time in the world to answer every single one of them." Giving them both another kiss that was the perfect distraction for Cashel, I took the flogger and gave his nipples a teasing flick for the first time.

Mouthing to Gareth that he needed to keep caressing Cashel, I brought the flogger down on the inside of his thigh. For the moment, it was just about the warmth and the newness of the sensations, and his quick inhale was more about surprise than pain.

Gareth knew it too based on his wide grin, but the way Cashel's dick was waving around trying to get everyone's attention was probably a good clue. That didn't mean he was going to reward its begging just yet.

No, as I let the flogger caress Cashel's chest and down his thighs, Gareth kept his teasing caresses right around the base of Cashel's sexy erection, never quite touching it. Just watching him do it was tormenting me, and it had Cashel letting out the neediest whine every time Gareth completed another sexy pass of his body.

Cashel seemed to think his job was to be still, so it took him a while before his control broke and he started

tugging on the cuffs, fighting the slow-building pleasure.
“I...it’s...”

I wasn’t sure if he didn’t know what he wanted to say or if getting the words out was just too hard, but the rest of his body was doing its best to make his needs clear. He tugged at the restraints and moaned as I warmed the underside of his arms, and as Gareth’s fingers gently caressed over the sensitive area where Cashel’s leg met his groin, Cashel’s hips thrust up and he let out the neediest sound as his dick jerked and silently begged.

We weren’t ready to let him come yet, but I knew it was time to take it up to another level. So I mouthed more instructions to Gareth, even though I wasn’t sure Cashel would’ve tracked the words if he could’ve heard them.

So as I flicked the flogger at Cashel’s nipples, that time when I worked my way lower, Gareth wrapped his lips around the tip of one and sucked on the sensitive bud. Cashel nearly came off the bed it was so perfect, and as he cried out, precum beaded at his slit.

It was like his dick was making itself even prettier to beg for attention, so as I went back to play with Cashel’s thighs again, I finally nodded toward the sexy erection waving at us.

Gareth was more than happy to follow that instruction and was nearly vibrating with excitement as he licked the tip. Just that little caress of his tongue had Cashel crying out nonsense. The half-formed words and phrases seemed to be about being good and liking the pain.

Because somehow, he thought that was still a question?

It was a bit confusing but the way Gareth was beaming said he thought it was related to his earlier conversation with our light. I just took it as a plea for

more and to come, so I inched up the intensity and let Gareth suck to his heart's content as I pushed Cashel right to the edge.

When I could see shivers racking his body, Gareth peeked up at me and it was his turn to nod that time... his signal that Cashel was ready to explode said it was time to let him fly.

So as I worked on his chest, keeping him hovering right at his orgasm, Gareth got into position. All it took was the gentlest flick of the toy to Cashel's cock for his pleasure to crash over him. As soon as he bucked his hips up and we knew it'd hit him, Gareth wrapped his lips around Cashel's erection and sent our boy flying.

The way Cashel fought for every drop of pleasure, still tugging on the restraints and thrusting his cock up into Gareth's greedy mouth was utterly beautiful. Cashel's submission would never be as easy for him to find as Gareth's.

Our pup threw himself into it with a passion most subs would never find, but Cashel's was precious because he trusted us to let us see this side of himself and it made me want to wrap him in my arms and never let him go.

The tender happiness that was on Gareth's face as he finally eased off Cashel's cock said he was feeling the same way. Cashel was nearly boneless and wearing a faint punch-drunk smile that said he'd loved every second of it.

But he was so out of it that he didn't even notice when we removed the restraints and barely sighed as we curled up close to him, sandwiching him in between us. The silence felt warm and relaxing as we took turns kissing him and waited as he twitched and finally started to stir. "Thank you for my orgasm."

Cashel's ridiculous words made Gareth nearly giggle, but he managed to control himself admirably as he kissed our dramatic partner's cheek. "You're welcome."

It was my turn to give him a kiss, so I snuggled closer and let my lips linger over Cashel's, softly making love to his mouth like I knew I'd do to the rest of him soon. "You're welcome."

He couldn't seem to decide if he wanted to huff or just pretend it was the most logical after-scene conversation ever, so I decided to help. "Would you like some water? What about the blindfold?"

Yes, he jumped on the change of subject and looked so relieved it was adorable. "I'm fine and I think I'm ready for it to come off."

"Alright, eyesight and cuddles it is." Gareth was back to wiggling excitedly as I took off the blindfold and he could finally see Cashel. "I'm so glad you liked the flogger. It's so much fun."

Cashel's cheeks went subtly pink but he didn't disagree with Gareth. "Yeah, I liked it better than I thought. It wasn't like regular pain kind of hurting."

Gareth shivered, loving the way the memory washed over him. "It's warm and almost like a blanket wrapping over you."

It seemed like I needed to make sure he got to play with it again sooner rather than later...and I was going to have to pick up a bigger one for us to play with. If he liked the tiny one, he was going to love one that wrapped around him.

I gave Cashel another kiss as he peeked over at me, earning a soft moan from him and an *aren't they cute* sigh from Gareth. "I'm glad you liked it."

Cupping his cheek, I didn't poke too much at what he was feeling yet. "Cuddles for now and you'll let me know if you need anything else?"

Nodding, Cashel relaxed into my touch. "Yes. That's perfect."

As we sandwiched him between us and softly trailed our fingers over his head and chest, he took a deep breath and his eyes closed without him seeming to realize how tired he was. With his only movement being to shift his foot so he could touch Gareth's, he fell asleep without even thinking about it.

Gareth was just smiling at him, barely caressing him as he ran a finger down Cashel's cheek as he finally whispered softly to me. "He sleeps better here. He always seemed to fight it before. It was like he was offended by it or something. But here he falls asleep as soon as he closes his eyes. That was one of the ways I knew right off the bat you were it for us."

Leaning over Cashel, I gave Gareth a soft kiss. "I knew when you came down for that first sleepover. I'd never had anyone trust me like you did or look at me like I was needed so much."

Gareth kissed my cheek, smiling sweetly as he snuggled up to Cashel and closed his eyes. The bed was almost too small for all three of us, but he seemed to love the way it made us curl up together. "We'll always need you."

And I would always need them.

"He asked me if I'd moved in with you." Cashel's frustrated glare was so adorable I had to remind myself that he required sympathy not snickers. "Not doing the walk of shame this week threw him so much he asked what was going on. I can't win."

Gareth decided to be the helpful one as Cashel threw himself on the couch. "Well, at least he was concerned about you?"

Cashel didn't seem to appreciate his look-on-the-bright-side mentality and seemed like he was trying to decide where to hide Gareth's body. "I don't even know his name. I don't know what his major is. I don't even know if he's Singing Guy. He should not be that concerned about my well-being."

I decided it probably wasn't the time to volunteer what I knew about him and his roommates, and Gareth was smart enough that all it took was the shake of my head for him to figure out he shouldn't ask. We could talk about that when Cashel wasn't quite so insane.

It couldn't all be about one comment from a neighbor, so I decided it was probably more about having a long week in general. That was something I could help with. Nosy neighbors were harder to fix. I knew that firsthand.

"Well, I like seeing your clothes in my dresser and seeing your shampoo beside mine." That had him blushing and groaning, and I couldn't help chuckling. "And that mousse and the sprays and your brushes."

Gareth was staring up at the ceiling trying not to giggle as Cashel grumbled and blushed even redder. They were so cute I couldn't help walking over to the couch and leaning over to pin my light against it.

He made the softest moan, trying not to show how much he liked the possessive show, but I knew better. So I leaned down and kissed along his neck, moaning as I tasted his skin. "I love seeing all your things beside mine and knowing that you'll stay with me anytime I want to hold my boys."

His grumbles and moans were getting mixed up, but he was doing his best to hold on to his frustration. "That's all the time."

Hmm.

It was and I knew that made him happy but there was something in his grumbles we were going to come back

to. "It is."

Kissing along his jaw, I finally took his lips in a long, slow kiss and poured all my love and desire into it. There was no way my grumpy light could fight that and soon he was reaching up to wrap his arms around my neck and whining for more.

When I finally eased back, I could see that most of the stress had faded. "How about we go out tonight? It's been a while since we had dinner out."

We all seemed to be mostly homebodies and were happy with takeout or trading off between me and Cashel making dinner, but I also thought a change of scenery would do him good. I knew I was right when there was a spark in his eyes and he slowly nodded. "Yeah, I like that idea."

Gareth was bouncing and in definite need of puppy time, but he was doing his best to stay focused on the conversation. "Is this a two-sides-of-the-triangle date or an all-three one?"

As I straightened and took Cashel's hand to pull our drama queen off the couch, he finally laughed. "Can your pup stay put while we all go out or should we go on a walk and pick up something closer?"

Shaking his head, Gareth stood straighter and looked down at his body like he hadn't realized he'd been pacing in the living room. "No, he's wiggly but we would both like Italian. He wants a full tummy when we play later."

I wasn't sure that was a good idea at all and judging by Cashel's eye roll he was on the same page, so I scrambled for another plan. "How about a moderate tummy and then playtime and we curl up for dessert at bedtime?"

Gareth and his pup loved that idea. His whole body seemed to light up as he nodded. "That works for both

of us.”

Cashel managed not to remind Gareth that his pup wasn't alive in his head, but it was a close call. I was pretty sure that Gareth was just fucking with Cashel because he never did it when it was just the two of us, but I wasn't going to ask because not knowing was much more fun.

“Then we have a plan.” Giving Cashel another quick kiss, I glanced over at Gareth who was somehow not wearing pants even though he'd only been home about twenty minutes. “But you are going to need more clothes than that.”

That had him looking down at himself again as Cashel snickered. “You're right.”

Nodding to himself, Gareth headed back toward the bedroom where I was assuming the rest of his clothes were. It wouldn't take long for him to come back, but I pulled Cashel into my arms for some cuddle time.

He sighed and snuggled close before letting out a quiet huff. “Why was he nearly naked? The curtains are open.”

Oops.

I hadn't realized that part.

“I don't know.” Shrugging, I was honest about the confusing interaction. “I was finishing up a work call when he came in from his last class. He waved as he walked past the table where I was working, and by the time I was finished, he was sans pants and wiggling.”

Cashel couldn't seem to decide if he was going to laugh or not and finally settled on shaking his head. “Definitely puppy time later.”

“I would have to agree.” Kissing his head, I listened to Gareth as he talked to himself in the bedroom, mostly about cute nonsense. “I think we need to work on a

better schedule to make sure he's getting enough pup time."

Nodding against me, Cashel let out a deep breath that seemed to take some of his stress with it. "Maybe we should mix up playtime and pup time where he's just relaxing? I'm not sure the wiggles are just about him having energy that needs to be used up."

Cashel had a point.

"He's going to the gym a few mornings a week, so you're probably right." Giving him another kiss as Gareth came bouncing out of the bedroom, now dressed again, I smiled. "We'll sit down and make another family calendar later or we can add it to the calendar you've got with Brady."

That had Gareth letting out a romantic sigh. "We're already calendar family. I can't wait to tell Brady's mom."

They were so cute...and just a little confusing because I wasn't sure what being calendar family meant.

But judging by past experience, it would take a while to explain it, so I just smiled and nodded. Yep, it was definitely dinner conversation and maybe while he was explaining that we could figure out what Cashel was actually so frustrated about.

Because it was not about his lack of a walk of shame.

Not even my cuties were that nuts.

Chapter 16

Gareth

Cash was so cute when he was grumpy, but I knew better than to point it out. Bates was smart too, but I could see him fighting back a smile as Cash grumbled and couldn't find anything on the menu. For him to be such a pain in the butt, I knew he was worried about something, but I wasn't sure if Bates knew that too.

Cash was dramatic a lot, but sometimes it actually meant he needed to talk. This was definitely a need to talk kind of grumpy, but I couldn't actually point that out to Bates without making Cash grumpier.

It was a rock-and-a-hard-place relationship situation, so I went back to looking at the menu. It seemed like the best option until I figured out what to do next. "You know, the only bad thing about Italian restaurants is that they don't have good appetizers."

Maybe I could text Bates?

Cash paused his grumbling, not wanting to agree with me but not willing to tell me I was wrong. Bates was pressing his lips together and trying to be patient without getting himself into trouble. It was hard, but after a moment, Cash sighed. "Sorry."

Thank God.

Now we could talk about it.

Looking up from the menu, I nodded at Bates and jerked my head toward Cash so he'd know it was time to figure out why he was insane.

He smiled.

Yes, smart boyfriends were so amazing.

“It’s okay. We all get frustrated sometimes, but we’re here if you’d like to talk about it.” Bates said it so nicely that it took me a second to realize it was like when Brady’s mom said something very similar. It meant we were supposed to talk whether we wanted to or not.

Cash’s groan said he knew that too. “It’s going to sound ridiculous.”

Probably.

“That doesn’t mean it’s not frustrating or important to you.” People got worked up by stupid things all the time, so Bates’s response was smart.

“I...” Cash was saved by the waiter coming back to check on us, but Bates had to send him away *again* because none of us had actually figured out what we wanted to eat. Cash had been kind of distracting.

When we were alone again, Cash took a drink of water and stretched out his explanation. I had a feeling Bates was proud of Cash’s ability to be a drama queen of epic proportions. For someone so small, he had a huge personality.

But Bates seemed to like that about him, so I wasn’t worried.

I was hungry, but not worried.

Cash never flipped out over real problems that we’d struggled with. College? No problem. Money? All set. Parents forgot birthdays again? He’d already had it planned out anyway.

Nope, this was about something he’d worked himself up over that I wouldn’t understand anyway and he’d just pout and sigh until we hugged it out.

So it was time for Bates to take over that role because the internet said it should be his job.

And sips of water weren't cutting it anymore, but I was patient and more patient, and eventually, Cash tried again. "I had a few frustrating moments today that all kind of caught up with me."

Okay, now we were getting somewhere.

Hmm, it hadn't taken as long as it had last time he'd lost his mind, so maybe having a Dom made finding his sanity easier when it wandered off?

"Would you like to tell us about it now, or is it a cuddle and get it out later kind of a conversation?" Bates asked the best questions and he even reached out and stroked Cash's head.

Cash was so cute, he leaned into Bates's touch and sighed. "No, we can do it now."

That was good because I wasn't sure his mental stability could wait if we dragged it out. Cash hadn't even been able to pick out dinner and he loved Italian food.

"Alright, where should we start?" Bates's even tone had even me relaxing and I hadn't been stressed.

Just hungry.

I was going to have a snack next time Cash had a meltdown.

"Well, the day started with a conversation in my morning class, that stupid family relationships psychology one." He hated that class but he'd needed a few more credit hours and it'd been the only one that fit into his schedule.

Oh, was this about our biological family?

"The class was on setting healthy relationship boundaries." Leaning back in his chair, Cash frowned. "It wasn't...I couldn't relate to any of it."

Why?

If it'd been just the two of us, I wouldn't have asked, but Bates was there to fix things if I drove him nuts, so I decided to take a chance. "Why?"

When they both looked at me, I tried again with more words. "I mean, we're awesome at explaining what we need from Bates and we're doing better at telling Brady no. We're even doing great at putting healthy distance between us and our biological family. I think we've done an awesome job of learning healthy boundaries."

We probably needed to work on a few areas, but overall, I was impressed with us.

Cash frowned, but it was his confused one not his frustrated one. So we were doing better, but I was still a bit lost. "I... Yeah, I guess we have."

So?

Bates always did a great job of fixing conversations that had wandered a bit off the path. "So you've made a lot of progress, because just wrangling Brady is an impressive feat, but something made you think you weren't doing a good job on boundaries?"

Licking his lips and wiggling, Cash nodded. "It sounds even more insane now, but the discussion eventually started focusing on boundaries in dating relationships and it got...well...it got stuck on taking your time and making sure you're not letting your partner push you into something you're not ready for and I realized we might be pushing you into stuff you're not ready for."

If anyone was pushy it was me.

Bates probably knew that too because he just blinked for a moment before cocking his head. "Okay, I'm going to process that for a minute while you tell me what else upset you. I think I need the full picture of your day in order to respond. Piecemeal isn't going to work with this."

Good point.

“Alright.” Cash still looked confused, but I thought he liked having someone else take charge of fixing his drama.

Bates was doing a much better job than I would have because Cash immediately started spilling out the rest of his frustrations. “After class, a few other students were continuing the discussion on relationships and I got caught up in it as I went to get coffee.”

I could see that happening. He liked talking to people and he had a hard time telling them to mind their own business. He was just as curious as I was, even if he didn’t like to admit it. “They asked about my relationships.”

Frowning, Cash cocked his head. “Maybe because I wasn’t sharing enough in class? I don’t know, but somehow, they thought I was charging headfirst into a relationship going nowhere and they were really stumped on the whole three people thing.”

Clearly they’d led very sheltered lives.

We weren’t anywhere near the weirdest people I’d met on campus.

“I managed to escape—coffee just wasn’t worth it—but they were so confusing, and then when I got back, I saw the stairs guy again and he asked me if we’d moved in together already.” Cash sighed, looking sheepish. “And that just seemed to be the icing on the cake? I don’t know. It just felt like a long day.”

Oh yeah.

I was curious about how Bates was going to fix it.

He was always a surprise, though.

He looked at me. “Do you think we need to work on relationship boundaries?”

Oh, was this tattle on myself time?

"I might need to." I shrugged, not quite sure on that one. "Brady still kind of walks all over me sometimes and I think I might be a little pushy when it comes to you? You don't seem to mind, so I'm not stressing over it, but if anyone is a bit rough on boundaries it's me."

I just never realized I was doing it until I'd already done it.

Bates's lips turned up at the corners, but he managed not to laugh. "I can see where it might feel that way to you sometimes, but I don't mind helping more with the Brady boundary situation, and I really like knowing what you want. I promise that if you were shoving my boundaries around too much, I would let you know."

So I was just wiggling them sometimes?

I could live with that.

"Okay, good." I looked over at Cash because it seemed to be his turn. "So how do you feel about my wiggling Bates's boundaries? Oh, do I wiggle yours too?"

Cash shook his head making me feel better, but it took him a second to get his thoughts organized. "No, I like knowing what you want and I like it when you drag me into things. Most of the time it's stuff I wouldn't have done on my own."

So helpful wiggling was good.

Got it.

"Like Bates." I couldn't help smiling as his smile got wider. "I think that turned out pretty good."

But he'd kind of wiggled the boundaries first...not that I was going to throw him under the bus.

"It did." Whatever Cash was thinking made him blush, but I was glad he hadn't lost his words that time.

“And this might sound like a dick thing to say, but we really shouldn’t be taking relationship advice from the average college student. They’re kind of stupid and they’re generally sleeping with everything in sight.” They were all on hookup apps and doing dangerous shit that Brady’s mom would’ve killed us for doing.

Cash’s face scrunched up. “I hate it when you make good points.”

Aww.

“Not terribly polite, my curious boy, unfortunately, it’s kind of accurate. But...” Bates let the word trail off as he glanced between us and seemed to have decided that we needed to stay on track. “But it feels like you’re still thinking our boundaries have somehow been pushed around a bit. What specifically are you worried about?”

Oh, that was probably good to know.

Cash’s blush got really bright for some reason, but he seemed to know that Dom Bates had asked that question...just still really nicely...because he wiggled and sighed but eventually got the answer out. “Um, well, Gareth kept talking about our next apartment together and I didn’t stop him and with the way everyone was staring when I was talking about our relationship, it seemed like I should’ve done something.”

Good grief.

“Are you responsible for me being pushy?” I answered before Cash could respond. “No, that’s Bates’s responsibility as my Dom. You’re Dom number two, so you don’t have to worry about that one. The internet said so.”

“That’s ridiculous logic.” Grumbly Cash was back but Bates didn’t seem to mind.

He smiled and shook his head at me. “Questionable logic aside, he had a good point. You are not responsible for Gareth’s desires or his wiggly boundaries.”

No, Bates was.

"I'll tell him if he's rushing me and I will do a better job of making it clear that I don't feel rushed." Leaning back in his seat, Bates got a very thoughtful look on his face. "I haven't been going through our relationship like there's a template we should fit or a plan we should be working through."

Good, because we weren't template people, we were BDSM checklists kind of people.

"I never expected it to be...let's call it traditional." Bates shrugged like he felt bad for not being able to find a better word. "Between the questions about lifestyle topics and wanting to date both of you, I expected the unexpected."

Cash finally started to nod and a faint smile peeked out. "Yeah, it's definitely been unexpected."

"Did we rush you?" I still wasn't completely sure what he was actually worried about, and I was afraid I was missing something important.

"No." Shaking his head, Cash seemed to realize I needed more words. "I think I was worried that I wasn't worried?"

God, only Cash could manage to worry that much.

Being in his head would be exhausting.

"I'm so glad I don't think about normal stuff as much as you do." I was perfectly happy thinking about history and our future and fun stuff like at what point we could plan a vacation together as a family and if a family vacation meant we had to take everyone.

Bates couldn't control his laughter any longer but it didn't last long. "I'm not sure if I want to ask what keeps your mind occupied or not, my curious boy."

"Not." Cash was a very dim light as he frowned and glared at me. "It's probably dirty or scary."

“Or both.” Messing him was so much fun.

His eyes got wider, and whatever went through his head was fun because he turned to Bates for help. “It’s your job to save me from him.”

“I’ve got a lot of jobs when it comes to our relationship. I think I should be taking notes.” Bates looked very pleased with himself when he made Cash roll his eyes. “And one thing I know I need to be taking notes on is our list for the next apartment, but...”

He shook his head when Cash’s worries started to come back. “No overthinking this, my light.”

They were so cute.

“Logically, I will be done with my program in May and you guys have one more year before you graduate with your bachelor’s.” Nodding toward me, Bates didn’t forget me. “And then Gareth will probably go right into his master’s.”

Yep, that was still the plan.

“So, that means I will need another place to live.” He shrugged like there was no way around it. “There is nothing wrong with me picking out a new apartment based on what we’ll need in the future. If you guys got scholarships like I’m pretty sure Cash said you did, then you probably have to live on campus for those.”

Another good point.

And he kept making even more of them before Cash could find something else to worry about.

“That means we’ve got more than a year before living together full time is even possible, right?” He waited until we both nodded to continue. “That gives us plenty of time to run into problems and sort them out, and to figure out what conversations we’ll need to have.”

“I think we’re doing pretty good already.” But I looked over at Cash just to clarify. “But we’re not living

together yet, we're just visiting a lot."

He was a brat and rolled his eyes, but Bates was helpful and nodded.

"Yes, just visiting." Bates smiled even though Cash was being dramatic and sighed. "This is also our test run to figure out the problems we'll run into. Nothing about our current dynamics frustrates me except when I have to sleep on my own."

He gave a very good imitation of Brady pouting, but as Cash and I both laughed, he continued his Dom Bates lecture. "What would frustrate me is finding an apartment that's too far from you guys and too small for you to move into it later. I have no desire to live somewhere and then move again. Living in the apartment here by the school made a lot of sense, but once I'm done it would make me nuts to move that fast again."

Ugh.

He had another good point.

"Cash likes staying in one place, so he'll agree with you on that once he stops worrying." I was a very good partner and ignored Cash's glare. "Longer leases also mean you can save money."

Bates flashed a quick grin but he did a wonderful job of staying on track. "Yes, and thank you for the reminder that money discussions need to go on the list too. See, lots of conversations before we have a permanent living together situation."

Even more than the spanking stuff.

I was never going to make it.

But it looked like we might've solved enough of Cash's frustrations that I'd get food, so I wasn't going to complain.

Chapter 17

Cashel

Yep, still felt stupid...but at least I wasn't frustrated any longer?

"Can I ask about commutes from the next apartment or would it be pushy?" The fact that Gareth was being serious was the only thing that kept me from either rolling my eyes or laughing.

He frowned, nearly turning around in his seat to be able to see us all as Bates pulled into the parking lot. "How far ahead does he need to start looking for a new apartment? I feel like that's a real-world grown-up thing that I should already know the answer to."

Oh, um...

"I want to say he should already be looking?" I wasn't sure about that answer until I saw Bates give a sheepish shrug as he parked the car. "Yep, that look said he's either already started looking or he's really behind."

Bates grinned and decided an immediate confession was best. "Both."

Bates's answer made Gareth laugh, but he didn't let it get him off track. "So explain both, please. Now I don't know what Cash should be worried about."

So I was doing the worrying for both of us?

That made a lot of sense, actually.

"Well, I initially got behind with looking because somehow the first semester just flew by and then once I started thinking about looking and figuring out my next

steps, I met you guys.” Unbuckling, Bates leaned over and gave Gareth a quick kiss and me a wink.

“So plans had to be adjusted.” Nodding, Gareth was still taking the whole odd conversation very seriously. “That would’ve put you behind too because you had to figure out what you needed to be looking for instead of what you’d thought you needed to be looking for.”

“Exactly.” Bates turned in his seat so he could see both of us as he leaned against the door. “I was initially picturing a small studio to just focus on saving up a lot, but that would be miserable for all three of us even if you were just visiting on the weekends.”

Oh, yeah.

I wasn’t sure there was any way to make that work. “I can understand wanting to save money, but I think we’d drive you crazy without more space.”

“I’d drive *everyone* crazy without more space.” Gareth’s honesty got laughter from me and Bates. “So the new plan...is that something we need to work on together or are you handling it?”

That question was clearly for Bates, but he was trying not to smile as he glanced in the back seat toward me.

“I don’t worry about everything.” Just most things. “But...that would be something I’d like to talk about before final decisions are made?”

It still felt like my needs were probably pushing on a boundary he should have but Bates didn’t look frustrated.

He also didn’t respond like I thought he should. “I think this is a *cuddle on the bed* discussion.”

Why?

“Why?” Gareth was helpful and voiced that one for both of us.

Bates was still looking very thoughtful, but he answered right away. "Because it's not a simple yes or no for me. There's more I want to say."

So he gave a confusing answer right away.

"Dom lecture." Gareth nodded. "Got it."

He'd been looking up way too much stuff online lately...but he was probably right based on Bates's grin. "Come on, cuties."

Ugh.

I wasn't sure what we were going to get lectured on, but I had a feeling it was my fault or just about my being dramatic in general.

Neither of those sounded like fun, but maybe that was why Bates wanted cuddles when he said whatever was on his mind?

As we got out of the car, he was still smiling and took both of our hands as he led us into his apartment. Thankfully his door was so close we didn't run into anyone else helpful or nosy, and I had to admit to feeling more relaxed as soon as we were inside.

"Shoes off, then keep going." Bates turned and gave Gareth a playful glare. "And keep the rest of your clothes on."

"Aww." Giving a cute pout, Gareth nodded. "Yes, Sir."

I couldn't decide if he was trying to butter up our Dom or if it just seemed right but the *Sir* part made Bates smile. "Good boy."

As we headed back to the bedroom, Bates gestured toward the bed. "Gareth beside me and Cashel is on our laps."

My groan didn't seem to register to either of them because they just climbed up on the bed and sat side by

side. Bates even gave a reassuring smile and patted his legs. "Come here. Cuddle time."

Ugh.

I wasn't pouting, but I gave them both good frowns as I climbed on the bed and settled on Bates's lap with my legs across Gareth's. "How about we just tell me what I need to apologize for?"

Gareth was trying not to laugh, but Bates kissed my head. "Nothing. We're just going to talk."

That did not sound any better.

"Alright." Curling into him, I let out a breath. "I'm ready."

His chest jerked, but he managed not to laugh, unlike a pup I could name. "Such a drama queen when you're worried."

"I'm not worried." Not much at least. "Talking is important."

"That's right." Bates settled back, hugging me tight. "And sometimes questions need more talking to answer than just a yes or no."

"I can understand that." I just wasn't sure what he'd started thinking about in the car and I didn't like it.

"So you said...or maybe asked...but either way you said you would feel more comfortable if the apartment planning was a joint discussion that you were a part of. Which is perfectly reasonable, by the way." Bates seemed like he added that part to keep me from worrying too much.

It worked.

"Okay, so why am I in cuddle therapy then?" It'd taken me a minute but that seemed to be what we were doing.

“Oh.” Gareth’s eyes widened like he’d just realized it. “So someone isn’t in trouble? That’s great.”

He was such a dork.

I couldn’t tell if he was fucking with us or not.

“No, no one is in trouble, so no spankings or naughty corner time or anything like that.” Bates clearly was on the side of fucking with us.

Gareth just grinned.

Bates shook his head before kissing me again and giving me another hug. “Do you acknowledge that asking to be included in the plans was reasonable?”

I wasn’t sure where it was going but it felt like I had to nod. “Yes?”

It wasn’t a terribly confident answer, but it got me another hug. “Alright, let’s try again. Being that we’re discussing eventually living together and we’re wanting to make sure the space fits all our needs now and into the future, do you think it’s reasonable for you to have an input in that decision?”

“Yes.” Gareth was happy to answer for both of us. “But aside from having questions and random thoughts, I don’t really have a huge need to get involved. You guys will do better with that and I’ve got a crap load of papers coming up. So they’re going to win the contest for my free time.”

Probably a good decision...and a good answer.

“Cashel? What’s your answer?” Bates’s soft tone made me sigh for some reason.

“Um, yes, it was reasonable.” Now what?

“I think you don’t always have an accurate view of healthy boundaries.” Bates paused but I wasn’t sure what to say, so I just shrugged and he kept going. “Playing amateur psychologist here, I think your

relationship with your parents, and probably watching Gareth's, made you question if you should be involved in our apartment discussion."

Gareth leaned forward like he had a spring on his back. "Because they never remembered to include us in that kind of stuff and so we'd internalize it and bring it over into other important stuff?"

All it took was for Bates to nod for Gareth to keep going. "Do we do it to each other or are we so used to it just being us we don't do it like that? Have I done it? Do you think it would spill out into stuff like sex? Is that why we haven't had penetrative sex yet? Well, penetrative making love?"

Now I was the one trying not to laugh.

I didn't do a great job but it popped the last of my stress and I could feel myself snuggling closer to them without thinking about it. "It's going to kill him to wait much longer."

"You're right." Bates gave us both kisses. "I think I wanted you both to make sure I wasn't rushing you into that part of our relationship because I kind of was...well, a tad bit pushy in the beginning."

Gareth snorted. "We needed pushy or we'd have never gotten *anywhere*. I'd have still thought that loving Cashel like a boyfriend would be going backward. Don't feel guilty about that."

Just don't make him wait any longer.

Bates's chest jerked for a moment like he could read my mind before he nodded. "Alright, message received loud and clear, but we're tabling the sex conversation until after we finish the first one."

My groan just made his laughter finally escape and he kissed my head again. "Now, first, I'm going to say that I want all of us involved in important decisions like where we live and things that would affect our life together.

Like if Gareth was going to be looking into master's programs on the other side of the country, that's something we'd all talk about together and figure out what worked best for him and us."

Gareth couldn't hold back about that, wiggling and throwing the answer out even though there hadn't really been a question. "There's a program here that's my first choice, but if I don't get in that one, there's a college about an hour from here that would work. I don't do well in online classes, so it has to be in person."

"That's all good to know." Bates leaned over and gave Gareth a quick kiss. "It's been something I wanted to ask about but other things kept coming up."

Gareth waggled his eyebrows. "Like spankings and pup time."

Bates laughed and couldn't seem to resist teasing him a bit. "And what's for dinner and how your day went."

Okay, there'd been a variety of distractions in our life.

"No, we're going to stay focused." Shaking his head as Gareth giggled, Bates relaxed back in the bed again. "Alright, second, I would like us to discuss the merits of finding a therapist for family counseling."

That hadn't been what I thought he would say.

Before I could do more than blink in surprise, Bates kept talking through his idea. "I'm not sure exactly how to describe what I'm picturing, but I think we need to make sure we're talking about things in healthy ways and that we're getting an outside check to show Cashel what healthy boundaries look like."

I started rolling the idea around in my head, wanting to really think about it since it was obviously important to Bates, but Gareth started shaking his head. "I'm not going to let anyone tell Cash that there's something wrong with us."

Oh, not good.

“No, baby.” Bates leaned over and kissed Gareth’s cheek before pulling him in closer. “Not someone outside the community who wouldn’t understand us. There’s a therapist in town whose whole practice deals with people who are more interesting than average. He’d have no problem with our relationship or you being a pup or Cashel being a switch. The guy’s a little and gay. He’s totally out in the community.”

Gareth’s panic immediately receded, but his frown didn’t fade. “Little like Brady?”

Bates didn’t manage to hold back his snicker that time. “No. No one is like Brady.”

“Okay, we can talk about it, I guess?” Snuggling closer, Gareth rested his head on Bates’s shoulder. “As long as it’s not stressful for Cash.”

Or Gareth.

Having us both end up nuts every time we went to therapy would be torture on poor Bates.

“Not stressful at all.” Bates shifted us around so he could wrap his arm completely around Gareth. “He’s the type of guy who wouldn’t even blink at meeting your pup side and he’d even throw the ball for you.”

“Hmm.” Gareth seemed to like hearing that because his snuggles got happier and less stressed. “How do you know him?”

Bates chuckled. “Some of the professors and people in the BDSM community around town have dinner once a month. I got invited to one of those by a professor early last semester. It was interesting and I liked the people I met.”

Everyone kinky came to this university, so it didn’t surprise me.

“Okay, well, that sounds better.” Gareth seemed more at ease with the idea after hearing that the guy had gotten the seal of approval from professors on campus. “We can just meet him first, though, right? I mean, without committing to anything?”

“Absolutely.” Bates gave him another kiss and hugged us again. “We’re not going to rush into any commitment, but I think you’d like him.”

It probably couldn’t be worse than the one I’d dragged Gareth to, but I wasn’t going to be helpful and point that out. “I want us to have healthy communication skills.”

My response got a dramatic sigh from Gareth that had Bates biting back a laugh. “I want to be healthy too.”

Gareth sounded like being healthy meant he was going to be tortured, but we were talking about communication, not weird green smoothies that tasted like ass.

“Well, I think cute pups who are open-minded and work on good communication skills should get rewarded.” Bates went right for the win.

Bribing Gareth.

It was definitely cheating, but Gareth responded well to it. “Really? I like being good.”

I couldn’t help the scoff that escaped and Gareth couldn’t resist sticking his tongue out at me.

“Oh, I thought my boys had been amazing at their communication tonight?” Bates gave a dramatic frown that was pure theater, but it had Gareth going very still. “Cashel was good at explaining what he was frustrated over and you were patient when you were letting him work through it. And we did talk about having dessert at some point tonight.”

It seemed like our Dom was good at bribing both of us.

Chapter 18

Bates

Yes, my boys needed a reward and some physical proof that we were all good. Poor Cashel's brain had been doing worry circles all day and Gareth was scared that the therapist would destroy Cashel's peace of mind.

Yep, they both needed a distraction along with a reward.

"I think I was better than Gareth." Cashel just couldn't resist poking our pup. "I shared a lot and explained what I was thinking and stopped being a dick really fast compared to normal."

Gareth's huff said he couldn't argue with that logic, so he just used it to leapfrog over it. "I was very patient while he was insane and didn't obsessively worry while he was being dramatic, and I was going to make sure you figured out the best way to handle his drama if you didn't work it out on your own."

That had me trying not to laugh.

"I appreciate you wanting to help me make Cashel feel better." He really had been patient and even Cashel's sigh said he was giving Gareth points for letting me figure out things on my own.

That had to have been hard on our helpful pup.

"Thank you." Gareth snuggled closer and seemed to be feeling better with the acknowledgement of how good he'd been. "It was hard, but I knew you'd want to try to figure it out on your own because you want your part of the triangle to be strong too."

So dramatic and so insightful. "You're very smart, pup."

He gave a little wiggle, another reminder that his pup needed to play soon, but he shifted so he was almost curled around me. "Thank you, Sir. Do good subs get even more rewards for being smart?"

Cashel didn't quite manage to control the snort that escaped, but Gareth was polite and ignored it. Another mark went into the "reward Gareth" column and Cashel made a slightly resigned sigh. "He's probably a well-prepared pup too."

That took a few seconds to translate in Gareth's brain. He went very still before sucking in a breath and nearly giggling. "I've been in a constant state of readiness since our first sleepover."

Somehow, I didn't think he was exaggerating that.

Neither did Cashel...and I didn't think he'd expected that answer either.

His eyes went wide and he took a moment to swallow and carefully figure out how he was going to respond. I was very proud of him, but Gareth was still cuddly and giggly and in his own world. As I kept Gareth happy and distracted, kissing his head and tickling him just to make him squirm some more, Cashel managed to wrap his mind around how much Gareth wanted penetrative lovemaking.

I had a feeling Cashel would've been fine without it either way.

When we were filling out limits lists and talking about them, I'd caught him at a confident moment and he hadn't squirmed when he'd said he was fine with penetrative sex going in his acceptable list, but looking back, nothing about the way he'd responded said he was passionate about it.

Should that have prompted more discussions?

I hadn't thought so at the time, but now, I was starting to rethink that assumption.

"It seems like preparedness should be rewarded." Cashel managed to sound relaxed and had completely hidden all his overthinking thoughts.

It was impressive and worrisome, if I was being honest.

"I agree." Sliding down the bed a bit, I pulled Gareth so he was half draped over me and chuckled as he snuggled closer, not-so-subtly rubbing his dick against me through our clothes. "We just have to figure out what kind of reward our needy good boy would appreciate."

And a few other important details.

But since our pup loved sharing everything on his mind, I didn't think he'd have an issue answering a few questions. The way he was rocking against me was a good distraction as well, so I wasn't worried as I reached down and gave his ass a firm pat. "What are our *very ready* pup's feelings on condoms?"

He giggled which had Cashel rolling his eyes for some reason...probably because that was an easier emotion to latch onto. "I went and got tested at the clinic on campus after our first date."

Gareth was one prepared cutie.

"I've been tested since my last partner and haven't done anything with anyone except you guys since then." Kissing Gareth's head, I gave his ass another smack. "No one holds a candle to my sexy boys."

Gareth was still happy and giggly, wiggling against me, but our sweet Cashel blushed and seemed to be deciding if hiding was acceptable or if he had to be Dom. His mind must've been whirling, but it eventually settled on Dom-lite, so I took that as a hint about what direction he wanted to go.

Out not in.

Well, not into him at the very least.

“I was tested at my physical last year because they don’t seem to believe you when you say you’re not having a boatload of sex.” Cashel’s frustrated tone had Gareth looking up and resting his chin on my chest.

“You’re right.” Gareth frowned. “I thought it was just me that they didn’t believe.”

Interesting.

“I think they’re probably under the assumption that most people lie and downplay their sex life and explorations out of shame or embarrassment.” I shrugged when they both frowned, and Gareth especially looked confused.

“Why would I have felt that way?” He cocked his head and frowned at Cashel. “They’re medical professionals, not a priest.”

Cashel shrugged, obviously just as confused as our Gareth for once. “I don’t know but it was a pain in the ass to keep explaining that being gay meant I hadn’t fucked any women.”

It sounded like I needed to drop a few interesting facts into the ears of the professors on campus who would know how to fix the situation down at the clinic.

“The last time I went they weren’t that bad, but it’s been a while.” Hmm, maybe longer than I realized since I went to the on-campus provider for that kind of stuff. “They might’ve gotten some new management over there? Is it okay if I vaguely mention knowing some people who got treated very oddly there? No details. I just don’t think that’s normal.”

Or healthy.

Or helpful.

Especially the gay and women part.

They both shrugged and even Cashel nodded. "That's fine. I'm assuming it's one of the professors in the lifestyle?"

"Yeah, when I was first going here that place was run great ,but it sounds like something changed behind the scenes and I want to let someone know." I just had to figure out who.

"That's fine." Gareth kissed my cheek and seemed to be working at keeping us on track. "We'll come back to that discussion, though."

Even Cashel almost laughed, but I nodded and tried to take it very seriously. "I think that's a good plan. We have other things to figure out."

That had a shiver racing through our needy boy. "Yes, something important. A reward. A very aggressively given reward."

A pounding, huh?

"I agree." Giving Gareth a kiss, nibbling on his lips and making love to his mouth, I felt Cashel relax into me and I knew he'd finally figured out his thoughts on Gareth's reward.

When I finally pulled away, I kissed along Gareth's jaw and pulled Cashel in closer so my boys could kiss. As they both moaned, I leaned back and just watched them nibble and explore until they were breathless and grinding against me.

Beautiful.

Finally pulling apart because air is important, I couldn't help smiling as they rested their heads on my chest. "I love watching you two."

As predicted, Gareth giggled and Cashel sighed.

“That’s the best thing about having two other partners, I always get to watch you two together.” Gareth went back to wiggling against me, just having needed a few breaths to get his excitement going again. “I like that almost as much as I’m going to like you making penetrative love to me, Sir.”

It seemed like he’d decided that subtle wasn’t getting him where he wanted to be fast enough.

“Should we test that theory?” I had to chuckle when his head started bobbing before his brain could’ve processed the question. “It might take numerous rounds of thorough data collecting to figure it out, though. Are you okay with being the focus of our research?”

Nearly moaning, Gareth nodded and looked a bit like his brain had completely stopped working. “Yes... I... Yes, I volunteer as tribute.”

Cashel couldn’t help laughing and that seemed to jump-start Gareth’s brain because he blinked and looked over at Cashel. “I don’t want to be selfish, though. If you want to be fucked into the mattress too, I can share.”

And now it was Cashel’s turn to explain what was going on in his wonderfully complicated brain. “I... Um, I think I’d rather be doing the...well, doing the fucking, not being fucked. Is that okay?”

Gareth cocked his head, blinking for a few seconds. “Sure, it’s probably a light switch thing, but like Bates said, not everyone likes doing that, so you don’t have to. That’s the joy of two boyfriends. If you want to watch that’s fine, or oh, you could suck my dick while Bates does the fucking.”

Cashel seemed to have imagined the conversation being a lot bigger than it’d turned out to be because he swallowed and it took a second for him to respond. “Okay, I might do one of those sometimes, but for now, I kind of wanted us both to make love to you.”

“Alternating or at the same time?” Gareth looked down at my bulge and then over toward Cashel’s groin. “I’m not sure you’d both fit at the same time without some stretching? It’s a thing. I know that. I’m just not sure about the mechanics.”

From the way he was studying us and the focused look on his face, I decided not to ask what he was picturing and stuck to the easier end of the conversational spectrum. “I think that’s something that we should work our way up to if you’re curious about it.”

“Probably a good idea.” Gareth kept up his inquisitive stare, though. “I don’t think I’ve ever had anything of that size go through that way before.”

Cashel’s eyes went so wide they looked like they were going to fall out.

I wasn’t sure what Gareth was imagining or talking about, and neither was Cashel, but thankfully Gareth didn’t elaborate as he finally stopped staring at our pants. “Okay, we’ll talk about that another time, so we’re going to what...alternate?”

We had the best conversations.

I looked over at Cashel to see if he was still panicking or if he actually had something to contribute. Surprisingly, he’d stopped worrying...probably because he’d just realized that the conversation could get weirder. “I was thinking alternating but kind of like we did with the oral stuff. Back and forth until you come.”

It seemed that all it took for him to talk about sex without worrying was for Gareth to ask about something that was a lot more interesting.

I was going to have to remember that.

“That sounds like a great idea.” Gareth leaned over and gave Cashel a quick peck. “Thank you for thinking of a good way to pound me into the mattress.”

Aww.

They were adorably insane.

“You’re welcome.” Cashel couldn’t seem to decide what else to say and went with an old standard, but Gareth didn’t seem to mind.

His brain had already jumped to a whole new topic. “Does that mean we’re good with no condoms or are we going to be the most careful we can be? Oh, or does someone have hygiene issues and want us to use them? I saw that online.”

His search history had to be fascinating lately.

“I’m good with no condom.” Kissing Gareth’s cheek as he grinned, I shrugged. “I like the idea of marking you and getting you dirty.”

“Aw, thank you.” He gave me a quick peck before settling back on my chest to look at Cashel, clearly wondering about his preference.

Cashel’s cheeks went slightly pink but he didn’t seem stressed. “No condom is fine with me.”

Once that part was out, it seemed like he got a burst of confidence because the rest came out easier. “I know you wouldn’t put either of us at risk and I know you’d like to get dirty.”

“I would.” The wiggling started up again as Gareth’s mind focused on what would happen next. “How are we going to do it? I’m so excited, you guys. I’ve been thinking about penetrative making love for a while now.”

Cashel managed not to point out that we hadn’t been dating that long, and I really admired his restraint. “I know and I’m glad we’re ready to give it to you.”

“You’re the best.” Gareth gave us more kisses before wiggling his way on top of me. “You are too.”

Chuckling, I wrapped my arms around him and stroked down his back as Cashel inched toward his side of the bed. "Thank you, pup."

"Oh no." Gareth shook his head teasingly. "I'm your curious boy now...*very* curious."

Cashel rolled his eyes and gave Gareth's ass a firm smack, surprising them both going by how wide their eyes went. "Should you be arguing with either of us right now?"

Gareth melted.

There was no other word for it.

He went all soft and sighed, giving Cashel a look like he thought he hung the moon. "Yes, Sir."

Yep, adorable.

Cashel swallowed, nodding and trying to look firm. "That's better."

This just kept getting more and more perfect...and I couldn't wait to see what would happen next.

Chapter 19

Gareth

Cash had spanked me.

Bates had made Cash so confident and happy that he'd been able to find his inner Dom enough to spank me.

Yep, best relationships ever.

"Good boy." Bates kissed my head, but I could hear the pride in his voice and I knew he was proud of Cash for being so confident. "Don't forget, good boys get the best rewards."

Pounding ones.

"Yes, Sir." I gave Bates a cute cheek kiss I hoped made me look very well-behaved, but the way his eyes were sparkling said I might not have been terribly subtle.

"So polite." Bates gave me a quick peck as he ran his hands down my back and squeezed my ass, but Cash couldn't resist scoffing.

"I think we have different definitions for that." Cash sounded wonderfully Dommy and I couldn't help the shiver that raced through me. "See? That's not a good boy."

Then what was it?

I was hoping this would be a spank Gareth game, but I wasn't sure enough to be sassy about it. To play it safe, I aimed for innocent again and gave both of them cute cheek kisses. "I'm trying to be good for you, Sirs."

Bates's smile was wicked and I could see delight in his eyes. He liked it when I pretended to be innocent, but Cash kept making disbelieving noises. "He's trying to be naughty. That's not being good."

Hmm, I wasn't sure I agreed with that but naughty might mean spanking, so I tried to look cute and helpless.

Bates moaned.

He liked helpless and sweet too.

Cash spanked me again...so he liked it too, just in a different way. "You're trying to seduce your Dom."

Yes, I was.

"No, Sir." I just wanted my reward...but how to get it?

BDSM was complicated sometimes.

Curling into Bates, I looked over at Cash and gave him wide eyes. "How can I show you I want to be a good boy for you?"

Oh, he liked that.

He shivered and I could see his hips rock forward without him realizing what he'd done. "I think you're going to have to be spanked. You need to learn your lesson."

Yes!

"I..." No moaning. No thanking him. Had to play along. "I want to learn how to be good for you, Sir."

Bates made another needy sound again and I could feel his cock getting harder as I slid off him and aimed to look sorry and helpless. "What do I need to do to show you that I want to be good?"

Because we needed to get started before one of them accidentally distracted us again.

We'd come close too many times for me to let that happen.

No conversations.

No orgasm-induced naps that lasted all night.

No getting distracted by desserts and cuddles.

Aggressive lovemaking first, then desserts and cuddles after.

Bates's chest jerked like he found me cute or he knew what I was thinking, but either way, he didn't let us get distracted, so that made him one of the two best Doms in the entire world. "Yes, I think it's time that we made an impression on our naughty boy."

Yay.

Swallowing back a moan and possibly a cheer, I nodded slowly and tried to keep my excitement in check, but I couldn't stop shaking. "Yes, Sir. Thank you."

Oh, yes, thank you...thank you...thank you...

"Hands and knees, naughty boy." Cash straightened and sat back on his heels looking confident and sexy, sending another shiver through me. "You'll never learn your lesson if we keep going easy on you."

Wow.

"I... Yes, Sir. Yes, Sir." I couldn't think of anything else to say, so I just kept nodding as I did my best to get into position. "Yes, Sir."

I wasn't sure where to go, though.

Bates fixed that problem.

He was wonderful as he sat up and leaned against the head of the bed, looking stern as well. "Over my lap, head down and ass up. You know what's going to happen."

“A spanking.” It might’ve come out a tad bit moany, but I couldn’t help it.

“That’s right.” Cash’s glare was sexy and perfect as he nodded and looked down at the bed. “Don’t dawdle.”

Yes, moving.

I was supposed to be moving.

Getting that accomplished took more effort than it should have, though.

I wasn’t sure why, but my limbs felt heavy and my brain was already fuzzy before I got onto all fours over Bates’s legs. It was so perfectly naughty I wasn’t sure I could’ve gotten any harder if I’d tried...but Bates decided to test that theory when he reached under me and released the button on my jeans and tugged them down to bare my ass.

Yep, it turned out I could get harder.

“This is not sending the right signals.” Cash reached under me and grabbed my dick, giving it a squeeze as he shook his head. “An erection doesn’t show that you want to learn your lesson.”

Oh.

Wow.

I... “I’m sorry, Sir.”

Clearly, all his practice at being a dramatic pain in the ass was working up to being the best glary Dom ever.

He was so good at being an asshole, it was the sexiest thing I’d ever seen.

Even Bates moaned.

He was a good caretaking Dom and the best happy Dom ever...but Cash was such a good asshole.

I knew I couldn’t keep the punch-drunk smile off my face, so I pressed it against the mattress and tried to

moan softly as hands stroked over my bare ass.

The first hand coming down being from Cash meant I hadn't hidden my smile fast enough.

Ugh, he was so cute.

"I'm not sure you're taking this seriously enough." Cash's rough tone sent a shiver through me and I couldn't help moaning.

That just got me another smack and made the moaning and erection issue even worse.

Yay for more spanks.

"He just needs us to make an impression on him." Bates's smooth Dom tone was the perfect complement to Cash's and so was his spank.

Somehow they were alternating between firm, warm ones and sharp ones that kept me on edge and aching hard. I could never tell what would happen next and they even took turns grabbing my dick and squeezing it and petting it softly.

It made the world spin around me and left me shaking even though I knew it wasn't too much pain or edging. Together they just made a scene more than the sum of its parts like some kind of dirty word problem.

And being mostly clothed still made it all even dirtier.

It was amazing and had to be magic, but they were nearly drowning me in the craziest sensations, so I couldn't have asked even if I'd been able to get the words in a reasonable order. But all I'd managed to do was moan and arch my ass up.

Part of my brain pointed out that I probably should be trying to figure out what to apologize for or work at explaining I was going to be their good boy, but again, that would've taken more brains than I had functioning at the moment.

Just staying in the right position and not orgasming was taking a huge toll on every part of me, so I was going to give myself some leeway on everything else. Including thinking in general and staying in the moment.

At some point, reality just didn't seem as real and it was almost like the world had taken a step back from me. The pain barely managed to flash through the fog like lightning during a storm, but it was the cool feeling of a slicked finger that pulled me back from the hazy sensations that had surrounded me.

It was Cash.

The world came back into focus and the first thing I heard was him making a pleased sound. "Yes, that's right. Such a needy slut."

I was?

I mean, I was, but...oh...

It took me a moment to understand that the other sounds I was hearing was me moaning, and then that was clenching around his finger and rocking back against him.

That definitely explained the sexy commentary.

"But I think he learned his lesson very well." Bates's gentle tone made me realize he was running his hands over my ass and up under my shirt. "Listen to his whines and see the way he's shaking for you? Yes, I think you made a very good impression on our boy."

They both had.

All I managed to do was nod my head, but as I worked on being good for them, I stopped fucking myself on Cash's finger...even when he added a second.

"I don't know...I think that was begging and stealing pleasure. I'm not sure if we've actually made enough of an impression yet." Cash's tone had me imagining more

spankings and edging, but his fingers were saying he was getting ready to fuck me.

I was really hoping finger logic would win.

“He managed to stop fucking himself on your fingers, though.” Something about Bates’s tender tone made the dirty words even sexier, and I couldn’t stop the shiver that raced through me. “He’s needy and a very sweet slut, but he’s trying to be a good sub for you, aren’t you, slut?”

Oh, that was so...he was such a...

“Yes.” The word came out almost like a croak and got cut off as Cash brushed his fingers over my prostate before I could finish the thought.

It took several long wonderful moments before he eased his fingers back to stretch my opening and stopped tormenting me enough for me to finish my thought. “I... Yes, Sir.”

Got it...well, mostly.

But the effort and focus that took had me forgetting I was supposed to be controlling my body.

Oops?

Arching my ass higher and pushing back got me a flood of pleasure and a flash of pain as a hand came down on my ass.

Cash.

“I don’t know. Look at how he’s begging.” Cash made a tsking sound that was the sexiest mix of frustration and disappointment ever. “I think we’re going to have to try something else to put him in his place.”

Since I knew my place was between both of them, I had to work at controlling the whole moaning and begging thing. But my stillness and almost-silence were

rewarded by a sigh from Bates. "You're right. I think there's a better way."

To...

To put me in my place?

To remind me I was their sub?

To help me remember that I was their slut?

All of the above?

Please let it be all of the above.

A small part of my brain that was still working tried to ask what would happen but that didn't quite work out.

"Yes, let's get him ready." Cash sounded like he was shaking his head as the bed shifted and my pants got pulled down even lower.

I lost track of who was moving and who was touching me, but they worked in tandem to strip my clothes off and it wasn't until I had to sit up so Cash could pull my shirt over my head that I realized they'd been taking off their clothes too.

God, they were so beautiful...and so fucking crazy because they kept frowning and shaking their heads like they were frustrated at having been put in such a ridiculous position.

My bad behavior was going to get me pounded into the mattress.

They were so wonderful to me.

Cash even smacked my ass again, frowning as he reached down and stroked his cock. "In the middle of the bed, slut."

He was amazing.

And so hard.

“Yes, Sir.” I had every intention of behaving quickly since getting fucked was exactly what I wanted but my body had other ideas, and it took a ridiculous amount of effort to get my arms and legs to work at the same time.

It took two more spanks and one wonderful flick to the head of my dick before everything moved in the right order to climb off of Bates’s lap. I almost thanked Bates for the flash of pain that got my muscles moving, but I wasn’t sure how that would be taken.

And I didn’t want to do anything to risk my punishment...or my reward...whatever we were going to call it.

“Good boy.” Bates gave my ass a firm pat as I managed to get in the right position and he could finally climb off the bed. “You just needed some encouragement to behave.”

So sexy.

“Thank you, Sir.” Every time I thought they couldn’t get any sexier, they managed to take scrambling my brains to a whole new level.

And just watching Bates slide his pants and briefs off so he could palm his dick had my brain whirling even faster.

I might’ve managed to moan, but all I really could focus on was licking my lips and wanting to taste his cock as Cash brought his hand down on my ass again. “That’s not what you’re supposed to be focusing on, slut. This isn’t about your oral fixation.”

How had he made that sound so erotic?

“I’m sorry, Sir.” I whined as he spanked me again but only because he brought his hand down right over my hole and it sent sparks of pleasure showering through me. “I...oh...”

“That’s much better.” Bates finally released his cock and reached out to grab the lube on the bed and slowly spread some down his cock. “We’re going to help you to remember exactly why you want to be our good boy.”

Best scene ever.

Chapter 20

Cashel

Shaking.

Hard cock.

Romantic eyes.

Gareth was loving the scene and Bates would've let me know if I'd done something wrong...and right now he was just as hard as Gareth.

So was I, but my brain could keep me worried and turned on at the same time because it seemed to be magic...or insane.

"I'll...I'll be good...I...I need to remember..." Gareth couldn't seem to decide how to finish the sentence, and his words only got more convoluted as Bates climbed on the bed. "Yes...I'll do that."

He'd be good?

He'd remember?

Gareth would've promised anything to get fucked at that point, so I wasn't surprised when Bates gave him a soft kiss and rolled him onto his side. "That's right. You're going to be so good for us."

I was the big spoon as we curled up around Gareth, and he must've known what would happen because he pulled his legs up and opened himself to us as he nodded again. "Yes...good..."

He was shaking and basically parroting what he thought we wanted to hear, so I knew he was still mostly floating and hadn't come back down to earth yet. Bates

didn't seem worried, so I took his cue. He just kissed Gareth again and shifted so he could tuck himself tighter around Gareth. "That's right."

Taking a clue from his simple wording, I kissed Gareth's neck, stroking my hands over him as I brought my dick closer to his entrance. "You're going to be a very good boy for us."

Part of me felt like I was watching everything from far above and just marveled at how we'd made Gareth feel. I'd helped send him flying. I'd made him so turned on he couldn't think and what brain cells he had left were all focused on having us inside him.

He'd never doubt how much we wanted him and I knew he'd remember this scene forever.

Of course, he'd probably talk about it forever, including with the random people he always seemed to meet around campus, but that didn't scare me as much as it used to. Our boy wanted to brag about his relationship and his partners.

He'd just choose to brag about things I wouldn't.

Bates probably would, though.

Yeah, there was a reason those two chatterboxes got along so well.

"Good...yes..." Gareth didn't get much more than that out as he hid his face against Bates's shoulder and let out a breath, pushing his ass back toward me. "Yes... good..."

Dragging it out would only make him crazier or bring him out of the wonderful headspace he'd found, so I gave him more kisses and held him tight as I pressed my dick against the tight ring of muscles.

I was aiming for slow and gentle, but he stretched open around me and it was like his whole body moaned as I sank deeper into him for the first time. "That's..."

Bates gave a soft chuckle, kissing Gareth's head and holding him tight. "Yes, lucky boy."

Gareth gave a faint nod as I went still, letting him get used to the feeling. It didn't take him long before he whined and wiggled as much as he could since he was trapped between us. "Please..."

He tightened his body around my cock, trying to pull me deeper, so I eased almost all the way out and then sank deep again, fucking him slowly to begin with. That got another sexy whine from him, but it was sweet and submissive and sent the most incredible emotions flooding through me.

I could feel how much he wanted it in every fiber of his being and I could barely fight against his need. I thrust back harder, knowing this was what I'd always been missing. Nothing had felt right because it hadn't been with my Gareth and my Bates.

My boy and my Dom.

My partners.

My boyfriends.

Wanting them to feel as incredible as I did at that moment, I kissed Gareth's neck and slowed until I eased out of him and left him feeling needy and empty. He shook his head, his whines getting desperate until Bates shifted his hips and started filling our boy.

That got the most satisfied sigh from Gareth and it made me smile as I kissed his shoulder and kept running my hands over him. "That's right. Bates is going to fill you so good."

Bates went right for the hard thrusts, filling Gareth just like I'd said he would and I could feel the pounding thrusts sending pleasure rippling through Gareth. "That's my good boy, yes, work your hole for me."

God, that was...

Gareth shivered, loving the dirty talk Bates gave him.
“Yes...I...”

Sliding my hand around his chest, I teased over Gareth’s nipple and pinched it as I kissed Gareth’s neck. He gasped and must’ve clenched around Bates because they both moaned. “That’s right. You’re going to make Bates feel so good, aren’t you?”

Gareth gave another faint nod and sucked in a breath as I went back to plucking at his nipple as Bates pounded away at him. I could feel the way he was shaking as the pleasure built, but just as he was ready to explode, Bates slowed and eased out of him.

My turn again.

As Gareth shook and whined, I slowly pressed into him and filled him gently, making love to him and dragging out the pleasure. The whole thing had Bates smiling and he had a wicked twinkle in his eyes as I rocked into Gareth and kissed his back.

“That’s right.” Bates kissed over Gareth’s head and took over teasing our boy’s sensitive nipples. “You’re getting filled over and over. I bet that feels so good to a sweet slut like you.”

It wasn’t really a question, but it had Gareth nodding as his body rippled around me. The tight heat and the way he moved were too good to fight. I held off as long as I could, though, slowly thrusting faster until I was pounding into him just like he wanted.

But I knew we’d both come if I kept it up, so I slowed down again, getting the sexiest whimper from him as I let Bates fulfill our promise to pound Gareth into the mattress.

Kissing.

Pinching.

Pounding.

We traded off making love to Gareth until he was clinging to Bates and shaking, too close to the edge to keep teasing him. Bates silently mouthed “subspace” as he raised an eyebrow, and I nodded. If we pushed Gareth any longer, it would be like the spanking and he’d go flying.

But since it felt like his promised pounding should come with a mind-blowing orgasm, neither of us wanted him to sink that deep.

So as Bates eased back into him, I kissed Gareth and held him tight as the pleasure started to build again. It felt like it only took seconds to have him hovering right at the edge and I could hear the needy begging sounds starting to escape our boy.

In his mind, he knew he wouldn’t come and he was already waiting to be pulled back from the cliff. But it was time for a surprise for our desperate sub. So as Bates thrust into him as hard as he could, I tugged on Gareth’s nipple and bit his neck as I ground my dick against the top of his ass. “Come.”

Bates shifted and nailed Gareth’s prostate, and the pleasure was overwhelming. He cried out and I could feel the desire explode through him and it pulled me over the edge too. I shot cum up his back as he shook and milked Bates’s cock for every drop of pleasure he could.

We did our best to keep up the flood of sensations sweeping through Gareth until he was boneless and let out a happy sigh. His drunk smile as he slowly melted into the bed was adorable, but the best part was when he waved his arm and pouted. “I need more cuddles.”

And he said I was the drama queen.

But we gave him what he wanted and held him tight as we wrapped ourselves around him again. “All the cuddles.”

Bates smiled, nodding and echoing my sentiment as he kissed Gareth's head. "Because you were so good for us."

Gareth let out another happy sigh and nodded. "I'm an exhausted good boy."

He was so insane.

"Because your Doms wore you out pounding you into the mattress." Bates laughed as Gareth nodded and gave him another kiss before leaning over our boy and giving me a kiss.

Giving my lower lip a nibble, Bates took his time loving and teasing me before he settled back on the other side of our cute attention whore. "How are you feeling, baby?"

Dramatic.

Gareth wiggled and sighed. "I'm going to need a lot more hugs. You both pounded me very good."

Nut.

Barely managing not to laugh even though I could see the love in his eyes, Bates ran his hand over Gareth's head and then caressed my cheek. "I think we can arrange lots of cuddles and then maybe a shower?"

That was definitely a good idea.

"He's sticky, so I'm going to second the shower motion." My dry response had Gareth giggling.

"You're a big part of the reason I'm sticky." He didn't seem upset by that, so I refused to be embarrassed.

"I had to mark my sub." My slightly asshole tone had him letting out another romantic sigh.

"I liked being marked." He turned his head and puckered his lips, clearly expecting kisses and getting them since the drama queen was too cute to deny. "And I

liked being firmly made love to and spanked and kissed and everything.”

Chuckling, because he was just too ridiculous, I nodded against him as I snuggled closer. “Firmly made love to, huh?”

Gareth scoffed. “Of course. You both love me very much and you gave me everything I asked for because you’re so good to me.”

So much confidence in such a crazy body.

“I do.” There was no point in brushing off something he knew so completely. “I love you very much and I always have.”

“And now we both love Bates so much too.” Gareth was still sounding relaxed and fuzzy-brained, but he leaned toward Bates and gave him a kiss. “We love you so much and we’re so glad you came into our life.”

“I know you do, baby, and I love you so much it feels unreal sometimes, but I think you’re supposed to let Cashel handle that part on his own.” Bates’s sweet response was met with a scoff from the crazy nut.

“I’ve waited a long time to tell you already.” Shrugging, Gareth didn’t seem like he was going to agree with Bates’s admonishment. “He needed a push, so I helped.”

He wasn’t exactly wrong, so I just talked around it. “I can talk for myself, thank you.”

Rolling my eyes as they both nearly giggled, I sat up enough to lean over Gareth and gave Bates a tender kiss. “I’m going to pretend the pushy pup didn’t say anything.”

Bates probably wanted to laugh, but he managed a serious expression. “I didn’t hear anything.”

They were both ridiculous.

"I'm pretty sure I love you both because you're nearly insane and I seem to appreciate that, especially in tall, happy men." That got giggles from both of them, but I ignored it as I gave Bates another kiss and reminded myself that I couldn't kill Gareth. "I love you."

Pushing himself up on his elbow, Bates leaned over Gareth and wrapped his free arm around my neck, pulling me in for another kiss and sandwiching a still-giggling Gareth between us. "I love you too, my light. You balance us out and I love that soft heart that's hiding under such a sarcastic exterior."

Yep, insane.

"And I love you both for all the cuddles you give me." Gareth managed to wrap his arms around both of us, wiggling and squishing us against him. "And I'll love you even more once I get a shower, because you're right, I'm really sticky."

Drama queen.

But he wasn't wrong, so after giving Bates one last kiss, we both separated and looked down at our smiling pup. "Best scene ever."

Definitely.

"Come on. You're getting cum on the covers." Shaking my head, I climbed off the bed and gave Gareth a glare that had his giggle starting up again. "Bathroom."

It wasn't romantic but he was leaking cum everywhere too.

Bates just laughed as he rolled off the bed and started tugging Gareth with him. "Dibs on cleaning the dirty pup, then we're going to put some lotion on that pink bottom of yours, naughty boy."

Oh, good idea.

Gareth just gave Bates another romantic smile as he let himself be dragged into the bathroom. "You both spanked me so good. Thank you."

I really wasn't sure he should be thanking us for making his ass ache...especially when we'd worn him out in more ways than one. But Gareth found a lot of crazy things romantic, so I wasn't surprised when Bates hugged him tight and kissed his forehead. "You're welcome."

Yep, they were both completely nuts, so it was probably a good thing that they had me to keep them mostly sane.

And on track.

Gareth started rocking against Bates, clearly trying to decide how quickly he could get more firm attention. "Stop that. You need a shower."

And his ass needed a break.

Snickering, Gareth aimed for innocent as he looked over at me but it wasn't believable in the slightest. "I don't know what you're talking about."

Bullshit.

"You need a break." Every part of him needed a break. "We're going to take care of you whether you like it or not, and that starts with a shower."

Because he was well beyond a washcloth level of sticky.

"Yes, Sir." Gareth sighed, resting his head on Bates's shoulder. "You're so sexy when you get all growly."

I was not going to blush.

I was not going to blush.

I was not going to blush.

“If you keep pushing me to get a reaction, I’m going to show you what I found out about cock cages.” That had the drama queen’s eyes going wide and it seemed like he stopped breathing for a few seconds.

Had he thought he’d been the only one to do research lately?

“Oh, that’s...” Gareth’s words faded off before he wiggled against Bates. “Other Sir...I wouldn’t like that, right? I mean, the look on his face says I’m not supposed to like that threat.”

Bates looked like he was mentally debating if insanity was sexy or adorable. “I think you’d find it very memorable at the very least, but how about you not push his buttons too much? I think we’ll all like cuddling a bit better if he’s not planning where to bury your cock-caged body.”

The lunatic took a few seconds before he nodded. “Good point, but you’ll explain why it’s hot and scary at the same time later, right?”

“Oh yes, my curious boy.” Kissing Gareth’s head, Bates nearly purred out the words. “I’m going to thoroughly enjoy explaining that one.”

They were both insane...but sadly, it was my favorite thing about them, so I hoped they never changed.

Chapter 21

Bates

“Are we sure this is a good idea?” Surprisingly enough, it was Gareth who was questioning the sanity of our current predicament.

“No.” I wasn’t going to lie to him but I tried to add a qualification that would keep him from worrying as badly as Cashel. “But I think this will help move us in the right direction. Do you want to be the one to explain to Brady’s mom that we’re not going to another family dinner?”

“Ugh.” Gareth sighed as he looked up the stairs toward their other apartment. “That sounds miserable... but going out on a double date with Brady and Jude?”

Yeah, I wasn’t sure which one would torture us more but Brady’s mom had actually tracked us down the other day. It was clear we had to get our act together and all figure out how to get along like a reasonably functional family or she was going to step in.

“Would you rather write a letter?” Cashel came up behind us, looking up the stairs too. “I’ll support your decision if that’s what you want.”

“I hate those.” Gareth looked like he couldn’t decide if he wanted to pout or pitch a fit. “I really hate those.”

Alright, double dating it was.

“It’s going to be fine. We’re going to have dinner and hang out.” And once we knew Brady wouldn’t ask us anything odd and Jude wouldn’t glare at us, then we’d know it was alright to go to family dinner.

I had to admit I was looking forward to that part, but the rest of it, well, not so much.

“We’ve been doing a lot better and it’s been a while since Jude glared at anyone.” Cashel being the calm voice of reason was fascinating, and he had a good point.

“You talking to Brady about your pup side helped a lot.” Kissing Gareth’s cheek, I tried to look confident as we heard Brady start bouncing down the stairs.

“I really think that if we move the boxes around again, we can get at least one or two more in.” Brady seemed to be doing his best to talk Jude into more toys, but even I knew he already had hoarder-levels of stuff packed away in his room. “You liked those new boxes. We could get more of those.”

It was a good try, but even Cashel and Gareth winced.

“I think we need to work out a system that if something new comes in, something old has to go out.” Jude’s logical response was met with more wincing and a shocked inhale from Brady.

“Oh, that’s...I’ve been a good boy, Daddy.” Brady was wonderfully manipulative and I couldn’t tell if he was trying to get his way or actually offended.

Gareth was frowning and seemed confused too, but Cashel just raised one eyebrow like he wasn’t buying it.

“Bambi, I’m just trying to be reasonable.” Jude’s tone said he realized that wasn’t what his adorable cutie wanted to hear. “There’s only so many toys that will fit in your room.”

Brady sighed as they got closer, obviously thinking Jude was missing some kind of point. “I’ll have more room once Gareth and Cashel move in with Bates. Then I can turn their room into a playroom.”

Wait, didn’t he already have a playroom in Jude’s apartment?

What were they doing with that empty second bedroom?

Hadn't Brady's mom told him she'd bought out the other side this semester so Jude wouldn't have to worry about a roommate?

It seemed like no one wanted to have to explain Brady to a new stranger at this point in their relationship.

So what were they doing?

I'd heard someone talking about it in the housing office a few weeks ago. They were a wealth of fun information and were easily bribed with coffee, but I'd actually been there to talk about my lease and when I had to be out of the dorms.

Was it supposed to be a secret?

Was someone's birthday coming up?

"You've got the weirdest expression." Gareth frowned, studying my face instead of the tail end of the toy debate. "What did they do?"

My smart cutie.

Just as Brady and Jude came down the stairs, I gave Gareth a quick kiss. "I'll tell you later. Nothing bad."

He knew me so well.

Cashel did too because he sighed. "Brady or his family did something weird."

Smart men were so sexy.

But there was no time to get distracted because our friends had arrived. Well, Gareth and Cashel's family and my interesting acquaintances. I wasn't sure how they'd describe me yet, but I wasn't betting on family.

Now Brady's mother...she considered me family.

Hmm, maybe that was another reason we were driving Jude nuts?

He didn't have the best homelife growing up.

But I wasn't supposed to know that, so I just smiled as they came down, with Brady frowning and Jude looking frustrated.

Cashel and Gareth didn't seem to know how to help, and I was smart enough not to want to get involved in a toy debate with a little, so it was slightly awkward until Gareth took one for the team. "I'm not sure you have room for more toys, dude. It's just...well, your Daddy has a point."

That got another dramatic sigh from Brady who clearly didn't like that answer. "Toys are very special things and not something that should be taken away unless I've been really naughty."

Gareth frowned, shrugging. "I don't know, but if they tip over, you'll probably die, so that might mean you have too many."

His logic was on point.

Jude seemed to appreciate the backup, even if he hadn't been expecting it, because his frown got noticeably less intense. "We'll figure out something, but I'm not making any promises."

Brady started to pout but then seemed to reconsider his strategy and turned to give Gareth and Cashel big smiles. "When are you moving in with Bates?"

I loved insane littles...and I was very glad not to have one.

Cashel was pulling a Jude and just frowned, but Gareth was adorably Gareth and shrugged. "We're working on that but not soon enough for you to buy more toys. He's finishing his master's at the end of the year and has to move out of the apartments and go live in the real world again."

“Oh, that’s terrible.” Brady was finally distracted by the tragedy of my move and seemed to forget the toys for a few seconds. “I’m sorry.”

Aww.

Even Jude frowned like he felt bad for us. “What are you going to do?”

Cashel decided he didn’t mind the turn the conversation had taken and actually spoke up, probably to show Gareth and me that he wasn’t worried anymore. “We’re looking at apartments that we’ll all fit in for after we graduate, and for next year, we’re going to work on figuring out the best way to handle it.”

Brady was still in the shocked and sad little phase but Jude was surprisingly helpful. “You might want to think about organizing your classes so you only have them four days a week. That way you can have three-day weekends to spend with Bates.”

Oh.

Cartoon light bulbs probably went off over all our heads based on the fact that Jude actually chuckled and shrugged. “I know I wouldn’t like to be separated from Brady, so I thought that might give you more options.”

Had he actually been thinking about ways to help us?

Maybe dinner wasn’t going to be that bad after all?

Well, it wasn’t as bad as it could’ve been but it certainly was awkward.

The silence was stretching out and not even the food arriving had helped. With everyone being on their best behavior, and only a minor number of frowns, I had a feeling it was more about not rocking the boat and less about being frustrated to be there.

Hopefully.

Because as we finished up the Mexican food, which was absolutely fabulous, I decided to throw a rock into a very still pond and see what would happen.

“I couldn’t help hearing your conversation about toys and looking for a spare room to use as a playroom.” Pausing, I waited to see if it would get an unexpected reaction.

It did.

Jude frowned at Brady who sighed and tried to look innocent as he figured out how to apologize. “We’re both sorry if we made Gareth and Cashel feel uncomfortable. That wasn’t anyone’s intention.”

Laughing seemed like it would’ve been the wrong response, so I did my best to take the whole thing seriously. “I’m pretty sure I can speak for all of us when I say we weren’t offended. It was a very practical discussion to have with someone who has lots of collections.”

That had Brady beaming and nodding, so I had a feeling I’d phrased it fairly well. “Yes, collections are important.”

Jude looked like he was trying not to laugh and encourage Brady, but he nodded. “They are.”

“I might have a way around that issue, though.” Here we go. “I was talking to the staff in Housing the other day about my own lease and yours came up.”

The silence around the table was deafening and the famous Jude glare was starting to return.

“I had no idea it wasn’t public knowledge. They thought it was sweet and were bragging about Brady’s mother.” That had everyone going completely still.

Was I supposed to keep going?

Finally, the life came back into everyone and Brady cocked his head and looked at his Daddy. Jude just gave

a very Daddy shrug and looked like he was trying not to sigh. "What did you discover?"

Well, he hadn't exploded.

"Brady's mother paid the single supplement for this semester so you wouldn't be given another roommate." That had eyes going wide around the table. "I don't know if it was supposed to be a surprise or if the explanation just got lost in translation, but from what they were saying, you aren't going to be given another roommate this year."

"People tell you all kinds of weird stuff." Gareth's delightful commentary had laughter circling the table.

"They do, but this one was your fault." I couldn't resist teasing him even though I was pretty sure he'd been cheeky to break the tension. "I was telling them about my wonderful boyfriends and they connected you with Brady and Jude."

Because they were just as nosy as I was.

"They've been trying to behave and not chat too much, but once they knew I already knew you guys, it seemed like they couldn't help themselves...and well, it didn't seem bad nosy?" Now I wasn't so sure, but when Brady and Jude both shrugged, I realized it was probably going to be fine.

"So my mother made sure Jude wouldn't have a roommate?" Brady might've been asking me the question but he was looking at Jude. "Maybe that was what she meant by her 'fun secret'?"

Probably.

"She probably thought housing was going to tell us?" Jude was glancing back and forth between me and Brady. "It sounds like there was a disconnect somewhere."

“I agree.” Thinking about it, I couldn’t help shrugging. “That’s the only thing that makes sense.”

“There’s a reason why everyone says communication is so important.” Brady shook his head like he thought the whole thing was crazy. “I’m not going to question that any longer.”

He shouldn’t have questioned it before.

“So what are you going to do about the room?” Cashel finally seemed at ease enough to jump into the conversation and I was glad to see it. “Do you want help moving some of the toys downstairs or are you picturing something else?”

It was a very good question that neither man seemed to have a quick answer for.

Jude was the first to get back on track, though. “We’ve got a few things to discuss first but setting up a playroom with some of the toys is going to be a good idea.”

A few things to discuss?

Part of me wanted to ask what they had to work out, but I knew it wasn’t my place.

It was Gareth’s.

“What do you need to work out?” Gareth looked between the two of them, curious and confused. “That’s code for something, right?”

Oh yes.

Thankfully Brady was just as chatty as Gareth was. “I’m not supposed to ask you about it yet, but lying is worse than being overly nosy, so I have to answer your question. There’s no way around it.”

I had a feeling that nosy part was a dig at me, but I approved of anything that got us more of Brady’s wonderful logic, so I wasn’t going to get offended.

“Jude and I were talking about next year and what to do and where we wanted to live and if we were ready to live together and what steps we should take, but I couldn’t leave you guys alone but talking about it was pushy and you might not be ready for those kinds of discussions.” Brady glanced curiously between all three of us as the insane flood of information finally stopped. “Are you?”

I could see both sides of the issue, so I understood why Brady wanted to talk and Jude hadn’t wanted to push.

“Are we what?” Gareth seemed to have gotten lost in the convoluted explanation because he gave Cashel a confused look, obviously asking for a translation.

“Ready for discussions about how we want to live next year.” Cashel was happy to help and it looked like his brain was going full steam ahead. “Brady wants to live with Jude in one of the two-bedroom units, but he’s worried that we’ll feel left out since we’ve lived together since freshman year.”

“Oh.” Gareth quickly jumped back on track once Cashel cleared things up. “Well, I was worried that us going to stay with Bates on the weekend would leave Brady alone too much, so this is perfect.”

Cashel and I both nodded in unison, but I let him take the conversational lead. “Taking care of Brady is really important to us and it seemed like a big job for just one person.”

“Who’ll babysit when you have to leave him alone?” Gareth’s helpful question had Brady pouting and Jude’s mouth dropping open.

Had he not realized the babysitting part?

“I haven’t used glitter or set anything on fire in months.” Glaring adorably, Brady had the most wonderful chaos threshold. “I don’t need a babysitter.”

The way Cashel's, Gareth's, and Jude's heads all cocked to the side at the same time said I wasn't the only one who was questioning that declaration.

"I think you just need to remember how important you are to everyone." It seemed like my turn to try to smooth things over before the crazy little continued to pout. "They want to make sure you're safe and happy. Not many people, little or not, can say that. You have a wonderful family."

And crisis averted.

"I do." Beaming, Brady sighed and looked at everyone like they were so sweet and romantic.

Hmm...had Gareth gotten that look from Brady or had Brady gotten it from Gareth?

"I have a wonderful family, and family shares secrets and helps each other, right?" Leaning his elbows on the table, Brady rested his head in his hands and looked adorably innocent.

He was definitely up to something...but what?

Chapter 22

Gareth

Brady was really good at getting what he wanted... but I wasn't sure what that was.

Looking at Cash and Bates, they weren't sure what he wanted either, but the way Jude frowned said he knew and he didn't like it.

That just made me and Bates more curious and Cash sighed.

Family was hard.

"You're right. You have a wonderful family that's supported your relationship with your Daddy and has done their best over the years to support you personally." Bates was the best at handling Brady and didn't even smile when Brady huffed.

So, Bates had managed to very sweetly put Brady in his place, wherever that was...but did we have any idea what Brady wanted to begin with?

"What do you need help with?" Cash seemed to think that was the safest part to respond to and I couldn't decide if he was a genius or very naïve.

Brady looked over at Jude who was shaking his head. "But, Daddy..."

"You even said it wasn't polite, Bambi." Jude's answer was just as cryptic as everything else had been and was not satisfying my curiosity in the least.

Leaning over toward Bates, I tried to whisper but I wasn't sure it worked. "What do we do?"

Jude and Cash both rolled their eyes, which was kind of cute actually, but Bates shrugged. "Ask him what he really wants to talk about is the only answer I think."

"It's going to be weird." I had to make sure Bates knew that.

"I know, but it might be fun." He was an eternal optimist. "Might as well ask and see what happens."

Cash had his *it's not a good idea* expression on, but he didn't tell us to stop.

"Alright, but you do it. I'm nervous." And Doms were for handling stressful stuff.

"The internet said this is my job, huh?" Bates laughed quietly and kissed my head as I nodded. "Alright, pup."

Hmm, did he think this was about my pup side?

Bates had been really careful not to say anything about being our Dom or that part of our relationship at all. It'd been like we were just three boring people who happened to have fallen into a relationship.

"Thank you, Sir." Well, if he thought it was kink-related, I told myself I should make sure Brady knew I was okay talking about it.

I just hoped he'd aim it at me, not Cash.

"Good boy." Kissing my cheek, Bates ran his hand over my back as I straightened.

Everyone at the table was looking at us, but they were all wearing different expressions. It was kind of fun. Cash was skeptical and brooding. Jude was looking at us like we were insane for indulging Brady, and Brady was excited that he was getting his way.

"What did you want to talk about, Brady?" Bates didn't draw it out or tease Brady, so I thought that meant he wanted to get it over with.

Or he wanted to fuck with Jude.

It could've gone either way, honestly.

"I would like to discuss Cash's role in your relationship." Brady sat up very primly and just kept going as my and Cash's eyes got wide. "I understand Gareth is a pup and that's why he needs two partners. He's very excitable and pups take a lot of work. I know that even if I've never seen his pup side."

Brady waited like I was supposed to say something, but he was right, he hadn't seen my pup side, so I just nodded.

Bates was trying not to smile, though, so I knew he'd found something manipulative Brady had said cute. "I can understand your logic."

When that was all Bates said, Brady sighed and Jude was now trying not to smile.

They were all so weird.

"I'm missing bits of the rest of the logic, though." Brady looked like he couldn't have that and just kept going. "Why does Cash need two boyfriends? Why do you?"

Oh, he'd given Bates a way in.

Bates smiled wider, ready and willing to throw himself in front of the Brady train to save our Cash. "I fell in love with them and I love the way they see the world and how close they are together. They just needed someone to step in and show them they were more than roommates. We wouldn't work if it were just any two of us."

Nodding, Brady looked like he approved of the response, but it took him a few seconds to realize he hadn't gotten the answer he'd really wanted. Jude knew it too because he sighed and started to fuss at Brady. "Bambi—"

Okay, well, it might not have been much of a fuss but Cash couldn't handle it any more than Brady could because he broke really fast. "It's okay. Brady can ask about me."

Bates and I looked so surprised, Jude laughed. "It's okay to tell Bambi no. He's not going to die if he hears the word, no matter what he thinks."

I wasn't so sure about that but contradicting Jude seemed rude. Bates seemed to be on the same page because he was coughing and looking down at his plate like the last few bites of his meal was suddenly very interesting.

I liked how he was letting Cash decide what he was comfortable with, but I was pretty sure we needed to work on Bates's poker face a bit more.

"It's fine." Cash sat straighter and shot Bates a look that I thought meant he should stop fighting off the giggles and behave.

It didn't help Bates's giggles at all, but aside from rolling his eyes, Cash seemed to understand how hard it was. "I don't need two boyfriends to be happy in general. I fell in love with Bates and he helped me realize that I'd already loved Gareth like a boyfriend. We just hadn't seen each other that way, and I think we need Bates to balance us out."

Oh, he'd done a good job of explaining how he was feeling without actually mentioning any of the interesting bits. Bates's lips were pinched together making me think he'd noticed that too, but he managed not to laugh or sigh, unlike Jude.

He was such a tattletale.

"Wait." Brady frowned, looking around the table again. "What am I missing?"

A lot.

“I don’t know but it felt like he said a lot of nothing.” Jude shrugged. “It’s probably just me being suspicious. Sorry.”

Well, that was kind of polite?

Cash must’ve been thinking something along the same lines because he sighed. “I’m really not used to talking about myself like this and it has nothing to do with family or not. I’m just...I’ve never come out about anything.”

He was right.

Most kids at school had assumed he was gay from pretty young, so he’d just never denied it. We might’ve technically come out when we’d told his parents we were gay but that’d been about it. The moms had only cared because they’d been planning on us marrying sisters so we could have some kind of joint wedding.

I’d never bothered to ask if they’d already picked out the girls, but looking back, that might’ve been kind of odd.

Brady frowned, staring right at Cash. “I’m not supposed to make anyone come out about anything they’re not ready to. That’s why I can’t ask questions.”

Was that a way to tell Cash he had to volunteer his interesting bits?

Brady was really smart sometimes...and really confusing other times.

“Is he manipulating us or being honest?” I figured I might as well ask since I couldn’t figure it out.

Bates started coughing again as Cash sighed. “Both.”

Oh, well that just made things more interesting.

“I’m a switch. I like dominating Gareth but I like submitting to Bates.” Cash waited for that to sink in and Brady’s eyes to light up. “I don’t need both kinds of

relationships to be in love, but I like having both of them in my life. It makes me feel good to know that no matter how I'm feeling, one of my partners can really understand what I need."

For some reason, Cash turned to me with a questioning look and just waited.

What the fuck was I supposed to be doing?

"Sir?" I decided to let Bates translate and now it was Cash's turn to fight off the giggles.

"Cash wants to know if he can talk about his relationship with you as he's describing his dominant side." Bates quickly translated the expression, so it'd probably been obvious to everyone else, but I didn't mind being confused.

"Okay, yeah, you can talk about me." It was just Brady and Jude...and well, Brady was family and everyone Brady knew...okay, maybe I could see why Cash thought he should ask about it.

Brady might not ask questions but he wasn't really good at keeping things to himself.

"Thank you." Cash reached under the table and squeezed my leg.

"I'm learning to be Gareth's Handler. For his pup side, I mean. We're still figuring that part out, but I like taking care of him." Cash seemed to think that was everything because he finally leaned back in his chair and waited.

"That makes sense." Brady nodded like that cleared up everything before turning to me. "Does your pup want to play with me? Big or little. Either would be fine. I like dogs."

"That sounds like fun." Little Brady would be fun to play with. "I think I'd like to play with you when you're little and I'll make sure to wear shorts."

Jude's eyes went wide for some reason.

Brady shrugged. "My little side wouldn't care about you being covered, but thank you for wearing clothes. I saw pups online and they like wagging their tails."

"Yeah, tails are fun." I thought I was just agreeing with something obvious but Jude's mouth was hanging open. "Bates said we needed to talk about who could see my naked pup side, but I'm not sure your Daddy wants you to see my penis."

Turning to Jude, Brady studied him and frowned. "Yeah, you might be right."

I was glad he was confused too, but it probably wouldn't have been polite to ask why Jude was acting so weird.

We all had penises, so it wasn't like he'd never seen one.

"Some people like privacy and are shy. It's okay." I was being nice, but Jude groaned as Bates finally lost the war with his giggles. "And some people are kind of strange."

That didn't help either of the two Doms, but it made Brady nod. "You're right, and that's okay too. Not everyone is logical."

Wasn't that the truth.

Cash was the only one not giggling or confused, but he was smiling and shaking his head. So he was definitely being weird too, but I preferred his brand of strange. "Is this something you guys would like to do in the future...or is this hypothetical?"

That was a good question.

I didn't have an answer for it, though, so I turned to Brady. "What do you think we were talking about?"

He frowned but was able to answer the question quickly. "What to do after dinner."

So he was frowning because he thought we were all stupid.

Got it.

"That sounds good to me. We got my outside tail the other day and I haven't tried it yet." How should we work it, though? "Which apartment has more space to throw the ball and play?"

"Bates's probably?" Brady squished up his face like he was trying to picture both apartments. "But I haven't seen Bates's enough and now he keeps the curtains closed a lot, so it's hard to imagine."

"I kept giving him blow jobs with the shades open, so we decided we had to be more careful with the curtains." I wasn't sure it would be possible to shock the neighbors, but Bates pointed out that we actually had some women in the building who might not want to see penises just popping up randomly.

"That's probably a good idea." Brady leaned back in his chair and frowned. "You know, I wouldn't have thought about that being one of the hard parts about living on the first floor."

"It really is." Shaking my head, I picked up my water. "And it makes it a lot easier for people to hear in. Some people are very nosy."

Sometimes that was helpful, though, so we had to be polite.

"Manners are very important." Sighing, Brady shook his head. "We're all very lucky that my mother taught us good manners."

Absolutely.

"Right, Daddy?" Brady seemed like he was just being nice by including Jude in the conversation, but he also

might've been checking to see if Jude's brain was working yet or not.

"Yes...I...yes, good manners are important." Jude managed to answer the question, but I was going to vote *not working* on the whole brain thing.

Bates wasn't much better, but he'd almost stopped giggling.

So I turned to Cash because he was still the only functioning Dom-ish person. "Is that a good plan?"

For some reason, he started to shake his head again, but his words didn't match. "Yes, that's fine. We'll have everyone over to Bates's apartment. When we get back, Brady can go upstairs and pick out a few toys and get in the right headspace, and we'll get you ready with your new tail."

Probably the best idea.

I wasn't sure Jude was ready for inside tails.

Some people just weren't very open-minded.

Chapter 23

Cashel

How had I ended up as the voice of reason and the Dom in charge?

Probably because the other two nuts couldn't function once tails were mentioned.

I could understand why Bates kept snickering but Jude was another kind of insane altogether. Brady was going to need to have a talk with him about why penises weren't scary, but for the time being, I was just glad we had Gareth's new tail.

Jude really wasn't ready to see the happy consequences of a good wag.

"Eventually you're going to stop laughing, right?" Glancing over at Bates as he turned off the car, I sighed as he had to hold his breath to nod. "If you keep giggling, Jude is going to kill you."

Once he snapped out of his shocked stupor.

Gareth was thinking about that too because as soon as the car was turned off his head popped up between the seats and he pointed over to where Jude and Brady were heading up the stairs. "Is Jude scared of penises too, or just mine, or is it something about pup penises that he has a problem with?"

All of the above?

Bates actually managed to take a deep breath and sound reasonably serious. "I think he was surprised at how laid-back Brady was about the whole tails and penises thing."

“And he was probably wondering what Brady had been looking up online.” My helpful addition had Bates’s laughter trying to come back, but he did a good job and managed to keep it in check with a deep breath.

“Good point.” Gareth leaned against Bates’s seat and smiled. “He’s not old enough to be looking that stuff up. Jude should be taking better care of him.”

Nope.

I was not going to ask.

“Agreed.” Bates’s eyes were sparkling, but he managed to sound almost normal. “But we’re not going to worry about that because he’s Jude’s problem now.”

“Yep, we’re not even babysitting either, so I’m not going to worry about it.” Gareth straightened and shoved his head and shoulders into the front of the car to demand kisses from both of us. “Kisses.”

We gave the happy drama queen kisses before piling out of the car, and I was glad to see that Bates seemed to be taking the situation much more logically. “Alright, time for the pup to come out and play and for me to figure out a dessert for everyone later. How does that sound?”

Like I was supposed to be managing everything, honestly.

Did he even know what desserts were in the freezer?

“How about we use that cookie dough I froze last week and make those after Gareth and Brady play?” It seemed like the best idea and had Gareth nearly bouncing as we headed for the door.

“And ice cream.” The way Gareth started nodding and wiggling said his pup was very much in agreement. “We have that vanilla ice cream that was on sale.”

“That sounds delicious, pup.” Bates tossed me his keys as he pulled Gareth into his arms. “And then later

we'll make sure our boy gets a good orgasm. Would you like that?"

It was a stupid question but one that made Gareth very happy.

"Yes, that sounds like a wonderful plan." Squirming against our Dom, Gareth was aiming for cute so he could get his way. "There are so many good options. You could pound me into the mattress again or we could take turns sucking everyone off or we could—"

"Nope, we are not going to entertain the neighbors with a list of your favorite sex acts." I thought I'd been fairly quiet until a voice came down the stairwell.

"He likes being spanked best and that wasn't anywhere on the list. He's trying to include everyone."

We had such helpful neighbors.

They even helped Bates start to snicker again.

"Thank you for noticing how nice I was being." Gareth beamed as he called up to the random voice. "We've got really nice neighbors."

That was one word for them.

But since I wasn't ready to have a discussion about that in person, I shoved everyone into the apartment before Gareth could ask our chatty neighbor to come throw the ball for him. "You're going to drive me crazy one day."

Gareth rolled his eyes as I shut the door and put the keys on the small side table near the door. "We've already hit that point."

"You guys have got to stop being so cute if you want me to stop laughing." Bates pinched his lips together before taking another deep breath. "Yes, no more adorable insanity. We're going to have a nice evening and watch the cuties play."

Sure we were.

“Yes.” Gareth was up for promising anything that made Bates happy, believable or not. “We’re going to be cute and then have orgasms and cookies and lots of fun.”

I was really hoping he’d gotten the order of that list mixed up.

“Yes.” Bates didn’t seem like he’d mind either way. “We’re going to have lots of fun, but first, pup time. Why don’t you and Cash go into the bedroom and start getting ready, and I’ll get everything organized for the cookies.”

“Cookies and ice cream and pup time.” Gareth bounced again, giving Bates a kiss on his cheek. “I’m such a cute pup that Brady is going to love playing with me.”

“You’re adorable.” Giving Gareth a quick peck, Bates beamed. “The cutest pup ever. So go have fun with Cashel.”

“Cookies and ice cream and tails and toys.” Gareth probably could’ve kept going, but he distracted himself as he started dragging me toward the bedroom. “What do you think about people seeing my inside tail?”

I couldn’t stop my eyes, they just rolled on their own.

“I think the question is what do I think about people seeing the erection your inside tail gives you.” He shrugged as I started to take off his shirt and really think about the question as much as we had time for. “Okay, starting over. If you were actually talking about the important bits being covered while having your inside tail in...I guess I’d be fine with that but you’d end up orgasming and making a mess.”

Gareth cocked his head, clearly picturing the scene as I took off his pants and shoes. “We’d have to cut a hole in

my shorts for my tail...and yeah, I'd still make a mess. So yes, your version of the question was right."

That wasn't a surprise.

When he was naked, I gave him a quick kiss and tried to take the question as seriously as he meant it instead of being a smart ass.

It was painful, but I did my best as I got his gear out of the closet.

"Well, I don't know exactly what my limits are with this, but the first thing that comes to mind is that I'm comfortable with you not being body-shy. I wouldn't want to be naked in front of...well, most people? I don't know about that part, so I'm going to focus on you." The conversation just kept getting weirder and weirder.

"You'd be fine with strangers but not people we know." Gareth was surprisingly confident about his answer as I started pulling out his gear and setting it on the bed.

"You might be right about that." I couldn't help running through a few odd scenarios in my mind. "I think something like a club with everyone else being interesting too would be fine, but I have to think about that."

People I knew were out of the question, though.

"Shorts on." Focusing on him and nothing else for the moment, I helped him step into the tight biker shorts that were going to keep him modest enough that Jude wouldn't have a heart attack.

"Kneel for me." Kissing his cheek, I tried to show him how special he was and how cute he was going to be, while not getting sidetracked. "You're the cutest pup ever and I know you'd be comfortable with a variety of people seeing how cute you are."

As Gareth got down on all fours, he nodded and wiggled side to side. "Yeah, if they're fine with me being naked and no one is going to do anything stupid, then I don't see the problem."

Anything stupid seemed to mean things like grabbing bits they shouldn't be touching, so I nodded as I picked up his mitts and crouched down beside him. "There are a lot of people who feel that way. I think Bates probably leans more toward that side because he doesn't seem to mind you liking to be naked."

Gareth nuzzled against me, rubbing his cheek against mine. "I think he's trying to figure out safe limits and ways to make us both happy. So maybe you need to tell him your limits and that will help him figure out his."

"That's not how it's supposed to work." I knew I was right, but Gareth gave a full-body shrugging wiggle. "He's supposed to explain what he's comfortable with and then we all discuss what our family limits on that kind of stuff will be."

"I still think that means he needs to know what everyone is comfortable about first." Gareth smiled as his mitts went on and his wiggling got more pronounced. "How about you pretend I'm right and tell him? You can go out for coffee this week and figure out what you'd both be happy with me doing."

That was definitely not how it was supposed to work, but I gave up pointing that out. "Fine. We'll go out and see what we can both agree on."

Gareth licked my nose. "Thanks."

"Stop trying to distract me." He just grinned, so I decided I wasn't going to get him to behave. "Your Doms will figure out if you're going to play with other pups and who you can be a naked pup around and if you can wag that cute inside tail in front of other people."

But probably not Brady.

He wouldn't care but his Daddy might not make it.

Gareth wasn't thinking about that, though. He was just focused on us making all the decisions for him. "I love it when you take care of me, but when you take care of me and I don't have to make decisions too, well, that's the best."

That would never be something I would say about myself, but I knew Gareth was being completely honest.

Giving him another kiss, I reached for his kneepads and started putting those on. "If you're a very good pup, we'll work it all out and not tell you until we're ready to show you off."

That earned me the melty smile.

Of course, I was putting on his knee pads so he had to turn nearly all the way around to do it, but it was still cute. "No, stay."

The simple order seemed to bring his pup closer to the surface because the romantic smile shifted slightly and turned into something playful and distracted. "Good boy, pup."

Petting his head, I decided it was time to put on his hood and help him sink deeper into the headspace before I promised him something ridiculous. "Such a pretty pup."

With the hood in place, I ran my hands over his head and nuzzled against his muzzle. "Yes, you're going to have so much fun playing, pretty pup. Brady is going to have so much fun with you and you'll get to run around and chase the ball."

Full-body wiggles and a low whine said his pup was ready to come out and play.

"He's going to think you're so cute." I had no idea how Jude would respond, so I stayed focused on what I

knew. "And Bates is going to give you pets and hugs and you're going to make him smile."

That earned me a bark and he nudged me toward the bed.

"I know. I know. Tail time." Yep, another wiggly bark said I was a very smart Handler. "You're going to have so much fun. Brady's going to be so excited."

Getting the tail on just right while he was shifting and squirming was like trying to catch a greased pig, not get a pup ready to play. But I managed it without killing him and without telling him to stand still, mostly because I wasn't sure he could do it.

We were definitely going to start practicing commands...sit and stay being some of the first.

With the right reward, I had no doubt he'd be a very eager-to-learn pup, but I knew I'd have to do some research because the only things I knew that would work as rewards were cookies and orgasms.

"All set." Running my hands over his head and down his back, I just soaked up his innocent excitement for a minute and did my best to relax.

I knew there was nothing to worry about, but logic and fear didn't go hand in hand.

Jude didn't want to hurt Gareth, so I knew he wouldn't say anything wrong, and Brady was too excited for me to worry about anything. It would be fine, but it was technically the first time anyone outside of our immediate family had seen Gareth as a pup and me as his Handler.

It was the closest that anyone had ever seen me be a Dom and it was weird.

Not bad...but really strange.

I didn't know how long we sat there and I petted Gareth, but before I knew it, the front door was opening

and I heard voices in the living room.

“You remembered the curtains.” Jude didn’t seem pissy, so I took it as him actually being grateful. “Brady wouldn’t mind the neighbors getting an eyeful, but I’m tired of the weird questions.”

Hmm.

Had the neighbors cornered them too?

“Daddy?” Brady had a slightly whiny tone in his voice and I could hear his patience dwindling. “Daddy, puppy?”

Gareth was vibrating with excitement and he was wiggling so much his tail was swinging back and forth. “Are you ready to play?”

It was a ridiculous question and just got him more worked up when Brady heard me and let out a squeal. “Puppy.”

Yep, he wasn’t going to have any issue playing with Gareth’s pup side.

“Let’s go play.” Little Brady was something I knew. Pup Gareth was something I knew. Bates would be happy and confident no matter what. Jude would be frowning no matter what. “Yes, we’re going to have so much fun, pup.”

It was going to be fine and there would be no surprises.

Chapter 24

Bates

Nothing was going like I'd expected except for Brady and Gareth.

Brady's squeals as he called to the puppy had to be echoing through the building, and Gareth's excited bark every time Brady called out for him was everything I'd imagined...and adorable. But Jude was another story altogether.

He was relaxed.

He wasn't frowning.

He was even sitting on the floor and smiling every time Brady raced by the front of the couch, either chasing Gareth or running from him.

It was slightly unnerving because it wasn't anything like I could've predicted. I'd expected nervous. I'd expected growly. I'd expected him to be an obsessive worrier over Brady...but he was very calm and just taking it all in, and I wasn't sure why.

And I wasn't the only one who was confused.

Even Cashel kept sending the carefree-looking Dom questioning glances, but thankfully, he was sitting just to the side and mostly out of view of the normally frowning Daddy who was leaning against the couch.

We'd spread out around the room without thinking about it, probably knowing the chaos of Brady and Gareth running around, but giving Cashel some space from Jude seemed to be working out well. Cashel was

confused, but he wasn't glaring daggers at Jude or assuming the worst, and Jude was pleasant.

So we'd made a surprising amount of progress.

But part of that might've been because Jude was smiling and giving instructions to Brady like the whole thing was perfectly normal. "Gentle pets, Bambi. Don't hurt the puppy."

Considering the *puppy* outweighed Brady by a significant amount, I wasn't worried, but since it might be Jude's way of being nice to the puppy, I didn't point it out.

I did, however, watch curiously as everything moved in perfect harmony.

It was actually kind of disturbing and I was wondering how to check to see if Jude was a pod person when Brady threw the ball down the hallway again and the partners in crime went racing off together. "I think I'm going to need to find a longer place for them to play next time."

Was there a conference room on campus we could reserve that would have enough privacy for them to run around like maniacs?

Jude actually chuckled as the ball went flying toward the front of the apartment and two cuties thundered after it. "I'm not sure I have any suggestions for that, but it's not a bad idea."

Nodding mostly to myself as Brady threw the ball and laughed as Gareth charged after it, I wished I had a better idea because they were adorable and clearly needed more space. Every time they got up to full speed, they got to the back of the apartment and had to turn around and start all over again.

It was wearing them out wonderfully, but it wasn't enough room.

And at some point, I was pretty sure they were going to smack into the far wall because they were getting closer and closer with every mad dash.

“I guess it’s something I’ll keep in mind for the next apartment.” It made me wonder if there was any way to search for apartments by hallway running length.

Was there a way to word that where it wouldn’t sound like I was insane?

Jude’s easy nod and utter lack of stress at the moment pushed me to keep going when I couldn’t think of a way to ask a rental office about it. “Thanks for the schedule idea. It should’ve occurred to one of us, but I don’t think it did.”

I looked over at Cash who was sitting on the floor by the dining room area and he shook his head as our pup skidded to a halt in front of him and gave him a quick nuzzle before running off again. Smiling, he inched closer to me and shrugged. “No, I hadn’t been thinking that far ahead, I guess?”

None of us had.

The next few months seemed busy enough that I hadn’t been thinking beyond that.

“Yeah, I’m not sure if we’re too focused on the next few months or not, but we need to make sure we’re looking at *everything* that will make it easier for you next year.” I wasn’t the center of their world, but I knew it would be hard when we couldn’t live as close as we did now.

I just wasn’t sure what our stumbling blocks would be or how to predict them.

Jude laughed, shaking his head but focusing on Brady who was trying to play keep-away with the ball. “You’re already planning on how living together will work and I bet your lists have lists, and I know you’ve got one with

all the things you want in the apartment so it will fit all three of you.”

I wasn't going to admit how right he was. “Maybe.”

My vague answer got another laugh from Jude. “You're doing the best you can.”

Yep, he was a pod person.

But Cashel seemed curious to get to know the new alien and kept quietly inching closer to me so he could actually see Jude. I didn't want to draw attention to it, though, so I rolled my eyes and focused on the smiling Daddy.

“You're probably not any better, though.” My teasing got a sheepish grin from the pod person imitating Jude. “His family has probably already started planning your wedding.”

His sigh said I was right, and he scrubbed his hands over his face as he shook his head. “I've managed to keep them from pushing Brady into picking out wedding colors and dates, but that's mostly because he doesn't care.”

That family was insane.

But at least it showed they supported their relationship?

“I'm voting blues with favors being things like Matchbox Cars because they'd pop against a light blue.” My slightly ridiculous response had Brady going topsy-turvy over Gareth as they raced down the hallway and somehow ended up in Cashel's lap. “Is he—”

Before I could ask Cashel if they were alright, Brady managed to untangle himself and popped up like he had a spring in him. “Toys? Weddings have toys, Uncle Bates?”

Oh, that was new.

And I might've gotten myself in trouble based on the glare Jude was sending my way.

Maybe he wasn't an alien?

How was I going to lie to a little?

"You can do anything you want at a wedding, cutie." But...but...everyone would kill me if I sent Brady into a wedding-crazed frenzy. "But birthday parties are the best kind of parties because they're not as much work and you still get cake and toys."

Bingo.

"I like parties." Brady laughed as Gareth rolled them off Cashel's lap and toward the kitchen. "Puppy likes parties too."

The puppy liked *everything* at the current moment.

Gareth's pup side was over the moon at having someone ridiculous to play with and an audience to watch him. Every time he paused to catch his breath, he'd pose and wag his tail, showing off and loving all the attention.

Brady thought it was the funniest thing he'd ever seen and laughed every time Gareth did it, which only encouraged the naughty pup more. Cashel was definitely glad Gareth wasn't wearing his inside tail as he'd started calling it, but I wasn't sure what Jude would've thought about the whole thing.

I knew Cashel had told Gareth earlier that he thought Jude was shy, but I had a feeling it was more about not knowing the social conventions around finding your partner's best friends hot—and sub or pup or just human cutie—Gareth was smoking.

And having the time of his life trying to lick Brady's face as the little squealed and attempted to escape.

"He does and he likes playing with you." With the wedding talk behind us, I relaxed again when Brady sent

the ball flying, obviously deciding that was the best way to distract the puppy since no one was going to his rescue.

I thought they were too cute to even think about stopping the chaos, and it just kept getting better because Brady threw himself into everything he did... including playing with his new puppy best friend who was currently trying to dig the ball out from under the table.

Brady couldn't be ignored and decided to take the game in a new direction. "My turn. I'm the puppy."

As Cashel rescued the ball and tossed it toward the living room, the very talkative almost-puppy went scrambling through the apartment on all fours, making everyone laugh and me sigh with relief.

"Good save, Uncle Bates." Cashel couldn't help teasing me as I shrugged sheepishly.

"It was an accident." But cars and toys would make for a memorable wedding...and it wasn't like Brady's family would've had an issue with it.

Jude couldn't seem to decide if he was going to laugh or throw something at me. "You're worse than his family."

"Aww, thank you." They were some of the most fascinating people I'd ever seen. "I'm glad I fit right in."

That got a scoff from the confusing Daddy. "His mother loves you and is giving both of us grief that you haven't come to a family dinner yet."

I was not the problem with that nonsense.

"We will do our best to make the next one." Especially now that we knew we could all be in the same room without making Brady's mother want to chase after us with a wooden spoon. "I heard good things about Christmas."

Slumping back against the couch, Jude studied me. "How?"

That was easy.

"Brady really does talk to himself a lot." More than any of them seemed to realize. "And he used to do it a lot more before you guys got together."

Jude was good for Brady but bad for my informational needs.

"He also used to make loops around the building when he was figuring things out or on the phone with his family after class." I shrugged as Jude chuckled, finally getting the picture. "Now that he has you, that's stopped. A Daddy is clearly better than pacing when it comes to wearing out a little."

Shaking his head, Jude smiled as Brady and Gareth landed in a puddle of limbs in the living room both clearly needing a moment to breathe and maybe some water. "Come here. You look like you need a cuddle and a drink."

Jude hadn't been nearly as specific as he thought he'd been because the two cuties untangled themselves just long enough to wiggle over and crash into him. They both seemed to think his lap was a wonderful place to take a quick rest and curled up together with Jude's thighs as their pillows. "That's not what I meant."

Neither of them was listening, but as they closed their eyes and tried to catch their breath, Brady reached up and patted his Daddy's chest. Jude frowned but he didn't complain. The dramatic Daddy just started to run his hands over their heads. "It's too late to take a nap."

If he wasn't careful, he was going to lose that battle.

But since I didn't want Gareth taking a nap this late either, I stood up and headed toward the kitchen. It was time for cookies and water at the very least. "I have a

surprise, but if they fall asleep, I guess we'll have to eat all the cookies."

That got movement and whines coming from the living room, but complaints meant they weren't asleep, so I'd take it.

Cashel shook his head but clearly approved of whatever he saw because he rose and came into the kitchen with me. "I'll get them something to drink."

Kissing his cheek, I nodded and got out the dough so I could put it on the already-prepared tray. It'd seemed a bit silly to preheat the oven earlier but now I was glad it was all ready and wouldn't take long to have done. "Thank you."

Giving me a smile, he called out to the living room. "Brady, do you want milk or water?"

"Water like the puppy." Chaos seemed to come from the living room for a few seconds before a laugh led to silence. "Puppies drink water."

So he was still a talking puppy?

"Alright." Trying not to laugh, Cashel went over to the cabinet and sifted through the cups aiming to pick out the best ones for puppies.

By the time I had cookies in the oven, he'd picked out a sippy cup we'd purchased for Brady and a straw cup that I was assuming was for Gareth. After telling him I'd get the rest, he took them out to the living room and I quickly followed.

The cookies wouldn't take long, so I was hoping the pups would get their second wind by the time they were ready. But that was going to depend on whether Brady would ever actually drink his water. At the moment, he was glaring at Cashel like the Devil himself was sitting in the living room. "No."

Raising one eyebrow as I set the other glasses down on the coffee table that'd been pushed to one side, I tried to guess what we were arguing about. "Do pups need milk instead?"

He'd seemed very sure pups drank water, but I could see him changing his mind.

Cashel shook his head as Jude pressed his lips together like it was hilarious. "No, um, puppies drink water from bowls."

Well, that would be messy.

And I wasn't sure they had the right mouth structure to make that work.

"Yes, bigger puppies drink from bowls but cute little ones use bottles." Probably. "Aren't you a cute little puppy?"

Pretending to be confused, I took the sippy cup from Cashel and held out my arms. "You were the cutest little puppy."

Nodding slowly, Brady climbed over Gareth, knees and elbows going everywhere. "I'm very cute."

And very confident.

"And so fast." Brady kept nodding as he climbed into my lap, ignoring any awkwardness as he latched onto the praise. "You raced after the ball and you played with the other puppy. But puppies need cuddles and water and treats when they're good."

Bingo.

"I was very good." Curling up on my lap, he rested his head on my chest and seemed to have decided that being a good pup was the way to get the most cookies. "I get lots of treats."

"I agree." Bringing the sippy cup up to his mouth, I made sure Jude only saw confidence and acceptance as I

helped Brady with the water.

His Daddy was the definition of protective, and I didn't want to accidentally give any impression that I was uncomfortable with Brady. The cute nut was dramatic and adorable, but I knew not everyone would've been relaxed around him.

But luckily for Jude, I was not everyone.

It'd have taken something a lot more interesting than being a little pretending to be a pup to shock me. Hell, he was fully clothed and being adorably manipulative, that was not something to worry about.

So as Brady relaxed and sucked on his cup like a good pup, I petted the pup's head and smiled at the other pup who was grinning like a goofball and wiggling excitedly. "I think we should find some puppy cartoons for our cute pups."

And that got wiggles from both of them.

Cartoons and cuddles and cookies...it wasn't a bad way to spend an evening with family.

Chapter 25

Gareth

“That was so much better than coloring with him and getting yelled at for picking the wrong crayon.” Stretching out on the bed, I wiggled and yawned as exhaustion started to hit me. “It’s more work, though.”

Bates chuckled as he lay down beside me and ran a hand over my chest. “It’s a lot more work, but you both had fun.”

Before I could do more than nod, Cash hopped up on the bed and sat cross-legged beside me. “I was a bit worried that it would be awkward or stressful, but it wasn’t, not for very long at least.”

Good point.

“Okay, I had a lot of fun, but why did Jude enjoy himself?” I didn’t think that was a stupid question, but I was glad when they both paused and looked thoughtful. “So I wasn’t the only one who found that weird?”

My pup side hadn’t really cared that it was strange. He’d been more focused on Brady and being fast and playing, but human sub me was starting to realize how strange the night had been because it hadn’t been strange.

Just thinking about that sentence made my head hurt, so I was glad when Bates and Cash both shrugged.

“Well...” Bates was definitely the big thinker of the group, since he thought about stuff without obsessively worrying, so I was curious to hear what he’d think. “Part of it might be that Jude had a rough childhood. I won’t

go into detail about what I heard, but he doesn't really know what a supportive family looks like, normal or more fascinating."

Brady's family was definitely on the more fascinating end of the scale no matter what it looked like.

"So we made him nervous and confused?" I could agree with that assumption. "But why did seeing me and Brady play make him feel better? That doesn't sound reasonable."

For so many reasons.

"Maybe he was more comfortable after seeing that we're not vanilla?" Cash didn't seem confident about the idea, but it sounded right as he started explaining his thoughts. "I mean, I'd have felt a lot more uncomfortable about the whole showing them your pup side thing if I hadn't known Brady was little. We've had years to get used to the idea, but had Jude ever seen us play with Brady?"

Oh.

I wasn't sure if he had or not, so I looked over at Bates. "Has he?"

"We're not going to discuss why you think I'd know that much about your life." Bates seemed to want to brush off his eavesdropping, so I let him. "But not really. I think he was little-ish a few times you were all around Jude, but I don't think he ever noticed the marker fight or you guys bribing Brady with playtime."

He really had known a lot about us before he'd come up to talk to us.

Turning back to Cash, I couldn't miss the way he was trying not to laugh. "I'm starting to understand how he fell for us so quickly."

Cash nodded. "He already knew everything about us."

“Yeah, that probably made it a lot easier.” And we wouldn’t have been surprising either.

Bates was grinning ear to ear. “I didn’t know about Gareth’s oral obsession or that Cashel was a switch or that you would look so sexy together.”

Okay, he had a good point.

“You had the highlights at first and then settled in to learn the details.” Sounded like a good way to learn something to me.

Reaching up, I wrapped my arm around his neck and pulled Bates down for a slow kiss. When he finally eased back, he rubbed his nose against mine and smiled. “I’m loving learning about all the details.”

“Do you think that’s a reason, too?” Cash seemed to think we’d followed his logic but both of us frowned as Bates straightened. “Oh, I mean, Jude. Do you think it was learning more about us and not just seeing us in passing that helped? I think dinner was the longest we’ve ever spent in a room together where we weren’t kind of frustrated and just glaring at each other.”

“Good point.” We hadn’t exactly shared much about ourselves. “And it was easier to talk to him with Bates around, so maybe he just needed to have another Dom around to feel safe? Three subs to one Dom might’ve been a bit overwhelming.”

We were kind of interesting.

Bates chuckled. “I hadn’t thought of it that way, but you might be onto something. Between learning about his sub and how confused you guys were, it might’ve been overwhelming for him?”

And the internet said some Doms didn’t like feeling stupid or backed into a corner.

We might’ve been doing both to Jude...mostly accidentally, of course.

“Either way, I think we’re good to all hang out together with Brady’s family, and you and Brady had a great time playing which was good to know too.” Cash leaned over and gave me a quick peck, grinning when I pouted as he moved away too quickly. “Jude didn’t even mind Brady cuddling up with Bates.”

Bates waved that off. “He was just glad he didn’t have to figure out how Brady could drink from a bowl.”

Quite possibly.

Cash snickered, nodding and leaning back on his hands. “Okay, you have a point. I wasn’t sure what to do because Jude is always so nice and never tells him no.”

“That was kind of frustrating in the beginning.” I just hadn’t realized it then. “We have different parenting styles. We’re not the overly indulgent kind.”

Our *don’t be ridiculous* line with Brady was a lot clearer than where Jude’s was.

Bates was nearly giggling but managed to get words out. “I hadn’t thought of it that way either, but you’re right. You all have very different ways of taking care of Brady, and maybe he didn’t understand that either.”

So, there might’ve been a lot of reasons we’d rubbed each other the wrong way.

“I’m glad it wasn’t stressful tonight, though.” I couldn’t resist stretching and wiggling again, loving the way my muscles ached and how hard my dick was still. “I got cuddles and rubs and Brady loved throwing the ball and we got to watch puppy cartoons. I didn’t even mind that I didn’t get to come.”

Yet.

“Very subtle.” Cash shook his head as Bates grinned. “I don’t think you get props for keeping your dick covered while you play.”

Yes, I did.

So I looked up at Bates and gave him wide Brady eyes. "But, Sir, I didn't show anyone else my erection and I ignored it so good while I was playing. I didn't even hump anybody."

Bates was barely holding himself back from laughing. "Should I ask who you wanted to hump?"

Everyone.

"I was so good, I didn't, though, Sir." I wasn't sure answering it any more clearly would be a good idea at the moment. "I was a very good pup."

Wiggling my hips so he could see my cock wave back and forth, I did my best to make him remember I was naked. "I was very good."

I was going to need another way to say that if it didn't get me closer to an orgasm soon.

"You were very good." Cash gave me another kiss but he didn't touch my erection, which was slightly frustrating. "But before you distract us, I just want to make sure there wasn't anything you wanted to change for the next time you play with Brady. Nothing that made you uncomfortable? Nothing that felt off or that you want to safeword about after thinking about it?"

That must only be an overthinkers kind of thing.

"No." I knew that wouldn't be enough of an answer to keep him from worrying or get me an orgasm, so I tried to give him more words. "I had fun and I was glad that Jude was relaxed. I wasn't worried about Brady, because yeah, the puppy thing is new, but he's Brady."

Cash laughed. "Very true."

"But Jude was good with the whole thing from the very beginning." At least, that was how it'd felt to me. "Right?"

Glancing between them, I was glad to see them both nodding. "Okay, good."

Now could we switch from talking to using our mouths for more fun activities?

No.

"I'll admit that I thought Jude was possibly a pod person for a while, but eventually I got used to the idea." Bates shrugged off feeling bad about thinking Jude was an alien and started slowly tracing lines over my chest. "I think my turning point was when he was cuddled up with you, pup."

"Mine was when he let you cuddle up with Brady." Cash kind of echoed my thoughts, so I nodded as he stroked a hand over my head. "He seemed to realize how cute it was too."

Ugh, they kept making me think.

"So we're all good with the Bates cuddling little Brady thing, right?" I looked between them, finally realizing we should at least put it out verbally. "I thought we were but then I realized we never said it, and I thought we should say it."

Their silence and cocked heads made me question a lot about what I'd said, but when they both slowly started nodding, I stopped worrying.

"Yes." Bates was the first to actually verbalize what we should have already verbalized. "We need to put that on our lists in some way so we're all on the same page, but from what both of you said and how you looked, I think we're all good with that, right?"

Now Bates and I were looking at Cash.

It took him a second to do more than shrug, but eventually, he found his words. "I didn't even consider it would've been crossing a boundary. I'd have been more upset if you hadn't cuddled Brady, so yeah, I'm good."

“So we’re all good and we’ll work out specifics like how clothed everyone has to be later?” Brady wasn’t a nudist but little Brady found a lot of things funny that big Brady would’ve shrugged off.

When their eyes both went wide, I sighed and saw getting my orgasm drift further and further away. “It’s got to go on the list somewhere.”

“Okay, you’re right.” Cash let out a deep breath before giving his head a shake. “We’ll figure that out, but none of us are the weird jealous kind of people, so we’ll be fine and I’m good with shoving that conversation off down the road a bit.”

“Deal.” I looked up at Bates, trying out wide eyes again. “Right, Sir?”

Bates barked out a laugh. “My desperate boy.”

He leaned over and gave me a quick kiss, but his fingers trailed lower on my stomach sending a shiver through me, and he looked wonderfully wicked as he pulled back enough to smile. “Deal.”

Yes!

“I’m not sure desperate describes it accurately enough anymore.” Cash was trying to look serious and shake his head like I was being insane, but I could see how much he wanted to smile. “We have a lot of energy to work out before we can get him to sleep.”

Yep, I was so high maintenance they were going to have to fuck me stupid.

“And he’s been pushy enough that we should probably make sure to help him remember his place.” Bates always had the best ideas.

“Yes, thoroughly wearing him out is the only option.” Cash finally ran his hand down my chest and palmed my dick, teasing it more than playing with it. “But how should we handle that? Do you have any preferences?”

The fact that he was just focusing on Bates and completely ignoring me made my dick even harder.

“Well, I have been thinking about fucking his throat.” Bates shrugged like he’d been simply talking about what he wanted for dinner. “Would you like to have his ass?”

I had the best Doms ever.

Cash even nodded, poking at my dick and making it swing back and forth like some kind of fidget toy. “Yeah, it’s my favorite way to use him, and that way I get to see him sucking you off. That’s a close second.”

They were awesome.

“Sounds like a good plan to me.” Bates patted my chest like he was excited they’d picked a good restaurant for dinner.

Eventually, I would ask Bates why it was so hot, but I wasn’t going to worry about it for the time being.

“I’ll take this end and you take that one?” Bates’s casual way of divvying me up had my dick begging for more attention as he leaned over and looked in the nightstand. “Would you like me to pass you the lube?”

I was definitely going to have a premature eruption if they kept it up, but I wouldn’t feel bad about it because it would be all their fault.

“Yes, thank you.” Cash’s polite response had me moaning. “Shh, don’t interrupt your Doms, pet.”

Such beautiful assholery.

Every time I thought they couldn’t be more perfect they did something else even more romantic.

“Here you go.” Bates handed over the lube like he was passing the TV remote. “Have fun.”

Have fun picking out a show.

Have fun deciding how to fuck our boy.

Uh. So perfect.

Every part of me thought it was incredible, but that made moving harder than they seemed to realize. The more my dick got excited the less my legs worked, but as they rolled me over, I finally managed to get my arms and legs working together.

“Good boy.” Cash gave my ass a firm pat as I finished turning around. “That’s right, just how we want you.”

There had to be another word that meant better than sexy.

I knew there had to be one, but as Cash opened the lube and Bates made a show of leaning against the head of the bed and releasing his erection, I didn’t have enough working brains to figure it out.

They were so beyond sexy.

“This is going to be the perfect way to end the day.” Bates ran a hand casually over my head as Cash brought two fingers to my ass and slipped them in.

He seemed to have realized why my shower took so long after Brady and Jude had left because there was no hesitation as he started methodically stretching me and sending sparks showering through me. “It really is. It’s going to be a good way to relax.”

Because they’d worked so hard today.

Thankfully, Cash pegged my prostate and wiggled his fingers to chase away the cheeky response that had tried to escape. “We just have to get a few things ready first.”

Bates made a low thinking sound as he brought my head down to his cock. “Kiss.”

As I obeyed, he went back to his conversation with Cash like I wasn’t even there. “Maybe we should get a few plugs to use on him so he’s always ready for you?”

Oh...that would be...

My brain was scrambling to describe what just the thought of that was doing to me, but Bates distracted me even more as he tapped his cock against my cheek. "Open."

God, he just kept making it even more erotic.

Was that the word? Hadn't I been looking for a word?

"Good slut." Patting my head and scrambling my thoughts as I took the tip of his dick between my lips, he slowly pushed my head down until I had half in my mouth. "Hold."

I'd have done better being still and quiet if it hadn't been for Cash's magic fingers, but luckily, Bates didn't seem to think that was necessary. "That's very nice."

His casual pats as I kept his cock warm in my mouth had my own dick dripping precum, but it didn't seem like either of them had a plan to play with it.

In-fucking-credible.

Oh, and it just got better.

"It looks comfortable." Cash eased his fingers out and spread my cheeks before nudging his cock at my ass, slowly pushing into me. "But this...this is heaven."

How did he keep making it even more insane?

"We each have our favorite parts. That's the joy of having a slut with so many wonderful holes." As Bates patted my head, I realized the reason they weren't playing with my dick was because it wasn't necessary.

I desperately scrambled to keep my orgasm at bay from just the shallow fucks Cash was giving me and their wonderfully dirty words.

Touching my dick really would've been overkill.

“It really is.” Bates gave me another pat as Cash rocked me forward, moving me between them like a fuck toy that had holes at both ends. I’d seen them online but I’d never realized I could be the fuck toy too.

They were so smart.

How incredible they were was one of my last clear thoughts as they rocked me back and forth, fucking my throat and my ass in perfect rhythm. Going back and forth between gagging and moaning seemed to suck every brain cell from my head because all I could do was feel the pleasure coursing through me as they used me.

Even the pats and praise about what a good slut I was seemed far away as Bates’s cock stretched my throat and Cash’s cock nailed my prostate every time he pulled me back onto his hard dick. Swallowing around Bates and clenching my hole to please Cash was all I could focus on.

Hearing their pleasure and feeling their erections get harder as they got closer to their orgasms pushed me closer to mine, but I was at their mercy.

So fucking perfect.

It was so incredible, the world went fuzzy again and all I could hear was my own moans and their grunts as they took me harder and harder. I wanted to stay like that forever, but between one thrust and the next, something had my orgasm exploding like a rocket.

As fireworks filled me and I cried out around the cock filling my mouth so perfectly, Bates thrust deep into my throat and I could feel his cum firing into me. Being used like that just made the whole thing even more incredible and I kept coming as Cash groaned, using me as I shook and clenched around him.

It felt like our pleasure would just keep going forever, but sadly, they slowly stopped making love to me and their dicks went soft as they ran their hands over me,

making sweet sounds. It was so perfect and so relaxing that I closed my eyes and just kept lightly sucking on Bates's cock as Cash eased out of me and ran a hand over my head. "Such a good boy."

Somehow, when my brain cleared again, I ended up pressed between them, Bates's soft cock gone, but I didn't worry about things like reality and time. I had my Doms and they'd keep me safely grounded in reality.

"There you are." Bates kissed my head as they sandwiched me tighter. "You were so incredible."

Cash made a soft sound, nodding against me as he big spooned around my back. "How are you feeling?"

"Loved." It seemed like the best answer and I knew they understood it when I got more kisses and hugs that were so tight I knew I'd feel them forever. "You both make me feel so loved."

Nuzzles and kisses turned into more hugs and happy sighs as Bates ran a hand over my head. "Because you are very loved. You and Cashel mean the world to me."

"And you make us feel so loved it's only fair we show you how much we love you." Cash kissed my neck, wrapping himself around me.

"We've got more love than I ever imagined possible and I'm so glad there are so many ways to show it." Because what I felt for them was bigger than I love you or hugs or even cookies. "We're a strong triangle."

We'd found Bates and a love that would last forever, because like Brady's mom had said, our family always knew when we'd found true love.

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Check out my Patreon if you would like to see the "hostage scene" from Bates's point of view.

The top two tiers get access to additional bonus content as well as exclusive stories.

## *Downstairs Guy*

If you haven't read my books before, this is my moment to confess I have a terrible time letting go of characters. To keep from having to say goodbye, I bring them back in unexpected places. If you're curious, here's some information about side characters from this book that have their own stories. Have fun with my guys, and visit my website or stalk me on Facebook if you have any questions.

### **In this series**

One of the other grumpy Doms in the building is Leon from *Learning to Trust* and *Learning to Love*. Leon and Morgan have a duet that are the first books in [The Education of the Heart](#) series.

Brady and Jude have their story in [Save Me Santa](#) where Jude ends up saving Brady, Gareth, and Cashel from an oversized spider right before Christmas.

Another couple that was in the building is Bryan and Maddox. Their first book is [His Missing Pieces](#). It's a friends-to-lovers, age play series.

The original couple who first started off the wonderfully kinky apartment complex near the college is Kevin and Jeremy. Their story starts in [Too Close to Love](#), and it's available on Smashwords and on my own site because it has topics Amazon doesn't like.

The odd professor who jumps from class to class is from [Embracing Faith](#) and [Embracing Love](#). That's another MMM series with a wonderfully unique sub and the Doms that fall in love with him.

M.A. Innes and Shaw Montgomery are two sides to the same squirrely brain. M.A Innes is the part of my imagination that leads to kinky and curious things like age play and puppy play. Shaw is the aspect that likes sweet BDSM but isn't taboo in nature.

I love hearing from readers, but if you liked my book, the best thing you can do is to leave a review. Books that are a little different or seem unique need reviews to help push other readers to dip their toes in the water.

I have all kinds of books from sweet guys in lingerie to cute boys in search of a Daddy. The best place to find all my books and to explore what I write is on my website. You can also get the occasional freebies and early peeks at the first chapters of new releases so make sure to keep checking back.

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