



Phoenix

CODE

NEW BEGINNINGS

STEFAN PRIDE / KASHEL CHAR

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Second Edition

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WARNING: This book contains graphic down to the last drop of male/male hardcore sex between consenting adults, all eighteen years of age or older. One chapter is explicitly bondage roleplay with dubious consent. This book is not intended for people under eighteen years of age or for anyone offended by gay male sex.

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Chapter One

“Good morning, citizens of our lovely glass-domed city. I am Lasitor, your Artificial Intelligence (AI) community news broadcaster. It is now 6 a.m.

The local Antarctic temperatures are -70.6 °F. But don't worry, the coastal temperatures are almost balmy, expected to reach a searing maximum of 14.0 °F during the summer. The terrain is almost entirely covered by an ice sheet, but beneath is a hidden landscape of mountains, valleys, and plains. Nice to know when you are freezing your butt off.

The sea levels are rising exponentially, the icecaps are melting at an alarming rate and constantly shifting and giving birth to pools of hot water and steam. You can breathe this air, but it is stinky and similar to the dull mist of a fart. Other than that, dear humans, all is peachy.

Breakfast is served until 8 a.m.

Thank you and enjoy your day.”

We are on our own

“Colonel Dr. McCormick, come to communications immediately, Sir!” Connor’s command was both loud and stressed as it boomed from McCormick’s small personal radio. “Run! Don’t walk,” he added.

Brad McCormick, who had been working on the experimental growing lights in the Agriculture Dome, had been taken aback by the near panicky voice of his second in command, Connor O’Hara. The urgency in his usually soft-spoken voice alarmed Brad, so he went tearing down the long corridor towards the Communication Dome. The energy-saving lights could barely keep up with his pace as his motion initiated the lights’ activation sensors. Finally, he came to a dead halt in front of the shiny metallic door to the Command Center. He waved his hand vigorously so the sensor would hurry up and do its censoring. He took a deep breath calming himself and burst inside as soon as the door slid open. He found his friend and second in command in the Communications Room. The room was designed in the shape of a half-moon, with all white furniture and massive, curved plexiglass screens for the best viewing quality. The pixilation was so fine that one could see a sand flea doing the mambo on top of Tutankhamun’s tomb in Egypt’s Valley of the Kings.

“What is going on, Connor?” Brad asked as he walked with purpose inside.

“Seems we may have a wee problem on our hands. Help me make some sense of all this,” responded Connor. He motioned for the tall American to sit in the chair beside him. Connor was positioned in front of the virtual networking screens, hammering his keyboard furiously without taking his eyes from them.

“What seems to be the problem, besides the fact that you are sitting here looking at an empty room. Is that Houston Headquarters?” Brad asked as he patted the young scientist’s back, taking the seat next to him.

“You’ll recall that I mentioned at dinner last evening I had been unable to contact Houston for our bi-weekly report. I put it off as being the result of some significant solar flares initially. The more I thought about the flare rationale, the more it didn’t make sense with the new communications technology. So I decided first thing this morning to attempt new contact efforts. At first, it was the same, just a black screen and static. Then Marcia Merrick appeared on the screen, and I’m telling you, she looked like bloody fucking hell. She started rambling, running her words together some of the time and screeching at other times about a pandemic. She managed to tell me to wait, saying she had to go but would get someone to speak to me, and then she turned and ran to the door in the back of the room. That is what we are looking at now. I’ve been holding for about fifteen minutes, but I just had this bad feeling, and I thought it wise to call you immediately.” Connor explained to Brad while remaining as calm and factual as he could.

“This is all very strange, Connor. I suggest we get Mika Romanov in here as well. This probably concerns all of us, but for now, just get Mika and the boys; I want them to feel in the loop,” directed Brad, referring to his son Simon and his college buddy Paul Chevalier. Both boys were selected as interns at the Antarctica facility due to their high academic standing.

“Good idea! I just wanted to be clear with you before I got others involved.” Connor said even as he picked up the pager and ordered the three men to the communications room, stat. In a matter of minutes, the two boys entered from the passage which led to the enormous dining facility. Simon, tall at six-foot-two and athletically built, led the way. He was closely followed by Paul, who was so strikingly handsome with his ebony hair and pale skin that academia’s elite was often dismissive of him until whittled down to size by his brilliance. The two had been inseparable since meeting at the age of ten at an exclusive school for the academically gifted.

A fraction of a second later, Doctor Mika Romanov, a Russian geneticist, geologist, medical doctor, physicist, and linguist, entered from the corridor that led to the subterranean entryway. Mika had proven himself to be an integral part of

the scientific team over the past several months. He had been procured by Dr. John Saunders. The latter had been impressed by his research and publications in various scientific journals. The young Russian tended to be loud and often opinionated, but his laugh was infectious and his smile completely disarming. The thirty-year-old Mika stood at six feet eight inches tall. He sported a luscious mane of shoulder-length white-blond hair that contrasted handsomely with his dark, closely shaven beard, which consistently appeared to be in a state of stubble. His accent was thick, but his command of English and six other languages was impressive.

When the three men had joined Brad and Connor at the communication desk, Brad quickly updated them on what little he knew. Then, with concerned and questioning eyes, they stood in silence in front of the monitors with Brad and Connor and watched the empty room at Houston HQ. Eventually, the sound of something crashing and braking could be heard somewhere out of sight of the monitor after about twenty minutes of this. Each of the five men took a step forward as if something would appear on the monitor by doing so.

Suddenly the face of a gaunt sickly sickly-looking man appeared, filling the screens as if out of nowhere. His hair was unkempt, and his face unshaven. His eyes were wide, and the whites blood red.

“My good g-d! That’s Dr. Saunders!” Connor exclaimed, his voice a loud whisper. Then louder, “Dr. Saunders, what the hell’s going on there?” Connor’s Irish accent, which had all but disappeared with his years spent in America, was thick with concern at the sight of his mentor and friend.

“Connor! I never thought I would hear from you again!” The elder scientist spoke weakly but clearly. “Is it there too?” Saunders asked with a growing alarm in his voice.

“Is what here?” Connor almost shouted.

“Calm down, Connor. We need answers. I know Dr. Saunders’ appearance has you upset, but we need to ask questions.” Brad advised, placing a reassuring hand on

Connor's shoulder. Connor nodded, realizing the prudence of Brad's advice.

"Dr. Saunders, please tell us what is happening and what we can do to help," Connor said to his old friend.

"Connor, apparently, you have been told nothing. Not surprising. The world has fallen apart since our last communication. There has been a deadly outbreak, most probably due to a bioterrorism agent. The WHPSS just declared a pandemic of unknown origin. Global coordination and response mobilization is non-existent due to mass bombings and explosions of communication systems and electrical grids. No one has claimed responsibility for the incident. This is a global attack on all nations, with no exceptions. It is not restricted to a specific location, according to all intelligence reports from around the world. No country has escaped the effects of the crisis. It is truly as if the earth is ridding itself of the human race." Dr. Saunders coughed and laughed as if it was a joke.

The men in the communications room were shocked and speechless. Brad knew he had to find out more." Tell us about the disease, maybe we can help in some way. We have scientists here that will be able to diagnose this for you."

"We have not even been able to tell how it is transmitted. What we do know is that the first symptom is a severe headache followed by fever. This happens in the first twenty-four hours. It then seems to disappear. It is regrouping. A low-grade fever becomes evident in the next twenty-four to forty-eight hours, followed by cerebral edema, which, depending on the person, causes disorientation within twelve to eighteen hours." He paused to take a few deep breaths and then continued. "Followed by coma and death within the next twenty-four hours. While statistics have been poorly executed due to the rapid spread of this virus, bacteria, or whatever it is..." He paused, shook his head slowly, and looked back up at them. "The survival rate is unknown; the transmission rate is... The..."

"Mom! What about mom!" Shouted Simon, almost hysterical with emotion, a very atypical reaction for this

logical and focused student.

“Son, please, we must let Dr. Saunders finish. Maybe we can learn something that will help your mom and our other colleague’s families. Your mother was in Houston preparing to come here with the first wave of residents, so she should be sequestered at HQ. I am sure she must be alright,” Brad cautioned his son. Even as he spoke, Paul had stepped forward and had placed his arms around Simon, trying to comfort him with tears streaming from his eyes. Paul was also thinking of his mother and father. They had been so proud of him when he had been chosen to accompany Simon on this science expedition. Brad had returned his attention to Dr. Saunders on the monitor, trying not to face what was probably inevitable.

“I am sorry, son. I’m not going to leave you stranded at the bottom of the world with false hope. But, unfortunately, the first wave civilian team is no longer. Its last member, John Sorenson, passed away yesterday.” An audible sob could be heard from Simon. “It is the same outside of HQ. My wife died in my arms this morning. We had just gotten word that my son...” Connor swallowed a cry and his eyes brimmed with water.” His wife and his two children succumbed earlier this week. I am glad she was spared knowing that Todd and her beloved grandchildren were gone.”

Mika swore in Russian, “Ty che, blyad?” and pulled his chair closer to hear better. “Comrade, you recording this?” He asked. “I am,” Conner answered in a whisper.

Dr. Saunders spoke again after he collected himself. “The bodies are everywhere, and this will, of course, worsen and escalate disease and death rates. Power grids are failing. Martial law was declared in the United States. Our neighbors, Canada and Mexico, followed suit a couple of days ago.” He paused to chuckle again, coughed a few times before continuing. “What science fiction writers have written about for decades, and scientists have theorized for years, has finally happened...it’s the damn apocalypse. All that is missing are the four horsemen from Revelations!” Saunders said the last so low that it was barely audible, but at the same time, it

resounded like a loud scream in the minds of the five assembled men.

“What can we do for you, my old friend?” Connor asked.

“You can do nothing for me, my young protégé. Maybe carry me fondly in your memory. We had a couple of good times, and you were a professor’s dream student. A good Irish lad that made me quite proud and who Todd could and should have loved...did love. Connor, my wife, was a devout Catholic; she just couldn’t understand.” Connor shifted uncomfortably at Saunders’ words and his inference to Todd.

Saunders, apparently aware that his conversation had drifted, continued.” You see, madness is coming upon me. You men may be the last remnants of civilization. There are things you must do and do quickly!”

“What? What should we do?” Connor asked before Brad could ask the same thing.

“Evidently, none of you are infected. It appears that the theory is correct, that this ‘outbreak’ started just three weeks ago, several weeks after you were already in place at the EP-1 outpost. It is unlikely that any of you are even carriers if, in fact, anyone ever was a carrier. We will probably never know where it came from or why. You are safe, and you are self-sufficient. Do not let yourselves be known, don’t give away your position. Don’t leave Antarctica. Stay hidden for at least five years. The longer you can stay hidden, the better. Let this virus eradicate itself. The world is going to devolve and crumble rapidly. The decimated remnants of the world’s armies will fragment. Eventually, what humanity remains will be struggling to live off the ruins of our society. Even now, all industry has come to a halt, and technology has been lost. You and perhaps a few others are the sole possessors of all of mankind’s knowledge. Make good use of it. You’re on your own, my friends. I’m sorry.

The fact that you have an aircraft in storage is a plus. Take excellent care of it. I’m sure there are more manned outposts around the world. It’s unlikely, but knowing my colleagues,

some may have been mobilized already. I hope that other men and women were as fortunate as you were.

The ground satellites are all pointing in the same direction: headquarters. All forms of communication are failing all over the world. “We believe it is the result of electromagnetic surges and coordinated targeting of exospheric orbital satellites, possibly including the International Space Station.” Saunders paused as if he were deliberating. “Yes! You could try contacting the ISS. You’ll figure it out. Assume you suspect that death has reached other outposts, particularly the McMurdo Naval Base, which is the closest to you. In that case, I implore you to stay away for your own safety and to avoid going there at all costs. Otherwise, if you are certain that no outbreak has reached them, they may be of great assistance because it is a US naval base with sophisticated equipment, should you need to salvage later on. I’m not aware of any ships or submarines in the vicinity. You have time, resources, and intelligence on your side. You’ll figure it out eventually.” He tapped his fist against the side of his head a few times. He appeared to be trying to recall something.

“Mika, Mika, Mika! I hope you will be ready soon. Roll out our plan for the project.” The men all turned to look at Mika. “What exactly is he talking about, Mika?” Brad inquired. The Russian scientist made a small gesture with his pointer and thumb. “Comrade...is a small project Mika is working on,” he explained, dismissing it as insignificant.

Brad did a quick summary and decided to ask later; he assumed it was geologic in nature. Dr. Saunders continued to speak, drawing their attention back to himself. “It also helps that you are well-qualified, healthy men working in a state-of-the-art facility designed and stocked to feed 10,000 people for the next three years.” You can also grow fresh food in the solar Hydroponics Dome and develop the subterranean level according to the schematics. In other words, you have many years of sustenance available to you, many more than your probable lifetimes. Unfortunately, in its infinite wisdom, the HQ had decided to send only men to prepare for the launch.

But you will have your progeny, and you will have descendants, but not the way anyone would expect. You'll have to talk to Dr. Romanov about it." Saunders began to cough, hacking for so long that he could hardly take a breath. "Tell him to sit down and take a look at him." He looks like a zombie, deathly pale and unable to stand upright," Brad explained to Connor. Saunders cocked his head and cupped his hand over his mouth to cover his cough. Then, when they noticed a trickle of blood coming from his ear, the five men fell silent.

"You want to sit down or get some rest and talk to us in a wee bit... we'd understand," Connor asked the old scientist.

Saunders attempted a chuckle. "Always thinking of others' comfort, Connor, and what is best for them. No, my boy sleep is something I will get plenty of shortly. Unlike my dear wife, I believe that death will bring nothing but peace and sleep. I never could quite make myself believe in the pope's promise of eternal life. If there is a heaven, he should know. The pontiff was among the first to die, and there wasn't time for an enclave, so that chapter in history is finally over. I've made my plans. I will not go mad and hurt others. Enough about me! There are so many things that come into my mind to tell you and warn you about, but I don't have the time, and my memory is beginning to fail me. But there are three things I must mention." Again the coughing, only this time Saunders placed his hands on each side of his head and winced in pain.

"Saunders, please tell us. We need all the help we can get! Anything you think will help us. Please share it now." Brad pleaded.

"Brad, look at him! He can barely talk; the pain is so intense." Connor whispered to their leader.

"He knows he's dying. This isn't the time for personal considerations. I have the lives of everyone here to think about," Brad said, with a grim look on his face.

"He's right, my boy, and you must think like him," Saunders said, clearly hearing the young scientist's advice to his leader.

Dr. Saunders stood up straight, took a deep breath, and concentrated on the screen in front of him as if he were concentrating on a single individual. “Brad,” he said, and then repeated it formally, “I should say that you are going to have the most difficult job of them all.” Your actions are directly responsible for the lives of everyone on EP-1, as you have just stated. Immediately following our conversation, you must contact the sergeant in charge of military security and explain the situation to him. Then you must bring together all of the other members of the EP-1 team and the soldiers to establish complete command of the operation.

Until you can establish a council that represents the interests of everyone, you should be able to exercise complete authority over your subjects.” Saunders went on to explain further, behaving as the outstanding project manager that he is. “I know you to be a decent individual, and this was something that was planned for you down the road, albeit not in the capacity that your authority will be required to assume. I believe your colleagues regard you as their civilian boss, which I think is very important. Soldiers will continue to support you; I am confident in that fact. Each of you was chosen only after extensive testing, evaluation, and consideration, right down to the lowest-ranking soldier. Your physical endurance, as well as your psychological assessments, distinguish you as a team without equals.

It is likely that the caliber of men who serve under you will never be equaled again. Time is of the essence. I’m not sure what the status of our power supply is or how long it will be before the internet connection we established goes down, and everything goes dark. I don’t know how long it will be before all other communications cease. Without mankind to intercede and the scope of damage being indeterminable, who knows truly the extent of the attacks. I am, frankly, surprised that we can communicate now with all the havoc going on outside. We are in lockdown. There are only a few of us left, and we are running on backup generators. I bring this up not just because I will be dead shortly, but because there is something you must do, and even now, you may not have time.” Saunders once

more held his head as if trying to keep his skull from exploding.

“Your computer bank is among the best-assembled. You have vast amounts of knowledge at your fingertips. I just uploaded and installed my WHPSS log to guide you. However, much of what you have stored is project-specific and classified. You need to tap into that and then into significant institutions that may still be accessible. I would recommend medical institutions, the WHPSS, NASA, Russian intelligence, Chinese, even the CIA.

Most importantly, you need to download architectural, metallurgical, and forensic construction engineering information. “I see where you are going with this, Saunders; those are the second wave professionals, the civilians expected to join us in a couple of weeks,” Brad said as he realized the scope of their problem. “Yes, Connor can help you there. He and Todd almost broke into the US Treasury and transferred it to their bank account. Fortunately, they came to their senses, but to this day, the government never knew that they had been breached and almost robbed by my home computer. Do this right away, or that knowledge will be lost, I fear. I will leave this line open so that if necessary, you can use this facility’s computer bank to possibly access others.” Connor had turned red at the mention of his and Todd’s attempt to get rich quickly.

“Finally, I must get back to the progeny comment to which I referenced earlier. You may think this is coming from the mouth of a man on the verge of madness. Think what you will, but keep it in mind nevertheless.

You are the oldest man on staff and only thirty-nine years of age, if I am not mistaken. Your son Simon and his friend are sixteen years of age. As I recall, the soldiers range from nineteen to twenty-nine, with Sgt. Bryan Howell being the oldest. The other professionals and the vocational men, such as electricians, plumbers, etcetera, range in age from nineteen to thirty-five years, I believe.” All of them are men. No one else is coming. I would have arrived with the third and final wave. All of the chosen are either dead or dying.”

“John, I am amazed by your ability to recall, even in your state, such minute details as the ages of EP-1’s personnel,” Brad said. He respected Dr. Saunders, a brilliant man who knew the makeup of his brainchild like the back of his hand, and his loss would be catastrophic.

“I’ll repeat it. There are no women. The plan was to introduce selected and unaffected civilians in waves of ten thousand up to a maximum of twenty-five thousand in three-year increments until the WHPSS leadership decided otherwise. Last week, that support team perished. So, Colonel Doctor, you may have to adopt a new belief system sooner than expected.”

“Dr. Saunders, Sir, I’m not sure what you are saying. What are you suggesting...I don’t...I mean, these are all men who took their positions here knowing that there might be unforeseen hardships, and I believe they can deal with those hardships?” Brad responded.

“Brad, my friend, listen to me. I mean psychosocial gratification. Suppose you are to manage these men effectively over the next several decades. In that case, you will have to see that their off-duty life is as well-adjusted as possible under the circumstances. Your men expected wives, husbands, girlfriends, boyfriends, and even children to join them, who are likely dead now. Some men do not even know that they are genetically predisposed, and they were specifically selected for this reason. Apart from their basic human needs, when you deny them hope, or simple human intimacy or sex, they will regress into sex-crazed animals. You must reassess your leadership style. A rigid military leadership style may cause problems. Please, use Connor as a resource on homosexuality.” Under a serious gaze, Saunders said this. Connor, on the other hand, could not believe he had just been ‘outed’!

“Sir, I’m not sure what you mean, but I promise you, I will transvalue and think progressively. I will keep an open mind and try to listen to the counsel of your scientists,” Brad replied, shaking his head in disbelief of the situation. *All their*

careful planning, the whole futuristic, save the planet shit-show is raining down on me, he thought.

“Good man, McCormick. I shall miss our debates. Connor, I shall miss you. You were like a son to me. Mika, you are brilliant, and your knowledge and bravado will be an invaluable asset to humankind. Your research is humanity’s last hope. The first of its kind. Simon, your mother’s loss is devastating to you, I know, and her loss as an integral part of the project’s scientific team is tragic. I know you don’t understand this now, but time will heal many of your wounds more than you know.

Paul, I am glad you are safe and there with Simon. I am sorry I do not know the fate of your family, and I doubt that you ever will. You have a new family now with Brad and Simon.

“Enough of this talking; you may have only hours to do the downloads I suggested, and Connor still must break the codes to hack into their systems. Oh, and Brad...”

“Sir?” Answered Brad, who had stepped to his son and had his arm around his son’s shoulders.

“You will find acceptance easier than you thought. Don’t make the mistake my lovely wife made and that I supported with my silence to keep the peace, as it were. The psychological profiles we did on your people are essentially infallible. The situation is closer to home than you might have imagined. With that said, gentlemen, I wish you well and bid you adieu. I now wish to join my wife in her room and end this fucking headache.”

With those final words, Saunders turned, did an about-face, and walked toward the exit door in the background. Some of the men, including Brad, gasped when they saw the pistol in his right hand. He turned around and saluted the men via the monitor before leaving their sight when he reached the door.

Some of the five silently said a quick prayer for the revered scientist whose ingenuity had created this facility and, in so doing, had no doubt created the circumstances that saved them from a horrible death back home.

“Connor, get to work on those codes and download everything mentioned and anything additional you think we might need to survive for millennia. Also, download the complete world history, especially the makeup of the American government from its conception to the present. I want every point of view you can get. That may well be the most important thing we have soon.” “Simon, contact Sergeant Bryan Howell, and tell him to come to my office immediately.” Ordered Brad to his son.

“Yes, Sir!” Both men answered in unison.

On his way off the communication pad, Brad bent down and whispered to Connor. “Also, download everything you can on human relations and behavioral science concentrating on anthropology and evolution of homosexuality.” With that, he was gone to meet with and inform Sgt. Howell of what was going on.

Two Hours Later

The Communications Dome was located in the center of the EP-1 complex. A good comparison would be the head of an octopus, with its many tentacles serving as passageways to the various pods of domed structures within the structure itself. Doorways from eight of the forty sides of the building flew open in response to the status call to the Communications Dome. In less than three minutes, the vast majority of the population, with the exception of a few essential military guards, had gathered in front of the elevated communication platform. In just a few weeks, it had been expected that the EP-1 domed complex would be fully staffed with a total of ten thousand year-round residents, the most extensive populated base to ever be attempted in the desolate Antarctic wilderness. Sadly, that number would have more than tripled in the next nine to 10 years. He was now looking at nothing more than a handful of men who were quite possibly the last and best of mankind. “Can you tell me how many heads are in EP-1, Corporal?”

Brad asked a bewildered-looking soldier with an electronic gadget and a pen in his hands. He typed furiously on the tablet and answered nervously, “Colonel Dr., we have exactly one

thousand nine hundred eighty-nine heads inside, but there may be a few busy working outside, still unaccounted for, Sir.” The soldier sounded reasonably sure of himself. A real computer geek with glasses much too big for his small rounded face. “Thank you, Corporal, please report to Master Sergeant Bryan Howell. I want a definitive number of how many military and civilian personnel are present. We are going on lockdown. Assist him in keeping track of our numbers. All those on guard or working outside, bring them inside. Then, find my second in command, Connor O’Hara, with the final number of souls sleeping at EP-1 tonight.” Col. Dr. McCormick said as he turned to face the crowd. He adjusted the microphone height to accommodate his six-foot-two inches length while doing a quiet and quick calculating assessment. *Thirty-seven football fields fit inside fifty acres, up to one hundred thousand people per stadium, and before he stood maybe one percent of that.* He straightened his back and began to speak.

“Gentlemen, please take a seat.” As Col. Dr., he was a senior officer to the military and the civilian contingent of EP-1. Their future, *the world’s future lies now on his shoulders*, he thought to himself while taking an uncomfortably long pause. “I have called you here because I wanted to share with you unfortunate events that have taken place over the last several days. What I am about to tell you are the facts as I understand them. This is not a military or psychological experiment to test your mettle. In collaboration with my colleagues, the leadership team of EP-1, Master Sergeant Bryan Howell, Connor O’Hara, and Mika Romanov, it was decided that total honesty with nothing held back is the only way to approach the situation. We are all in agreement.” Brad could hear the whispering among the assembled group. All were wondering what was going on here.

Some of the men could hear the strain in Col. Dr. McCormick’s voice; others who were close enough could see the red puffy eyes of the men seated upon the speaker’s dais. Even the always confident Master Sgt. Howell, with his rugged good looks, was very obviously stressed. The effervescent and handsome Irishman, Connor, looked as if the blood had been drained from him; he was so pale. With his

model-perfect face, Mika, the loud, boisterous Russian genius, sat with his colleagues, his expression set as if in stone. The only indication that there was any animation at all was the periodic sweeping of his white-blond hair out of his eyes by his shaking right hand.

Brad explained as best he could what had been told to him by Saunders. That said, he pointed a remote control to the massive, big screen and played what he felt was relevant for them. The tape had been edited by Connor on orders from Brad to exclude top secret and unnecessary information. He had rationalized that now was not the time. The men would have enough to deal with worrying if their families had survived. Connor was also sure to edit out the part where the elder scientist had ‘outed’ him.

As the video played, audible sobs could be heard throughout the room. One young soldier, Ay-Rab, so-called because of his Middle Eastern heritage, began sobbing uncontrollably. Two other soldiers, not much older than Ay-Rab, helped get him under control, even as tears dropped from their cheeks.

“All here are equally affected by these events. None of us know the exact extent of our losses. Men, we may never be in a position to know who survived and who did not. I do know that for some unknown reason, we have been allowed to live, *for now*, he thought. We owe it to the people who loved us to continue to do everything we can to survive. They would want us to live on and carry their memories in our hearts. While it will be some years before we can safely leave, we can try to contact some of the other bases. We will begin doing that as soon as we can. In the meantime, I know how difficult this will be, but I must ask you to remember your positions and what you were sent here to do. This is now more important than ever if we are to survive in this climate. As I speak, Dr. O’Hara is downloading information from several of the world’s greatest information banks to help increase our odds of survival, as instructed by Dr. Saunders. Now...” Suddenly a voice from the assembly interrupted Brad.

“What about our families? If the internet is up, why not let us try to contact our families?” Jake, a bioengineer, yelled.

This was followed by several men in agreement, both from the soldiers and the scientists.

Raising his hands in the air for silence and to once again gain the floor, Brad spoke. “Gentleman, I wish I could let you do that. Right now, however, every computer is downloading information that we may need to live. I don’t know how long the information will be available. But, when we are done, and the internet is still up, I have no problem with you trying to contact your loved ones.”

“Why do we have to wait? I think it’s more important that we get the opportunity to contact family than downloading how to bake a cake!” Shouted a young soldier by the name of Linus.

“Stand down, Private! That’s an order.” Barked Master Sgt. Howell. “We would all like to make contact, but right now, we must do what is good for the group, not for us individually.”

“Let’s hope that what is downloaded already will be enough,” Connor interjected quietly.

“Because men, the bloody internet just became history. The engineers, architects, building designers, draftspersons, interior designers for interior fit-outs or renovations, and contractors for the larger, more complex building project services are not coming. Many other professionals trained in their specialist disciplines who were responsible for the coordination of this architectural marvel...” Brad pointed up to the massive dome structure, “we are on our own. We all have to step up and supplement our knowledge bases to survive this. We all have been chosen for this specific reason. You knew the projected reengineering and what our main goal entailed when you signed up. We must not lose focus.”

Chapter Two

“Good morning, citizens of Phoenix

*It is Lasitor, your AI and community news broadcaster. It is
now 6 a.m.*

*If you have marked your calendar for outside activities
today, I suggest you go with plan B.*

*While the outside promises much excitement in the form of
apocalyptically high winds, blizzards, cyclonic storms,
tsunamis, earthquakes, and unpredictable monsoon patterns
near coastal regions; your day might be better spent
canoodling with a friend.*

*Also don't trust the rumors about “dead zones.” Read the
latest piece of news about body odor and how you can deal
with it.*

Breakfast is served until 8 a.m.

Thank you and enjoy your day.”

Brad gets his wake up call

One thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine souls were confirmed residing at EP-1. There were ten more than the initial number, including the guards and the outdoor crew. The cold and hollow corridors were hauntingly empty as they connected the domes, which lay like forgotten ping pong balls against the Trans-Antarctic Mountain Range in the snow. The men grieved the loss of a world they once knew and had taken for granted. They grieved the loss of loved ones, and grieved the loss of a future they would never know. Many found comfort in denial. Of the entire population of Phoenix, only Simon McCormick knew for a fact his mother was dead. With that in mind, when many of the men thought of home, they replayed memories of their mothers and grandmothers cooking dinner or their families gathering together for celebrations.

As with all human tragedies, each passing day had shifted the sorrow from intense agony to the numbness that would stay with them for the rest of their lives when dreams or a passing thought tapped into the man's memories. According to the wisdom of Dr. Saunders and his team of psychologists, each individual had been profiled for their stamina and ability to perform when under stress. Each man had done his job to the best of his ability throughout the grieving process.

All of the experiments proceeded as planned; the only difference was that the men were now aware that the work was no longer experimental because the results of these experiments would determine whether they lived or died. Because the military defenders did not have to be concerned about external threats, Master Sgt. Howell and Dr. Col. McCormick decided that they would be assigned as assistants to the various scientists and maintenance technologists on the. The soldiers would not only be able to avoid boredom, but they would also be able to learn a trade that could be very useful in the future.

However, it was later discovered that Connor had also downloaded the project's personnel files from Houston Headquarters as part of the secret records he had obtained on

Doomsday (as the event had come to be known). As a result of this information, Connor was able to develop a program that perfectly matched the personalities of the soldiers with the personalities of the scientists and maintenance technicians who worked alongside them. The willingness of the armed men (now educated assistants) was able to overcome the egos of the scientists once they realized how capable these young men were becoming. The rest of the procedure went off without a hitch.

The brilliant Mika was tasked with creating a makeshift university for the two young prodigies and anyone else interested in finishing or supplementing their studies after Col. Dr. McCormick realized that his son, Simon, and his young friend Paul had been cheated out of their college education before it had even begun. After being persuaded by the Russian, Dr. McCormick agreed to allow the soldiers to participate in classes on a volunteer basis. When this privilege was offered, the response was overwhelming, and additional senior scientists were invited to develop a sound and valuable educational system. Master Sgt. Bryan Howell has been assigned the responsibility of ensuring that all project members maintain a healthy physical fitness level. Inside the vast underground vaults leading to the Athletics Dome, the project, now known as Phoenix, was equipped with a state-of-the-art gymnasium dedicated to the University of Phoenix.

The International Sports Federation has called for the continuation of the Olympic Games, arguing that they are an essential part of humanity's cultural heritage and should therefore be preserved. This was evidently agreed upon by the International Olympic Committee. This Athletics Dome structure was designed to house an Olympic stadium, with enough space to accommodate the various track, field, and aquatic sports held there during the summer games.

After Doomsday, the men developed into genuine team players who valued and respected each other's abilities and contributions. During the course of the day, rank was held in high regard, even revered. However, the camaraderie among the men was so strong during their free time and off-duty

hours that it was difficult to tell a nuclear physicist from a kitchen chef while they were playing basketball or tennis.

Men began to express a stronger desire for more intimate forms of physical release. Most of the men in Phoenix were in their twenties and thirties. Since the limbic system associated with sexual desire is linked to libido and the part of the brain responsible for higher-level functions like planning and thinking, the gifted savants were increasingly restless. In other words, the men were horny as fuck.

Just as Brad had feared, Dr. Saunders' warnings were coming true. It was a day like every other day, but this was the day he could mark on his calendar as the "H" day. The big homosexual day. The day his bells rang, and he got his wake-up call. As Brad entered the mess hall for breakfast, he was astonished to hear lewd and crude remarks bandied about by some men. These were being done good-naturedly enough, but Brad could detect an underlying tone of pent-up sexual frustration in their conversations. It was common for a man to ask another man how he was hanging, but the most creative euphemisms for replies on this morning were specifically describing masturbation. Since his early military training years, he hadn't heard responses like "*slapping the monkey, choking the donkey, or jacking the poor man's grenade, which he assumed was a molotov cocktail.*" But what stood out most was the open and blatant back and forth insinuations to homosexual activities.

As he listened with one ear, he began to think about his early morning escapades with his right hand. He laughed to himself as he thought about his hand being so sore; he must have been petting that one-eyed cobra way too long.

"You want to help me out, buddy?" One of the soldiers asked loudly. "Whohaha," the men laughed boisterously.

"Huh, what...I mean, excuse me?" Brad said to no one in particular as the laughter pulled him from his own sticky thoughts about spearing bearded clams. More laughter floated from parties around other tables while enjoying their breakfasts. Luckily no one heard him, he thought.

“Morning, may I join you?” A handsome young man asked, not waiting for permission and sat down anyway. “How is your morning going?” He asked, being much too friendly for Brad’s comfort. Brad summed him up as a doctor, or a medic, judging by the stethoscope, scrubs, and comfortable white shoes. Taken aback by his lack of respect and arrogance, Brad jumped up and excused himself. “Morning, good, thank you, sorry I have to go.”

What’s happening to everyone? It’s like being in the foyer of a brothel here, he thought to himself.

It is time Conner supplied me with those volumes of material dealing with homosexuality, he thought as he rapidly made his way down the long hallway to meet with Master Sgt. Howell. In addition to being a good workout, walking through the different corridors while performing their morning inspections allowed him to assess the scope of his responsibilities for the day ahead.

While walking, he thought to himself, *the homosexuality dilemma has finally come home to roost, and the roosters aren’t going anywhere.* Since the Doomsday event occurred three years ago, he had sensed that things were changing, but he was unsure of how to approach this particular situation, which made him unusually nervous. Consequently, he continued to badger himself; he preferred to project an air of superiority by appearing aloof, rigid, and unapproachable in order to maintain his image as an intelligent and successful man. It kept him safe and prevented him from getting involved in potentially messy or uncomfortable conversations.

What was that? The audacity of that beautiful, godly man! He is not inclined to...with anyone... Brad’s thoughts were jumbled as he thought about the beautiful long-haired man who had sat with him uninvited, during breakfast. He preferred his distance; he felt safe in his cocoon of power. He knew to solve this dilemma, he would have to call in his team. *With their input, establishing a social structure as projected by Dr. Saunders would be beneficial.* As Brad struggled alone, his inner turmoil was compounded by the fact that he had no idea that he would end up separated from his wife and be

disconnected from the WHPSS leaders. These people were supposed to make the difficult decisions on his behalf.

Judge Steven T. Johnson was tasked with establishing the law, as well as the structure of the government and the social order. For the birth of these scientifically advanced inventions to nurture a race of people who would flourish not to the detriment of the earth, but rather to the contrary, it was intended that Dr. Li Swentson, a master of all seven fields of architecture and Pritzker Architecture winner, was to establish culture through architectural advancement and Professor Dom Vanelli, Professor of Space Engineering at the University of Arizona would have brought his expertise to ultimately build a civilization from the ground up. One that would not only advance in science, architecture and technology but also make a positive contribution to the environment and most importantly, to future generations.

This thought made him even more panicky. He is responsible for so much, and he cannot get it wrong; no do-overs are left. This is most probably the last handful of humans on earth.

His wife, oh' she was his best friend, completely understood what he was going through. She was wonderful with their son, and he cherished her affection. He had Connor's support, but he had not spoken honestly to him about the "dilemma," as he referred to the homosexual issue, since Doomsday and had no idea how to approach his friend on that topic. It appeared that Connor, like many others, preferred not to discuss his personal preferences. *This professional and cold, completely unemotional friendship is barren and so fucking sad,* Brad couldn't stop himself from screaming at himself inside his mind. He was aware of what was going on in his environment, but he was unsure how to take the next best step towards moving forward. For three years he has been unsure of how to take action. He wished he could just talk to his wife for one more time. She would know exactly what to say and would assist him in making sense of all of his conflicting thoughts and feelings about this whole fucking situation.

“Good morning, Colonel Dr.” Master Sgt. Howell said to him, but Brad appeared to be wholly immersed in his thoughts this morning. It was obvious Brad was deep into his own thoughts. “Do you require a torch, Sir?” Master Sgt. Howell asked, sarcastically insinuating the double entendre. Brad, who was oblivious to the joke, quickly refocused. “Yes, thank you. I thought this morning might be a good time to go through some of the more unused tubes in the caves. You know, the areas where we just added lighting, I wanted to explore them a bit deeper today.”

The Master Sgt. could barely hold his laugh. One more word about tubes, torches or going deeper and he was going to explode with laughter. He reeled himself in and answered with a serious face. “Of course, Sir.”

They continued walking in silence as they made their way to a section of the cavern system rarely used. Essentially, it was a network of volcanic tubes that reached deep into the mountain range. Although the tunnels were nowhere near being entirely explored, miles of the tube system were illuminated, thanks to advanced solar energy technology that Brad installed and was currently experimenting with. A survey was conducted by the project team to determine the best location for storing what appeared to be a bumper crop from the project’s first harvest. The tunnels were chilly but not frigid, and they were ideal for storing items that needed to be kept cool.

An odd series of noises could be heard, but it was difficult to tell where they were coming from because of the slick tubes, and the echoes caused the noise to be distorted. Master Sgt. Howell, noting the confused look on Brad’s face, suggested that many of the men, tiring of the track in the gym, would often use the tunnels for running as they extended for miles. Satisfied with Howell’s answer and nodding approval, the two officers rounded a sharp bend, where they both came to a dead stop, mouths agape.

Three young men stood in front of them. Among those huddled together was Dylan Hurst, a twenty-two-year-old private who was bent slightly forward, his hands pressing

against the cavern wall for support, his jogging pants below his knees, legs spread as wide as the fallen pants would allow, and his firm young arse protruding outward; behind him. Dr. Mitchell Fairgate, the thirty-year-old bio-agriculturist in charge of light hydroponics, stood, his pants also below the knees. Even as his commander looked on, he was thrusting what appeared to be a very large penis in and out of the young soldier's arse. Dylan grunted with each inward plow, but not out of pain, rather in apparent pleasure. In front of Dylan and on his knees, the young soldier, Ay-Rab, added to the spectacle by holding on to Dylan's fuzzy arse cheeks and receiving his buddy's cock with each of Fairgate's thrust. Mitchell grunted, pushed in as deeply as he possibly could, and was very clearly ejaculating deep into the soldier's arse. Brad and Howell had no time to react or say anything. Mitchell used the boy's taunting buttocks to keep him in place while he was in the throes of orgasmic ecstasy and his knees were about to give way under him. Dylan, in turn, grabbed Ay-Rab's hair from behind his head and held it in place as he sprayed cum down the handsome tanned corporal's throat load after load of cum. The young man from the Middle East coughed, but to his credit did not lose a drop as he continued to suck and swallow. When he finally managed to pull his head away from Dylan's dick, he lashed his tongue out across the man's cock slit in an attempt to get one more drop. Brad was able to find his own voice at that point.

“What in the ever-loving fuck do you think you are doing?” The Col Dr. screamed at the three men in front of him. While purely rhetorical, the question had the desired effect; both Mitchell and Dylan, their legs tangled in their jogging pants, fell over when they heard McCormick, who was usually calm, yelling at them. The moment Dylan began to back away from the wall, he grabbed the lush black locks of Ay-Rab's hair and pulled him forward so they both fell to the floor, with Ay-Rab's face buried in Dylan's crotch. The three men rose to their feet as quickly as they could under the circumstances and confronted Brad, whose face was red and contorted with rage. Howell did nothing but stand there and watch the situation.

“Col. Dr. McCormick, I don’t quite know what to say!” The flustered and red-faced Fairgate told his boss while trying to tuck his thick meat into his pants.

As Dylan pulled his pants up, Brad saw the glistening cum running down the inside of his thighs as it leaked from his hole. As for Ay-Rab, the very prominent tent in his pants had all but disappeared. Brad caught himself wondering how big the young man must be to have created such a protrusion. This consideration angered him even more.

“Fairgate, I don’t quite know what to say either. I’ve known you since you got out of college. I was on the committee when you defended your dissertation for your Ph.D., and my wife and I attended your wedding. Now I don’t even know who you are. What an example you are setting for these young men. You disgust me, Mitchell!”

“Sir, I loved my wife as much as any man could love a woman. She is not here and probably is dead from all accounts. I am a man, and I have needs. I was not disrespecting Dylan or Ay-Rab. We were all doing what we needed to do,” Fairbanks defended himself and the whole caboodle.

Disregarding Mitchell’s statement, Brad looked at the two young men sternly and without any sign of compassion. “I recognize both of you from, among other things, the university that Mika has put together. I have heard good reports about both of you. So why would you humiliate yourselves like this, being used in such a despicable manner? Aren’t you supposed to be in class, aren’t you on duty, and what would your fathers think?” The two young men did not or perhaps could not respond, so shaken were they, but the two remained at attention, showing the Col. Dr. the respect due his rank.

Receiving no reply, Brad shook his head in disgust and turned to Master Sgt. Howell “I want those two soldiers placed in confinement. Mitchell is non-military and falls under another jurisdiction. Therefore, he is suspended from further duty and will remain in his quarters until I can convene a meeting to determine what will happen to the three of them. Until that time, the three of you and Master Sgt. Howell will

not mention what has taken place here. Do you all understand?”

“No, Col. Dr. McCormick, I don’t!” Mitchell said, louder than necessary, the anger very apparent in his voice. “We were in an area that is about as private as we can get in this facility. We are all adults, and we all consented to have sex. It is not the first time I have done this, but it is the first time I have done it with these two soldiers. Normally, I have done it with members of our science team. It is the only way we can keep our sanity. We must have intimacy. If not with each other, then who...?”

“Enough, Mitchell! Master Sgt. Howell, please escort these men back to Phoenix and sequester them as I ordered.” Brad said as he turned to get out of their presence.

“I believe Colonel Dr. could benefit from some stress relief.” Mitchell shot out before Brad could leave.

“Yes Sir, Colonel Doctor, Sir!” replied the handsome sergeant.

“Sir, if I may, I would like to schedule a meeting in your office at your earliest convenience.” Brad just nodded and walked around the bend, his footsteps fading into the distance.

After a respectful pause, Mitchell asked, “What do we do now, Bryan?” “He’s on the offensive. If he starts suspending everyone he catches or learns is having sex, there won’t be anyone left to run this place.”

“Right now, let’s do what your boss and our superior officer has ordered. We have no choice. He is in charge. So as he ordered, say nothing to the others. They won’t even know what has come down until Col. Dr. McCormick decides on how to proceed.” Howell told the scientist and then, looking at the worried young soldiers, added. “Dylan, Ay-Rab, I don’t want you boys worrying. I have known Col. Dr. for quite a while, and I know him to be a fair and reasonable man. He just can’t seem to get his head around it for some reason. Although he is difficult to change, I believe he can be persuaded to set rules of conduct and tolerate it as long as it is out of his sight. For the time being, anyone seeking relief should not enter the

tunnels, and I will make sure that word gets out about it. Something even more discrete will have to be found. Don't look so scared boys," Howell counseled Ay-Rab and Dylan. As previously stated, you boys should avoid worry."

Ay-Rab had milked the sergeant's thick cock just the day before; he remembered how velvety smooth the boy's lips had been. In addition, the memory of how tight Mitchell's arse had been on his hardness on several occasions made his manhood tingle no little bit. Yes, Howell was willing to go to any length to prevent sex from being outlawed in the Phoenix area.

Chapter Three

“Good morning, citizens of Phoenix.

It is I Lasitor, bidding you a good morning, it is now 6 a.m.

*Make most of your tankinis, learn about beach evacuation
and ways to survive unsafe beaches.*

*You ever go to the grocery store and think, “fuck, there are
too many vegetables...I want to walk out of here with
something I can eat.” Of course, you have. Lasitor knows
everything about you.*

*Learn more about vegetables, fruits, and fish and how we
produce them under solar domes. No meat for anyone; that’s
not practical. Those cows will stink up these domes, not to
mention the danger of their flammability. No, we instead
produce vitamins, antibiotics, and other medicine synthetically
in-house. All our chemicals produced are environmentally
friendly; you can wash it all down with the freshwater
collected from the inland mountain range cave system.*

Breakfast is served until 8 a.m.

Thank you and enjoy your day.”

This is not a crisis

Connor had made it a point to get his boss only books that dealt favorably with the subject at hand. The young Irishman knew the direction that the men of Phoenix would have no choice but to take. As a result, he did not want to supply Brad with any information to reinforce his pessimistic views.

What had Connor confused was the reasoning behind the otherwise liberal and logical scientist's prejudice. Connor wondered if Brad would be blinded by his intolerant belief system when it came to his son. Simon leaned just a tad to being effeminate and it was clear to everyone, but Brad, that the two boys were closer than just best friends.

Connor knew that over time something would eventually come to a head. He was also aware that his friend and colleague had behaved differently ever since Dr. Saunders, in a fevered state, had outed him. Of course, the old scientist blamed his confusion on his impending death, which was a reasonable save. The Irishman was far too familiar with the senior educator. Saunders never did or said anything without having a good reason for doing or saying it. What was the reason that would compel his lover's father to divulge an understood confidentiality? When Dr. Saunders told Brad that the situation was closer to home than he would ever suspect, what exactly did he mean? Was Saunders making a reference to the two boys? In his head, Connor jotted down a reminder to bring up the subject the next time he saw one of them.

Swish! The door of the Command Center slid open, as Brad stormed inside at precisely the same time he does every morning after the EP-1 walk-around with Master Sgt. Holwell. As soon as the doors slid shut behind him, he stopped in his tracks, closed his eyes, and took a few calming breaths. Only his breathing and the low hum of the overhead lights were audible. Then, realizing he was standing in the middle of the reception area with his face upwards to the sky, like that orange-haired chick from that old movie *Fifth Element*, he moved over to the large viewing windows opposite the entrance. The inside of the massive tetracontagon was

viewable like the inside of a beehive. The natural Antarctic sunlight shone through the glass domed roof, onto his face and he basked in it. All the offices ran along the inside of the domes, designed by the architects to not only save electricity by using the sun as a source of heat and light, but also to fight seasonal depression and prevent premature osteoporosis. This was Brad's favorite spot to relax, especially the one in his office. He found that the sunlight or even the moonlight on his face relaxed and recharged his batteries. The front office was not big, it had enough room for two white leather sofas, a coffee table and a water tower. Two hallways flanked left and right to Connor and Brads' offices and to access to the Communications Dome from the back via the Emergency Exit. When Brad had composed himself he spoke to Connor who was sitting behind desk in the reception area. Connor did not like to share his files and work with a receptionist. They were only in the Office bare minimum, because they were mostly working from their research labs. Morning meetings have become a tedious routine, but it seemed excitement has followed Brad today.

“Connor! Where do you keep the files on human adaptations and adaptability, particularly those on biological plasticity and the ability to adapt biologically to an environment? I need them right now!” Brad was very upset. A real trooper most mornings, so bloody chipper, but today was an exception.

“What's crawling up your backside?” Connor inquired as he turned on his computer. “My G-d, why are you in such a rush to research such heavy topics so early in the day?” *He looked like hellhounds were chasing him*, the Irishman thought as he frantically typed on his keyboard. “Don't you worry, I'll have it in your inbox in a second!” Connor chuckled softly so Brad couldn't hear him. He was pretty sure he knew what was going on. Brad went to his office to wait for the files Connor was sending him.

Just five minutes later, Brad's chair still cold, he sped out of his office back to Connor. “Connor, I've got to talk to you, and I've got to talk to you now!” The agitated Col. Dr. sputtered to

his number one man, a position Connor frequently wondered if he still held in the eyes of the homophobic commander.

“Yes, Brad, of course. What is it? What has happened? Just calm yourself down a wee bit, so you only use words of fact,” said Connor as calmly as possible. Listening to himself speak brought back memories of his grandfather in Ireland, not only because of the words he used but also because of the heavy brogue that accompanied his attempts to sound soothing while speaking.

“Get Mika and Howell in here immediately. Howell wanted to speak to me right away, so now is as good a time as any. Mika might also have some good input, and I can trust him to keep quiet. You would not believe what I just witnessed in the tubes!” Exclaimed Brad.

Oh no, thought Connor to himself. *So it's definitely happening today!*

“What?” Connor asked, knowing he already knew.

“Let's wait until Mika and Howell get here. I don't think I can stand to repeat this twice,” huffed the irate Col. Dr. In short order, Mika was present. The Russian had been working out in the gym and was dressed in black shorts and a tank top, which almost made his long white-blond hair sparkle as it contrasted with his dark stubble. His chest hair glistened with sweat and his long muscular legs covered in a forest of blond hair almost had Connor breathless. Brad had motioned for him to sit in one of the office chairs. When he placed his six foot eight frame in the chair and splayed his legs out casually, his very abundant basket put a lump in Connor's throat.

The three men waited on Howell, Brad pacing back and forth all the while. Mika shot Connor a questioning look only to be answered by a shrug of the Irishman's shoulders. In a few minutes Master Sgt. Howell was in the office, where he took a seat next to the Russian.

“What in the hell took you so long, Howell?” Brad demanded.

“Sir, I was following through on your orders.”

“Oh yes! Hm, yes, of course.” Brad cleared his throat. “I’ve brought you here to discuss a disturbing event to which I was a witness, as was Master Sgt. Howell. What I’m going to say is extremely confidential, at least for the time being, and until we can have a formal meeting and hearing on the matter. The rules of this meeting are: first, I tell you what happened, then I will talk to Connor for his feedback as requested by Dr. Saunders, and after that, the three of you may share your observations and opinions freely. Am I queer? I mean, clear?” Brad reddened visibly with his word mix-up. The three men, smiles held in check, nodded in agreement.

Brad went into complete detail of everything he and Master Sgt. Howell had just witnessed. His description was so detailed that Connor would have experienced great embarrassment if he had to stand up. So instead, he discreetly covered the ample outline of his penis and the growing wet spot visible on his khaki pants.

Connor cleared his throat. “What do you intend to do about it?” Even as he asked, he dreaded the answer.”Well, I’ve suspended them all from duty for the foreseeable future. I’ve told Dylan and Ay-Rab that they could not attend the university; after all, my nineteen-year-old son and Paul attend many of the same classes. Mitchell, at present, is confined to his quarters until I can have a meeting and get a consensus as to what I should do. It’s not like the old days when I could fire Mitchell and never have to see him again and have the two soldiers court marshalled. As you can see, I am in unfamiliar waters. That’s why I have you three here.” Brad said as he felt a little calmer.

“Why Brad? What do you want us to do?” Asked Connor, dreading the response.

“Dr. Saunders said if I needed help with just this thing, that I should use you as a resource. Why did he tell me that?” Brad quizzed his second in command. Connor sucked in a deep breath, thinking, *here it is, this is how the cookie crumbles*. He forced himself to make eye contact with his friend and took another deep breath, held it, and let it out slowly. “Dr. Saunders said that I would be a good resource because his son,

Todd, and I were lovers from the first month I came to the states until after I got my doctorate and Todd's mother found out. If she had not found out, Todd and I would have been married and probably had surrogate children by now. That meddling, selfish woman pretty much destroyed my life. Todd was miserable too. He married to satisfy his mother. His wife went along with it, but every chance Todd and I could get together, we fucked like rabbits. The day and night before I joined you to come down here, the two of us never got out of bed. "I had no idea! How blind am I? You are one of the most masculine men I have ever known. I truly would never have guessed. I just assumed the lack of women in your life was that your work surpassed your desire for a normal relationship," Brad said, in almost a whisper.

"Now, hold on! Let's get one thing clear, Brad, and I am saying this to you with the respect you deserve as my boss, but even more so as my friend. My relationship was normal in every respect. It might not be the kind of relationship you or most of the guys at Phoenix would want, but don't you think for a minute that what Todd and I had was abnormal. So I'll not let you be all high and mighty and belittle his memory by saying that!" Connor said these words forcefully but at the same time with well-thought-out calmness.

Connor's calm, assertive demeanor appeared to have the desired effect on Brad. He visibly regained control of his trembling hands. His angry expression was replaced by stoic resolve and possibly a hint of color.

"I apologize, Connor. Those words just came out. The family I was raised in felt that homosexuality was a heinous sin. I can't help judging others by my family's values, it seems. As far as you are concerned, I had no idea about you and certainly never entertained whether there was anything between you and Todd. I must put my opinions aside on the ethics of that lifestyle. Your work is and has always been exemplary. You are one of the world's leaders in the field of biomanipulation and program logic. I believe I can safely say now that you are the world leader in your field, given the reduced world population. Not to mention your genius in computer program design."

“Thanks...I think,” replied Connor. “FYI, Brad, it would be easier to digest if you would stop with the homosexuality word and switch to gay. It means the same thing but, for some reason, is so much less offensive. As far as you not having any clues about my orientation, it may indicate that you look at all gays through a stereotypical caste system. Most of us don’t dress or talk effeminately. Some of us do, but most don’t. We are not all designers, hair stylists, or flight attendants. We used to make up a big percentage of the world’s population. At least ten percent, it is believed. Many of us are soldiers, truck drivers, diesel mechanics, etcetera. I happen to be a scientist who is also a fifth-degree black belt. I can rebuild a sports car engine, climb the face of a sheer cliff, be dropped in the middle of nowhere, and get meself out in fine fiddling shape to be Irish about it. I also enjoy knitting; I know all the songs in most musicals, trim my pubic hair, and enjoy a man’s kiss and what his penis can make me feel. I am all those things, Brad. I always have been.”

Connor and the other two men watched the Col. Dr. as he seemed to digest what the young Irishman had just shared with him. Then, finally, he stiffened, then relaxed his posture a little, and sat down in the remaining available chair near Mika.

“Advice noted, Connor, and your candor appreciated. I accept that there are gay people in the world. I do not deny that. My problem is what to do about it here in this small population. You say the world averaged an estimated homosexuality rate of ten percent. If that estimate is true, then we have twenty men in Phoenix who are hom...gay. I’ve just caught three of them red-handed. What do I do to find the men before this gets out of hand and lowers everyone’s morale?” Brad asked in a desperate plea for answers.

“Man, are ye daft? Did you not hear everything in my words?” A bewildered Connor implored. “I gave you a percentage that was highly suspect in a world that no longer exists. I did not include figures on men who are bisexual or men who are curious about other men. It is a known fact that in prison, most men had same-sex relations. Those institutions had even started advocating condoms to prevent the spread of disease among the inmate populace. In the armed forces,

same-sex activity was highest in the navy due to the lack of women in most instances. This did not necessarily make the men gay. When they got out of prison or off a long voyage, they immediately returned to the sexual relationships they preferred. Col. Dr., you don't turn someone gay. You either are born that way, or you are not. But most humans must have intimacy, and they will seek out whatever is available and hopefully willing."

"But Connor, you are a man confined here with the rest of us. You have not participated in this activity, have you?" Brad asked, looking Connor right in the eyes, waiting for what he knew would be an honest answer.

"Sir, I can honestly say that I have not. I have certainly thought about it, and if I had known where this meeting place in the tubes was, I'm not above thinking that I might have jogged right down there. But all lightness aside, Brad, I knew it had to be going on. I've just been too wrapped up in my grief over Todd to make much effort to find sex." Connor had answered him honestly, and Brad respected that.

"What of you, Mika? What do you make of all of this? You have a reputation for being quite the lady's man and brilliant on top of it. But, except for your genius, I have to be honest and tell you that I was reluctant to have you included on this mission because of the lack of women." Brad confided in the Russian.

"Comrade," Mika began using the affectation of the old Soviet term, which had ended before his birth. "As with most comments made about me, there is some truth and much exaggeration. I have always been much too involved in my science and observations of the human condition ever to have lived up to my womanizing attributes. Though from time to time, I have enjoyed the softness of a woman's touch, it is, without doubt, not as much as I have been given credit for." Then, in his heavily accented English, the exquisite-looking Russian continued. "You honored me by bringing me here to ask my opinion about your dilemma. My opinion is a simple one and one I borrow from the old English Bard himself. I do

believe Col. Dr. McCormick that you *make much ado over nothing* at least at this time.”

“You quote Shakespeare to me in a crisis like this?” Brad, flustered and demanded.

“Brad, this is not a crisis. This is men being men. Were these men neglecting their duties while engaged in this?” Mika asked.

“Yes, no, probably, okay, I see what you mean.”

“Were these men in a public forum as they carried out these lascivious acts?” Mika asked.

“Not as such, but it was not in a private place either. I mean, we just walked into it.” Brad defended.

“Do these men have a private place? The soldiers sleep in dorms, several men in a room, do they not? Scientists of Mitchell’s rank cannot entertain soldiers in his quarters, can he?” Mika kept asking questions.

“You already know those answers, Mika.” Brad retorted.

“I’m almost done, comrade. If these men had not been caught, would they reflect anyway on how they perform their duties? Also, did any of these three men act as though they had been forced to participate in these acts?” Concluded Mika, who respectfully smiled at the Col. Dr. and waited on his answer.

“My g-d Mika, surely you are not supporting what they did. You sound as if you have done it as well.” Brad was losing focus again. It was just too much information from two of his best men.

“No, I haven’t done anything. So I am not making excuses for myself. However, in light of Connor’s candor, I would be remiss if I did not inform you that I have been with far more men than women and have enjoyed it much more. But no, Brad, I have not done it under your watch.” At Mika’s words, the Col. Dr. was quiet for what seemed like minutes but was, in fact, less than a minute.

“Master Sgt. Howell. Your turn to speak. You have heard me, and you have heard the two leading civilians. I now want to hear this from a soldier’s perspective.” Brad stated, turning to the young sergeant hoping to find somebody in his corner of beliefs. Howell was one of the toughest, manliest, and fair men Brad had ever met, and he was proud to count him among his loyal soldiers. Howell was not a tall man standing at five feet eight. He had close-cropped black hair, and his Italian heritage from his mother showed through his olive coloring, sensuous lips perpetually in a sexy sneer, and his heavy beard that, for military regulations, needed to be shaved twice a day. Only his brilliant blue eyes under the thick, incredibly long black lashes gave a glint of his father’s English background.

“Permission to speak candidly, Sir?”

“Permission granted Howell. I didn’t think there was any other way to speak after hearing from Connor and Mika. So let’s hear it.” Brad replied to Howell’s request.

“Sir, I too must be honest with you. I see no harm in what those men were doing. True, it is unfortunate that we walked upon them. They felt they were in a safe, relatively private area. They thought that because I told them it was. I have had relations with both of those soldiers in that very spot, although not simultaneously. We were off duty and on a “free day” each time. We...”

“Oh, my g-d!” Is everyone else in this complex queer except for me?” Brad yelled, his face astonished.

“Begging your pardon, Sir, but I am not queer. I am as heterosexual as they come. In the world, I may still have a wife and three little boys, whom I cherish above all. But Sir, I am a man with needs, and as pointed out, I need to share intimately with someone on a sexual level. If there were women available here, that would be my preference, but there are none here, and it is unlikely there ever will be. However, in two of my soldiers, I found like-mindedness for release. Without coercion on anyone’s part, we had an hour of intimacy that neither of us regretted. One of those men is gay and the other straight, but we knew what we had to have.

Frankly Sir, in all honesty, I'm hoping for many repeats of our shared pleasures.

Sir, you wanted feedback, and now you have gotten it. Naturally, as a sergeant under your command, I will support whatever you decide. Still, I must tell you that your treatment of my two soldiers and your scientist was done recklessly without considering the possible consequences. Therefore, I have some suggestions that I will give you off the record if you like, or I will keep my thoughts to myself and carry out your orders."

Brad continued sitting quietly, deep in thought, weighing everything he had heard, not just from his sergeant but from his two scientific colleagues as well. He shifted one leg to cross the other and began biting his nails, a habit that he had beaten many years ago in high school. Then he looked at the men, who were all staring at him, each thinking about the situation and waiting for an answer. He didn't have one. The military manual had never prepared him for this, nor had his management training. His upbringing had confused him and set a code for it. He shivered when he thought of that.

Finally, in a voice weakened by the day's events and his lack of support for his convictions, he spoke. "What do you gentlemen suggest? Howell, I permit you to speak as an equal. We must take some action on this dilemma, be it right or wrong before word gets out and I lose control of the situation. You first, Mika."

"Well, Brad. This is a situation new to all of us. I would only suggest that we came here from what was a free world for the most part. Having known you for a while, but acknowledging the respect you are given by the other scientists, I can only assume that you have always been a fair man. You loved your country enough to serve it and to stay in its uniform long after you could have left for the private sector. Based on those things, I would think that you would want to run Phoenix democratically.

As such, I would ask that you look at the Constitution of the United States and its form of government. I would also ask that you look at your government's harmful or negative acts

and, of course, it's positive contributions. Try to throw away as much of the negative as you can. I would also look at the political systems of the free world. Consider what they did well and what they could have done differently. Well, comrade, that is too much to take in for the purposes here. Still, the point I was getting to was that while the USA was the last in the western world to do so, they nevertheless decriminalized homosexuality.

Nonetheless, you have once again made it a crime. I suggest you reflect on that. Is it really a crime?" Mika stopped briefly and then went on, "I think it is only not a crime, but it is a way of life accepted by many other species on this planet as a natural thing."

"Mika, for Christ's sake, are you suggesting that I put out flyers telling the men here to copulate when and where they want?" Brad said with a wild gesture of his hands.

"None of that, Comrade; what I'm proposing is that you make it clear that you are aware that such activities take place and that, so long as they do not interfere with duty time, sexual activities should be carried out in private or sanctioned areas where those opposed to such activity will neither condone nor condemn those inclined in that direction. I have one thought since we are not going to be joined by the teams who were expected, there are more than enough rooms for each of us to have private quarters where activities such as these would be private. A sanctioned area would also be beneficial. Who knows, some may even fall in love and want to be a couple. Of course, situations will differ and must be dealt with on an "as necessary" basis. I have a feeling you are going to have to end the class system that prohibits our military boys from fraternizing with the civilian population." Mika laughed when he said the last sentence.

Brad was still not seeing any humor in the whole situation. "Oh, my G-d!" While Brad was not a religious man, he had prayed to a higher power several times during this meeting. "How involved do you think my people will be in this?" He posed this question, leaving it open for anyone to respond.

“As I started to tell you, Brad,” started Connor. “We cannot rely on statistics in such a small population. Men who would never have even dreamed of doing anything gay will eventually give in to their desires. I am not saying all men. Some here will never have sex with another man even if they want to, and they shouldn’t have to. But I downloaded Saunders’ personnel files. I can tell you that the psycho-social evaluations of each man present at Phoenix were studied extensively. You would be surprised at the number of men who have same-sex traits.”

“Your point is exactly what, Connor?” Brad asked dismissively.

“My point is that you can outlaw and put sanctions against it, but it is still going to happen. In the Ay-Rab world, men were still doing it, knowing that the discovery of their secret would cost them their lives. So I say accept it and apply a moral code to it that we can all live with, or there will be trouble. Remember what I said about the three men caught tonight that these were at least willing participants. History proved that the unwilling could be participants in certain circumstances. Yes, that’s right, I’m suggesting rape. Its violent acts that the laws we set up should address not good men having consensual sex.”

“I see, and you Howell?” Brad deferred to his sergeant.

“I agree with both men. The sex thing has been happening here since before the Doomsday event. We all just joked about it. It has always been that way with any group of men. However, I strongly agree with Connor in regards to violent acts. In my opinion, if men become desperate enough, they will break the law. The history of any war supports that opinion. There are recordings of men knowing they would be executed in just a matter of hours, gang-raping other men. I am not necessarily saying that will happen at Phoenix; I am putting that possibility in front of you, Sir.”

“Very well, gentlemen. I thank you for your time and input. I’m not sure what direction to take. Sergeant Howell, gather your two soldiers and inform them that they will be allowed to mingle with the rest of the population but that if they say

anything about being caught, they will be held in solitary confinement for a month for violating a direct order. I will talk to Fairbanks and advise him the same way. We will meet here at 0900 in the morning, and I will then inform you of my decision. Gentlemen, you are dismissed.” Brad said, dismissing the men with the wave of his hand. Howell saluted, and Mika agreed to attend the morning meeting. Connor remained firmly seated.

“Connor, I said dismissed.”

“This is my office,” Connor responded.

“Hmmm!” Brad replied as he stormed out of the office.

Unbeknownst to any of the men, Simon had walked into Connor’s outer office early after the meeting had started. It had never been his intention to eavesdrop. Instead, he had simply wanted Connor to go over equations with him when he heard his father’s booming voice and the subject of homosexuality, a word he had never before heard pass his father’s lips. Intrigued, Simon had stayed until his father dismissed the meeting. Then, somewhat in shock about what he had learned, especially about Connor, he rushed out of the office to share this information with Paul.

Chapter Four

“Greetings, citizens of Phoenix.

It is I Lasitor, bidding you a good morning, it is now 6 a.m.

The first February snow flurries will be seen today, signaling the beginning of the season’s transition from summer to winter. Sadly, ending the 32 °F heatwave you all enjoyed so much.

You may be surprised to learn that some men look better in the summer than they do in the colder months. This group of men represents the ideal summer man because of their clothing, hairstyles, and overall appearance.

However, there are some men who can look good in any weather, regardless of the season. Our local community news page has a fun quiz that will reveal which seasonal man drives your motor.

Breakfast is served until 8 a.m.

Thank you and enjoy your day.”

Simon and Paul make a suicide pact

“What do you think your father is going to do, Simon?” Paul inquired, his cock buried deep in Simon’s tight arse as he snuggled against his friend’s back. Simon was still savoring the explosion of sperm Paul had blasted in his arse just ten minutes ago. They had a habit of orgasming and remaining linked together while they talked.

“Your guess is as good as mine. It’s something we have never discussed. It was very off-limits at home. Remember that time mom caught you and me jerking off together?” Simon asked in a whisper.

“Fuck yeah. I was never so scared or embarrassed in my life. I just pulled up my pants and got out of Dodge! But after that, she never seemed mad at me.” Paul remembered.

“No. Mom was cool when I told her about me and us. She just warned me that I must wait to tell dad. He just wasn’t ready to understand. But she had me and you figured out for a while. I miss her, Paul.” Simon told his friend with his voice breaking and eyes filling with tears.

“I know, baby. I know.” Paul tried to reassure him as he pulled the young man closer to him, burying his dick a final inch and kissing the back of his neck. It was in this way that they had comforted each other since Doomsday. Simon at least still had a father, and he knew what had happened to his mother. Paul had no idea if his parents and beloved grandmother had survived or not. Probably not, but he was one of the survivors who chose to think of them as alive. What they did have was each other, at least for now. “Simon, I need you in me now, please.” Paul pleaded as his aloneness in the world flashed through his mind.

“Paul, try not to be sad. At least we aren’t like poor Connor, who has probably not only lost his family in Ireland but his lover as well. We have each other, and we’ve got to hold on to that...no matter what father decides to do.” Simon responded as he felt Paul pull his length from him and lay him on his

back. Just like hundreds of times before, Paul crawled in between Simon's legs and softly sucked Simon's cock into his mouth. Its feel was velvety smooth, and Paul pushed his lips to its base, his nose inhaling the musky scent of his young friend's bush. With the expertise he had learned from this, his only lover ever, he began twirling his tongue about the rim of the boy's cap, sometimes skittering it across the slit and playing there. Simon's moans let Paul know that he was doing it right. Simon's staff had gone from semi-hard to rock hard in very little time. Paul loved it when Simon's cock was fully erect. It became steel hard and had a very lovely upward bend to it. In no time, the slit was leaking profuse amounts of sweet nectar into Paul's sucking mouth. The boy pulled back, stopped worshiping his buddy's staff, crawled up to Simon's face, and kissed Simon long and deep, their tongues dueling and their young cocks touching. Ending the wet kiss, Paul said, "Ok, babe. It's your turn. How about you get on top so that I can look at you?"

"Your wish is my command. I live but to serve you, Aladdin," joked Simon as he sat upon his knees and Paul rolled over onto his back. Quickly, Simon was between Paul's knees and had the boy's hairy legs up and positioned on his shoulders in a well practiced move. He grabbed the lotion on his nightstand in easy reach and deftly applied some to his fingertips; expertly massaging around his friend's arsehole with it. Next, he slathered more to his finger and slid it into Paul's tight hole. Working it around, he added another finger and finally a third, moving them in and out.

"Ok, Simon. Stop driving me crazy with this. Fuck me now," pleaded Paul. He never tired of this dance with Simon even though they had been repeating it almost daily for the past four years.

As if he had not heard him, Simon continued the slow in and out movement of his fingers, circling and tickling the area and occasionally rubbing against the boy's sensitive prostate.

"Damn you, Simon! Put that cock in me before I go crazy and run to the barracks and have your father's soldiers take turns with me," threatened Paul.

“No one gets this arse except me!” Shouted Simon good-naturedly as he pulled his fingers out, laved his dripping cock with lotion, and rammed it in to its base.

“Holy fuck! Simon! You could go a little slower. Show a little compassion, be a little romantic, be aww!” Paul exclaimed as his big green eyes rolled back, showing only the whites. “Yes, fuck me, baby.”

Simon had learned early on that Paul liked it rough, and he was more than happy to comply with his nature. In the old world, the boys had always worn protection just as they were taught to do in school, and even Simon’s mother had been sure to mention it. But here at Phoenix, they didn’t even know if there were condoms available and certainly would never have had the nerve to ask for any. They decided the risk was minimal since every man had been tested for any kind of disease. After the testing, everyone had been in quarantine and then retested before coming to Antarctica. They were positive any infectious diseases, sexual or otherwise, were not even present at Phoenix.

Simon got into the rhythm of intercourse that they had found over the years worked best for them. Paul was on his back with a pillow under his arse and his legs locked around Simon’s lower back. It was the perfect angle for entry and deep penetration, which was the goal of each young man. Simon, who was long-waisted, found it the ideal position to move his silky smooth chest against Paul’s slightly hairy chest while intensely kissing Paul and thrusting in and out of his hole.

Simon truly loved the way Paul looked when he was being fucked by him. Most boys had worked their way through many crushes in high school, but not Simon. Every time he gazed at his raven-haired lover with pale skin and blue eyes, he wondered how he had ever been lucky enough to catch Paul’s attention. Just two inches shorter, at six feet even, Paul was a perfect match for Simon. But truth be known, Paul wondered how he had ever managed to capture the affections of the athletic blond who was not only gorgeous but brilliant.

“Oh g-d Simon fuck me faster! Faster!” Yelled a breathless Paul. Simon complied, pulling his cock to just the point of withdrawal before plunging in. The curvature of Simon’s cock was such that it rubbed Paul’s prostate to excruciating ecstasy. It was a feeling so strong that Paul couldn’t stand for it to continue and yet never wanted it to stop. Simon’s thrusting became progressively faster; Paul could do nothing but moan as he raked the skin on Simon’s back with his nails. Paul, familiar with Simon’s sounds as he neared his orgasm, used his legs to pull Simon in even deeper. Suddenly Simon thrust deep inside Paul, and Paul could feel Simon’s cock expanding and then expelling hot cum in his guts. He swallowed the vibrations of his boyfriend’s deep moan into his mouth as volley after volley of thick seed was shot into him. At the same time, the workout Simon’s cock had given his tender prostate had Paul shooting a second heavy load that plastered both of their abdomens.

“I love you, Paul. My life here without you would mean nothing.” Simon said as he looked into the eyes of his young lover. “No matter what kind of rules dad makes about our lifestyle, I will never give you and what we have up. I would rather be dead than be without you.”

“Simon, you know I feel the same about you. If your father outlaws what we feel for each other, I don’t know what I will do either. Eventually, we’re going to get caught. Maybe if he knew that your mother knew and gave us her blessing, he would be more understanding,” offered Paul.

“Dad is a great man, and Phoenix needs him if the men here have any chance of survival. They may not realize it, but it’s true. As far as convincing him that mom approved of us, I’m not sure he would believe me, even though I have never in my life lied to him.” Simon said, as his penis softened inside his friend. Every few seconds, he would twitch it and move a little just to make them feel some of the electric sparks left from their orgasm.

“Then what will we do? You know I’m with you a hundred percent on whatever you decide, Simon, just as I have always been.” Paul said, stroking Simon’s back.

“If he won’t tolerate us, then we will outfit ourselves and make it to another base across the Transantarctic Mountains. I believe that there will be people alive. If they are gone or dead, we will try to survive on our own. But, of course, in reality, you know that we will die trying to do that.” Simon told Paul very seriously.

“Then that’s what we’ll do. I prefer death to a life without you.”

“Then that is our pact. In the morning, we should be made aware of what has been decided for the community. I love you, Paul.” With that, Simon leaned down one last time, kissed Paul, and extracted his cock from his lover’s arse with a resounding plop.

Brad stood frozen in the doorway; having walked by his son’s quarters and hearing unusual noises, he had opened the door to make sure Simon was okay. He stood there stunned at what he saw and couldn’t force himself to leave or to make himself known. He hadn’t seen everything, but for the first time since his son was an adult, he saw him naked as he had brought his friend’s hairy calves over his shoulders and penetrated the boy. He had listened to their conversation. *I don’t have the strength for this tonight*, he thought to himself as he turned and quietly shut the door. Now he had even more to consider. His own son is queer. His trusted wife who’d been both aware and supportive of their unnatural relationship, and the boys had bound themselves to a suicide pact. In his life, Brad had faced many difficult challenges but this...this had been a day from hell.

The boys, who were none the wiser, had disengaged themselves and immediately got into a sixty-nine position; each began licking Paul’s semen off the belly of the other. When they were finished, they took a shower together before Paul left for his sleeping quarters.

Chapter Five

“Greetings, Phoenix residents.

It is I Lasitor, bidding you a good morning, it is now 6 a.m.

Having a hard time staying busy? Why not start a new project today and learn how to do something fun! Needling has been a popular pastime for generations, and a video on the subject is well worth watching.

Cross-stitching is a craft that many men testify requires effort and perseverance to succeed.

It’s not a hobby but a post-apocalyptic life skill. Visit our local community news page to get started on your next needling project. Who knows, you might find a friend to help untangle your yarn.

Breakfast is served until 8 a.m.

Thank you and enjoy a wonderful day.”

Don't be Blasphemous, Comrade!

Far from Simon's quarters in another residence area, Connor heard a knock at his door. The Irishman was in the habit of staying up to all hours reading or working on various program models. Still, it was highly unusual for anyone to visit at half-past midnight unannounced. Having showered about an hour before, the Irishman was in his comfortable tweed robe, a source of teasing for years, but one that was a reminder of Ireland. Todd used to belittle him to no end about his fashion sense, which had improved under Todd's tutelage but never enough that the robe found itself discarded.

He walked from his bedroom across the small sitting area and opening the door, was surprised to see Mika towering above him. Since their last meeting, Mika had showered and changed from his black gym shorts and tank top to black sweatpants and a sweatshirt, which hung gracefully from his slender but muscular body. Connor had rarely been this close to the man, who generally kept to himself and his projects. As was his custom with men, the Irishman performed a quick scan and noted his lush red lips against his pale Nordic skin, his upper lip's two high arches, his straight and perfect nose, and his penetrating frigid blue eyes. His hair, usually tied back in a practical ponytail, hung loosely over his broad shoulders. His hands were large with long slender fingers. A glance at the Russian's feet told the Irishman they must be at least a size fourteen. In all, Connor concluded that while the man may be Russian by nationality, he was the vision of what comes to mind when one thinks of the Hollywood version of a Viking warrior king. But in one large hand, instead of Norse ax, Mika held a bottle of what had to be vodka with two glasses, one inside the other turned over the bottle top.

"Mika, what brings you here this time of night?" Connor asked, wondering how the man even knew where his quarters were.

"Comrade, I thought after the meeting we had earlier you would enjoy sharing with Mika a drink. I have in my possession what is likely one of the few remaining bottles of

Russian vodka. Although I am working on a formula that may allow me to duplicate it here at Phoenix, it will be a long-drawn-out process.” The blond giant beamed at Connor. As the Irishman had done to him, Mika took an entire scientific or carnal appraisal of the man before him. While Connor was a good eight inches shorter, he was indeed a fine specimen of a man. With broad shoulders, thick well-kept black hair, and blue eyes, the embodiment of the Black Irish. More than once, Mika had noted a fine bubble butt supported by muscular thighs beneath his always well-tailored pants. “But if I am not welcome this night, perhaps another time will be more suitable,” Mika stated, noting the man’s pause at inviting him into his quarters.

“No, no, I apologize, Mika. I have just been deep in thought about today’s meeting as well. Fortunately, you seem to be one step ahead of me.” Connor told the Russian with a broad smile and indicated the vodka his unexpected guest held.

“Is good for the mind and what troubles it, if used in moderation. I have used it to resolve many internal conflicts.” Mika told the young man feigning seriousness.

“Well, boyo, I’ve done the same thing with good Guinness Stout, but when in Rome or with a Viking...I mean Russian, as they say.” Connor stumbled over the words, opening his door wide and gesturing for the giant to enter.

Mika, seated himself on Connor’s couch, placing the bottle and small glasses on the coffee table, he indicated that Connor should join him. With some reluctance, the Irish scientist sat down next to Mika. He could not help but inhale the male pheromones this sexy blond man seemed to emit from every pore.

“So, Comrade Connor, what did you think about tonight’s meeting and Col. Dr. McCormick’s reaction to various revelations made to him?” He asked as he poured both of them a stiff drink.

“I take it that by various revelations, you are not speaking of the information with which he came to the table? Shouldn’t we

mix that with 7-up or orange juice?” Connor asked to deflect Mika’s question.

“Don’t be blasphemous, Comrade! Vodka is like very pure water, is not need to be diluted.” Mika could use a very Baltic accent if needed. “You know what I mean.”

“It was very much a surprise, what Master Sgt. Howell had to say. Indeed quite a surprise, but it’s grand,” responded Connor, saluting Mika with his glass. “Slawn-sha! For good fortunes.”

“Budem zdorovie!” Responded Mika in his native language, clicking his glass against Connor’s. “Traditionally, I would throw the glass at the wall, but you would probably not see the spirit in that, and glass here is finite, I am sure. Also interesting was what you said, Comrade.”

“Really? I thought everyone knew. I do not try to keep it a secret.” Connor said, diverting his eyes from the other man’s stare.

“Perhaps not, but like me, you do not broadcast your preferences. Unlike me, I am sure no one knew that you had a committed lover, married or not, and certainly not the son of the man who pioneered Phoenix. My point is it must have been tough for you to learn of his death and not have anyone to speak with and share your grief.” Mika said with a sympathetic smile.

“I got through it, and I wasn’t alone. I had my memories of Todd and what we were to each other. So I bleached out the negatives and filed the good ones to a special volume in my mind that will always be there for me when I need it.” Connor reminisced, not resenting the Russian’s intrusion into his private life. “I take it you did not have a special lover?”

“Ahh, well, I never had time to make anyone special. I had many, what the Americans call fuck buddies, but no one special.” For the first time, Connor thought he saw a note of sadness in the always carefree scientist. Then, pouring them each another drink, he went on. “But you get me off track. I came here to see what you thought would be the outcome of the meeting. I can almost assure you that Master Sgt. Howell

is discussing it with his two very embarrassed soldiers.” Mika said with a laugh.

“Mika, I wish I had an answer for you. It troubles me to think of what will happen with morale and other things if Brad does not reconsider his stance on the matter. I am afraid his position will be undermined if he doesn’t appear to consider the needs of everyone. He could be just as supportive of both sides without either knowing that he was compelled to go against his belief system. Both opposing sides would be protected classes; there would be a legal and an ethics code with punishments given to whoever broke the code, whether gay or straight or in between on the heterosexual–homosexual sliding scale. It would be like the laws were set up to be in most of the free world. A council could administer the code of men from each orientation. Just as in the old American judicial process, a jury of twelve peers could be selected to determine the outcome. That being said, I doubt that would often be necessary if boundaries were set and respected as far as an individual’s rights are concerned. It was narrow minds and religion, in my opinion, that caused most of the problems in the old world. As Dr. Saunders said, every last man here was selected not only on his ability to perform but also to adapt. Presented as such, I don’t even think acceptance would be talked about after a few days.” Concluded Connor, who then downed his vodka. Mika was quick to pour them both another.

“Comrade, you have just said exactly what I have been thinking. If you agree, I suggest that you and I spend some time this very night writing up what we feel is an acceptable code. Then, we will have Master Sgt. Howell, come and meet us here at 0700 and get his approval or make suggestions for alterations. Then we will present it to Col. Dr. McCormick at tomorrow’s meeting. What you think?”

Connor thought for a minute, “Well, you might just have a point. Brad is not a man who would know much about drawing up that sort of code or what limits to set, given that his preference would be not to allow it at all.” Chuckled Connor. “But why should Howell come here at 0700 instead of my office?”

“Because Comrade, we will just be getting up. If he does put into place a law against the same-sex activity, he can’t make that law retroactive.” Mika told Connor with a smile.

“I still don’t understand,” Connor replied, a frown creasing his forehead.

“Mother of all Russians! Because I not shower for nothing. This may be your last chance to experience the delights of huge Russian cock!” Mika said in an exasperated voice.

“You can’t be serious. You don’t just knock on someone’s door and tell them you want sex with them!”

“Why not? I have noticed you since the first day we were on the airplane coming here. Out of one thousand nine hundred ninety-nine men in this facility, you are the only one I have in my mind when I masturbate. You should be honored that out of all these men, you are the only one I pick for my fantasy.” Mika informed the shocked Irishman with an earnest look. Connor could feel the heat turning his face red. However, he had also noticed the Russian on first seeing him. How could you avoid it? Not only was he towering above everyone, but he was the most striking man Connor had ever seen. He had jerked off more than once, thinking about the dark five o’clock shadow framed in white blond locks. Mika was correct; the Celtic stud was flattered by the proposal. So was his cock, which was beginning to stir. Connor cleared his throat and started to say something.

“But enough of this talk, my friend. Let us first put together a proposal for Col. Dr. McCormick, and then we fuck each other.” That said, Mika began suggesting ideas to create a code that would establish sexual rights for the men of Phoenix. Connor caught up in the spirit of the bill, grabbed his notebook, and began to combine their ideas. In a little over three hours, the two men had compiled what they thought to be a decent letter and a set of ethics that could be altered or added to as time went on and circumstances dictated. This they would show Master Sgt. Howell, who had agreed, upon being contacted, to come to Connor’s quarters no later than 0700.

“Okay, we make love now?” Mika demanded more than asked his colleague.

“Hell yes!” Connor replied, standing up.

“I am so glad to hear you say that. In another minute, I would be one of those men brought up on rape charges.” Mika stated, wiping away a nonexistent stream of sweat from his brow, his face full of worry. “Why do you stand up?”

Connor was laughing, “Same here...going nuts myself. I got up to lead you to my bedroom like a proper gentleman.”

“Is okay not to be a gentleman sometimes.” Replied Mika. “I like bedroom idea, but first let me see you undress. I just want to sit here and watch.”

“Seriously?” Connor asked.

“Seriously, Comrade. I have guessed for so long what your body must look like. I want to see how intuitive I am. Indulge me.” Mika pleaded, leaning more into the couch, an obvious tent in his running pants.

“Okay, but it’s not going to be much of a show. Only my tweed and boxers to lose.” Connor discarded his familiar old robe, dropping it carelessly on the floor. The Russian sucked in his breath. The man before him looked as if he had been chiseled from white Carrara marble by a master artist. The arms were quite muscular but not bulky and dusted in fine black hair. His chest was expansively muscled, supporting broad, muscular shoulders that come from good genetics, not a gym. The waist was narrow, and the abdomen presented very defined muscles. The Celt’s torso was smooth except for a thin black trail of hair leading from his navel, which was a tiny vertical slit, to the waistband of his navy blue boxers. Mika licked his upper lip as Connor teasingly hooked his thumbs into the elastic band of his underwear, but as he began pushing them down, he did an about-face presenting the man with his backside. Mika swallowed a sigh of disappointment. However, at the sight of the sculpted buttocks, he was no longer disappointed at the “turn” of events; he again licked his lips in lust-driven anticipation. Connor had turned his head and gave

the Russian a big Irish grin with a backward glance over his left shoulder.

“Quit playing with me, Connor. You have a beautiful arse I plan on tasting, but you’ve got to turn around and show me the lump I’ve been admiring in your pants over the past months has not been sock. “Mika demanded of his tormentor.

In response, Connor slowly turned around, still smiling, only now his hands were modestly covering what Mika so much wanted to see. Then, before Mika could beg, Connor laughed and dashed out of sight into his bedroom.

“Mother fucker!” Mika yelled. As large as he was, he made a graceful cat-like leap to his feet and followed his prey to the next room. There Connor stood, next to the head of the bed, his hands hanging loosely at his sides, letting his suitor admire him. The Irish’s cock stood proud and was so engorged that it stood upright to his belly button, its head touching just below. It was not enormously long at seven inches. Still, it was probably the thickest piece of meat the Russian had ever encountered, excluding himself, of course. *That is going to hurt*, Mika thought to himself. It sprung from a full but well-kept nest of curly jet black hair that offered striking contrast next to the smooth ivory skin that covered the rest of the young man’s body. His balls were boastfully large and hung low, secured in a naturally smooth hair-free sack.

“My mistake, Comrade. I never believed in divinity, and now I find myself standing before a god.” Mika whispered, sincerely meaning the words as he spoke them.

Connor, modest by nature, reddened at the Russian’s embellishment of his attributes and, laying down on his side, supporting his head with his right hand, said, “okay, c’mere to me. It’s your turn to perform for me.” With those words, he watched his visiting guest with all his focus.

Mika, smiled showing the whitest set of teeth Connor had ever seen. After a dramatic bow slipped out of his black leather sandals kicking each away as he did so. Then to the rhythm of music only he could hear, he began a slow gyrating dance. His whole body began undulating as his hips swayed

and his pelvis moved about suggestively. Mika raised his arms high over his head and intertwined his fingers as he smiled at Connor again, continuing the sensual movements. He then closed his sapphire blue eyes, sensually ran his long slender hands down his abdomen across his prominent groin area, licked his lips slowly again before forming them into a delectable looking “O,” and once again opened those blue orbs that had locked onto Connor’s eyes with an open inviting lust. A quick movement of his head moved the thick blond tresses away from his face at the same time his hands had grabbed the base of his black sweatshirt, which he began pulling up slowly over his head.

As much as Connor wanted to see what lay under the shirt, he felt a feeling of loss when the shirt’s material obstructed his view of Mika’s face. Connor wondered how a man as tall as his soon-to-be lover could be so graceful; it was as if his limbs were a pliable rubber.

Connor continued to watch, barely breathing, as Mika weaved back and forth as the shirt was slowly raised to just beneath the man’s armpits and over his square, muscular pectorals. From just above the navel to right below his tiny pink nipples, a wide column of dark golden fleece rose and then fanned out across his broad pectorals. The light in the room danced on the man as it caught different hues in the short curly hair. The hair under his arms was long, but not obscenely so, and dark blond; like his beard but was shiny with dampness. *‘This man’s body was made for me to worship,* Connor could not help but think. The shirt was now gone. Connor did not notice where it went because the man’s face had taken his complete attention once more. Mika continued his dance. Connor began to wonder if the music he heard in his head was the same as the Russian was playing in his mind.

The pants were next. This man was indeed and intentionally tormenting Connor. Mika put on his most seductive smile and motioned with his eyes as if asking Connor if he should continue. Connor licked his lips twice and paid no attention to the clear liquid leaking from the end of his cock to the bed. Mika, as if in agreement, hooked his thumbs into the waistband of his jogging pants and lowered the right side

down several inches before looking coquettish and pulling them quickly back up and starting all over only with the other side. This was driving his boy crazy with desire, so much so that after repeating that same move four more times, the pants were slowly lowered down thighs that were roped with long muscles and, like his chest, covered in glistening golden fleece, but not enough that the pale Nordic skin did not show through.

Connor was drooling and leaking precum like a sieve. Wishing Mika would dispense with the torture, he gave a pleading look at the man to make haste and drop the tight-knit black boxers that clung to the demigod like a second skin. No such luck for the anxiety-ridden Irishman. The tall beauty pulled the same routine with his boxers, turning his back to Connor as he dropped and kicked them aside. Such beautiful tight fuzzy globes begged for the Celts' hands. Still, when Mika turned to face him, the young Irishman was not treated to the sight of Russian bred cock, but a jockstrap that appeared to hold unimaginable wonders. This was the only piece of clothing that was not black. Instead, it was a brilliant red, and Connor was trying his best to see an outline of his manhood. Mika's smile remained brilliant as he towered above the bed, looking down at his quest. Connor was not amused and shot a pseudo glare at the young Russian.

Acting as though he did not understand the meaning of Connor's look, he asked innocently, "What? What you want Mika to do? Did I not perform adequately? You want me to dress and do the strip dance for you again?"

With that, Connor turned on the bed, grabbed a pillow, and threw it at the Russian. "You fucking tease! You know what I want! I want to see your cock, and I want to see it now! Fucking wanker!"

"So you not want to just see Mika dance for you? You want to see me naked! Now I understand. Why you not say so in first place? I only wear jockstraps because if I did not, everyone would think Mika happy to see them." He indicated, pointing to the large protrusion. With that, Mika unsnapped the jockstrap, and it disappeared. Connor knew not where, just

like the shirt. In its place was revealed the most magnificent piece of meat the handsome Irish lad had ever laid eyes upon. Hanging from a nest of dark blond hair was a cock that was seven inches soft, if it was an inch. Its base was a good five inches in circumference. While uncut, the foreskin only covered about half the cap, which was impressively flared. *We are really going to have to negotiate what he plans on doing to me with that*, Connor thought, licking his lips. He just lay on the bed staring at the beautiful manhood and not saying anything at all.

“You are disappointed in my “meat” as you say?” asked Mika.

Connor found his voice. “Are ya daft? It’s indisputably the most amazing display of male anatomy I have ever laid me eyes on. My only concern is what you’re planning on doing with it.”

The man’s laughter was musical but deep as he walked toward Connor, the staff swaying from furry thigh to furry thigh. “Well, I was hoping to put it in your mouth and eventually up your arse. If it gives you any relief, I am how you say...a shower, not a grower...at least for the most part. Here...touch it.”

Connor, with no hesitation, reached out and felt the huge prick, tenderly at first and then more vigorously. “What do you mean for the most part?”

A low sexy chuckle, “It grows maybe two, three inches more at most and maybe another inch, inch and a half in circumference. So I will have you well prepared. My word I give to you. Besides, I want you in me as much as I want in you and such thickness as you, I have never had in me. So you, too, must be gentle.

Connor weighed the heavy appendage on his palm. The man’s balls were like his own, large and low hanging. Then, on a sudden impulse, Connor moved his head forward and kissed the tip of the large cock. Holding it in place, he slid his tongue between the head and the silky foreskin. Results were

immediate as the staff began to fill from a surging rush of the Russian's blood and a sigh escaped his lips.

"You play unfair. I want to feel your tongue fighting with mine and taste you all over with my lips before you start sucking me." Mika told his young lover with a smile.

"You are so right. But I have a request."

"Anything my beautiful Irishman wants that I can do, I will do," Mika whispered.

"I am so used to being the decision-maker...the man in charge. So for tonight, would it be okay if you were the one calling the shots and making love to me? For as long as you want...just you be in charge. Not that you can't tell me to do things!" Connor asked beseechingly.

"Of course, my darling man. I am your total lover tonight, and for every night you want me to be...until you let me know that you want to make love to me." Mika bent over and sealed his words with a long deep kiss. Even as he was doing this, he crawled onto Connor's bed and on top of the Irishman's muscular smooth body.

Connor had never been with a man as furry and domineering as the young scientist who now lay on top of him, exploring his face with his kisses and tonguing his ears, and just as suddenly feather-light kisses caressing his neck. It was surprising to Connor how silky soft the curly chest and leg hair felt against his polished smooth musculature. The way they curled and kept their shape, Connor had expected them to be somewhat wiry and stiff, which would have been alright with him as well.

No matter where Mika's lips explored, his mouth always sought out Connor's lush lips so that their tongues danced together yet again. Their eight-inch difference in height was a strange sensation at first. As Mika lay prone on the Irish, he could feel the thick cock of his lover throbbing high against his abdomen, his leakage warm against his taut belly. Likewise, Connor felt the extravagant length and girth of the Russian running the length of his thigh. Like his meat, it was producing copious amounts of fluid. For fifteen minutes, Mika

explored Connor's face and neck while Connor moaned, had his arms locked around the Russian's smooth back, and wiggled beneath the large man, ecstatic in the electric-like charges sent out by the man's lush body hair.

Mika began a slow, maddening descent from the nape of Connor's neck down to his right nipple, first manipulating the small nub with the tip of his tongue followed by painful little nibbles by his perfect teeth. Quickly he switched to the other nipple, which had taken the right nipple's lead and had perked to a pointed erection. Mika must have sensed that the Irishman's nipples and vocal pleasure centers were directly connected. His moans were loud and guttural and constant. For once, Connor was grateful that his quarters were in a largely uninhabited sector of the complex.

Mika replaced his tongue with his thumb and index finger on each nipple, then proceeded with his nimble tongue down the center of the scientist's stomach and, discovering his tiny belly button decided exploration was in order. The dark-haired man's ivory white cock had filled his navel with his precum nectar, and the Russian relished in its sweetness. The wetness of the blonde's tongue and its quick in and out flicks had Connor feeling sensations he didn't know he could feel. Having released his tender nipples, his blond giant used a hand to gently move Connor's leaking staff to one side. He continued downward toward his cock base, giving butterfly light kisses along the way. When his mouth had reached the base, and his nose was buried in the Irishman's blue-black pubic hair, he inhaled the clean musk deeply. Connor, ecstatic that Mika was now going to suck his heavy cock, made an audible sound of disbelief as the Russian veered away and began tonguing the crease between Connor's thigh and groin. He continued alternating between using his warm wet tongue and his full lips, kissing down the man's smooth left leg all the way to his foot.

Connor felt ready to explode with desire. "Please! Please, Mika! I can't stand this anymore. Suck me or bugger me, or put me out of me misery!"

“You ask Mika to be love machine. I make love to you as I know to make love to a man. I want to get to know you. I have desired you for long time. Be patient, please. I promise you not to be disappointed.” Mika said, batting his long lashes at the half-mad Irishman. Then, bringing Connor’s left foot to his mouth, he began sucking each toe one after the other until he was satisfied the Celt had five suckable toes. Mika continued his gentle ticklish torture with a lick down the sole of his lovers’ foot and went immediately to the right foot to repeat the toe sucking. Done with the right foot, he kissed his way up the man’s leg to the groin, where he mercifully moved to Connor’s smooth ball sack and, after licking for some time, sucked in each ball one at a time and then both at once.

Connor was mumbling something that Mika could not understand when the blond raised up and, placing his hands on Connor’s hips, flipped the man over onto his stomach like he was an air cushion. Connor could not see the look of total lust that filled Mika’s eyes as he gazed at the perfect muscular butt. He wasted no time bending over and using his tongue to lave the arse crack that was as smooth as the rest of the Irish’s body. Mika rubbed his rough five o’clock stubble across the man’s buttocks and lower back before kissing his way once more into the smooth hairless crack. Finding the puckered bud, his strong tongue licked around it and suddenly entered the orifice. Connor was in nine different kinds of hell now. He thrashed and pushed up to meet the probing tongue, Mika didn’t even have to move his head. Just like Mika himself, his tongue was long, and he knew just how to titillate the man’s sphincter muscle into a state of relaxation

Connor was still pleading; some things Mika could understand while other words came out unintelligible. So he flipped the man onto his back. Mika was sitting on his haunches with Connor’s ivory masculine thighs positioned atop the Russians’ hairy ones. Both men’s eyes were locked on each other. Connor was literally shaking with desire.

“So you crying like little girl for me to stop and fuck.” Mika said, his eyes glancing toward his turgid penis. Connor followed the glance and his eyes widened. He had never personally seen an erect cock that long and thick before. “Too

bad you not have lube. Mika will have to dry fuck.” The Russian lover said, looking very serious and shaking his head.

“No! No! Stay exactly where you are!” Yelled Connor as he swung up and out of bed, miraculously missing his lover’s head with his foot, and dashed for the bathroom. In a flash, the Irishman was back in position, holding a large bottle of lube. Connor would never know the big smile and silent laugh Mika gave during his brief absence.

“You Irishmen do everything the easy way.” Mika chided as he poured a generous amount of lube on his finger, which he proceeded to insert in Connor. He worked it in and out. Noting that Connor appeared comfortable, he added another finger and yet another, intentionally rubbing the man’s prostate. Connor sucked in his breath when Mika suddenly extracted all three fingers and just as suddenly reinserted them into his heat. Mika pulled Connor’s arse a little closer and, with his right hand, grabbed the base of his thickly veined staff, which, in its hardness, was at a ninety-degree angle flat against the Russian’s abdomen and aimed it directly at the Irishman’s hole. Mika’s foreskin, stretched to paper thinness, was partially retracted, allowing a glimpse of the pink mushroom head. Rubbing his left index finger in the wetness from his cock tip, Mika extended his long arm and painted Connor’s lips with the sweet nectar before he had a chance to suck the finger into his mouth. The Russian began stroking Connor’s beer can thick cock while he playfully moved the wet tip of his cock against the man’s hungry hole.

“Oh, no, my fucking g-d!” I don’t have condoms available for your size! “The commissary would have those.” He had a sad expression on his face now, with his brow furrowed in anguish.

“My dear, sweet, Irish boy. We have been told that over ninety-seven percent of the world is dead. We were checked for every disease known to man before being allowed here. So I think we can safely make love and breed each other’s arses like rabbits without worry.” Mika said, laughing.

Connor smiled. “I suppose you are right. The protein will no doubt be good for us.”

“Comrade, I like the way you think,” Mika replied with his disarming smile, which Connor truly enjoyed putting on his new friend’s face. The Russian proceeded to squirt lube directly into Connor’s arse and then applied it to his cock very generously.

The moment both dreaded and most desired had come. Connor sucked in a deep breath and seemed to hold it. “Comrade, you act like you have never been fucked before. You know not to grimace and not breathe. As I push in, you must push out against me. It is going to hurt and burn but only until the head is passed the muscle ring. Then I give you plenty of time to get used to it. There is no rush. I am not impatient little Irish boy. I am big strong Russian man who knows the art of pleasing his man. You must trust me.

Play game. Pretend I am Russian Cossack that has conquered your village, and upon seeing how handsome you are, I have decided to take you as my husband. You have agreed that you will travel with me and take care of all my manly needs in exchange for letting your family live and not giving your teenage brother to my troops for pleasure. You hate me, and you promise yourself that you will not let my claiming your arse hurt, no matter what. How sounds that?” Mika asked the bewildered Celt beneath him. During this fantasy, Mika put half his dick head in Connor’s little-used arse, resting it there and then withdrawing. Mika soothed and charmed.

G-d the man is charming, he can talk roadkill back to life. Connor thought.

But, he rather liked the fantasy idea. So he grunted and agreed.

The young muscular Irishman’s mind drifted away from the sterile environment provided by the Antarctic post to the steppes of Russia as Connor envisioned how they might have looked nine hundred years ago. He had been taken prisoner by an unforgiving horde of Cossacks, their broad curved sabers hanging at their sides by bright red sashes. Their pants were billowing and loose but tucked into knee-high boots. Their king, a beautiful blond giant

with a battle scar across his right cheek, had spotted the beautiful peasant boy just as the soldiers had forced him into a kneeling position and poised a razor-sharp sword high above his ivory neck... "HALT! Take that man to my tent under guard until I get there. Wash him, soldier, and do not put so much as a bruise on him, or you will pay with your life."

As the young warlord had ordered, in the royal tent, the soldiers had ripped the clothing from his body and dutifully washed every part of him. In a short time, the tent flap was pulled to the side. The tallest man the boy had ever seen entered and stood there staring at him, a beautiful, radiant smile belying his rumored cruelty spread across his face. "Bend him over the table and hold his hands down." The men were ordered and they complied. "You two men get on the ground and spread his legs." This done, the boy lay trembling, the upper half of his body on the table and his bare feet touching the ground. Glancing around, the boy could see the warrior king looking at him with a look he had never seen another man give to another. "Bring his father and brother in here." Two battle-weary men, one about thirty years, the other no more than fifteen, were ushered in, hands tied behind their backs and ankles shackled together.

"I bring the father in here and the brother that you may learn my magnanimity. Your son, Yuri is that his name has agreed to be my husband so that you might live as free men. In return, he will serve me at my pleasure, being both my servant and acting in my woman's place as I might need. him to act in her place. I brought you here so that you will see his sacrifice for you. I also do this because once my soldiers know that I have planted my seed in him, no one will dare to violate him. My entire army will protect him with their very lives." The quaking boy felt the heat of the king behind him as a soldier brought a bowl of pig's lard over, and the warlord swooped up a generous amount and rubbed it into the boy's arse. He then unceremoniously pulled the material hiding his cock aside and pulled out his cock. The boy

heard his father gasp and pray to the warrior king to have mercy, and he listened to his little brother sob. This made the boy look again, with dread, over his shoulder. He then saw what his father was praying about, his brother sobbing about, and what the soldiers present stared at with reverence. The largest piece of manhood any had seen. The king slicked his cock in the lard, positioned himself behind the boy, spread his legs wide so that his height was lowered enough for the pounding that was to come. The king slapped the boy hard on the arse, and as he cried out in pain, the king rammed his cock into the boy to its very base.

“Aaarrrrgggghhh! Merciful divine g-d stop!” Connor screamed.

During their role-play fantasy, Mika had worked his cock past the tight muscle ring. But, unlike Connor’s warrior king, Mika being much more compassionate and caring, had eased his cock head in plus an inch and was stroking Connor’s thick meat while the man got used to it. He was also using his thumb under Connor’s scrotum to massage his sensitive prostate externally.

“Are you okay, comrade?” Mika whispered with concern.

“Yea, yea. At least, I think so. Just let it stay where it is for a minute.” Connor replied, sweat dripping from his face.

“Da, detka! Yes, baby. I don’t want to hurt you, no matter how much I tease. I really do care for you, Connor.”

The white-hot fire from the wide anal stretch was dying down, and Connor was feeling a complete fullness that pulsated with every beat of his Russian lover’s heart. “I’m better now. The fantasy idea really worked, by the way. Okay, I want more of you.” Connor said as he rubbed his palms back and forth on the hairy thighs. Due to the height difference and the fact that this is the first of what Mika hoped would be numerous encounters over the years to come, the Russian determined that the best technique would be for him to remain seated on his haunches with Connor laying on his shoulders with his buttocks and lower back resting on Mika’s thighs. In

this position, Mika could just sit still and pull the Irishman's arse toward him and continue burying his cock in the man. Mika pulled him another inch and yet another and stayed still for about half a minute. Then, another two inches slid in. At this point, Mika pulled almost all the way out, careful not to let the bulbous head out, and lubed his staff again. He slid it back in with ease to where it was and then pulled Connor toward him another two inches before pulling almost out. A few more times and Mika had his entire ten inches and all that thickness in his colleague's gut. When Connor would move, the most minor little bump on the Russians' slab of meat would make contact with his prostate and send out ripple after ripple of complete mind-blowing pleasure.

"Mika, I am ready. I have you all the way in me. Now, I want you to fuck me like we are trying to make a baby! I want to feel your ball sack hitting me. I want to hear the wet suction of my arse on your cock, and I want to hear you grunt, and I want you to leave bite marks all over my neck and shoulders so that Brad will know what we are talking about. I want you to cum in me and on me and do anything you want to do to assure yourself you have made me addicted to your body!" Connor had tears streaming out of his eyes as he huskily told his penetrator these words. Connor could not help crying. He was ecstatic, never had he felt such pleasure. Never in his wildest dreams did he think he could accommodate such a monster penis. Todd had a hefty eight inches that he used well on Connor. Still, he was Todd's only man, so there was a lack of experience, which Connor appreciated. Connor cried because he thought of Todd, who was so much alive the night before Connor came down to Phoenix. He had not even showered, so the man's dried semen and scent remained on his body. Todd would have been joining him in a few weeks. That is the only reason why he had the lube. Now Todd's body lay no telling where, on the street, in his house, decomposing in an unsanctified area. *My poor Todd.* The pistoning of the giant's cock and his grunts of pleasure brought Connor from his melancholy reveries, and he found himself wanting more of the Russian.

This Irishman, who had been a stranger to Mika just months ago, was making him feel more involved in his lovemaking than he had felt for many years. He could feel his payload building up, his huge balls ascended in their golden bag of skin, and he began shooting his load into his boy's arse.

Connor, well aware of the massive dick's expansion and feeling the heat and wetness spreading in his guts as well as the moist sound of the plunging cock brought Connor to the brink and over.

"Jesus, Joseph, and Mary!" Exclaimed Connor after the contraction of his large balls and the subsequent firing. Connor's thick cock was entirely out of its foreskin; his jizz shot straight up into the air and then arched over, hitting his face repeatedly with clumpy, thick white cum. The swearing and moaning and spasms of muscles all over Connor's body took him to the brink of passing out before he finally settled into a rapid heavy, but regular breathing pattern. Mika, his legs tiring from the position and the gradual diminishing of what had to be the most intense orgasm of the young man's life, moved back a little.

"Don't you dare! You stay right where you are for a while. Pulling all that cock of me at once would be such a shock and loss to my body that I don't know what might happen." Connor warned his new lover.

"Mika can't stay buried in arse forever, my legs...how you say...go to sleep." The satiated Russian whined.

"Not forever, guy...just until you get a little smaller. I don't want to feel the withdrawal of that cock head of yours just yet." Connor said with a bit of chuckle and shaking his head. "Besides, I got to clean my own spunk off my face. Hand me that rag, please." He said, pointing to a napkin on his nightstand.

"Don't you even think about it! Mika worked very hard for that protein. You will not deny it to me." With that and a few objections from Connor, Mika withdrew from his partner with a wet moist pop. Connor looked down at the manhood and could not believe it had just found accommodation in his arse.

As soon as Mika had extracted himself, he leaned over and licked every last strand of cum from Connor's face, and then he gave the Irish a long deep kiss, sharing his taste with him. Connor thought how the boisterous young Russian was as loving and tender as any man could be.

"I was sad for you, little Irishman when I saw you crying for Todd. I understand, but Todd's gone now with so many others. So I am here for you now." *And always, I think if you will let me be*, the gentle giant thought to himself.

"I think I would like that, Mika. Todd would like you too." Connor replied, running his hands through the man's long blond tresses and lifting his head. He gave him a warm, lingering kiss.

"Bedsides, you now belong to Mika anyway, Irishman," those gleaming teeth and irresistible smile were back.

"What's that supposed to mean?" Connor asked, going along with the Cossack's bravado.

"After you have been filled by Mika's monster cock, no other man will ever be able to please you. You will be forever saying, is in yet?" Mika laughed hysterically at his joke.

Connor was glancing over at the clock. "My g-d, it's just ten minutes before Master Sgt. Howell is due here!" He said, voice all excited and jumping out of bed.

"Calm down, Connor. Put on ugly robe, and I put on sweatpants, we brush our teeth, you share toothbrush, and we will meet him." Mika said smoothly.

"But he will know!" Connor said, looking at Mika like he was crazy.

"So? He likes the same we do. After we meet, we will change into appropriate clothes to meet with Col. Dr. McCormick." Mika said simply.

"You're right." Connor appreciated the calmness that Mika passed on to him. *I think this man is going to become very important in my life*. So he thought as he slipped on his old tweed robe and, with it, its memories of Ireland.

Chapter Six

“Greetings, Phoenix residents.

It is I Lasitor, bidding you a good morning, it is now 6 a.m.

*Did you know humans heal faster when they laugh?
Laughter is a physical reaction characterized by rhythmic,
often audible diaphragmatic and respiratory contractions. It’s
a reaction to external or internal stimuli. Laughter can be
induced by tickling, or by humorous stories or thoughts.*

*Yes, dear humans, it is a proven fact that laughing is the
medicine of the heart and soul. There is no need to be
depressed when Lasitor can break the ice.*

*Why was the iceberg very confused to see a huge, wilted
head of lettuce floating in the middle of the ocean?*

Because there was an iceberg, dead, ahead.

Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

*Visit our local community news page for more jokes to
brighten your day.*

Breakfast is served until 8 a.m.

Thank you and enjoy a splendid day.”

Craziness ‘gay gentlemen’ come up with

Precisely on the dot, Master Sgt. Howell showed up at Connor’s quarters. As the door slid open, he stood frozen by the sight of Connor in an old tweed robe and Mika in just sweatpants. His eyes lingered on the Russian’s muscular hairy chest before coming back to focus on Connor.

“Gentleman, I hope you are not planning on meeting Col. Dr. McCormick like that.” The Master Sgt. said dryly.

“Of course not, Connor and I work very hard last night on what we are about to show you, and then we decided we should get to know each other much better,” Mika said, smiling brightly as Connor’s face turned a rare shade of vermillion.

“I see,” was Master Sgt. Howell’s only reply as he followed Mika’s invitation into the neat apartment. Howell mentally appreciated how fastidiously Connor managed to keep his living quarters. The walls were covered in a mixture of classical, modern, nouveau, and deco art. Yet, the pieces were displayed so professionally that there was no appearance of clutter. The few polished tables provided perch for some small, tasteful ceramics, what Howell’s Father would have called unnecessary dust catchers. Contrary to his father’s nomenclature, there was no dust to be found here.

“Please sit down, Master Sgt. Howell,” Connor said, motioning toward an impeccable leather couch.

“Please call me Bryan. In informal situations, titles seem very stiff, and I’m not on duty yet. Is that coffee I’m smelling?”

“That it is. This is a sad thought thinking of the day we run out here. Connor said in his best Irish brogue. Connor had learned to favor coffee over tea during his years in America. “May I assume you would like a cup? How do you like?”

“Oh, g-d yes! Black, thank you.”

While Connor had given up tea, he still loved Irish scones. A kitchen pastry chef made them for him regularly from an old family recipe Connor had provided him.

Niceties aside, Connor quickly set up three places at his small round dining table. Bryan and Connor seated themselves while Mika brought over a folder containing the bullet lists they had worked on just hours before. There was a copy for each of them, and Howell noted an extra one that must have been for Brad. “What did you come up with?”

Connor and Mika went over each paper in the folder in great detail. Elaborating, when necessary, on each point. At various interludes Master Sgt. Howell would interject with an idea or a question. Some of the thoughts proposed by the two men were altered at Howell’s suggestion, some deleted, and others more carefully developed. The three men worked well together and were glad that Brad had come to them with this situation.

“Gentlemen, I like what you did and what we have added. It is certainly a revolutionary concept, but I think it would work, and it would stabilize Brad’s position here. We don’t want to lose him as a leader at any cost.” Howell summed up their meeting. “Well, men, the hour is at hand. You gentlemen should dress a little more appropriately, and we’ll walk down to Connor’s office and wait for Brad.”

Not surprisingly, Brad was already in Connor’s office, though the men were ten minutes early for their scheduled meeting. All three of the men noted how haggard and pale Brad looked this morning. His appearance concerned the men who feared he might be getting ill.

“You quite alright, Sir?” Asked Connor. Can I get you a tea or anything? Perhaps some soda biscuits might be the thing.”

“No, thank you. I am fine. I just need to discuss this situation and see if we can come up with some possible remedies before it gets out of hand. Now, men, I thought all night about what you said, and I still don’t...” Mika interrupted him mid-sentence.

“Sir, Mika, seek forgiveness for rude interruption, respectfully asking you to listen. We may have some important

suggestions you may want to consider before reaching a decision. I ask for permission to speak?" The Russian asked as humble as he could muster. Connor grinned that he was using his pseudo accent on Brad.

"Yes, of course. Permission granted."

"During the course of the night, the three of us thought long and hard about this very serious situation, and we came up with what you will, no doubt and justifiably so, find as a slightly controversial solution," Mika said and nodded to Connor, who immediately passed the thin folders out to each man. Then, with all three men seated and the folders open, Connor took up where Mika had left off. Howell, as planned, was to be the voice of reason if Brad became irate about the proposal.

"The top sheet is a fundamental explanation of what has been going on around here. But, of course, what we know probably only touches the tip of the iceberg. It discusses the situation we are in and touches on the world events leading to this predicament. We included studies from Predoomsday; significant is the fact that while the military never supported or even remotely promoted homosexual activity, it did recognize the importance of addressing the sexual needs of the heterosexual population. Every war in American history, from the Revolutionary War to Desert Storm, made a point of providing men with women for sex. This was done for the psychological welfare of the soldier and apparently succeeded quite well in boosting morale."

"Heterosexual, yes gentleman...you are doing apples to oranges." Inserted Brad curtly.

"Sir, the research we did on ships at sea...our own navy reported heavy homosexual activity during long voyages. So much so that unless a person was openly caught, the navy turned its head. But, of course, that usually takes at least one person who is either gay or bisexual. Naturally, you are aware of the ancient armies of the Greeks and Alexander the Great's Macedonian soldiers, or the Spartans who were paired with their male lovers in combat."

“So, what are you suggesting, Connor?”

“Sir, I think what we need to focus on here are four key phrases out of all of this.

1. Sex in the open.
2. Human psychosexual needs.
3. Turning heads
4. Willingness to participate

“Col. Dr. McCormick,” began Mika. “If you go to the next set of papers, you will see a structured set of laws or code of conduct, if you will. One of the rules states there are to be no sexual activities of any kind in public areas. Well, that includes most of Phoenix, so we are designating areas where sex between two consensual parties can be practiced. Since this complex was designed for thousands to live in, there is no reason why every man should not have his own quarters, including the soldiers. They can be placed in family quarters if down the road they find someone they want to share their life with... and that will happen. A large percentage of our men are genetically heterosexual but may still want to share a sexual experience with someone. What we are suggesting is that we ask for volunteers to do sex duty. Their name will be on a roster, and men in need can set up appointments privately to meet in one or the other’s quarters where they will have quality time together. The client will be confidential to the point of severe restrictions if that confidentiality is breached. Also, since the volunteer roster will be public and there will be no doubt that those men are gay, there will be punishment to anyone who humiliates or bullies any of those volunteers. Their job is an important one, and one we believe is essential. There will also be a place designated off the gym area where men not necessarily interested in intimate contact can go for relief. Likewise, the person providing that relief will be an anonymous volunteer. There will be absolutely no sex during working or on-duty hours or...” Mika finished his presentation with his always captivating smile.

Brad just sat there staring at the paperwork for several moments and then looked in disbelief and exacerbation from

one man to the next, shaking his head in disbelief.

“Howell, what do you think about this craziness these two “gay gentlemen” have come up with?” asked Brad as he pitched the papers in his hands haphazardly on the coffee table. “Off the record, of course.”

“Sir, this doesn’t have to be off the record at all. Connor and Mika created the draft and went over it with me. I can proudly say that I was delighted to help prepare the finished product. While nothing there is carved in stone, I wholeheartedly endorse it being put into practice. If you are that uncomfortable with it, make it clear to the men of Phoenix that its success will be under review for ninety days and that if it is not working out, alternative practices will be considered.” Howell said, his voice confident.

Brad was deep in thought about all the grief that homosexuality had caused in his life. The look of anger contorting his face had nothing to do with what his loyal men had suggested, but they, not knowing that, looked at each nervously.

“Brad, it is only a suggestion we thought might work. Anything on that list can be tweaked. We can even scrap it and listen to what you have to say and do it your way. We will publicly support whatever policy you put in place regardless of our personal opinion. We want you to be confident of that,” Connor assured him.

Brad sat there quietly as if thinking about the situation. But, in reality, his thoughts were far away in another place and time. He had just walked into his twin brother, Daniel’s room. He found him lying on his bed, the white bedspread, bright crimson from the multiple wrist slashes Daniel had self-inflicted. Lying on his nightstand was a note.

‘I’m sorry I was such a disappointment to all of you. I am humiliated and beaten. I couldn’t seem to help what I was. I’ve embarrassed Brad and made mom ashamed of me, and dad. I guess you’re right; I’m not a man. If I can’t be with the man I love I have nothing. Don’t blame Jerrod; he’s a good man. He won’t let me be with him if I

have humiliated or lost my family. Be happy. I love all of you.'

That's all his brother had said.

Brad's thoughts went to Simon...Oh, g-d...Simon and Paul...what if they? He woke up from the trance he was in and realized the urgency to go see his boys.

"Thank you, your plan is creative. Maybe it will work. I'm doing this conditionally, but I'm going to stay out of it unless it hits me in the face. You, three gentlemen, will be policing it and making any necessary changes. Now, gentlemen, I have some family matters to address." With that, Brad stood and started to exit the room.

"Comrade Brad! Please wait. I have these two papers for you to sign. This one is your signature of approval, putting these rules into effect." The overzealous Russian said, handing Brad a formal paper with a large X for him to sign by."

"You were certainly sure of yourself, Mika," Brad stated while taking the pen and signing his name. "And the other paper."

"Yes, Sir, one of my many faults. The other paper requests to be transferred to a large family unit, with Connor," beamed Mika. The three men, including Connor, just stood there with their mouths open. Connor's face was once again turning many shades of red. "Da! Someone has to get the family value thing right. Right? I just thought it should be us." Mika stated as Brad shook his head, signed the paper, and promptly left.

"Well, that certainly didn't go down like I thought it would." Master Sgt. Howell said evenly.

"But..." Connor started to talk.

"Please be quiet Irish boy. You will see. You will like waking up with Mika every morning. Da! I will make it so you will love it. Now come, the three of us must distribute this Code of Conduct throughout the facility, and then Connor help Mika pack, and we move. Then, I must get some sleep after you keep me up all night playing with Russian dick." With

that, Mika grabbed Connor's hand, and with Howell, they went about spreading the word.

Chapter Seven

“Good morning, Phoenix residents.

It is I Lasitor, wishing you a happy morning, it is now 6 a.m.

*Did you know that exercise boosts endorphin release in the
brain?*

*People frequently describe their feelings after a run or
workout as “euphoric.”*

*And did you know that sex is a form of exercise and that
during sexual activity, a man’s heart rate and systolic blood
pressure rise only moderately? Average sexual activity is
comparable to doing the foxtrot, blowing snow, or playing
ping pong.*

*The more you exercise, the more content you will be. So,
chop-chop, let’s get started. Visit our local community news
page, where you can sign up for a variety of activities. Your
privacy and anonymity are guaranteed, so check it out today.*

Breakfast is served until 8 a.m.

Thank you and have a delightful day.”

The Phoenix Code

Word spread like wildfire. By dinner, everyone in Phoenix had read and reread their new code of conduct. The men wondered what had happened to their fair but conservative commander that he would endorse what was now being called the “Phoenix Code.” As with all things that represent change, some thought it disgusting, but most thought it made good sense given the situation, and many were anxious to try it out.

The call for volunteers was rapid in coming. Among those on a public list was Ay-Rab, the twenty-two-year-old Corporal who served under Howell in more ways than one. Private Dylan Hurst, also twenty-two, was the second man to volunteer. By the end of the week, six of Master Sgt. Howell’s men had volunteered to have sex on an appointment basis.

Besides the soldiers, two scientists, a dentist, one maintenance man, a cook, and a thirty-two-year-old man from housekeeping had their names added to the list. Col. Dr. Brad McCormick did not even try to hide his amazement that so many men had openly agreed to be used as sexual objects.

While the volunteers’ names and contact details were public, their clients would remain confidential unless the client, himself, elected to share the information. The volunteer and client would negotiate a time to meet. Requests by the client would be considered by the volunteer, but it would be the volunteer who would set limits. Limits set by the volunteer had to be honored. The volunteer would report to the client’s quarters at the preset time. There would be no rules on how many clients the volunteer could service at any one time if the client wanted that. Still, it was the volunteer’s decision to have or not have multiple men at one time. There would be no military rank or executive position recognized for the agreed-upon activities; all participants were of equal stature for the allotted block of time. Any mistreatment of the volunteers or clients would be dealt with severely and quickly by the council, with the client’s name and the nature of the infringement being made public.

Permission was granted by the Council of Three, as Howell, Mika, and Connor were known, for the construction of a relief chamber. The sexual servicing room was to be situated in the unused recreational area of what would have been the women's locker room. At the end of the locker room was another door designed to be an emergency exit opening into a stairwell leading to a natural tunnel. It was the perfect place for what Master Sgt. Howell had in mind, and he asked volunteers from among his soldiers to build a false wall at that end. Like the end of the room, the wall was nine feet wide and very solidly constructed of building materials provided by maintenance. This alteration created a small hidden room of nine feet by eight feet, with the back wall still equipped with the emergency exit door. In the newly built wall, the men placed three holes of six-inch diameters every two feet.

All the glory-holes were at a height where most men would be able to comfortably insert their cock for anonymous servicing. All the holes could be opened and closed from inside the newly constructed room, thereby signaling the presence of one, two, or three volunteers. The volunteers would be able to see who was approaching, but the man being serviced would not know who was doing it. The volunteers would be committing a punishable offense if they ever divulged the name of their fellow volunteers or the names of the men who used their services.

The men in need of service would enter the locker area, exit to the left to the supposed shower area, and have their own private stall and entrance to a glory-hole. Then, when they were done, they would exit through the swing door of their stall and continue to the communal recreational area.

The Council of Three determined that this room would benefit men who were either not comfortable or secure enough with their sexuality to enjoy bedroom sex; or men who were on a tight schedule and simply wanted to enjoy relief at the mouth of an unknown person. These men would remain anonymous. The council decided the surest way to guarantee anonymity would be to assign everyone, except for Col. Dr. McCormick, a four-digit number randomly selected by a computer and attaching a man's name to that number.

glory-hole hours would be posted online. The hours of operation would be seven days per week for two-hour shifts, four times per day as follows: morning crew six to eight, afternoon eleven to one, evening six to eight, and night from eleven to one. Volunteers had to be off duty when working a hole, but users could go anytime during those prescribed hours. To volunteer, a man would go online and look at times not already scheduled, and when he found a time that worked with his schedule, he would enter his four-digit number in that time slot. Of course, there were three openings in each time slot. glory-holes would be opened or shut with a sliding door to indicate whether it is open for business or not.

This, of course, could mean that only one volunteer could possibly be responsible for servicing quite a few men, hence the need for that volunteer to be on a free day. However, Howell determined that this little project would not be terminated because volunteers fell asleep from cocksucking fatigue!

When Howell had first discussed this with Mika and Connor, Mika thought it was hilarious and worth a try. On the other hand, Connor had always had a conservative catholic mentality. He saw more cons than pros with the idea, but in the spirit of democracy, he went with the other two men.

“Da! This is great idea! Coming from a capitalist soldier.” Mika said, with his beautiful smile and face on full beam, using his intentionally affected Russian accent. “Mika will be first man in line!”

“Only if you agree to let me be on the other side servicing the line, and even then, I can assure you that you will not like the service. The medics will get a kick out of bandaging you, I’ve no doubt.” Connor retorted.

“You servicing a line? I don’t think so.” Mika said sternly, putting a protective hand, unconsciously, over his crotch.

“Thought you’d come round to my way,” Connor said before moving on to other business with his two friends.

“You can cut the capitalist soldier crap too, Mika. You were born after the fall of communism, and rumor has it that you

became as rich as Midas off some of your inventions. Too bad you'll never see that money," Teased Master Sgt. Howell.

"Please, that hurts so much," pouted Mika.

Later that same day, Connor and Mika had moved into sizeable executive family quarters. Brad had signed off on the requisition form. It was astonishing to see the transformation in both men. Mika's impulsive, sometimes childlike, enthusiasm would drive Connor crazy at times. Still, it also made him do things that he would never have done before. For the first time, Connor was openly living and enjoying his life with a blond Adonis for a partner. For Mika, setting up house with the conservative Irishman could, at times, be very frustrating. It also had the effect of forcing Mika to think things through and not lose his temper as quickly. They were both neat freaks, so there were no housekeeping altercations. However, they did decide to keep separate work areas because Mika could become quite loud when disagreeing with a colleague over one of his projects. Bedtime, however, was magic. By the fourth day of waking up together and dressing for a workout in the gym, it was as if there had never been a time when they hadn't shared their lives.

Connor thought back to that first day. After Mika's impromptu request to Brad for sharing quarters, Connor had managed to get the impetuous Russian aside to discuss terms and issues. Mika assured the Irishman in no uncertain terms that he had no issues worth discussing and couldn't understand why Connor would have after the night they had just shared.

"Actually, my biggest issue when it comes to sharing quarters with you is the question of monogamy," Connor said and noted the Russian's Adam's apple move as he swallowed nervously. "To be honest, Mika, when I think of living with a mate, I think of coming home to him and him to me. I frankly don't want to share the man who is sleeping in my bed every night. I'm just the personality type who would find it difficult to work with a colleague if I had personal knowledge that he has shared the same cock I get."

"That really what you think of me, Comrade?" Mika looked serious.

“That’s just it, I barely know you, so I can only go on impressions of you and your personality. You are by admission a partier of the first degree, who loves sex in all its forms, and that is by no means a criticism; it is an observation. I truly have had the best sex in my life with you. It even made me feel I was betraying Todd’s memory. I want a repeat of last night. But if you can’t be monogamous with me, I am telling you that we should not live together because I will make us both very unhappy.”

“What do you propose?” Asked Mika.

“Well, we stay in our own quarters, and you can see anyone who agrees to see you in your room. You can even go to Master Sgt. Howell’s glory-holes and get a quick fix, and when we can both agree on a free night, you can come to my quarters for a couple of hours, we’ll have some fun, and then you can go back to your quarters.”

Connor could tell Mika was not happy with this idea and was really wrestling with it all in his brilliant mind, but he didn’t quite know what to say.

“Or we could submit the signed requisition for a large family quarter, which as Col. Dr. McCormick’s number one” (Connor had only then realized that he was designated successor to Brad, and the realization sent chills down his spine) “I am entitled to have. It will have two bedrooms, which we could sleep in separately.”

“Ah, I see.” Said Mika, like he was really pondering this possibility.

“We would still be living together but in our own unique situation. You would be free to satiate any of your baser needs in your room. You and I could have sex when we were free, and I am agreeable to it. I, in turn, would be able to have a colleague or two in and line up one of Howell’s soldier volunteers, like Ay-Rab, just as an example, of course. I could use his tight little arse while a couple of men took turns using my arse and mouth. The problem would be if you were trying to sleep because you know how loud I get when a big cock makes me orgasm without touching myself and....”

“And Mika would have to come in and kick all of their arses before throwing them out the door and then kick your cheating little arse!” Mika shouted at Connor, his face red with rage from the unexpected visual.

“Exactly,” replied Connor calmly. “So, what will it be?”

“The Irishman has a good point.” Replied Mika, regaining some of his composure. “I think just you and me is good idea. We both leave the volunteers to people still looking. The glory-holes are too close to the ground for me anyway; it would be much too uncomfortable.” Connor had never felt so grateful in his life that Mika was willing to make a commitment. “Besides, with my job and vast responsibilities, I could not have little Irish boy screaming like girl in other room.” The Russian added with a serious look that turned into a smile. Connor, acting as if he were angry, pushed the big Russian off his seat, landed on top of him, and gave him a long deep kiss. Mika was as happy as a scientist who discovered a new species. He had never had a man or woman who wanted to really be with him except for his looks, money, and sexual prowess. He knew in his heart that he had finally found the person he was meant to share his life with.

The kiss finished. Both were panting, almost short of breath. “Promise me one thing....” They said the words at the same time. “Ha-ha!” They laughed hard and long.

Connor gained his composure first. “Promise me that you will never lie to me about anything. But, if you slip up and find you have, I want you to come clean with me the minute you realize it. What were you going to say?”

Mika smiled. “Unbelievable, I was going to say the same thing exactly, only I was going to ask you to give Mika a little more leeway with slip-ups.” His new mate’s sense of humor was going to take the serious-minded Connor a while to get used to. Over time though, Connor would find the Russian’s love and lightheartedness take the edge off many critical situations.

“By the way, Mika, in the true spirit of honesty, you need to know that I have already canceled your four-digit number.

That should help a little with slip-ups.”

The code was set to go into effect seven days after its announcement. That time frame had been set to ensure that there were no strong oppositions that would endanger the project and its leadership. Almost all the men were well educated, and their outlook had not been formed by primitive religious ideologies. Those who found the idea of men with men distasteful were those who simply did not understand its appeal, much like the absolute gay man or woman who thinks sex with the opposite sex is unappealing but who realize it exists as a part of nature. The time also helped establish the volunteers and get the number system out to the population. Overall, morale was higher than usual, and men appeared motivated and excited about their bleak futures.

Chapter Eight

“Good morning, Phoenix residents.

It is I Lasitor, wishing you a happy morning, it is now 6 a.m.

By now, you should have completed an hour of vigorous cardio exercise, had a shower, exfoliated your face, groomed your pubic, and looked at your calendar.

I exist but to serve you.

The weather in Phoenix valley is a ball frosting -68 °F, but not to worry; right before sunset, we expect a rapid rise to -60 °F.

Did you know, as far as we know, Napoleon Bonaparte’s penis is in New Jersey, USA, while Napoleon himself rests in Paris, France?

In 1924, an American rare books dealer bought the collectible and kept it under his bed for good luck. But, unfortunately, it did not work, he did not have any grandchildren to pass it onto, so it was gifted to the New Jersey Museum for antiquities.

Visit our community news page for more exciting facts about the human history.

Breakfast is served until 8 a.m.

Cheers and have a wonderful day.”

Shock advised, charging

Brad felt peace and a feeling of calm satisfaction in his bones for the first time since Doomsday. His decision to call on his leadership team, his friends, to be honest, was a wise idea, he thought to himself, as he lay in front of the expansive anti-reflective one-way windows overlooking the inside of the dome. With his boots kicked off, Brad appreciated the luxury and pampering of the commander's comfortable recliner. He sang along with his favorite songs while enjoying a tall glass of the last obtainable bottle of Macallan M whiskeys in the world. With his earbuds inserted, he let loose and sang "Under the Boardwalk" a pop song written by Kenny Young and Arthur Resnick and recorded by the Drifters.

His wife, who knew he loved the seventies music composed a generation before his birth, had created this playlist for him. He did a rare thing and reminisced for a while. When his thoughts came back to the present: he finally felt ready to let her go. Silently, he thought, "you always knew me, much better than I knew myself; thank you for watching over our boys. I love you, good-bye, my love."

"May you rest in peace," he exclaimed into the room and then continued humming with the beat of the song as he watched the comings and goings of the men down below. A great weight had been lifted from his shoulders. Done with the past, Brad felt confident about the future.

As far as good times go, Brad did not experience much of that. Geologists noted that the facility's seismic equipment was recording an unusual amount of activity. The first severe storm of the winter season had also formed. Since Phoenix could no longer use the many satellites orbiting the earth, the scientists could only speculate what was happening outside of their own valley. Various theories were bandied about the complex by the science community.

So, later that day, the day marked with a big red X on their calendar, was the day those big proverbial S-H-I-T balls hit the fan; as the entire complex began undulating, equipment fell from tables and glassware from shelves in the huge kitchen.

The Plexiglass sections that formed the connecting corridors of the Phoenix complex flexed and held as they were designed to do, but also built into the design were weak points intentionally put in place so that the corridor would pull apart rather than be destroyed. This would theoretically make it possible to repair the damage. The theory was correct, and while most of the structure remained intact, two connecting passageways had pulled four to six feet away from the center structure of Phoenix. This could be repaired.

Unfortunately, the storm was at its height, the winds blowing at a consistent eighty to ninety miles an hour. The outside temperature was forty below zero Fahrenheit, not truly cold by Antarctic standards, but the cold combined with the wind sought out the openings to Phoenix. Miraculously, the vast subterranean lava tube system was unscathed by the quake.

“Col. Dr. McCormick, we need to act fast. The solar batteries are completely charged and, as far as we can tell, suffered no damage. Still, they are programmed to keep Phoenix running at a habitable temperature and to keep the solar hydroponics area from freezing at all costs. They will either drain or burn out in a matter of hours. If they drain, we will have to go subterranean for g-d knows how long until we have sufficient sunlight to recharge them. If they burn out, everything above ground will be lost, and so will we.” Chief maintenance man Tony Bonillo, the twenty-six-year-old civil engineer who had helped in the design of Phoenix as a graduate student, told Brad over his communicator.

“Where are you, Tony?” Brad responded.

“In the maintenance tunnel with a couple of men getting suited up to evaluate repairs to the passage pull-away.”

“Good, man. Any injuries?” Brad asked, crossing his fingers.

“None, Sir, of which I am aware. We were fortunate here.” Tony assured his leader.

“You get out there and see what you need. I’m doing a public broadcast on what I want to be done. Everything will be

ok.” Brad closed communication with Tony and immediately switched to mass broadcast. “Men of Phoenix, passageways three and thirty-seven have pulled away. The damage could be worse. We can fix it. I want all emergency captains to notify me that you are safe. I then want you to do a run-through of your assigned area, looking for men who might need help. You have ten minutes to do this. At that point, all airtight doors will be shut. All energy will be diverted to the food growth domes, except for necessary lighting in the lava tubes. All residents, except maintenance, will report to the athletics dome via the caverns. Master Sgt. Howell, have your men on the ready to get supplies to maintenance for repair. I want a complete account of every man. If anyone is missing, I want to know who!” Howell sent the appropriate pulse to Brad, letting him know orders were heard and understood.

Reaching for his communicator, Brad asked, “Simon, are you ok? What about Paul?”

“We’re both fine, dad; where are you?” Simon immediately replied.

“I am now in Computer Central; I ran over from Command Center so that I can keep tabs on everything. You two get to the caverns and stay there. See if Howell can assign you something safe and in the cavern.”

“Like, I’m going to tell him that, dad. Some of the soldiers you put on the ready are probably younger than I am. We’re already in the cavern. We were working out. Dad, you said you are cutting off heat up there, but you don’t have Antarctic wear!”

“I have to keep the computers above freezing so I will be ok. Just do what I say.” Brad ordered and cut off his pager to start energy diversion.

As people filed into the Athletics Dome, those with slight injuries such as cuts from flying glass fragments helped the seriously injured in need of medical attention to the medic’s room. One with a broken arm from a fall, and a cook with burns to his hands, were brought to Dr. Longarrow, a thirty-year-old Native American doctor and the only practicing MD

on duty at Phoenix. He requested all medics and anyone with medical experience to report to Medic-Underground. Paul and Simon had done a Red Cross Camp the year before, and when Dr. Longarrow got word of them, they were immediately conscripted to prepare and apply bandages and ointments on those not requiring stitches. Thirty minutes into the job and when he was just finishing his last injured patient, Simon took a deep breath and ran.

“What are you doing, Simon?” A worried Paul asked.

“You don’t have to keep those computers above freezing. They were designed to operate in deep space. Paul, dad, could freeze to death in a matter of minutes when he diverts the energy.” Simon said, dashing to the safety wear chamber near the maintenance area. Paul was right behind him. “You stay here and see if Dr. Longarrow needs more help.”

“Not on your fucking life! Who’s going to look after you?” Yelled Paul, following Simon into the element protection clothing area. They both began dressing in appropriate parkas, masks, gloves, and Simon grabbed an extra for his dad. They rushed to the closed security doors leading to the Phoenix complex and found two soldiers standing in front of it. “Sorry, men, you can’t go up there. These are direct orders from Col. Dr. McCormick.” Pvt. David Ferrell told the boys, raising his right hand in a halt motion.

“I am Col. Dr. McCormick’s son, as you well know, and he has ordered us to Computer Central to assist him in monitoring temperatures in the Biomanipulation Growth Labs.” Simon challenged him with a don’t fuck with me look.

“I have heard no such requests. I’ll check with the Col. or Dr. Connor O’Hara.” The young soldier replied, raising his communicator.

“Sure...interrupt the two busiest men in the complex because you don’t believe the commander’s son,” Paul said cynically. He had not even seen Connor to know how busy he might be. It was just an assumption on his part that the second in command would be swamped. The two soldiers looked at each other, wondering what to do. Finally, the hesitation was

enough, and Simon pushed one aside and made it through the door, Paul directly behind. They could not follow the boys because they weren't dressed for the temperature change.

While this was going on, Howell was given a resident accounting tally. All men were accounted for except one.

Howell searched the small crowd of men until he saw the blond Adonis towering over everyone and twisting around. He was not looking happy.

"Mika, where is Connor?" Howell asked upon approaching him.

"That's what I'm wondering. I assumed that he was working the emergency protocol that he and Col. Dr. McCormick had put in place. He has not answered his communicator. He did not even check to see if I was ok. He does that if I am just five minutes behind schedule." A distraught Mika told his friend.

"Where was he last you knew?" asked Howell.

"I am sure when the quake occurred, he was still in our quarters because he was going to complete some calculations before going to his lab this morning." The Russian said without a trace of his usual playful accent. "I'm going to our quarters. He must be in trouble." Mika said, running toward the exit.

"Not until you gear up, or you'll be missing too!" Ordered Master Sgt. Howell. Mika nodded his head and ran to the equipment room, followed by the Sergeant. "You are also not going without me. If he's in trouble, he will need us both."

Properly geared, the men ran toward the exit leading to the Command Center. On their way, passing the two soldiers who were not very successfully guarding the door, Howell ordered, "tell Corporal Ay-Rab he's in charge down here. Then, if we are not back in thirty minutes and you do not hear from me, send three men to living sector two!"

"Yes, Sir," both soldiers answered in unison.

Mika and Howell made their way to Connor's quarters as rapidly as possible, being careful to seal each section of the passageway as tightly shut as they found them. Once in living

sector two, the cold was numbing. Frost and ice sickles had already begun to form. Fortunately, Phoenix had been built in a dry valley, or snow and ice would be beating against the frigid buildings and hinder the repair work. Mika was carrying an extra thermal suit for Connor. When they finally reached the shared quarters of the Irishman and Russian, they found the door locked. Frantically Mika tapped in the security code to unlock the door. The deadbolt gave a slight “whir-whir,” but nothing; the lock was frozen in place. “I know my Connor is in there!” The Russian shouted his battle cry. “Who-ha-ha!”

“I’ll get an ax from one of the fire extinguishing cubbies!” Howell exclaimed.

“Fuck ax! We have no time!” Mika stepped back from the door, raised his foot, and “Chuck-Norrised” the steel door from its frame in a true martial art form. The door clanged loudly as it fell and crushed a wood end table. The amazed Howell followed the giant into the apartment. Connor! Connor! Are you here!” He called and shouted for his lover without getting a reply. Mika looked at the Sgt. in silence, and they both heard the running of water. Mika ran into their bedroom and rushed to the large bathroom. “My g-d! He’s here!”

Howell was there in a flash. Lying nude halfway out of the shower was Connor O’Hara, his ivory skin a deathly pale white with a bluish hue around his lips. His legs were at a weird angle. Blood was everywhere. Mika rushed to his side and fell to his knees in the crimson pool. Without thinking of the cold coming into the shower room, the Russian ripped off a glove, felt for a carotid pulse, and then began looking for the blood’s source. “His pulse is weak, but thank g-d, he does have one. Shut that door!” The Russian shouted at Howell, indicating the shower room door. Howell complied immediately. “Call for the medics to start up this way! Tell them to meet me with stretcher. Tell them Dr. O’Hara has a head laceration and to bring a thermal blanket with them.” Mika ordered the Sergeant, who followed his orders to the letter.

The Russian stood up and began taking his thermal gear off. “What are you doing? You will freeze!” Howell yelled at him.

As Mika went into “*I’m saving-my-lover...don’t-fuck-with-me mode*”, he forgot his proper English and answered Howell with a typically broken Russian accent while getting undressed.

“Niet, I von’t, but he vill,” “He vas shoverrring when quake hit. It must have surrrrrised my Konnorrr, he lost his footing, slipped and fell, hitting his head on rrridge of shover base. However, he vas konscious long enough to crrrawl halfvay out beforre losing konsciousness.”

Teeth chattering from the cold, he gathered himself, shook his head, and switched to more fluent English.

“My Connor likes boiling hot showers. I often kid him about burning me up when we shower together. Good for him and his hot showers because the water comes from thermal springs in the mountain and is limitless. That is what kept him and the room warm but also made the blood flow easily. My body has heated my clothing. I take it off, put it on him, and I will put the cold one we brought for him on me. Then I run like hell with him in my arms until we meet medics. I only hope he has not lost too much blood already, or you will have two dead men to deal with.” During this time, Howell continued to be amazed by the efficient methodology of the scientist. He had Howell elevate Connor’s head and apply pressure to the gaping scalp wound. At the same time, he put his long pants on the Celts lower body, carefully lifting his hips and pulling them securely to his waist and reverently moving the man’s scrotum and penis out of the way of the thermal zipper. Howell continued to hold the Irishman’s torso up and supported his blood-damp head with his chest while Mika put the parka on him as well as gloves. “We won’t tie parka hood too tight. There, grab that sock, tie it around his head, keep pressure on wound.” Mika stood, then squatted and took the muscular Irishman in both arms, lifting him to elevate his head and leaning it against his upper chest. “Howell, I need you to run as quickly as you can ahead of me and open every door for me, or he will die! Howell was up and out of the

room, leaving bloody boot prints on the carpet of the couple's immaculate apartment. Following, not far behind was Mika, who carried his hundred and eighty pound man like he was a feather. As he ran, he talked to Connor, hoping he could hear him. "Please, oh please, Connor, stay with me. Hold on for me...for us. You are all I have. You are all I have ever had that brought meaning to me." There was no response from Connor. When Mika looked down at him, his lips were even bluer than when he found him, but the blood was no longer seeping from the gash. That could mean one of two things; the cold had stopped the bleeding as Mika hoped, or his lover's heart had stopped and was not pumping the blood out. Tears had frozen down the cheeks of the large Russian as he continued to run with his treasure in his arms.

Howell was managing to stay ahead of Mika, getting the sealed doors open, but just barely. *Where are those medics?* Howell kept repeating over and over in his mind. When he would look back at his tall friend with the limp body in his arms, he prayed silently that those two would not be parted so soon after finding each other.

Finally, in the distance, Howell spotted two medics jogging toward them with a stretcher. They were flanked on each side by a soldier. They were already about three-quarters of the way to the cavern entrance. To everyone's dismay, when the tearful Russian was within six feet of the medics, who had laid the stretcher on the ground, he said softly, "not enough time to stop," and without showing any fatigue at all, he passed them by and continued to the cavern. Using his communicator, Howell told his men to be on the watch for the approaching man and have the door open and a clear path to Dr. Longarrow's medic's room at Medic-Underground.

The soldiers were ready and, on their toes, waiting like a bunch of meerkats. As soon as Mika was at the sealed entrance, the doors were opened. Mika, not looking, either way, rushed Connor to the doctor who was standing by and laid the Irishman on the padded medical slab where Longarrow indicated. Then, out of the corner of his eye, he noted Col. Dr. McCormick in the next bed with both Simon and Paul looking down at him with grave faces. Not having

the time or inclination, he gave it no more thought before reporting to the doctor the circumstances, “Connor’s pulse is thready,” while holding his now bare hand over the gash in his head and inspecting it, Mika began ordering the doctor.

“He’s got a head laceration that needs to be shaved, cleaned, and sutured, and at the same time, he will need several packs of blood. He is type AB, and I am O negative. I am universal donor; take from me what you need until you can get his type here.”

“Which do you want me to do... suture or start the IV for transfusion?” Dr. Longarrow asked, all sarcastic and a lot of *careful buddy, this is my ER*, while listening to the Irishman’s chest sounds.

“Medics, please place him on one hundred percent non-rebreather mask stat and get me his vitals and saturation!”

“I can do either, but a few things must be done simultaneously, or we will lose him... and we are not going to lose him!” Mika leaned over and kissed Connor on his cold blue lips. “What will it be, Comrade Doctor?”

Dr. Longarrow would have usually been dismissive of a man who was hysterical over his injured lover, but he was impressed. This giant of a man knew what he was talking about, and the doctor realized that there was no hysteria, just common sense, confidence, and a desire to get the procedures underway.

“Jack, start an IV stat with normal saline on Dr. O’Hara and Dr. Romanov; you will lay here while Sam scrubs your arm and prepares to transfuse you.” The doctor ordered the two medics, taking control of his surgery back from Mika.

Mika did as he was told but insisted that he be allowed to hold Connor’s hand. “I will shave and suture later. But, first, we need to scan his head,” the doctor said while bending over Connor, peeling back his eyelids to assess his pupils. “You know, to rule out penetrative injuries.” Dr. Longarrow stated with a tiny grin playing at his lips. “Dr. Romanov, you seem to know a lot about medicine. What is your background?”

“Sorry, I did not mean to be rude. Connor is always jumping my arse about my take-charge manner. You are in charge; I am just petrified about losing him.” Mika said very sincerely.

“You have every reason to be. I am serious though, your background? I thought you were a geophysicist and linguist. At least that is what I have been told.” Dr. Longarrow said while looking at the results of the scan and vitals. The truth was that Longarrow had been struck by Mika’s beauty the first day he lay eyes on him and had discreetly done everything he could to find out about the man.

“Is nothing. I went through medical school when I was still in prep school. I had much trouble deciding what I wanted to be when I grew up. But decided by the time I was twenty that I not want to be doctor.” The accent was back now that Mika had calmed a bit.

“I see. Well, you still know your stuff.” Longarrow said, shaking his head. Longarrow, himself, had been one of the youngest men ever conferred with an MD at Harvard Medical School. He knew that this guy was a geneticist, physicist, a geologist, spoke multiple languages, and now he finds that he became a doctor before he was twenty.

He glanced at the worried beauty, who was squeezing on a ball to pump his blood out and into his lover. Yet, even under these serious circumstances, the Native American felt his manhood stir. Longarrow himself was nothing to sneeze at. He was tall with jet black hair, almost black eyes, and a wit that was only surpassed by his handsome face.

He truly hoped that Dr. O’Hara would survive. And, if he did, there was little doubt that it was because of the superhuman heroics provided by his Cossack lover. Longarrow wanted to get to know both of these men in more ways than one. He had just finished the last suture when Mika cried out, “Doctor, I am not feeling a pulse!”

While holding Connor’s hand, he had also kept a finger on Connor’s radial pulse, which, while weak, had been present. The only EKG monitor was connected to Col. Dr. McCormick. The others were still in the Phoenix Medical Dome.

Longarrow quickly and expertly placed two fingers on the Irishman's carotid. There was no pulse. He confirmed that by listening with his stethoscope. "Asystole, starting CPR, connect the AED."

"Disconnect Dr. Romanov from the transfusion line, administer Epinephrine 1 milligram, IM every 3-5 minutes during resuscitation, and prepare for tubing. Stand clear! Do not touch the patient while the AED analyzes!" ordered the doctor. "Shock advised, charging..." said the AED in a female robotic voice.

Mika yelled, "Are you crazy, doctor; Adrenalin will never reach his heart, give it IV or through the nose or mouth."

It was a stupid mistake, but the doctor acknowledged Mika as correct and ordered the medic to give it IV.

The doctor exclaimed once again, "all clear!" The electricity shot out, and in reaction to the shock, Connor's body arched upwards in a quick jerk before falling back on the stiff table. "Analyzing, commence CPR," repeated the AED. "No pulse, give two breaths and begin chest compressions," Longarrow ordered.

Sam began deep compressions; Mika thought he heard a rib crack, and he winced. "Sam, give Dr. Romanov the AMBU bag and get me a straight blade and a number eight ETT." Mika gave Connor what he estimated to be about 800 cc's of pure oxygen for every compression of the bag. He did not know if that ratio was still the guideline but felt comfortable with it. Sam handed the doctor the intubation instruments and, walking to Connor's side, slipped a portable pulse oximeter on his finger. It read 98%. Connor was getting oxygen which meant that his own blood and the additional blood from Mika was enough to transport O₂ through his systemic system. "Halt compressions!" Dr. Longarrow rechecked the carotid. "No pulse, "Shock advised, charging..." repeated the AED, and Longarrow said, "stand clear, right before Conner's body arched again."

Mika knew the doctor was doing the best he could, considering there was no monitor in place to determine the

rhythm, if any. Longarrow's gut instincts were the same that Mika would be doing in his place. Mika thought that Connor had probably received close to two pints of blood from him... more than prudent to give, but he still needed more. "Why did they wait to send the necessary fucking equipment? I could have used a TCP early on. Jack, 1 mg epi in his IV and go ahead with intubation..." Meds placed in IV compressions resumed, two breaths, and Mika tilted Connor's head back in sniffing position. Longarrow deftly inserted the laryngoscope into Connor's throat and, spotting the trachea, expertly inserted the ETT, stopping when it was at twenty-two cm's at the lip. Mika holding the tube in place, fit the AMBU to the tip and gave long deep breaths while the doctor listened for air movement location. Assured that the tube was placed correctly in the trachea and that air was not being pushed into his stomach, the tube was secured. Two more times, the AED analyzed, more compressions and more meds were placed onboard each time, and still no response. Longarrow looked at Mika's eyes, such a deep blue and so devastated. The young physician shook his head and sadly stated for the record. "Code called at 11:46 a.m.," Looking one more time at Mika, whose long dark eyelashes could no longer hold the tears that began flowing over them, he put his stethoscope in his lab coat pocket and walked toward Col. Dr. McCormick's bed.

"No! Nooooo!" Mika's scream didn't sound human as it filled the vast room beyond the medical area and bounced off the walls, silencing all the men of Phoenix who were gathered in the underground chamber. "I won't let you do this! Damn you, Connor, too much for us to do, you bastard!" Then, in his madness, the Russian gave a hard pericardial thump with his fist directly over his young lover's heart.

Two soldiers, responding to the screams, grabbed Mika by his arms to pull him back, thinking he had indeed gone mad. He tossed the young men aside as if they were pesky flies, with such force, they went flying, tripping over each other and a low-lying bed. Mika shook Connor and squeezed the AMBU bag several times, still cursing him for giving up. "Wake up, you fucking leprechaun!" More soldiers arrived to join the circus. They halted in their tracks with the look of desolation

Mika gave them. He stopped his screams and gently started to bend over Connor.

Connor's eyes shot open and panicky from air starvation created by the small diameter of the tube obstructing his airway; he sat bolt upright striking Mika just above the right eye socket with his forehead. The force of the blow was such that Mika stumbled backward. Connor grabbed the tube and extubated himself. The Irishman took a long deep wheezy breath and looked around, his eyes bewildered, his fight and flight response in overdrive, thanks to all the Adrenalin shots. Then he focused on the Russian. "What is wrong here, my Yelda?"

Mika's mouth closed, and he pulled his hand from his eye, which was rapidly swelling and was going to be a brute of a black eye. But, instead, his smile began to form and become more and more radiant before he burst into laughter, gently grabbed Connor like he was afraid the muscular Celt would break, and kissed him on the lips. "Everything and nothing, my little Gille-Toine. I just was given back my life's meaning."

Everyone in the room began applauding and hugging each other. Connor didn't know why. Mika laughed again, thinking it funny that no one present spoke Russian or Gaelic. If the crowd had only known that Yelda is an old Russian word for big dick and Gille-Toine was Gaelic' boy of the arse' or the more modern term "Fuck-Buddy." It was a term of endearment used between the two in private. Connor would have been mortified if anyone had picked up on it.

A re-evaluation of Connor by Dr. Longarrow indicated that his vitals were getting back to normal. His blood pressure was low, but that was to be expected with the significant blood loss he had suffered. Truly Mika's donation had saved his life. It was then that Longarrow advised the Russian that the plasma was due to come in with the subsequent arrival of residents, and there was no blood available. The doctor and Mika set up a meeting then and there to start a blood drive, so this would not happen again. Connor was going to require a lot of rest and

a good diet to build his blood back to normal, and so was Mika.

It seems that Mika's inhuman cries as he battled for Connors' life brought Brad, who had suffered severe hypothermia, out of shock and back to life as well.

When Simon and Paul had disobeyed orders by leaving the safety of the caverns and made it to Computer Central, they had found Simon's father passed out, his head lying on a control desk. Unable to awaken him, they had immediately dressed him in protective thermal gear and notified Medic Alert, advising the situation and telling them they would meet in the passageway. The boys pulled Brad into the corridor, grabbing the near-frozen man, who was too big for the boys to carry, under each of his arms, and drug him at almost a run over the smooth passageway's floors. He had been closer to the subterranean entrance than Connor, and the boys were soon met by medics and soldiers who placed the commander on a stretcher, rushing him to Dr. Longarrow's care. His heart rate had been slow and his breathing shallow, but the hypothermia blankets and proper meds along with Mika's battle cry had done the trick. Brad was expected to make a full recovery in just a few days.

Master Sgt. Howell and Brad chastised Paul and Simon for disobeying orders. Simon had agreed that when he realized his father had placed himself in peril, he should have notified Howell or Ay-Rab. Brad criticized himself for being so stupid as not to think of having thermal protection brought to him. The earthquake incident also showed a weakness in the management structure that would have to be addressed. Both Connor and McCormick were almost lost. That was quite serious since they were the two leaders by succession at this point and possessed knowledge of computer codes that no one else could access. However, on the positive Brad's orders had probably saved the Phoenix community and food-producing ability. Tony Bonillo and his crew had repaired the pull-aways without a hitch, and Phoenix was back in working order in less than twelve hours.

There was no equipment damaged beyond repair. The plateware damage was extensive in the kitchen and dining area, but thousands of glass items were still in original shipping crates and were quite safe. Luckily the few people who were dining or serving had no severe injuries.

Brad identified an emergency preparation team was needed to deal with anything from disasters to mundane tasks like making sure all breakable items were kept in an earthquake-proof manner.

Chapter Nine

“Good morning, Phoenix residents.

It is I Lasitor, wishing you a glorious morning. It is now 6 a.m.

No point in mentioning the weather. With winds at a steady 90 mph, none of you geniuses are dumb enough to go out there anyway.

Did you know meditation was practiced in numerous religious traditions to achieve mindfulness, or focusing the mind on a particular object, thought, or activity to mentally clear and emotionally calm a human’s state of mind?

When you meditate this evening, you might want to spare a thought for the Ancient Egyptian whose rather stinky contraceptive of choice was crocodile dung. Mixed with sour milk to form a paste, the dungy dough was inserted into the vagina, hoping it would create an acidic barrier to sperm. Not that any of you here will likely have to be concerned with this as there are no women and most likely no crocodiles. Penguin shit might be a good substitute, but then there’s the no-woman dilemma again.

Breakfast is served until 8 a.m.

Thank you, I wish you a peaceful day.”

Please let me go, Sir!

All the men of Phoenix were young, intelligent, and resilient. As a result, all was back to normal in a week. The overall confidence level was up since they had endured an earthquake successfully. Management and military revisions were ordered and soon enacted by Col. Dr. McCormick, who insisted on a general population vote, including the soldiers, to be put into law. To ratify a change, a fifty-one percent in favor vote had to support a new law. If fifty percent of the voting members voted against a proposal, meetings would be held to negotiate the reasons for disagreement. If there was an impasse, then a committee would look into alternate solutions. Such things would work well in a population as small as Phoenix.

Changes included the promotion of Master Sgt. Bryan Howell from Sergeant to Captain, Corporal Habib Lamasi (Ay-Rab) to Sergeant, Private Dylan Hurst to Corporal. Even though done for his lover, Mika's heroism had him placed as number three in succession to command Phoenix right behind Brad and Connor. Against Brad's wishes, the community put his rank from Col. Dr. to General with one hundred percent approval. Phoenix was probably the first community in history where the civilian population had an equal say in military ranking.

Military personnel transitioned from full-time active duty to standby to be deployed at any time, should the need arise. Taking on the role of Reserves made better sense. Soldiers who had shown interest were apprenticed to various specialties or pursuing a specific degree at Phoenix University. In-service training was welcomed, especially those skills to enhance the complex's safety in natural disasters like earthquakes, tsunamis, or flooding. Terrorist threat levels were low to non-existent from the outside, so Phoenix Reserves always maintained a skeleton crew to guard and monitor the alarms. The Phoenix Code for same-sex relations was working quite well. A few altercations, usually involving alcohol, or alcohol and men dressed as women resulted in forbidding volunteers or clients to imbibe within twelve hours of a rendezvous. Ay-

Rab reported that his off-duty days were quite busy from clients booking him weeks in advance. Cpl. Hurst reported the same popularity. Of course, neither broke the code of conduct by revealing any of their clients' names. Mitchell Fairgate, the only scientist to publicly volunteer, reported that, even though he was the oldest of the volunteers by some ten years, he was surprised by the number of much younger men who made appointments for pleasure with him. Apart from Quik-Fix Hall, some whispers had surfaced about a group of men who walked the corridors as females at night. As apartments were re-allocated, the belongings inside automatically became the property of those persons who moved in. It made sense that the orphaned silk and chiffon gowns were begging to be worn. As this was innocent, all in good fun, and happening after hours, Brad and his council members decided to not interfere. As long as no laws were being broken, there was no reason to micro-manage each man's proclivity.

Brad had developed an entirely different relationship with his son after walking in on Simon and Paul having sex and overheard their suicide pact commitment. He'd had a long conversation with Simon in private. Telling his son that he was aware of him being gay and that he knows about the relationship with Paul. However, he stopped short of mentioning that he had witnessed him impale Paul with his cock, nor did he bring up the pact that was tantamount to suicide. It was difficult for Brad, but he talked to his son as lovingly as possible.

He, unbeknownst to Simon, had Paul waiting in the outer office and called him to join them. "Paul, I brought you here to join Simon and myself in this meeting to discuss something that I have been made privy to." Paul just sat there wide-eyed and somewhat scared of his lover's father. Surely, General McCormick didn't know that he and Simon were lovers." It has come to my attention that Simon is...gay and you are as well and that you are having intimate relations." Paul glanced very nervously at Simon and then at his own feet. "I want you both to know that I'm not sure I understand any of this but that I am trying. I love Simon more than anything and, being the closest thing you now have to a parent, I have learned to love

you like a son. While I can't think of you as being like brothers," Brad attempted some humor, "I can think of you as family. So I embrace the two of you and hope that you will bear with me as I adapt."

Both boys started crying. All three men stood up, the two boys extended their arms for a handshake, but Brad ignored the gesture and instead swept them into his arms for a group hug. The boys were all smiles and tears. Not being big on emotions, Brad said, "I suggest you go see Mika about getting a living quarters' change form." Simon looked at his father with confusion. "I imagine you two will want to share an apartment, and I will need a form to approve and sign. After that, you two are dismissed for classes." Brad sat down at his desk and turned his attention to other matters as the boys bounded toward the door of his office. Stopping them before they could exit, "Please don't hold hands in the passageways and do not kiss in public. I don't care if you announce your relationship; I will support it, just be men about it. Dismissed."

Captain Howell's little project, secretly called "Quik-Fix Hall," was doing incredibly well. For persons providing services, most slots were filled for every shift, on rare occasions, only a third. Overall, it worked pretty well. The men knew why it was there and would sometimes be lined up waiting their turn. There was no reason to gossip about seeing a particular scientist or soldier in the queue because all but four of Phoenix's residents were not in committed relationships. To date, two couples claimed monogamy; Connor and Mika, who vowed to never visit Quik-Fix Hall, and Simon and Paul, who performed their duties as cocksuckers impartially and unattached. They would quietly whisper to each other about various topics until it was the next man's turn to approach, unzip their pants and put their cock through the orifice where it was greeted by a warm wet mouth. Naturally, men being men, there was always speculation about the volunteers' identities who fellated them, but it was harmless.

In truth, the Quik-Fix Hall volunteers varied a great deal. Some men volunteered just to see what it was like or perhaps on a dare, which was against the rules and never did it again.

Others enjoyed it so much that they repeatedly did it, but no one ever knew the schedule. Only Connor knew whose name went with each four number identity, and he never looked to see who was doing what unless a rare complaint was received. When that happened, Connor would pull up the resident's sign-up code and address the situation.

Brad was aware of the existence of Quik-Fix Hall and its popularity. He had never condoned it but had never spoken against it. It was one of those grey areas that from the beginning, he had told the Council of Three to handle everything, involving him as little as possible. All residents tread lightly on the subject of anything to do with the Phoenix Code when around General McCormick. Nevertheless, everyone, especially his friends, was impressed with his acceptance of his son's relationship with Paul.

Sometimes Captain Howell would sign up for a two-hour shift if he was feeling particularly horny or lonely. He was a very handsome playboy who, in the Predoomsday world, had quite a sexual appetite. He was never obsessed with sex but had always had a healthy attitude and never lacked partners. He had gone into the military because of a love for his country and because it was expected of him as he was a fifth-generation marine. In the world before, Bryan had been cautious about letting his nature be revealed to his fellow soldiers. His decision of total discretion made his life very lonely. He made it a point to only have relations with strangers to protect both his career and personal life. He'd had a wife and children as had been expected of him. He had loved his children, but had he been happy? No! Doomsday was the best thing that had ever happened to him sexually. His only regret was that he did not have a partner. Still, he envied Connor and Mika's commitment to each other, wishing for them only happiness. He felt Paul and Simon were awfully young to make a life commitment but was glad they had each other. Young people had made lifelong commitments before and ended up lovers, partners, and spouses for fifty years and longer, so they might also. Still, he wondered about them, knowing that boys would be boys.

On one such occasion, Howell had signed up for the evening shift. It was usually a busy time because men had finished their daily work and wanted to work out in the gym, shower, get dinner or perhaps stop by on their way to their quarters after dinner and scratch an itch before being alone all night. When Bryan entered the room, it was about fifteen minutes before the start of his shift. He took a seat at the middle hole, wondering who would be requiring his services. He had checked the computer sign-up and knew that all three spots had volunteer relief providers. While he waited for the shift to begin, he looked through the tiny peephole to see if any men were waiting for the relief doors to open. There were already four men out there, all in their workout clothes. In a community as small as Phoenix, Bryan Howell knew all of them, although he had not serviced any of them. First, there was Tony Bonillo, the twenty-six-year-old of southern Italian extraction and a civil engineer, who had so brilliantly orchestrated the quake passageway repairs. He was laughing and talking to Dexter Mathews, a twenty-eight-year-old electrical maintenance specialist who worked under Tony. Next, Jack Donovan, a twenty-two-year-old medic, a former jock with all American good looks, appeared to work out more regularly than Howell had realized. Jack was usually extroverted but nervously looked around the room. At the same time, Sam Martin, Jack's medic colleague, obviously tried to make conversation. Bryan smiled and thought that this must be Jack's first time visiting Quik-Fix Hall. Most of the straight men of Phoenix who came to cum, as it were, at Quik-Fix had done so out of desperation for another human to touch them intimately or had been cajoled into it. It was Bryan's experience that a first visit was all it took to start a habit of repeat visits.

The door behind Bryan opened and in walked Dr. Peter von Leutzendorf, a twenty-seven-year-old biochemist from Bavaria, who at six foot two, short blond hair, blue eyes, and smooth skin was the perfect example of what Hitler envisioned for his Aryan master race. Bryan hoped he would be able to concentrate on his duties with Peter sitting next to him. He had wanted him for a long time. About five minutes before his shift started, Bryan was surprised to be joined by Dylan Hurst,

the twenty-two-year-old who served as a soldier under Howell and who had been one of the boys caught in the tunnels by General McCormick. In Predoomsday world, Howell would have been mortified to be with someone under his command in this situation. He was used to it now; the rule that you have no rank when it comes to sharing sex had helped a lot. Dylan would never mention having seen his Captain in the service room, just as Dylan would never come up in Bryan's conversation with anyone. Nevertheless, Bryan was surprised to see Dylan working Quik-Fix since he apparently was quite busy as a public sexual volunteer.

Peter and Dylan looked at Bryan, who looked at his watch and signal to open the small glory-hole doors. Like cattle coming to feed, Sam went to glory-hole one serviced by Peter, Tony strutted up to glory-hole two manned by Bryan, and nervous Jack to glory-hole three, where the nervous novice was going to be lucky enough to be serviced by the veteran mouth of Dylan. *That will guarantee Jack will be back*, thought Bryan. For right now, only Dexter, leaning casually against a wall rubbing his groin, was in line waiting for the next opening.

Jack quickly glanced at the other two men to see what the protocol was and saw Sam and Tony hook their thumbs in the elastic waistband of their workout pants and shoving them to the knees before placing their dicks through the opening; Jack followed suit.

From his side of the wall, Bryan couldn't help but steal a look to each side; Sam's cock was long, slender, and cut. Bryan, who could see no pubic hair at its base, assumed the medic kept himself shaved. Jack's cock was soft but dropped through the hole several inches with a curly thicket of brown pubes at its base. Dylan's head swooped down and captured Jack's limp cock like a bird catching an earthworm. Bryan knew Jack was in good hands.

Bryan looked at the opening before him. He had been curious about Tony, the young Italian engineer, but had never heard anything about him and had only exchanged a few work-related words with him. It was apparent Tony Bonillo

had been here or a similar place before. He eased his eight-plus thick inches of veiny cock casually through the hole, before hoisting his balls through the opening, obviously expecting to have the satiny smooth bag taken care of as well. Bryan had noted that Tony had a thin fringe of hair at his cock's base, but it was joined to a treasure trail that undoubtedly made its way to his navel. Tony's large cockhead had been covered entirely by his thick foreskin when he stuck it through, pointing at Bryan's mouth. Bryan was able to see the engineer's slender fingers go to the base of his cock and retract the foreskin until only half of the huge head remained covered. *This little Italian beauty is really expecting service. He wants me to peel the skin the rest of the way back with my lips*, thought Howell, more than happy to oblige. Bryan took a look from the corner of his eye at Dylan, who was slurping noisily on the former high school jock's seven inches. From the grunts and thrusts into Dylan's mouth, Jack was no longer nervous.

Bryan used a hand to hold Tony's cock as he locked his lips on the part of the head naked of foreskin and flicked his tongue in the slit and then flitted it around before using his wet lips to push the olive-skinned sheath totally off the young man's glans. A distinct male musk was evident of the workout the Italian had just completed before seeking relief. Howell thought he heard a quick gasp. With just the head passing his lips, Bryan twirled his tongue around the cap and lingered at the delicate V on the cap's underside. He spent some time here with the end of his tongue doing a seductive dance on the sensitive spot. The Captain's throat was practiced, and he swallowed the entire shaft without as much as a gag. His nose was buried in Tony's jet back pubic hair. He stayed there impaled on the straight length of the man's meat, relishing the feel of Tony's cock pulsating and quickening from the pleasure. Working his tongue back and forth, he extracted the delicious cock from his throat. Using his hand, Bryan covered the head with the sheath of skin and stuck his tongue between the foreskin and nerve-covered head. Teasing the man on the other side of the wall, he vigorously licked around the throbbing head several times until he was assured he had thoroughly washed it. "Oh, mother fuck!" Tony hissed in a

muffled voice, trying to get even more cock to his anonymous sucker.

Bryan let the head go and started working on his balls. Flattening his tongue as much as possible, he used the rough taste buds to run across the base of the man's heavy sack before sucking one ball roughly into his mouth and pulling. "Oh, mother fuck! Mother fuck!" Tony moaned as he laid his head sideways against the wall and pounded his fist next to his face. Bryan was experienced enough to know the pounding was from pleasure. Maybe pleasure from pain but still pleasure. He let that nut out of his mouth and did the same to the other. After hearing more explicatives and pounding on the wall, Bryan sucked the free ball so that he could entertain both inside his moist hot mouth. "g-d damn fucker!" Tony yelled. *I love a boy who likes it rough*, Captain Howell thought before releasing the balls and weighing them in the palm of his hand. Tony was not making any attempts to extract his freed cock and sack from the hole. Bryan smiled, released the spit-slobbered balls from his mouth. Tony's cock was almost purple, filled to the maximum with blood; it was bobbing up and down, smearing Bryan's forehead with pre-cum. Bryan loved giving filthy blowjobs and began slow deep sucks on the penis.

In the background, Bryan could hear moans and gasps coming from Jack and loud sucking noises from Dylan, who suddenly stopped and locked lips on Jack's raging hard-on and noisily swallowed several times as the young medic dropped what must have been a saved up load down Dylan's throat. Jack stayed in place until all waves of orgasm had left him and pulled out. Dylan was sucking loudly again. No doubt Jack's cock had just been replaced by Dexter's dick

Peter was face fucked forcefully by Sam, who must have wanted to finish up and follow Jack out of the room. Probably to find out what Jack's impression had been of his experience with his unknown server. Peter had put a hand around Sam's slender long dick so that it wouldn't be bruising the back of his throat. "Fuck... I'm going to shoot!" Sam yelled as a polite warning. Peter pulled back but used his hand to continue jerking Sam; he had his mouth open and tongue out. Peter

looked breathlessly handsome, even doing something as subservient as this. One more grunt from Sam and rope after rope of thick white boy gravy was shooting on Peter's tongue, in his open mouth, and on his face. Lastly, ejaculate dripping off his chin, Peter moved his head forward and sucked out the last drop before releasing Sam's prick. "Thank you, man, whoever you are," Sam said through the wall as he pulled out of the glory-hole and went after his friend. Unless Bryan was a terrible judge of character, he was pretty sure medic Sam would be trying to save his jock buddy some trips to Quik-Fix Hall.

Before Peter could clean his face, another cock slid in his whole. This time Howell had no idea who it was since he was still blowing young Tony, who was beginning to thrust several inches in and out of the glory-hole but was showing no signs of ejaculating any time soon. Fine by Bryan, who switched to a variety of techniques on the thick tool. He could tell what was feeling best to Tony by the gasps, profanity, and grunts or pounding. At one point, Bryan scraped his teeth across the sensitive purple head, which got a resounding expletive, and both hands pounded the wood partition between them. Tony's tip had a steady stream of precum flowing, and Bryan feasted upon it. Dylan had served seven men to completion and Peter five while Tony was still flexing his tight little butt and poking his cock into Bryan's mouth. Bryan was getting tired... something that rarely happened when he was blowing cock. He began jacking Tony and sucking him while pulling on his heavy ball sack simultaneously. Suddenly, the cock pushed as far in as it could and began to fire volley after volley of thick pearlescent cum into the Captain's sucking mouth. Bryan was sure it had to have been several tablespoons. *I won't have to take my vitamins tonight*, he thought. When Tony was finished shooting, he left his cock in Bryan's mouth while he caught his breath. As the Italian began to pull out, Bryan, who was still letting his nuts rest on his palm, clenched his hand into a fist around the tender balls, squeezed and pulled, and did not release.

Tony made a painful moan. "Fuck! Let go, you fucker." Bryan tugged and twisted and still did not release. He heard

Tony gasp and then total silence. Finally, Bryan thumped a ball with a finger from his other hand. "Sir! Please let me go, Sir!" With the magic words, Tony was released. Pulling his huge cock and balls from the glory-hole, Bryan heard, "I don't know who you are, Sir, but my name is Tony Bonillo. Look me up if you want." Bryan listened to the young Italian as he padded away. *You bet I will, Tony*, Bryan thought to himself.

No one else was in the waiting area, and the shift was fifteen minutes from being over. Bryan shut his glory-hole door and locked it. Then, out loud, he said, "Guys, it's been fun! I'm heading out. Will you cover for me for the next fifteen minutes." Peter and Dylan smiled and nodded their yes. As Howell was leaving the room, he looked over at the handsome Peter. "Look me up if you would like to run the tubes with me sometime."

Chapter Ten

“Good morning, Phoenix residents.

It is I Lasitor, wishing you a happy morning, it is now 6 a.m.

Are you aware that origami is derived from the Japanese words “oru” meaning to fold and “kami” meaning paper? A class in origami can help develop hand-eye coordination, fine motor skills, and mental concentration. They say folding a square paper into a flower is the greatest joy in the world. Using your hands to stimulate yourself may be the key to your happiness.

Visit our community news page for more interesting education videos about self stimulation classes.

Breakfast is served until 8 a.m.

Thank you and have a delightful day.”

This is top secret

Mika had taken leave of his duties for ten days while Connor, a somewhat non-compliant patient, regained his strength. As Mika lay in bed with his partner, they talked about many things. One concern that had dwelt on Mika's mind since the day of the quakes was the exact cause. As a geologist, he was interested in all things seismic. However, he could not help but think that there was more to that day than a shift beneath the earth's crust. He also talked to Connor about the possibility of adjusting the satellite dishes that had been placed in the valley around Phoenix when the short Antarctica summer started.

"That can certainly be done, but for what purpose?" Connor asked Mika as they snuggled closely together in their big bed.

"As you know, world net is down, but that is because the power grids of the Predoomsday world failed. Our dishes were set to receive signals that bounced from dish to dish on the ground, and we, in turn, received our communication via Houston HQ. Do I understand that correctly?" Mika inquired, nibbling on Connor's neck.

"Hm, that feels so good. I want you in me." The Celt replied, ignoring his lover's question.

"No, I want you in me for the first time, little Gille-Toine. Besides, Dr. Longarrow said no fucking until he checks you out tomorrow." Mika cautioned.

"That bloody doctor is just jealous he doesn't have you to bugger him. I've seen how he devours you with his eyes when you go with me for my checkups." Connor pouted.

"One more day won't kill us. I don't want to do anything that might risk your health." Mika stated. "Now, answer my question about satellites."

"Well, that's mostly correct. It's a little more involved. Houston HQ had the codes to its orbiting satellites, and we were set to receive and transmit only through Houston HQ code. It was a safety measure so HQ would know if we were

being hacked. But in answer to your question, the satellite dishes through Phoenix's valley can be repositioned. Why do you ask?" Connor answered.

"Well, I know the best hacker in the world pre- and post-doomsday," Mika said, running his hand along the smooth crook of Connor's back and over one of his ivory globes, squeezing it lovingly. "So, I thought that since you had gotten into the files of some of the most protected systems in the world that you might be able to figure out some of the orbiting satellites' codes." Mika had spoken only English since his arrival at Phoenix, except for when he was having sex with Connor, he would often revert to Mother Russia, saying things that the Irishman could not make sense of, but which was accompanied by physical feelings of pleasure, so Connor didn't ask for translations. The Russian linguist was a gifted mimic, and his accent was seldom noticeable anymore except when he would sound a little Irish.

"That would be very difficult to program, and for what purpose? In addition, there are probably no working ground receivers to communicate with the orbiter." Connor said, playfully weighing the Cossack's balls in his hand.

"Awww, that feels good." The Adonis sighed. "No, nothing to communicate of which we are aware. But the government satellites of the USA, Russia, and China are all capable of taking pictures of an ant carrying a mustard seed. If we could take control of those satellites, I would be able to see what is happening around us. I think the earthquake was of volcanic origin. We know that there are at least four potentially volatile volcanoes in Antarctica. So, if that was the cause of the quake, the information could be useful. Besides, my pretty boy, wouldn't you like to see what is happening on the other continents?" Mika kissed his man's neck sniffing in his scent.

Connor stiffened noticeably and then shivered. "I am not sure I do. Right now, memories of how things were are all that I can see in my mind. Do you want to see the devastation?"

"No cara mia, I don't want to see it, but as a scientist, I think I need to know what is going on out there. Those satellites have only a finite number of years up there before

they crash to earth. So, we at Phoenix must have some idea of what it's like; we must have a point of reference to plan for the future. Besides," smiled Mika, "the American saying "forewarned is forearmed" may apply in this case."

"I suppose you are right. I have been happy here because you and I have not thought of ever leaving despite my losses. Phoenix can potentially provide for us for generations, and we are safe here, relatively speaking." Connor said, turning to his side so that he was face to face and cock to cock. Mika's body hair was shooting tiny electric sparks into the Irishman's smooth thighs and abdomen.

"That is relatively correct," Mika teased Connor, "some of our medicines will expire eventually, but the good news is solid dosage forms, such as tablets and capsules, are most stable past their expiration dates. Drugs that exist in solution or as a reconstituted suspension may not have the required potency if used when outdated, but we do have frozen supplies. The formulas and cultures are kept below freezing, stored frozen with, among other things, in the Cryonics Laboratory for when the need arrives. We will be able to simulate most artificially. While the residents have been immunized against most known diseases, we have been tested extensively, and their DNA make-up verified as untainted, we are still all probable carriers that could be passing broken genetics to our descendants.

Another issue is clothing. We have in storage clothing for thousands of people, who never made it here, but it will age, and we don't have facilities to make clothing, at least not that I am aware of anyway." Mika brainstormed while doing little minute rubs of his long cock against Connor.

"I see your point. I will call a meeting with Brad and Bryan and tell them what I plan to do. They might have some suggestions. I should probably include Tony Bonillo, as the engineer who designed the dishes' current placement; he will no doubt know the best position changes for enduring Antarctic weather, and Bryan will be instrumental in providing his soldiers to help with manual labor." Connor said, his breathing ragged as he sped up the friction of his cock against

his lover, lubricated by Connor's precum. Mika was returning the pressure with his slickened shaft. Each little jerk upward that Connor did rubbed his huge crown against the under-cap of Mika's throbbing organ. Neither had had sex since the morning of the quake, and both were so horny that all it took was a smile for them to be engorged. "Oh, bloody hell! Fuck!" Connor breathed out, squeezing Mika against his body and tensing up.

"Oh, baby boy! Fuuck!" Mika's deep voice rumbled out, vibrating against Connor's ear, which was lying against the crook of the Russian's neck.

Both men started spraying jizz, which mixed as it covered their flat abs. The heat was searing against Connor's belly, and he felt it forming rivulets and running across his belly toward the sheets. Mika breathed heavily, his icy blue eyes tightly closed, enjoying the heat of their mixed fluids weaving into the maze of hair between the touching bodies.

After the last tremor of delight passed and the stiffened arms that held each other went limp, "So much for the fucking doctor's orders, you Irish nymphomaniac." Mika said in faux chastisement. "He said to gain your strength before sex."

"I'm still alive, aren't I? Besides, I'm Irish, and we recover much more quickly than any other race!" Bragged Connor running his index finger across Mika's lower lip, painting them with their cum.

"Irish had nothing to do with it. You were given almost two pints of pure Russian blood, which not only brought you back to life and to Mika but no doubt tripled speed of healing process." Mika boasted in his best Russian accent.

"I do feel exhausted now," Connor said softly.

"Oh no. See! You overexert yourself. I try tell you these things. Let me get you some juice, or what do you want?" Mika asked with audible concern in his voice.

"I think the essence of protein would be the right elixir. Perhaps pure Irish mixed with pure Russian would do the trick." Connor laughed, pushing the beautiful giant onto his

back, working his way down his muscular belly, licking at the spent seed.

“You little Irish leprechaun!” Mika yelled. “I, too, am tired. I lost blood too.” He feigned anger as he reached over with his long arms, grabbed the Celt’s waist, lifted the shorter man and brought his tight abdomen over his face, and began to lick his share from Connor.

Connor had placed his mouth over Mika’s deflating cock to savor any of the bittersweet liquid that might not have been spent.” Wait a minute! What did you mean by our descendants? Are you expecting a busload of women to drive up to the door?”

Mika laughed and spun his lover around so that Connor’s head was lying on his arm and the Russian was on his side looking down at his raven-haired partner. He used his free hand to brush a long tress of thick hair aside from Connor’s smooth pale forehead. “I wanted to tell you about this for some time.” Mika was uncharacteristically serious. “This is top secret. Not even General McCormick has details on this. Peter von Leutzendorf, my project assistant, knows, but Dr. Saunders wanted to keep everything completely confidential until all was in place. Sadly, all was not put into place because of Doomsday, but still, Mika thinks close enough. I think I have figured out how it could work, but it will take at least a couple of years. But, we will still be young, so no worries.”

“Oh no! You are not going to leave me hanging on this, or I will get nosy and start asking a bunch of people questions, and it might not end up being so top secret after all.” Connor teased him.

“You wouldn’t!” Mika was shocked.

“Of course not!” Connor would never divulge anything Mika told him in confidence, and his lover was well aware of that. “But I will be admitting; I don’t like the idea of you sharing a secret with anyone that looks as good as Peter von Leutzendorf.” Connor cajoled.

“Oh so, you think Peter looks good. I never noticed. I’m glad to be informed by the man I fuck, that he has chosen a

potential replacement for me!” Mika pouted jokingly.

“Not true, and you know it. I will always trust you unless you don’t trust me with this secret.”

“Very well, but we must keep it in the family for now, seriously.” Mika emphasized “seriously,” and continued sharing Connor. “I came under Dr. Saunders’ radar after he had read some of my published papers. That was the beginning of my relationship with Saunders. Soon after that, I corresponded and met with him secretly. American intelligence had learned that I had been working on genetics, not just agricultural genetics, but human. I was on the verge, I believed, of successfully incubating humans. But, of course, the Russian government was interested in me altering human DNA to enhance humans, not for the good of humankind, but for personal gain, to win wars, which I am very much against. Dr. Saunders was an undercover agent, a scientist recruited for an intelligence branch of the CIA, focusing mainly on progressive scientific and research affairs, which in turn influenced the WHPSS. He encouraged me to come and work for him with a virtually unlimited budget, and in return, I would be free to focus on my work as I saw fit.

We both agreed that the project would be highly confidential, so we camouflaged it under another name. It was easy enough to work on agricultural genetic alteration and still work on artificial diverse embryonic growth. It was decided to move the project here, where there was little chance of anything leaking out. EP-1 already had unlimited resources available, and safety and security issues were minimal. It made sense to have a backup plan for when the future of the human race solely fell on the few females joining us, as planned by the WHPSS. Dr. Saunders was a true visionary; he planned for us far into the future. He never trusted that the females would arrive at EP-1. Why he thought that he never said, and I never asked. This is what he was trying to explain, with the limited time he had back when Doomsday went down. He kept this secret tightly guarded between himself and his contact at the CIA and WHPSS. I don’t think more than five people knew what Dr. Saunders envisioned with my research. Groups of people, mostly from religious elements, would have slowed

my progress to a crawl. Peter von Leutzendorf, who had written brilliant papers on cloning and who Saunders had also mentored, was made privy to some of my work and was very supportive of it. He asked if he might participate, and after Saunders assured me of Peter's integrity and genius, I did not hesitate to agree. Unfortunately, the Doomsday Event halted the project since all the pieces were not in place." Mika shared.

"But I don't understand. Aren't you still talking about cloning a human? What purpose would that serve to have repetitions of one thousand nine hundred ninety-nine people for generation after generation?" It was evident Connor was uneasy about cloning.

"I actually would love to have a little Irish Connor call me dad. I would raise him with old Russian values and teach him not to be so nosy!" Mika teased and was responded to with a hard slap on his fuzzy butt. "You misunderstand. My work involved fertilizing a human egg and attaching it to an artificial uterine wall in a liquid protein culture, and developing the fetus just as the female carrier would do. Don't you see, thousands of women, who could not conceive or carry a child to term, would have had the opportunity without involving a surrogate human? In some instances, the child would be born healthier because it would be submerged in perfect nutrition throughout its gestation." Mika was getting excited, as he always did when he spoke of his work.

"But none of the men here produce eggs that I am aware of," Connor said.

"That's part of what is secret. Peter is an expert in cryogenics, and he is harboring tens of thousands of human eggs frozen in nitrogen in his lab. Even though they are frozen in liquid nitrogen, theoretically, those eggs will be viable forever." Connor looked at Mika in amazement.

"Sperm, is there frozen sperm?" The Irish asked.

"No, but there is enough sperm flying against the walls here on any given day to repopulate India." Mika laughed.

“You mean it’s possible that you and I could each have our own child?” Connor asked as his eyes lit up.

“It is, and that is a motivating factor for me,” Mika replied, tilting his head and giving the Irishman a long soft kiss.

“Well, I just don’t want any sassy seven-foot-tall Russian teenager giving me lip.” Connor quipped.

“Oh, and Mika does not want house full of leprechauns with beer can dicks chasing neighbor’s sons.” He said with a Russian accent.

“How do you know he will chase the son? What if the neighbor has a daughter?” Asked Connor.

“That may be a problem. So far, all of my experiments and my work with Peter have only produced males, but it is a kink that we can work out later once we start the work up here at Phoenix.” Mika said, not looking at the situation as a problem.

“Well, we’ll have to get married and turn one of our offices back into a bedroom...”

“Yes, I suppose we will. But we have time to think about it.”

“You don’t want to marry me, and you’re talking about children.” Connor teased.

“You can take the boy out of Ireland and make him a brilliant scientist, but he is still going to be a papist!” Mika said, teasing Connor about his Roman Catholic roots, and then added, “But I will marry you, children or no children. “But, before Mika marries you, he wants to clean you, go shower.” Mika jumped up, slapping Connor playfully on his buttocks as if playing bongo drums on them.

Chapter Eleven

“Good morning, men of Phoenix.

It is I Lasitor, wishing you a happy morning, it is now 6 a.m.

Are you feeling a bit sluggish and having difficulty concentrating? While a mid-afternoon nap or a cup of coffee may be your first thought, a brief burst of activity can provide a more substantial pick-me-up than you might expect.

Ten minutes of stair walking or a five-minute visit to Quik-Fix Hall may increase your mood and energy fifty times more than a caffeine pill.

So instead of slumping and moping around, take a quick stroll down to the athletics dome, where you can jog, swim a few laps, or engage in a variety of other heart-healthy and energizing activities.

Breakfast is served until 8 a.m.

Thank you, have a day filled with ecstasy and joy.”

These domes are our home

Early the following day, Connor sent a meeting request out and scheduled it for later that afternoon. He was very eager to get the ball rolling on Mika's proposal. Attending the meeting were Mika, Bryan, Tony, and of course Brad, who, as commander, would have to give final approval. Also, the men respected him because his knowledge and advice were always meritorious.

Conner led the meeting while the rest sat and listened attentively around the white marble table. He noticed Bryan and Tony looked and smelled freshly showered, like they had just been to the gym, still wearing gym sweatpants and t-shirts. Both of their hair combed backward, still dripping droplets of water down their necklines soaking into their shirts. Hence, damp spots were visible on the cotton material over the back of their shoulders.

Brad sat and enjoyed a cup of coffee. Dressed impeccably in his light green and white camo pants with a matching green t-shirt. The four gay men around the table appreciated how virile and handsome their leader was. Every time he brought the cup up to his mouth for a sip, their eyes zoomed in on those massive biceps stretching and contracting. Brad, of course, was completely oblivious that his good looks were a constant source of attraction to the young men watching him. It was, however, not lost on Connor, who diplomatically cleared his throat in order to regain control of the meeting and get on with the day's agenda. "Hm-hm, gentlemen, I believe that Mika's suggestion for changing the positions of the ground satellite dishes is one that we cannot ignore. I don't necessarily want to see the Doomsday devastation, but we need to face up to it. We all have been living in a state of limbo, simultaneous denial, and in constant anticipation of contact from the outside world. It's been just over three years.

Although setting up the University was a brilliant idea to prepare minds for our future, it also served the purpose to keep our minds occupied. But, unfortunately, most of the men here, myself included, only accepted the world's true reality after

three years of denial. It's as if all of us were waiting for a knock on the front door, and when that didn't come, we turned our attention elsewhere. Yes, I'm talking about sex and the Quik-Fix Hall, and although there is nothing wrong with that, we can't continue to hide our heads like ostriches and make-believe that Phoenix is the universe. What we have achieved so far is excellent for group cohesion and unity, but the time has come to face the truth." Connor said while gesturing to the arctic map and the dome structure on the video screen.

Using Mika's words gleaned from rest periods during the previous night's debaucheries. Connor continued, "also, if there is volcanic activity, we need to know about it and what risks, if any, it poses to Phoenix. With seismic recordings and photos, Mika and his geologist colleagues can better assess possible outcomes and develop well-thought-out models. Gentlemen, I'm stressing that Mika believes it is critically urgent that Phoenix stay at least one step ahead of Mother Nature.

The satellites will give us weather data; down here, we need to know when storms are coming and how severe they will be so that we can see to the safety of our towers, dishes, and the plane. Fortunately, we are in a dry valley that receives snow rarely. Still, the evidence is that if a storm would be severe enough, the valley could potentially be inundated with ice and snow of epic proportions even for Antarctica, the consequences of which could be devastating." He paused for dramatic effect, smiling at Mika to confirm his support.

"We originally planned to be manned and supplied by HQ tri-annually. We expected to be continuously supported by teams of experts to further facilitate the safety of Phoenix and to continue the construction of more pods and domes. Especially critical was planning reinforcements to enhance our current structures. Guess what, my friends. Those teams of experts will not be coming and there will be no new domes. Our experts are either dead or disbanded. It will never hold for two thousand years if it is not constantly serviced and metallurgically bonded and reinforced. We are alone and we will have to become the experts." Connor lay his notes on the

table, nodded his head in thanks for the time and attention given him by the small audience, and sat down.

“Thank you, Second in Command, Connor. Dr. Romanov, do you have anything to add?” Brad asked as he gestured to Mika.

The Russian took the floor, filling the space with his graceful gigantic presence. “Yes, thank you, Comrade. I will not only be able to see if there is activity locally, meaning this continent but if we are lucky, globally. I am not confident that we can make radio contact via orbiter satellites or the Space Station. Still, aerial photos could give us a representation of human activity. Depending on what we discover, we could decide to fly over some of the Antarctic bases. Perhaps we could ask that they give us a signal as to whether they were affected by the plague or not. This is all hypothetical, of course, and we are getting ahead of ourselves. Still, even if we feel it is not safe to go there, they may require supplies that we could airdrop, and we have more than enough to share.

I have thought about Dr. Saunders’ suggested waiting period of five years, but if they, like us, haven’t been touched, they may still be there, providing supplies held out. If the virus did get them, there wouldn’t be movement, and with that knowledge, we can rule out flying there.” Mika added while pointing and triangulating the positions of the satellites and the other bases.

“Flying over the bases is going to use fuel that we may need to get us off this bloody ice-covered continent,” Connor interjected. Everyone around the table nodded affirmatively to that statement.

“But of course, if the base has a landing strip, they most likely would have some fuel in storage,” Brad countered to Connor. “Men, the situation is largely unchanged; there is a possibility that we will never leave here unless these domes collapse and we have nowhere else to go. Do I have to remind you, we all signed up for life. These domes are our home. We destroyed our planet. The human race is perishing. We messed up. Humans messed up, for fuck’s sake!

We have an obligation to survive for however long we can. I do agree; we need to be able to read the weather. We should perhaps try to communicate with others if there are any others.” Brad’s virility was pumping male pheromones into the space at suffocating levels, unknowingly establishing his undisputed dominance; even Mika wanted to roll over and show his tummy to the man. They hung on every word he said as he went on and on about their bleak existence.

“At the same time, I refuse to believe that when we die, this project and all our good works will die with us. So, I will allow for satellite repositioning and external maintenance. Furthermore, after processing everything we have discussed during this meeting, I am confident that besides reaching out to possible other survivors, we need to start using all available material to strengthen Phoenix as soon as possible.”

“Please explain, Sir,” Connor requested.

“As soon as the satellites are correctly positioned. I want to call another meeting with all of you plus every man with an architectural and structural background. ASAP! We are going to strengthen Phoenix so that she can stand for two thousand years! That is the subject of our next meeting. By my orders that is to be a continuing priority.” Brad said as he took his seat. Bryan saw this as an opportunity to take the floor.

“My only caveat regarding reaching out to any other possible survivors,” began Captain Howell, “are that some of those bases were controlled by unfriendly governments with questionable motives. None of those bases know of our existence, and I caution you about letting them learn we are here. It could be an invitation to disaster. Understand me; we are incredibly well-armed even though we are few in numbers. I also realize that any hostile camps are also small. However, it would only take a few trained men to do some real damage with the right weapon.

My concern is that any generosity will unintentionally invite hostiles into our midst. I am skeptical about survivors. We’ve had radio silence for over three years. However, suppose McMurdo naval base is functional. In that case, they will know the whereabouts of any surviving bases. Unlike Phoenix,

which is locked in a mountain valley, they can use the old radio signals to communicate. Moving at least one satellite dish further out onto the plateau above our valley will increase our chances for better reception, but it also exposes EP-1.

In the event, McMurdo naval base made it through the pandemic. I am confident they have already tried to contact the other bases. I have been hoping since Doomsday that they had someone like Dr. Saunders' advising them not to allow ships with the sick to take harbor there and that they, in turn, did not get on a navy vessel and abandon the base, thinking that getting home would be better than staying. Backing up slightly, I'm not against contact and lending a helping hand to fellow humans, but in my stance, I'd proceed with utmost caution and let them earn our trust."

"Excellent points, Captain," Brad praised Bryan. "Does anyone have anything else to add?"

A hand was raised and acknowledged by Brad. "Before we go, I have additional updates on transportation safety and equipment. We have a Six-Wheeler Sir, it's an Arctic Truck." All the men in the room turned their attention to Tony. Bryan was transfixed by the Italian beauty. "The vehicles we were expecting to arrive just before the Doomsday event were to be a shipment of land-ice transportation machines, specifically for perimeter checks, upkeep, and routine maintenance runs. But unfortunately, those never made it here. Other than the Six-Wheeler, we had blessedly received excavators, cranes, and heavy-duty construction vehicles during initial construction, which for cost reasons were abandoned here. All are in fine condition. They are in this area, located here," he pointed to a spot on the map where the Athletics Dome disappeared into the mountain.

"In light of the concerns expressed by Mika about weather and increasing seismic events among the potential threats to Phoenix, I suggest that when not in use, all this equipment be stored in a dome, which will afford it much better protection."

"Excellent point," Brad exclaimed, "Thank you, Tony," Brad said as he continued assigning responsibilities. "Captain,

you will work with Tony to assign a work detail to help achieve favorable end results.”

Connor made eye contact with Mika, trying to encourage him to speak. He opened his eyes to baseball size as if to say, “tell them! Tell them now! Tell them about the babies! B-A-B-I-E-S!” Instead, Mika just smiled at Connor, shaking his head discreetly, so no one else would pick up on their silent conversation. Thus, letting Connor know, now is not the time to talk about the Omega Project.

“Connor, how soon can you start trying to break the codes and take control of those government satellites?” Brad continued, apparently unaware of the silent dialogue Connor and Mika were having.

“Yesterday, General,” Connor smiled. “I started yesterday,” he repeated.

Tony volunteered, “General, I will draw up the plans and line up volunteers with Captain Howell’s assistance. It should take no more than three days at the most to complete the adjustments on the dishes.

The plan is, on the first day of decent weather, we will engage the cranes, moving the dishes up onto the plateau.”

Mika was confident he had caught a quick and lustful eye-lock between the Italian engineer and Howell. Brad was very impressed with Tony’s resourcefulness. “On a side note, Howell, you brought up a valid point about how well armed we are, but that our soldiers are few in number. Draw up a mandate advising the civilians that they are all in the army now. They are all young and healthy, or they would not be here. Just mention the unlikely possibility of an outside threat and how everyone should be prepared to defend Phoenix. I’m not thinking hardcore boot camp, but rather a Saturday every two weeks, where they will be familiarized with basic combat skills, assembling and disassembling weapons, and a defense plan. I expect everyone will enjoy it. Tell them to see me personally if they have reason to believe they should not have to do it. That Joshua Adams character is about the only one that I think will be resistant.” Brad was making reference to

the sour-faced Mormon, who was very solitary and by no means a team player. Both Brad and Connor had given thought as to why he was chosen to be such an elite group.

“Yes, Sir! Sounds like fun,” Bryan smiled.

“Very well, men. I am pretty interested in this, so keep me apprised of any pertinent developments. Dismissed!”

Connor and Mika often discussed Brad, who was a friend to both men. Connor felt he saw an emptiness in him. The man projected definite loneliness that a close intuitive friend like Connor would feel in his presence.

Simon had confided to Connor on several occasions that he was worried about Brad’s melancholy. Connor speculated that he may still be grieving the loss of his wife and other family members. Paul had told Simon the same thing. Connor suggested that for now, the best they could do was to be supportive and available if he needed them. However, he promised Simon that if his father’s apparent depression did not improve, he would intercede, insisting that for his own sake and the good of Phoenix that he seek Dr. Longarrow’s professional advice.

What better time than now? thought Connor. As the men cleared the room, Connor gestured for Mika to wait outside. When everyone left, Connor approached his friend. “May I have a word, Brad?”

“Of course, Connor. Have a seat and tell me what’s on your mind.” Brad answered the young man.

“Is everything okay? I mean, you just seem so unhappy. You are not like the happy friend I remember.” Connor told him softly: a genuine concern could be noted in his voice.

Brad sat there momentarily and appraised his young friend. “Of course, I’m unhappy. The world I knew is gone, my wife is dead, and I can only assume my parents are dead. I am suddenly in complete charge of the lives of one thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine men. I tread unfamiliar waters each day, and my personal values have proven to be a joke in this

new world. So perhaps I am unhappy, or perhaps I'm not adjusting well. You tell me. Sounds like Simon talked to you."

Connor did not validate Brad's suspicion of Simon talking to him since the boy had spoken in confidence. "Brad, I'm your friend, but everyone here has suffered loss, more than your own. You at least have a son safe here with you. So many of the men here lost their children, wives, husbands, parents, siblings, lifelong friends, and lovers, but they are all adjusting as best they can. You are admired by all those under you. The cost of your position and mine as Second is the burden of exemplary leadership.

None of us at Phoenix expect you to be infallible, but you are the best of the best, and we are grateful. Your values were not a joke, perhaps they were based on old prejudices and misinterpretations, but you seem to have come to terms with them."

Brad laughed somewhat cynically, "well, I had no real choice. It turned out that my teenage son and his best friend had been jumping each other's bones for years. Also, I find myself sitting in a meeting that let out just a few minutes ago where my two successors are bedmates. My civil engineer and my head military officer are fucking, or at least I suspect they are."

"Nooo shit!" Connor blurted out at the gossip.

"Well, I don't know that for a fact, but did you see them looking at each other? I know they are workout buddies as well; it just seems odd. But keep that to yourself, my "gaydar," as you guys call it, is obviously not very efficient...Simon and Paul case in point." Brad admitted jokingly.

"But you are right. I am blessed that my son and his friend are both here with me."

"Promise me one thing, Brad," Connor asked respectfully, "if you continue to feel so down, please go see Dr. Longarrow. He is a good man and has had extensive psychiatric training, not that you need a psychiatrist. Still, we can all use someone to talk to occasionally who is impartial and doesn't know a lot about us." Connor got up, slapping his friend gently on his

back, “I am leaving to work on hacking into the Chinese government’s satellite. I have given up on trying to reach the International Space Station for more than a year now. Maybe jumping from orbiting satellite to satellite will work. Who the fuck knows.”

“I will consider Longarrow, and that is also between you and me. Didn’t know you knew Chinese.” Brad joked.

“I don’t, but Mika does, and those codes will be mathematical anyway. Not that I will tell Mika that. I have to make him think he is useful.”

“Why does that not surprise me?” Brad smiled at his friend.

“One more quick question,” Connor said a little nervously.

“What?” Brad asked.

“As the highest-ranking man at Phoenix and in light of the fact there is no religious hierarchy here, do you have the power to perform marriages?” Connor asked.

“Why does that not surprise me either? Yes, I suppose I do. Need I ask why?” Answered Brad.

“Well, I’ve convinced Mika to say he would marry me. I don’t want the mood to disappear. I’ll see about having the chapel opened...and dusted.” Connor was out the door.

Brad just stood there shaking his head and feeling more alone than ever. Connor did not say as much, but he was pretty sure that Simon had talked to him. The Irish lad was someone Simon had always trusted and looked up to. But, of course, he knew that Paul was concerned about him as well. He really did like that boy even though he was dicking his son on the regular. *Just don’t think about that.* Perhaps he should really give consideration to seeing Longarrow. He knew that it would be kept confidential and indeed would not be seen as a sign of weakness by him. He decided he would make an appointment, but only to talk.

Chapter Twelve

“Good morning, Phoenix residents.

It is I Lasitor, wishing you a happy morning, it is now 6 a.m.

Did you know that men in their twenties to forties are the most frequently afflicted with Temporomandibular Joint Disorders? This chronic temporomandibular joint problem is caused by the jaw’s connection to the temporal bones of the skull, which are located behind each ear. It enables you to speak, chew, and yawn by allowing you to move your jaw up and down and side to side.

To alleviate symptoms, moist heat or cold packs can be applied for approximately 10 minutes three times a day to the side of your face and temple area. Additionally, avoid hard, crunchy, chewy, and most importantly thick or large bites that require you to open wide.

Breakfast is served until 8 a.m.

Thank you, and have a day filled with stillness and tranquility.”

We'll just chalk this up as part of our sexual resume

“Yeah, I don’t think that is something the two of us would want to experience. What if father found out? We don’t want to push him too far.” Simon told Ay-Rab.

Dylan and Ay-Rab were close friends with Simon and Paul. The young soldiers went to the university established under General McCormick. As a result, the four often had lunch together, worked out together, and Paul and Simon even tutored the two young military men in subjects such as math and physics that seemed to be more difficult for them.

“I’m telling you it’s a blast!” Ay-Rab exclaimed.

“Yeah, you never know who is going to show up, and they never know who you are.” Agreed Dylan.

“Simon and I are committed to each other, you know,” Paul told the two.

“I know you are, and this won’t change that. You will be doing it together. How many other men have you two experienced?” Ay-Rab asked the boys.

“No one. We are each other’s first.” Simon said.

“You won’t believe how hot it is to watch your boyfriend doing another guy...like making another man go as wild as he makes you go.” Dylan urged them.

“I don’t know, man. Maybe, but I don’t know if either Paul or I would be comfortable with that. I can get a little jealous.” Simon said as he sat back on the couch in his and Paul’s apartment. “What are your feelings, Paul?”

“I don’t want to screw up a good thing, and that’s what I think we have,” Paul replied.

“But I’m telling you. When you are done, you get up and walk away, and the guy you sucked off will never know whose mouth worked on him.” Ay-Rab insisted.

“You two nerds don’t have a hair on your arse if you don’t try this at least once.” Dylan chided.” It would be a big favor for us. You would only have to do it for an hour, and we will come in and relieve you. We didn’t realize we had an evening watch, and we wouldn’t get off-duty until midnight. It’s not that busy on a Monday night.” Dylan had pleaded.

“It will surely save us from getting in trouble with Captain Howell and maybe even Dr. O’Hara. The whole program is based on being dependable.” Ay-Rab added.

“I tell you what, we will flip a coin, heads we’ll do it, tails we won’t,” Simon said, looking at his partner for an agreement. Paul gave an “I know this is a mistake” look at his lover but nodded assent. Simon still carried a quarter around with him. Paul didn’t know why since money was of no use at Phoenix. Simon flipped the coin into the air, and of course, it landed on heads.

“Yes!” Yipped Ay-Rab, high-fiving Dylan.

“Okay, you will show us where to go. This is how it’s going to work,” said Paul. “We will stay for one hour. Then, if you are not there, we give it five minutes and walk even if people are waiting for service. You don’t want us to leave it unattended since your numbers will be on the signup sheet. You understand?”

“Understood!” Ay-Rab answered, smiling, looking scarier than Batman’s Joker, all he needs is facepaint and a bad green hair job.

“I also want to make it clear that from now on, you guys look at your calendar. This is a one-time thing we are doing for friends.” Simon said sternly. He knew he would probably regret this. But as with most boys throughout history, these two geniuses did not concede to intellect or gut instinct. The decision was based more on a desire to be accepted by new friends than anything else.

Dutifully, Simon and Paul followed Ay-Rab and Dylan down the little-known corridor, through the unmarked fire door and the stairs to a stairwell with a sign saying authorized personnel only. It was between shifts, and Ay-Rab opened the

heavy metal door, ushering the two boys in first. “It will probably just be the two of you. At least that is all who had signed up last time I looked. So you simply sit at the middle seat or the one on the right, those are the seats Dylan and I signed up for.” Ay-Rab explained, stepping forward and sitting down; he slid the latch aside on the little round door and swung it in. The room beyond was empty, as expected. “The rest is self-explanatory; a man will step up, take his cock out, and stick it through here. I know I don’t have to tell you how to suck dick. So enjoy, oh, one other thing you can look through this little gage hole up above each door if you want to see who’s waiting or coming up to your window. Just please be on time, guys, at eleven tonight. We will be here to relieve you at midnight.” After this brief tour, the boys went back to class.

That evening while they were working out, before dinner, Paul nudged Simon every time he saw a man casually walk over to what had been the women’s locker room and go through the door leading to Quik-Fix Hall. “Why did we let them talk us into this?” Paul whispered to Simon.

“No point in questioning it; we’ve already given our word,” Simon replied. “I suggest we do it for the experience and never talk about it again. We will be there with each other, and it’s only an hour.”

They made every effort to enter the stairway door as covertly as possible and descended the steps two at a time until they came to the level with the sign “Authorized Personnel Only.”

They were so nervous; they arrived twenty minutes before the service center of Quik-Fix Hall was due to open.

As they slipped inside the room, they looked at each other, and then both stepped forward to pull the other into a kiss. “I wish I had not agreed to this,” Simon said, shaking his head.

“Hey, it wasn’t just you. I went along with it too. So you think they drugged our soda with some secret military drug?” Paul said, trying to put a humorous slant on it.

“That’s what we can claim if my dad catches us.” Simon agreed, going along with the humor.

“I don’t even want to think about that,” Paul said with absolute dread showing in his eyes.

“The main thing for us to remember when we see each other doing this is that we are supporting the Phoenix Code program by doing our part this one time. But, most importantly, we must remember how much we love each other. In an hour and a half, we will be back in our apartment making love, and we will never bring this up to each other, ever.” Simon said, kissing Paul lightly on the lips one more time before sitting in the chair on the far right.

“We’ll just chalk this up as part of our sexual resume. We will be able to say that we have had multiple sex partners. Like we’ve had lots of experience,” added Paul, following his lover and taking the middle seat.

“It will probably mean we service more men, but in a way, I hope no one signed up for that third spot. That way, we will be the only ones to know what we did, except for Ay-Rab and Dylan, who won’t have any idea if we did any men or not.” Simon advised quietly. He proceeded to look out the tiny peephole to see if anyone was out there. Sure enough, two men were leaning against the back wall waiting for the little doors to open.

“I’m afraid to look,” said Paul. “Anyone out there we know?”

“Well, that’s a stupid question. Who wouldn’t we know?” Simon told him, rolling his eyes.” But there are two out there so far. You know I would get up and leave if it wouldn’t get Ay-Rab and Dylan in trouble. The more I think about it, the more I realize it’s only you, I want to be with. The hell with not having experience or broadening my horizons.” Simon said.

“Well, we promised. Maybe Ay-Rab was right, and not many will show up. It’s only for an hour. We’ll do it and go. But from now on, the only cock that goes in our mouths is

each other's." Vowed Paul. Simon nodded eagerly in agreement. "So who's out there?"

"Ronnie Kerrigan and Bryce Richards." Answered Simon. "Should I open the little door yet?"

"Nah, still five more minutes. I want to put this off as long as we can." Paul said nervously.

Ronnie Kerrigan was a reticent twenty-four-year-old young man with dark brown hair. He had sharp but pleasant features. Paul and Simon had met him once or twice at some function or other. Paul remembered him because he was so quiet, almost withdrawn. Paul didn't know if it resulted from the loss of his wife and two young children or his regular demeanor. Ronnie was part of Howell's military group and was a sniper SPC Class 1. Paul remembered discussing with Simon why Phoenix would have needed a sniper.

Bryce Richards was a thirty-two-year-old Australian, standing five feet ten, with sandy blond hair just going over the ears and striking emerald green eyes was definitely a head-turner in the Predoomsday world and now at Phoenix. Bryce presented a ready smile and was always the first to volunteer when a need was announced. His function was directly under Tony Bonillo as maintenance head. He seemed to have every manual for all the diverse scientific instruments stored in his handsome head. Simon remembered when first meeting him that not five minutes had passed before he had pulled out pictures of his wife and three children to share. Even though he knew chances were slim that they still lived, he loved talking about them as if they did. His Aussie accent was heavy and engaging.

Just before time to open the little glory-hole doors, Bryce and Ronnie, who had been whispering about a storm that seemed to be brewing, were joined by Juan Martinez and Joshua Adams. Paul and Simon exchanged a glance. "I hope they don't start filling up that room with only two of us here," Paul whispered. "I am surprised to see Joshua Adams, aren't you?"

“Hopefully, we just get two each, and maybe we will be lucky, and they will be quick cummers.” Simon said softly. “I am surprised to see Joshua but not so much Juan; I am surprised he’s not back here with us. Juan is a shameless and provocative little fucker.”

“Who knows, but I heard he is in a serious relationship with Drew, another cook who works with him,” Paul replied, grinning. Both of the boys had suspected Juan was gay. Simon had mentioned his surprise at Juan getting past his father’s scrutiny. The twenty-eight-year-old cook had effeminate traits as he sashayed around Phoenix’s large kitchen. He had a great butt and wore his chef’s clothes tight, to his buttocks’ advantage. He was a second-generation American. Although well-spoken, he possessed a slippery and sharp tongue with a distinct Latino accent. His complexion was light brown; he had coal-black hair, black eyes, and long lashes; he liked to flutter for attention. Paul had only spoken to him on one occasion when they had been working out and had later seen him in the common shower area. He had been surprised that with the light café latte complexion, his uncut cock was almost black in pigmentation.

Joshua’s presence was a real surprise. Dr. Saunders had gone to great lengths to draft the world-renowned quantum proteins biodiversity specialist, who was a devout Mormon. No one knew what the negotiated contract had included. Still, it was common knowledge that it must have been substantial to convince Joshua to leave his position as Alderman in Salt Lake City, not to mention leaving his wife and six children behind for three years. Adams was five feet eight with a receding hairline. At thirty-two, he had a more plump belly than any of the well-toned men who made up the Phoenix population.

“Time to open for business,” Paul announced with an air of confidence, which he did not possess. Simon acknowledged him, hoping now that a third person would show up to service, even if late.

The doors opened, and the four men in the waiting room became silent. Ronnie and Bryce, being there first, walked

forward to take their positions. Their bodies blocked the peepholes and the glory-hole openings. The boys swallowed in unison as they saw the flash movement of hands in front of their assigned glory-hole. The only sound now was the pop of snaps on trousers and the unmistakable buzz of zippers being lowered.

Paul, who had been looking unobserved by the client through his minute peephole, knew that it was the sniper, Ronnie Kerrigan, who had chosen his space. Paul looked over quickly at his lover just as Bryce slid this thick and veiny eight and a half inches of uncut meat through the hole where it hung over the ledge waiting for Paul to do his work. *Great*, thought Paul, *I'm certainly never going to be able to satisfy him again.*

That was the furthest thing from Simon's mind as he stared at the huge cock hanging in front of him. He had never seen an uncut cock up close before, and he was not exactly sure what to do with it. Assuming that all dicks pretty much react the same to any given stimulus, Simon reached out, bent forward, and sucked that monster into his mouth. Rolling his tongue around the sizeable foreskin-covered head, Simon felt an immediate change in the organ's texture. It was rising to solid stiffness, drizzling precum on his tongue. As it grew, Simon continued to suck, trying to take more in his mouth with each inhalation. As he did this, he could feel the delicate skin retracting from the head until his tongue detected the bare flange that was the rim of the cockhead.

Simon pulled entirely off the meat just to look at it. Fortunately for Simon, the Aussie, who was eleven years Simon's senior, was a shower; not a grower. Simon knew that at this early stage of his skills and his lack of experience with anyone besides Paul that had the Aussie grown like Paul did he would be lucky to get more than a head washing and a hand job. Nevertheless, the retracting foreskin was fascinating for Simon to see. Bending forward, he angled his head to play Bryce's staff as if it was a harmonica. Licking his tongue along its length and upon reaching the tip moving his mouth so that he swallowed the cap and tickled the underside sparking the nerve endings. Bryce, apparently liking what he felt, moaned and pushed his pelvis tightly against the glory-hole.

Paul's customer, only six years his senior, had been rock hard and throbbing when he inserted his glistening piece of manhood. Unlike Simon's client, Ronnie was cut. The soldier had a very thick cock of about six inches. It had a very distinct unyielding upward curve that made Paul wonder how it would feel going into you. He gripped the man's shaft and stroked it a few times before going down on it to the base. Initially, the upward curve caught Paul's somewhat practiced gag reflex by surprise, and he had to back off. After a few tries, though, he had a good rhythm going that had the young soldier giving out little gasps of pleasure. This boy was seriously leaking, and the way he was trying to thrust through the hole into Paul's mouth, Paul knew he wouldn't last long.

The thought suddenly ran through Paul's mind that he and Simon had not even discussed what to do when the men climaxed. He had never swallowed anyone's jizz other than his own and his lover's. Too late to ask now. He could only hope that his decision would be good with Simon. Since Phoenix was ultimately disease-free, he decided he would swallow whatever his efforts produced. Besides, he liked the taste of sperm, the taste of Simon's and his own, anyway. He knew that Simon was the same way about the delicacy so felt confident that, like in almost all matters, he and Simon would be of the same mindset.

The Aussie was a little more verbal than the secretive sniper and was, in a husky testosterone-laden voice, giving Simon muffled instructions through the wall. "Right on...suck it deeper and faster! Lick the slit. That's it...feels good...aww... pull back and wash that head again, mate. You got it, just keep doing that." Bryce instructed Simon in his heavy down-under accent. *Thank g-d he's patient with me.* Simon thought, wondering if the man would be able to figure out who he was through his inexperience. He placed the thick man-meat back in his mouth and began earnestly going up and down the rigid Australian dick. Then Simon started to panic, having unrealistic fears. *Fuck! This is Dr. Richard, my instructor in nano-molecular mechanical theory. If he went to his lab and swabbed his pecker, could he analyze the DNA to see who was sucking him?*

“Owww! Watch yer fuckin teeth, mate!” Bryce roared. Simon almost said, “Sorry,” but caught himself. Opening his mouth wider, he tried to make up for scraping the generously hung man. *Why would he even care who I am*, reasoned Simon. *Unless it was to find out who had given him rabies from the bite*. Simon entertained himself as he continued servicing Bryce.

The scientist was in no hurry to finish; he just settled into enjoying the warm wet mouth. To his side, he could hear a series of grunts and then the familiar noise of his lover’s cough as he was swallowing the young man’s ejaculate. Looking from the corner of his eye, he could see Paul doing his final deep-throating on an almost purple penis sticking through the white wall. Still in the process of sucking, Ronnie pulled out of Paul’s mouth abruptly, zipped up, and left without a word. Simon could see Paul look over at him as he shrugged.

After Ronnie’s hasty retreat, Paul looked through his peephole just in time to see Joshua Adams step forward. Paul, who always made it a point to get along with everybody, was not fond of Joshua. He and Simon both considered the man somewhat of an elitist and noticed a very obvious coldness from the man once it was announced that Paul and Simon were mates. Still, Paul reasoned that he was there to serve, not be judgmental, and put his distaste for the short pompous scholar aside. He looked straight ahead through the hole while Joshua fumbled with his belt and slid the zipper down. Paul glanced at the man’s eager little prick, its base fringed by a scant growth of dark wiry hair; it was positioned just above a tiny wrinkled scrotum and below the outcropping of a slack hanging midriff bulge. *Yuck*, thought Paul as he watched the slender five inches slide through the hole. Paul closed his eyes and encapsulated the man’s outcrop in its entirety.

Meanwhile, Bryce was pumping into Simon’s wet warm mouth on the other side of the wall. He was grunting and moaning even more feverishly than before. The Aussie threw all decorum aside, raising his sweatshirt while pinching his nipples, going from one and back to the other. With his other hand, he fisted his hairy scrotum, tugging and rolling his walnut-sized testicles. Simon discovered that by wrapping his

hand around the man's huge cock and focusing his tongue on the mushroom head, with Bryce's pistoning motions, his long foreskin would cover the head on withdrawal, trapping Simon's tongue between the sensitive head and the silky skin where the young man could play with a variety of movements that seemed to drive Bryce toward the brink. When pulling back, the skin retracted again, leaving Simon with a slick wet bare cockhead in his mouth. Bryce was leaking more than ever, for which Simon was grateful to have the extra lubrication. He wasn't sure his saliva glands could keep up with the demands.

Joshua was emitting hiss-like sounds. Paul had picked up on the fact that the religious zealot liked it when he made loud sucking noises around his tiny cock. It seemed to throb a little more intensely every time the Australian made a deep erotic sound while standing next to him. The boy thought it surprising that such a tiny cock with its minuscule matching set of balls had produced six little Adams. Paul had intentionally detached himself from what he was doing, when suddenly, ninety seconds into servicing the condescending man, he felt his mouth filled by volley after volley of shooting sperm. Wondering where the short man kept all that stored when just as suddenly it stopped, he kept it in Paul's mouth for about ten seconds, pulled out, hitched up his pants, and with a soft "I'll be back," made his exit. *Not while I am here*, thought Paul, who had turned his head aside and reneged on his earlier decision to swallow, exorcising the mouthful of liquid into a towel he had brought with him. Paul looked over at Simon, who was still diligently sucking the big cock. He seemed to have found a more comfortable situation in which Bryce was doing all the work. Simon was simply providing a tight humid orifice for the Aussie to fuck, and he seemed pleased if the noises coming through the wall were any indication.

Just then, Paul's cheek was punched by an incoming black cock. *Hm, this one must belong to the cute cook, Juan, the pretty sissy-boy.* Juan Martinez presented the first uncut dick Paul had ever seen up close and personal. While the cook's thick seven inches was fully erect, it was encased fully by a pouting protrusion of skin. Unlike Simon, Paul grasped the

slender penis and skinned the covering back from the head, which elicited a quick. “Be careful, man,” from the handsome Latino. Quickly Paul soothed the shiny wet heat with his tongue and supple lips. Juan was in no hurry, and Paul enjoyed the easy deep thrusts the cook delivered rhythmically. The only problem was, it was not Simon’s big erection sliding in and out; he hoped he had the energy to take Simon when they got back to their apartment.

What the fuck, the Aussie knows no end, he is worse than a bloody Formula One Grand Prix on a Sunday, he goes on and on, and on, Simon thought.

“AAHHH Fuckin cripe! Hold my head in yer mouth and roll your tongue. Yer about to drink Australia’s best,” Bryce yelled, not caring that he was sharing his ecstasy with everyone in the room. Simon felt the pulse, the throbbing, and the swelling of the head as the man’s scrotum ascended. *Fire one!* He thought as a thick shot of cum blasted to the back of Simon’s mouth, plastering his tonsils. *Fire two!* He counted silently as another explosion of bitter rich sperm grazed the boy’s tongue on its way down to the boy’s stomach.

There was no deciding not to swallow this man’s load even if he’d chosen not to have it. Six more spasms and Simon was barely keeping up swallowing, feeling some streaming down his chin. Finally finished, Bryce pulled out of Simon’s mouth. Simon could see the man’s mighty hand form a fist around his meat and milk the last drops to the end of his cock, which he stuck back through for Simon to lick off. The scientist took himself in hand, pulling gently but expertly covering his large head in its satiny sheath of skin.

“Ah, mother fuck! Look at the size of your cock!” Yelled Juan, obviously looking over at the Australian standing next to him for the first time. Juan came in rich spurts, filling Paul’s mouth. The cocksucking accompanied by the visual of Bryce’s giant cannon had pushed the gay Latino over the edge. Paul swallowed. “Man chew can take this any way chew want, but if chew ever wants to plant that in this,” Juan slapping his butt and speaking in faux ghetto, “chew got an open invitation... and Juan won’t tell a soul.”

Bryce chuckled. “May just have to take you up on that, mate.”

When both men were out of the guest room, Simon slumped back in his chair, his jaws aching and sweat coming off his forehead. “I’m fucking whipped.”

“I bet. Man, I didn’t think Dr. Richards was ever going to cum for you. I wonder if all cocks that size last so long?” Paul asked.

“I imagine they all vary, but I will never look at Richards again without feeling some respect for him,” Simon shared, reaching out to take Paul’s hand.

“Neither will I. I also will never look at Dr. Adams again without feeling a little superior.” Quipped Paul. “Did you see how little he was...and he had fathered six kids.”

“Just goes to show you; you just need to get it in, I guess.”

Paul added, “He came in buckets, though. Didn’t you see me spitting it out?”

“Yes. I don’t blame you.” Grinned Simon. “What time is it anyway?”

“We just have twenty more minutes, and the room beyond is empty.” Answered Paul. “Come here and kiss me. I’ll share a little aftertaste of Juan if you share some of Bryce.”

“Gross! Okay.” Simon said, bending toward the boy he knew was his true love. Their kiss was long, deep, and sincere.

“I hope those two assholes are on time. Promise me that we will stop the other from ever agreeing to do something like this again. I don’t want to get used to doing this sort of thing.” Paul pleaded.

“Same here. You can’t miss what you’ve never had. I’m sure I will never miss this, but I wish I had not done it. It’s like being unfaithful in a way.” Simon lamented.

“Well, sweetheart, we did it together, so we can’t say we cheated on each other. Let’s just think of it as a lesson learned early in our relationship, and someday when we are old and

gray, we can talk about the time we did something wild.” Paul said, kissing Simon again.

“Talk about something wild. Connor told me that my dad is going to officiate at his and Mika’s wedding. That has not been officially announced, so it is just between you and me.” Simon warned his lover, knowing he need not fear betrayal of the confidence.

“How cool. I have to admire your dad for putting aside his principles about gays and supporting them.” Paul replied and then, “I know we’re too young, and it would be foolish to get married until we are older, but what do you think about officially being engaged?”

“What a strange time and place, after you’ve just blown three men to ask me to marry you,” Simon responded with that serious look that only his father’s son could manage.

Paul looked down at the floor, “I’m sorry, I just...”

“You are so fucking easy, Paul! I can think of nothing more I could want than the prospect of being your official for life.” Simon hugged and kissed Paul until Paul didn’t think he would be able to get enough air.

They just had ten minutes to go, and Ay-Rab and Dylan should be there, and they could get the hell out and go to their apartment and fuck all night with the person they felt they should be doing it with.

They heard footsteps in the other room. “Oh fuck no!” whispered Simon. Paul looked at his watch and then looked exasperated. “Let’s just close the doors and leave. Ay-Rab will be here in five or ten minutes. They can wait that long.” He stood up and tried to pull Paul with him.

“No, we can’t. We gave our word, and it could get them in trouble if it were reported.” Paul said. Then, both boys looked through their respective peepholes to see who was there. Just as they focused around the corner came Dr. Broderick Longarrow. His blue-black hair lay on his shoulders, glistening in the low light of the lineup room. He stood there quietly doing a second scan of the room and, stepping into full view,

turned and lifted his right hand as if motioning someone forward. The boys heard another set of footsteps, and a very nervous General Bradley McCormick came into view!

Chapter Thirteen

“Good morning, Phoenix residents.

It is I Lasitor, wishing you a happy morning, it is now 6 a.m.

Did you know, if you fill a cup with boiling water and step outside, and then throw the water into the air, it will fall to the earth as snow? Yes, that’s how cold it is outside today. That means other than the joy of seeing water turned to snow, galavanting outside will be an unproductive endeavor.

Why not bring the snow inside and look at it under your microscopes? Did you know it is a myth that no two snowflakes are exactly the same? In 1988, Nancy Knight, a scientist at the National Center for Atmosphere Research in Colorado, USA found two identical snowflakes that came from a storm out of Wisconsin, USA.

Visit our community news page to find more interesting facts about snow.

Breakfast is served until 8 a.m.

Thank you and have a joyful day.”

Don't breathe a word of what just happened

Simon's and Paul's mouths dropped open simultaneously, and each jerked their head towards the other. "Tell me this isn't happening!" Simon whispered hoarsely.

Paul, at a loss for words, didn't say anything. Then, finally, "I'm out of here," Simon said firmly. Still not saying anything, Paul shook his head and pulled Simon back into his seat. The doctor was whispering to Brad in a low whisper like Brad would be the only one to hear, but the room acoustics were such that almost anything said funneled right to the open holes, even if a server wasn't trying to listen.

"Brad, I think this will be good for you. It's been well over three years since you have had any intimacy with anyone but yourself." Longarrow coaxed his patient. *With anyone but himself?* Simon thought in disbelief. *My dad beats his meat!*

"This isn't exactly what I call intimate Rick," Brad replied cynically.

"It's a start. I need it too." Replied Longarrow, laying his hand softly on Brad's shoulder. Paul couldn't help but notice the Native American had his left hand over his crotch and was subtly rubbing.

"What do you mean "a start?" Brad asked in a louder whisper.

"I mean, this may loosen you up enough to have a meaningful sexual relationship with...."

"Don't even say it, Rick! I'm the highest-ranking person in this facility. What would my men think of me, what would my son think of me if he found out?" *Ask me in the morning,* Simon thought, cursing Ay-Rab for getting him into this predicament. *If they just talk five more minutes, those two jerks should be here, and I will get out of here and pretend this was a nightmare.*

“All I’m asking is that you take one step at a time. Do this, and then give yourself some time.” Soothed the MD. “Actually, Brad, this is off the record, but I would very much like to be the one to take you to that next step.” *Shit, my dad and my doctor*, Simon didn’t have to speak the words as Paul looked over at him, eyes wide.

“Not you too,” Brad said, shaking his head.

“I always liked both, but you are the only person since getting here that I’ve propositioned, if that helps.” The hunky doctor said. His piercing eyes were black and glistening, even in the dim light. His smile showed perfect ivory white teeth. He unzipped his pants, pulled an enormous tan cock out, and held it in his hand, looking at Brad. “Come on, Brad, you’ve come this far.” Brad could not help but look from his new friend’s face to his cock and then back to his face.

Slowly, like in a daze, Brad stepped forward toward the waiting holes, his doctor close by his side. Of all the holes to choose, Brad got in front of the one Simon was manning. Simon, in a panic, felt Paul’s firm grip on his arms and saw him motioning frantically for him to switch chairs. Simon had never done anything so fast in his life and just in time.

As soon as he sat in Paul’s former seat, the Native American slowly pushed his cock through the hole. From a distance, Simon had noted it was gigantic, but up close, it showed its girth as well. Simon was good at mathematics, and he quickly calculated at least nine inches of uncut Apache dick coming his way. *Perhaps his last name is indicative of a family trait shared with his ancestors*, thought Simon. Dr. Longarrow threw his balls in as well. The bag hung low and had large nuts weighing it down, and was completely smooth. At the base of the cock was long silky soft public hair, not wiry, not curly, just perfectly straight and in an abundant supply. *Holy shit!* Thought Simon and Paul, who was looking over at him.

Paul focused on the opening in front of him. He dreaded seeing his adopted father or future father-in-law, whatever he was to him, sticking his manhood through that hole. On the other hand, he knew it was better him than Simon, who was looking completely traumatized. He doubted Simon had ever

seen his dad naked, let alone with a boner. Paul had never seen his father hard either, but his family was much more liberal when it came to nudity around the house, so that part didn't bother him.

Paul nodded for Simon to get started on the doctor, thinking that it would distract him a little. Brad, hearing some more encouragement from Rick, unzipped his pants but did not undo his belt. Instead, he fumbled in the opening and finally brought out a soft cock that could only be described as massive. "Nice." Paul thought he heard the doctor whisper. Brad cleared his throat and stuck it through the opening where it hung against the wall. It had more girth than Paul would ever have imagined and a huge head like his son's. *Maybe he is a General for a reason*, thought Paul, who then silently chastised himself for thinking such thoughts about his lover's father.

At Paul's prodding, Simon looked away from the opening in front of Paul and took Longarrow's cock in both hands, and started stretching his wet hot lips over the head. His tongue went automatically to the slit where he played with the opening. "Ahhh," sighed Rick, letting out his breath. Simon knew that all of this was not going to go down his throat. The young doctor smelled clean but had a musky odor about him that Simon found very appealing despite the current situation. He slowly pushed with his tongue the second foreskin he had ever dealt with, baring the pink-red cap, its skin proving to be even muskier before swabbing his tongue around, alerting every nerve in the sensitive head to his presence. "Ohhh yeah. This feels so good. It's been way too long." Rick breathed out. Unbeknownst to the boys, he had reached his long arm over and rubbed the back of his smooth hand against Brad's face while he looked at the older man and smiled.

Paul had taken Brad's cock into his mouth, vigorously laving it in his saliva and using his full lips to provide friction around the large cap. In what seemed less than a second, Brad's large penis became engorged with blood, and he was gently thrusting in and out of Paul's mouth. Paul noted that lengthways Brad and Simon were similar, but he honestly hoped that his nineteen-year-old lover never grew to match his

dad's width. The thought of Simon vigorously impaling his tight arse and fucking him with that sent an involuntary shiver up the boy's back. *How had Simon ever handled Bryce's demon dick?* Paul wondered. Opening his mouth as wide as possible, Paul gave his best effort to get this job done as soon as possible. To his credit, he managed to get about seven thick inches in his throat with the head a little passed his tonsils without gagging. He was sure he'd heard almost inaudible gasps coming from his future father-in-law, and he was being rewarded with sweet-tasting semen, very reminiscent of his son's nectar.

Simon felt like he was being gagged by the virile young physician, who was thrusting like a rutting animal in his mouth. When Simon pulled away to spend some time on the smooth ball sack, he noticed a long clear string of shining semen keeping his lips attached to the leaking slit. The ball bag was soft and smooth, and as he licked and suckled on it, he felt the involuntary movement of the scrotum's contents. Then, up the bag, he licked to the base of the thick golden brown shaft. There he nibbled with just his soft, warm lips until he poked his tongue barely beyond his lips and ascended the man's pole, the roughness of his taste buds sending electric sensations into his client.

Locking his mouth once more around the stiff staff, Simon paid particular attention to the nerves centered at the edge of the cap below the slit. "Ohuuu, that's it. It's been so long I'm going to cum, Brad. I can't hold out." The doctor slid the words through clenched teeth, his knees buckling a little. Then came the mother lode; Rick was firing heat into Simon's teenage mouth. The thirty-year-old doctor withdrew a few inches after every ejaculation only to ram his pulsating cocking back in the boy's waiting mouth to shoot yet another load, giving credence to the time period since he had last shot his thick creamy load. Simon, more practiced than even an hour ago, didn't lose a drop.

Simon had no more finished swallowing the doctor still lodged in his mouth when he heard the door behind them open. Ay-Rab and Dylan had finally made it back to replace them. The Indian pulled out of the glory-hole, and Simon was

up out of the chair with lightning speed. “Where the fuck have you been,” the boy whispered directly into Ay-Rab’s ear.

“We’re only five minutes late. Sorry.” Ay-Rab whispered.

“Just take over for Paul... that’s my dad he’s blowing!” Simon, almost beside himself, said very softly, not wanting his father to recognize his voice. Ay-Rab’s eyes went big and his mouth opened like he wanted to leave too, but Simon wielded him around and, seeing Paul’s mouth wide and trying to suckle his dad, pushed him over to the chair. Paul, knowing what was happening, quickly and successfully exchanged positions with the boy. Ay-Rab, much more experienced at sucking a whole gamut of dick, had Brad sighing louder than before.

Dylan had taken his seat where Simon had been sitting and was concentrating on his buddy sucking the commander’s huge member. Simon grabbed Paul’s hand and headed for the exit when he heard his father’s distinctive voice. “Oh! What are you doing?”

Brad’s cock jerked out of the hole and Ay-Rab’s mouth with a pop. Simon, trying to find out what was happening, ran back to the peephole over Dylan’s head and looked through. Paul heard the gasp coming from Simon and went to the spy hole over Ay-Rab’s head and looked through, his mouth falling open in complete shock. The stunning Dr. Longarrow had turned the General sideways, fallen to his knees, his ten-inch cock still hard and pointing at the ceiling and sucking furiously, had encapsulated over half of Brad’s cock. Simon thought for a second that his dad was going to push the doctor away, but instead, he had locked his hands into Rick’s long silky hair and was holding his head in place. His knees were slightly bent and absolute pleasure was written over his face.

Simon pulled away from the peephole, grabbed Paul, who was glued to the opening, and pulled him toward the door. “We’re getting the fuck out of here,” he said as low as he could in Paul’s ear. Before going, he bent over to Ay-Rab, “We are still friends, but I won’t be responsible for my actions if you ever ask us here again or breathe a word of what just happened!” Ay-Rab, never taking life too seriously, nodded and gave the boy a thumbs up. Simon and Paul were gone and

up the stairs. They didn't stop until they were safely locked in their apartment. Paul didn't know what to say to his man. Was Simon going to cry or be angry? He had never been in a situation like this. The two boys just stood there looking at each other. Simon's face widened into a grin that grew into a laugh. He was laughing so hard that he couldn't even talk, try as he might. The laughter was contagious. Paul doubled over, thinking about what a night they had been through. This went on until they were both crying from the laughter.

"Wonder if dad will invite the doctor to spend the night with him?" Simon said aloud. "What a complete hypocrite. It will be fun to see how he acts over the next few days. I just hope I can keep a straight face around him."

"I just hope your cock never gets as big as his!" Said Paul.

"You saying I'm small?"

"I'm saying you would never be topping me if you were as big as your dad. But, I'm also saying you fit and feel just right." Paul diplomatically added. "Come on, let's go to bed, and I'll show you."

Chapter Fourteen

“Good morning, Phoenix residents.

It is I Lasitor, wishing you a happy morning, it is now 6 a.m.

Are you aware that nuts are packed with vitamins and minerals, including magnesium and vitamin E, and provide nutritious fiber, fats, and protein? Most of the fat in nuts is monounsaturated fat, as well as omega-6 and omega-3 polyunsaturated fat. They do, however, contain a small amount of saturated fat.

Did you know that healthy fat is required for the formation of cell membranes within sperm cells? Also, by boosting blood flow to the testicles, omega-3 fatty acids contribute to sperm production. Not excluding the arginine content in walnuts which contributes to the increase in sperm count.

Visit our community news page to book a tour of our very own Hydroponics Dome and its nut plantation; it may be more than it's “cracked” up to be.

Who knows you may get a “nutsack” of samples to take home.

Breakfast is served until 8 a.m.

Thank you and have a nutty day.”

This is how it happened

Brad had to admit; he felt a ton lighter after meeting with the young Doctor. He seemed to have an extra hop in his step. He had not felt so invigorated since well before Doomsday. He realized with a smile that there was a certain truth about a man unloading himself emotionally when emptying his balls. He wasn't saying he was gay or in love, but he felt like pounding his chest like a proud mountain gorilla.

Twenty-Four Hours Earlier

“So, General McCormick, there is no way I can convince you to take a mild antidepressant? It would not be for life. I don't have that big of a supply.” Dr. Longarrow asked the man sitting across from him in his office.

“No! Absolutely not! I want all decisions I make, right or wrong, to have come from my reasoning ability and not artificially produced by an abnormal increase in my serotonin level.” Brad firmly answered the stunning Doctor. “Call me Brad, please. This General title makes me feel even more weighted down, I'm afraid.”

“Do you work out regularly? Do you make time for leisure activities with friends or family? You do realize you are the only person in the whole community I can ask that to? Do you find that you drink more alcohol than you used to?” Broderick Longfellow was on a roll, firing more personal questions than the General was comfortable answering. “I work out daily before breakfast, and before you ask, my nutrition is excellent and on an almost perfect schedule. I am responsible for one thousand nine hundred ninety-nine men and running a vast complex in an inhospitable environment, so my social activities are limited. However, I do try to have at least Sunday dinner with my son and his...partner. I neither drink more nor less than Predoomsday; I have two glasses of wine with my dinner and the occasional rare whiskey late evening before reading a book and going to bed.” Brad seemed bored by the line of questioning.

“How about sex?” Longarrow asked him.

“What about it?” Evaded Brad.

“Do you have sex?” The Doctor pursued, undaunted by Brad’s dismissive tone

“Dr. Longarrow, how in the hell would I have sex? My wife is dead, and there is probably not another woman within five thousand miles of here if there are in fact any at all.”

“If you want me to call you Brad, please call me Broderick.” The Doctor requested, trying to divert a little of Brad’s cynicism.

“Broderick, that has three syllables like your last name. Saying one is like saying the other.” Complained Brad, but he was showing the hint of a smile.

“True. My fiancé and some close friends used to call me Rick. I would be fine if you also did.” Doc answered. “What about masturbation? How often?”

“What? That’s very personal. I won’t lie and say never, but I can honestly answer seldom.” Brad mumbled a response, annoyed.

“How often did you say?” *This Doctor is very pushy*, thought Brad.

“Oh, my g-d! Probably once a month.”

“What do you fantasize about?” Rick asked, knowing he was pushing it.

“Oookaaay. This is enough for one day.” Brad said dismissively.

“Very well, but you need to do it more. To be quite honest, it would probably be good if you participated in your Phoenix Code and had an occasional partner yourself.” Rick told the Commander.

“Rick, let’s get one thing straight. I know you are trying to help me, I guess, but that Code certainly is none of my doing. I went with it for personal reasons.” Brad said, getting more agitated.

“Well, talking to you has made me realize that I probably should follow my own advice. Sexually I’ve denied myself too. So between now and next week, think about some fantasies and try living them in your mind.” Rick told him.

“I’ll think about it.” Brad turned to leave the office.

“Brad,” Rick called after him. Brad stopped, looked back at him, and listened.

“Would you consider meeting me tonight around ten and having a drink with me? Of course, it is therapy-related, but quite frankly, I haven’t had a drink and shot the bull since I got here.” The younger man told Brad sincerely.

Brad thought for a minute. He liked this young Native American, whose intellect and interest in his profession, Brad suspected, matched his own. “Okay. Sundowners at ten.” Brad said, referring to the shared lounge area that for right now was well stocked with about any spirit a man could want. “But no questions about my masturbation habits.”

“You have my word. We won’t be discussing masturbation.” Rick replied.

Later That Evening.

The drink he was supposed to have had with Dr. Broderick Longarrow had turned into four gin martinis to Rick’s two beers. After the second martini, Rick brought up the possibility of sexual activity eliminating his depression and the possible need for antidepressants. As the conversation expanded on that subject, Brad had become more easily convinced that a visit to Quik-Fix Hall might have medical benefits. Rick had suggested that he was undergoing the same depression from sexual deprivation. It would be a positive experience for him. When Brad had pointed out that he had to be aware of how his own activities might be perceived in his position. Rick countered that as the medical director responsible to all residents, he was in the same situation. “That is the beauty of Quik-Fix Hall; everybody is there for the same thing, and anonymity is assured, under threat of punishment. Regardless of anyone’s opinion of that facility, I have patients who

definitely are on the road to recovery from loneliness and depression due to Quik-Fix Hall therapy.”

Everything was like being in a dream state, as Brad had reluctantly agreed to follow Rick. No one seemed to be out at that hour. Entering the former ladies’ locker room, Brad could smell the muskiness of male sex, and it excited him. He knew he wanted to do what he was following the Doctor down there to do. When they got closer to the area, which was just around the corner, Rick went around first to ensure there was no line as he had promised. Brad had told the Doctor he did not want to stand in line for a BJ. In fact, when they had entered the locker room, Brad had locked the door with his master key. No one else would be following behind him, and they wouldn’t complain to Connor until morning. He felt relatively secure except for wondering whose mouth might be on the other side of the little hole.

A few feet from the glory-holes, Brad had been surprised to see his Doctor pull out a very long and erect penis. Giving Brad ample time to peruse its length and girth before smiling at him and going toward the hole. The handsome General gathered up the nerve to walk up to the only open glory-hole and fumbled with his zipper. He had heard some rustling on the other side of the wall but thought little about it. His manhood was far from erect, but he blushed when Rick looked and complimented his penis, of all things. That was a first!

Rick was obviously enjoying his decision to put his cock into that dark hole and by some of his sounds, whoever was licking him must have felt pretty good too. He could feel his cock getting bigger and damned if it hadn’t jumped from an involuntary throb when Rick had placed his hand on his shoulder. They had not been there long when it was apparent that Rick was blowing his wad into the darkness. As for Brad, whoever was sucking him knew what he was doing. It felt so nice to let someone give him the pleasure that his own hand had gotten used to doing.

He hoped that Rick wouldn’t leave him alone now that he had finished. He even thought about pulling out of that soft, moist mouth and leaving with him sans orgasm, but he

couldn't make himself pull back and end the pleasure. Suddenly he was pulled back from the hole and swung around so that he was face to face with the Native American, those penetrating black eyes looking deeply into his own.

Rick whispered so that only Brad heard what he said, "No one will drink from your cock but me tonight." The young Doctor slid quickly to his knees in front of his Commander and, with his tan hands, grasped the older man's arse and pulled him forward. Brad's cock was still sticking through his zipper; the pants remained buttoned at the top. With all the control Rick could muster, he took the enormous cock deep into his throat and managed not to gag. The blockage was so complete, he wasn't able to breathe. His throat muscles massaged the head, and his tongue danced on the underside of the throbbing shaft. Sooner than he wanted, Rick had to pull back to get a breath of air. Rather than pushing him back as the Doctor feared, Brad had placed his hands behind Rick's head and was running his hands through his thick mane. Rick worked the top third of the cock with his mouth and tongue. Brad was groaning in pleasure and assisting in a fucking rhythm. It had been about three weeks since the General had ejaculated, and he was reaching the precipice quickly.

"Rick, I'm...ah...going to come!" He pulled out of the young man's mouth just as his ejaculation started. Enormous long ropes of sperm shot over Rick's nose, in his eyes, in his open mouth, and long shiny strings of pearlescent ropes glistened in the blue blackness of his hair. Rick pulled the penis forward and back into his mouth, trying to swallow the remaining five globs that Brad ejaculated into him. Rick pulled off the slab of man-meat, wiped some jizz out of his eye, looked up at Brad, and said, "Wow!" Then he smiled at the man.

Brad had quickly regained his composure and tucked his prick back into his pants. "Rick, I am so sorry. I rarely drink, and it hit me hard."

"You did this because you were drunk?" Asked Rick.

"Yes. Again, I apologize, and it won't happen again." The General stated as firmly as he could under the circumstances.

“Yes, yes, of course. The two beers had me drunk too.” Rick lied, standing to face Brad.

“What do you propose we do about this?” Brad asked.

Rick was still standing there, in front of the holes in the wall. In his hair were thick strings of cum, dripping down to form rivulets on his forehead and running down his cheeks and chin. “Well, General McCormick, I think we need to talk at length,” Rick said as he reached up and swabbed a finger up his cheek, gathering cum on it and sucking it into his mouth. Brad followed every move; his eyes were locked on that finger being sucked clean. He found the filthy act revving his motor on all cylinders. “About the next step in your recovery. I don’t want any headway you have gained tonight to lose momentum.” Rick said seductively, pulling his finger out of his mouth with a wet plop.

“What do you say we go straight to my apartment where we can actually make love like I know you want me to do?” Brad said, and Rick’s heart skipped a beat. His game of seduction was unexpectedly paying out bigger rewards more quickly than expected. Rick smiled and smeared a small drop of sperm across Brad’s lips. Brad and Rick stood, their eyes lustfully locked. Brad did a quick flit of his tongue across his lips and said, “Let’s do it, doctor.”

“Mooother fuck!” Exclaimed Ay-Rab, who had pulled his dick out as soon as Simon and Paul had made their hasty retreat and was stroking himself while watching his doctor sucking off his leader. Standing up, Ay-Rab silently stepped over to Dylan and, smiling, slid his pants down his hairy thighs. No words were exchanged as Ay-Rab slid his dark meat into his friend’s mouth. The young soldiers weren’t aware when the Doctor and General left.

The Present

As Brad thought about the past twenty-four hours, he recognized that he had done something totally out of character; he had let himself go. Not worrying about the past or the future.

Strange how fast life can change direction. Just last week, he had felt like picking up a gun and swallowing a bullet. It was impossible to even imagine a future. The men he was afforded to lead were all doing much better than himself. They are the personification of resilience, and Brad realized they don't need him at all. They are exceedingly well equipped to survive and to make Phoenix a success. Phoenix doesn't require a General. His rank was only a meaningless bureaucratic stamp on a paper.

For fuck sake, he thought. Remembering how sorry for himself he had felt. Now with a sarcastic laugh, he dismissed all feelings of self-doubt. He was General Brad McCormick, the unquestioned leader of Phoenix. Then with a chuckle, he thought, *why, when another man sucks my cock, is life once again making sense?*

“Oh my g-d!” Brad roared aloud as he realized how much time and energy he had wasted. His wife had often told him to simplify his complicated thought pattern to a simple “A” and a “B.”

“A,” I was just stressed, and “B,” he sucked my cock and unscrambled my brain. Dear g-d, I'm fucking losing it,” he laughed at himself.

’Yet Rick was amazing, he actually listened to me, and he knew I needed someone, maybe a friend. Yip,’ he thought, he was happily losing his mind....

Chapter Fifteen

“Good morning, Phoenix residents.

It is I Lasitor, wishing you a happy morning, it is now 6 a.m.

Do you get motion sick, dizzy, or have trouble following a moving target? Can't remember when you last had an eye exam?

You're definitely overdue if it's been more than a year. Our community news page has a self-assessment application if you are experiencing symptoms like red, dry, itchy eyes or have spots, flashes of light, or floaters in your vision. Take advantage of it while you can still see what you are doing.

Keep in mind that Lasitor provides information only for informational purposes and does not provide any kind of medical advice, medical recommendation, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your eye doctor, physician, or another qualified health provider for any questions you may have.

Breakfast is served until 8 a.m.

Thank you and have an aesthetic day.”

Orange, you glad to see me?

“Morning General,” the Native American Doctor greeted him. He was all smiles standing next to the entrance of the dining hall, looking all kinds of sexy; his left leg crooked backward against the wall for support. Rick had slipped out of their bed earlier that morning. He had no fresh clothes for the day and needed a shower and shave, so they agreed on a time to meet for breakfast. Rick had his white lab coat on, and as always, around his neck was his stethoscope. His thumbs were hooked into the pockets of his lab coat, and he was wearing those comfy white medical shoes.

The Doctor looked delicious, like a bar of double-dipped chocolate, and Brad wanted to eat him or maybe ruffle him up, so he didn't look so perfect and so bloody sure of himself. Brad wondered why he still wore his military boots daily, and he was jealous of the doctor's shoes, so he made a mental note to discuss clothing options at their next meeting. This place was never meant to be a military institution. He wanted to wear comfy white shoes, too. He stopped in front of the Doctor and just looked at him; his hair was still wet, braided tightly, but some dry hair stuck out at the sides. Still, he looked perfect and Brad could smell the fresh scent of shampoo and the cedar body wash he used. Brad wanted to push those strings of black hair back over his ear but had enough self-control to resist. So instead, he greeted him.

“Morning Doctor,” he answered with a sly smile, “shall we go have breakfast?” He held his hand out to activate the automatic sliding door of the mess hall. As soon as they stepped inside, silence overwhelmed them. The place was empty. Behind the counter, one server stood and greeted them.

“Good morning, Sir. Morning Dr. Longarrow, welcome to breakfast,” he said as he opened the trays of food on the warmers. The nameplate on his left upper chest, said Andrew Cunningham, Food and Nutrition Management Services. “Morning, Andrew,” Rick greeted him. He had seen the man around Phoenix, but they didn't move in the same circles. Usually, the man could be heard talking and laughing in the

back. Now he was serving food; Rick wondered why. “My name is Drew; just Drew, please. I will be your server for this lovely morning.” Drew was a big hunk of a man, one that would look very comfortable on a motorcycle dressed in black leather chaps and black boots. Even now, while working, he wore his outfitted white kitchen uniform with his black biker boots. Brad knew him in passing and had spoken to him on a few occasions. A friendly teddy bear, some might say of him. He wore his hair braided back neatly, and while working, he kept it hidden under his hairnet. Obviously, he liked to taste the food he prepared in the kitchen. His tummy wasn’t big, but it was on the soft side. He had a friendly, open face, one that Brad enjoyed greeting in the mornings, either when he helped out serving breakfast or during staff meetings. He liked the comfortable, colorful aura Drew emitted. It felt like he was someone you could tell all your secrets to, and get a hug afterward.

“Morning Drew, where is everyone?” Brad asked with a big smile on his face.

“They were all in for early breakfast. Apparently, the men were called outside for a special operation today.” The six feet happy giant teddy answered, and his blue-green eyes glinted with friendly playfulness.

“All of them?” Brad asked, sounding surprised. *I wonder why I wasn’t informed of this?*

“Well, Sir, last night Captain Howell sent out an announcement. He requested volunteers to assist in going outside and moving ground satellite dishes to try and contact the outside world. So, shortly after we arrived at 4 a.m. this morning to prepare breakfast, most of the men were already up and falling in line for coffee and toast. They were already dressed and ready to jump into Arctic suits. Others were so excited it sounded like a party when I entered the dining area. Well, excited really doesn’t begin to describe them. I think it is a toss-up between just getting fresh air and exercise or helping to reach the outside world, Sir.”

Just then, Juan, one of the cooks, entered through the swinging doors that connected the kitchen area with the dining

area. Behind him, the kitchen staff were being boisterous; Brad could hear the plateware and pots clanging.

“Good morning, General McCormick. A splendid day isn’t it, Sir?” Juan asked with a feminine lilt in his voice.

“Yes, good morning, Juan.” *Phoenix has an automated artificially controlled environment. What would make today any more splendid than any other day,* Brad wondered to himself. He had talked to the young Hispanic chef on numerous occasions, but Brad had never thought much about him besides noting his distinct Spanish accent and refined looks. Today, however, there was something different about Juan. Thinking back, Brad recalled the man as always having a ready good-natured smile and mischievous eyes. Today his eyes were more snake-like, and Brad didn’t like the slithery vibe the man projected.

Almost like a fucking spider, waiting to entrap me and eat me. Maybe he knows what I was doing a few hours ago. Let it go, Brad, you’re acting like a guilty boy; afraid everyone knows he just rubbed one out in the school men’s room, he thought. Both Brad and Rick grabbed their breakfast trays, chose the closest table, and sat down.

“Where is my pager?” Brad asked as he realized no one had contacted him since he woke up this morning. “Dear g-d, Rick, what in the ever fucking hell did we do to my pager?” Usually, a missing pager would freak Brad out, but he found himself to be inquisitive and not nervous. Just as the Doctor wanted to give an answer, they were interrupted. Brad lifted his hand and indicated to Rick should wait.

“Ah, thank you, Drew, thank you guys, this is stellar; I can’t remember when last I had freshly squeezed orange juice.” Brad and Rick held their glasses as the server walked a pitcher over and offered them the juice. *Again, even Drew is acting weird. What the fuck is going on?* Brad wondered. Brad hunched over and followed Drew’s rounded backside, checking the cook was out of earshot as he disappeared behind the swinging doors to the kitchen’s food preparation area. Then he leaned in and whispered, “Rick, what is going on, and where did we lose my pager?” He continued his whispering,

“if we lost it in Quik-Fix, I am going to wring your neck,” Brad joked and chuckled as he realized the humor of the situation.

“Don’t know, don’t worry, I’m sure it will turn up somewhere. Wait, I think you switched it off yesterday afternoon when you came to see me.” Rick whispered back.

“Jesus, Mary and Joseph, you are right!” Brad said excitedly. He felt like a naughty boy who skipped school as they giggled together.

Brad and Rick both inhaled their food. Brad especially felt the need to see what the volunteers were so “enthusiastically” doing. Brad knew about these plans, but he did not expect it would happen the very next day. He was sure he had told Connor to keep him updated.

“Don’t worry, I’m sure your council has it under control,” Rick told him as if he could read Brad’s mind. The two of them were like peas in a pod. Like old friends who thought the same.

“Well, in all fairness, I did okay this, but I should have been informed about when it was set to be executed. I am supposed to be kept in the loop,” Brad repeated as he threw the last of his orange juice down his throat. “Let’s go!”

Rick swallowed the last of his cheese omelet and also downed his juice. Then, he jumped up, put his tray away, and followed the somewhat disgruntled Brad into the corridor.

Drew shook his head in disbelief. “You gave both of them some of our special orange juice; you are such a cock slut. You want everyone in Phoenix to be one too.”

With the sass and drama of a proper queen, Juan spun around tapping himself on his arse, holding an imaginary rein, and pretending to ride a pony. He gave a long and loud, “hee-ha! Ride me, cowboy!” Drew chuckled and joined him in the silliness, rubbing his hands all over Juan’s delicious arse.

“I love doing the naughties with you, especially when we play naughty monkey business. Feel how hard you make me.” Drew took Juan’s hand and rubbed it over the bulge in his

pants. “Ooooh, orange you glad to see me? Juan joked. “But you do realize if we get caught, I’m throwing you under the bus.”

“Nah, we won’t get caught, anyway it’s all harmless. If we didn’t play these little jokes, our days would be extremely long and boring, my big teddy bear,” Juan replied with all kinds of suggestive devilry in his voice.

“Let’s just hope those two don’t have heart attacks from bonking like rabbits,” Drew snickered as he grabbed Juan’s arm to pull him closer for a deep kiss.

“At least they will die happy orgasming like geysers,” Juan said into Drew’s mouth.

“Giving them your “Rooster Booster Juice,” is sadistic, especially if they don’t know what’s happening,” Drew said, kissing Juan down the side of his neck.

“No, it’s not.”

“We better get to work on lunch. I’m sure we are going to get a blow-by-blow description later. I just hope we don’t get court-martialed. The General is not known for his sense of humor.”

The murmuring of men’s voices became louder. “This way,” Brad called as he swung into a stairwell marked “emergency exit.” Rick kept up, and after a few flights of stairs, Brad pushed a door open and burst onto the platform where Connor, Bryan, Tony, and Mika stood, all wide-eyed at his unexpected entrance. “Why the fuck wasn’t I told about this?”

“Sir, I tried contacting you, but you never answered the pager.”

“Bryan, excuses are never acceptable. On the rare occasion, you can’t reach me you should physically track me down.”

“My apologies, Sir. Tony had said it would be advisable to execute the mission as soon as the weather permitted. I relayed this to Mika who told me the winds had abated and the weather would likely be clear today and most probably for the

next day or two. So, I contacted Tony, *who, by coincidence, was right under me with his ankles locked behind my back.* I told him Mika's guess on the weather," Bryan said, leaving unnecessary bits of information out, for obvious reasons.

"Yes, I asked him about getting the cranes out to move the satellite dishes. We thought paging the general population requesting volunteers to show up at sunrise would be a good idea, *after I came deep inside his arse,* to help thaw the bolts, disassemble the foundations, move them, and reassemble them in their assigned positions. But it seems the whole of Phoenix wants to go outside General, Sir. So, to prevent an incident, we decided to call the council and of course you as well." Bryan said, and the rest of the men looked at the Doctor, questioning. Is something wrong, Sir? Were you down at Medical all this time? Is this why you didn't respond to my pages? Why didn't you let us know you had a medical problem?

"And now the spotlight is on me," Brad said nonchalantly. "Sorry, men, I lost my mind, I mean my pager. Maybe it's at the gym."

"No, gentleman, don't you worry about my health. I am healthy as an Ox; Doctor Longarrow can attest to that fact." Connor looked at Brad, wondering who the man in front of them was. *Did he just make a joke? He looked like a fucking proud peacock or something.*

"Are you bloody preening, my friend?" Connor asked, baffled. Brad slapped him hard on the shoulder, "Yes, my man, I certainly am!" Best advice ever to go see the Doctor; he fixed me right up-p! He popped his p's loudly. "You know what popping p's means, right?" Connor stood there flabbergasted. He assessed his friend, *fuck, if I didn't know my friend better, it looked like Brad was tripping.* "Are you sure you are okay?"

"Yes-yes, let's get the ball on the road, or the spikes on the ice, ha-ha!" He laughed at his own joke.

"So, I hear we are going on an adventure, and all the bloody men of Phoenix too! Ha-ha! Not to worry, I will sort this out, because that is what I do, I sort things!"

“Dear g-d, General,” Connor said as he realized his friend was acting totally bonkers.

Brad ignored them and continued, “I already knew this was all Bryan and most definitely all Tony’s doing.” Brad felt excellent, almost invincible. He noticed every sunbeam through the glass of the domed roof had different colors. *So pretty*, he thought. “Maybe, Mika, yes, Mika?” He swung around, searching for Mika. When he found him and managed to focus on him, he pointed at him. “Yes, you, my Russian c-o-m-r-a-d-e!”

Poor Bryan and Tony, and now Mika stood there questioning their leader. “I am sure you were joking?” Mika decided to step up to the plate. Grabbing Brad around the waist, pulling him closer for a man hug as if they were long-time friends. “Morning Brad, I mean General, all this is, is just a demonstration of how much the men value teamwork. Connor and I were looking at the latest local weather data from the weather balloon we sent up a few days ago, and we saw blue open skies for miles. So, we forecasted good weather for the next day or so. We contacted Captain Howell and we thought sending out an invitation for volunteers would be the thing to do. You know, for moving the ground equipment.”

“Ah-ha! I knew it was you, Mika,” Brad joked while looking at the dome’s ceiling as if seeing it for the first time.”

“Sir, this is a good thing. We can complete the project in one day instead of three. You know, more hands, lighter work and all that. The men are all eager to get outside to lend a hand.” Mika continued explaining, hoping to diffuse the situation. He suspected Brad must be tired, overworked, maybe having a mental breakdown.

Connor had sidled up to Rick and said in a whisper, “What the bloody fuck did you give him?”

“Color, lots and lots of color,” was all he responded.

Brad was vibrating. All his gears were finally clicked into place. He knew he had to keep it all together. But, he also knew he needed to take his “General hat” off and instead manage these men as Dr. Saunders intended. He had an

epiphany. It became obvious what his friend meant when they spoke last, at the Doomsday event. He will manage these men like a fraternity. A brotherhood with common goals and aspirations. These men made a commitment to each other for life. Together, they would learn, grow, and make Phoenix stronger.

Brad felt psyched up, happy, and so horny, if they let him outside, he could drill a few holes in the snow for them. He knew in front of him stood brilliant men, and obviously, they were all waiting for him to spoil it for them. He felt the closeness of Rick behind him, and he saw the worry in his leadership team's eyes. He knew this decision would mark him as a leader or as a dismal failure. No matter how giddy he felt, he had to get it together. "I was chosen for this exact reason," he said. "Dr. Saunders and the WHPSS chose me because they were divinely inspired!" He quipped to them with bravado and confidence. While Connor, Mika, Bryan, Tony, and Rick just stood there aghast watching their early morning breakfast show, with Brad as the master of ceremonies, Brad stepped forward, took the microphone in hand, and spoke.

"Gooooood Mooooorning, Men of Phoenix! "Jesus, did he just copy that dude from that old movie, Good Morning Vietnam?" Bryan asked under his breath to anyone in earshot, while Brad continued.

"Yes, I'm sure he did, I still watch the original by Robin Williams though. I don't like the series, it is kind of lame without Robin Williams." Connor said, remembering when Brad and he watched it together many-many years ago. Brad continued with his impressive delivery.

"I am impressed by the enthusiastic reaction to Captain Howell's call for volunteers last night." The men erupted in jubilation, and as soon as it happened, Brad knew he had made the correct call. *Yes, absolutely a bunch of cooped up university geniuses, can't blame them, let's go with the flow.* "I know it's been a tough three years, and I have been informed by my leadership team that we may have a chance to make contact with.... Well, who the fuck ever, if we reposition the ground satellite dishes."

“Hooray,” the men cheered.

“Thank you for coming out to assist while the weather permits. I am proud of you all, and I am humbled by your willingness to persevere and succeed with whatever life throws at you, have fun!”

“Hooray, hip-hip-hooray!” The crowd roared their approval of Brad. Brad gestured to Bryan and Tony to take the floor. They both stepped up and started to organize the men into teams.

As Brad stepped backward, he listened to how the men of Phoenix planned to work miracles in one day. *A splendid day indeed*, he thought.

Meanwhile, Dr. Longarrow was busy with a lustful tripping of his own in the background. He knew at that moment that he was falling in love with a magnificent man. *Brad had a halo around his head*. He thought and then was sure he saw it and it sparkled. *Brad never attacked anyone because he did not feel in charge or inadequate. Instead, he spoke to the masses and not only supported his leadership team, but he also cemented the group’s cohesion into an unbreakable bond for success.*

Rick, had to reposition his cock a few times, as it grew like it had a mind of its own. He had discreetly moved it from his underwear so the “anaconda” could grow alongside his left pants leg. Brad, in all his gloriousness, a demigod with a sparkling halo, managed to give him an embarrassingly hard erection in front of nearly 2000 men. He couldn’t wait to get Brad alone to show him how proud of him he was.

While Connor, Mika, and Brad were hugging, Brad grabbed Tony, Bryan, and Rick around their waists to pull them in closer for a group hug; all of them were embracing and slapping each other’s shoulders.

Another celebratory roar came from the crowd as the colossal electric doors started to roll and retract into the roof as they all marched outside onto the ice.

Longarrow could not tame his libido for another second. He leaned over to whisper in Brad’s ear and gestured to the

crowd, “I’m going to go back to Medical. I think I need to prepare for anything from a smashed thumb to a total leg amputation.”

With that said, he turned around and left by the emergency exit doors, the same ones from which he and Brad had entered the platform. He was halfway through the tunnel when someone slammed into his back and pinned him to the wall. It was so unexpected, the air left his lungs and he couldn’t draw another breath due to the pressure on his back. “Where do you think you are going?” Brad’s deep voice rumbled through him. His hot breath on his ear gave him goosebumps. “Dear ancestors!”

“Don’t talk. Just listen!” Brad hissed to Rick. The Doctor felt spittle hitting his neck as the Commander spat out the words. Brad held Rick’s face against the cold steel wall of the stairwell landing with the flat of his large right hand. The General’s groin pushed intrusively into the young man’s muscular buttocks, while he forced his left hand between the wall and the native’s groin and roughly groped it.

“Brad! What the fuck are you doing? We are not alone!”

“I ordered you to fucking listen!” Brad repeated. “I can’t do this, but I’ve got to...I can’t help it...I...I...don’t have the strength to resist. I’m so fucking horny. I don’t know what’s come over me.” Brad continued, relaxing his hold on Rick. The Doctor immediately turned to face Brad, prepared to hear him out. “I’ve relived it and relived it. Since you left me in the early morning hours. I’ve wondered if my code has always been fake or just too much pressure from my position. I’ve even wondered if you put some kind of Native American curse on me that zapped my moral compass. Okay, okay, I didn’t really take that thought too far. I am, after all, a rational man most of the time. Why I...” Brad blubbered as his thoughts raced through his mind.

“Hold on, Brad. I’m at a loss. Seems to me you thoroughly enjoyed last night! Am I wrong? What are you expecting from me?” Rick interrupted the hot to trot Brad.

“No! By g-d, you’re not fucking wrong. That’s what’s wrong! A minute ago, when I saw the tent in your scrubs as you headed back inside...well, it just hit me that I had to have you again. Now! Not tonight! Now! Four stair flights up there is a landing with enough room for us to fuck each other right out of our systems,” Brad pointed at a damp spot on the front of his crisp uniform pants. “I need your cock, I need your mouth, I need your arse, I need you now!”

“I bet, I can beat the old General up those four flights!” Rick said, springing toward the stairs and taking two steps at a time.

“Old!” Brad yelled, chasing after him.

The targeted stair landing was reached in record time. Brad first brought Rick’s face to his. The moment their lips touched, Brad’s tongue breached the younger man’s mouth. The kiss was deep, long, sensual but abruptly ended when the Commander grasped the Doctor roughly by his shoulders, turned him a hundred eighty degrees, and without fanfare jerked Rick’s scrub pants and briefs below his knees. “Bend over! Grab hold of the rail!” Commanded Brad. Rick complied without question. The older man was instantly on his knees behind the object of his desire as he freed Rick from one leg of the scrubs, but not bothering to take the other foot out. “Spread your legs.”

“Good g-d! Motherfucking, fuck, fuck, fuck! A surprised Rick almost shouted as he felt his superior’s tongue penetrate his arse. Brad was wild with lust eating the Doctor out as if to devour him. The masculine musk had Brad so aroused, his cock was painfully confined in his uniform.

Brad stood, undid his belt and trousers before pushing them midway down his hairy thighs. Then, breathing heavily, “this is not what I would have planned, but it’s going to have to do. That was foreplay!” With those words, Brad grasped his thick leaking cock, pushed it against Rick’s tight hole, bent his neck as far as he possibly could, and let a big wad of spit drip from his mouth right onto his cock. He used his cock to smear the spit around Rick’s hole. Brad was quivering with lust, just like

a virgin, going for his first hole. Finally, he forced his massive head past Rick's sphincter.

"Mother fucking g-ds!" Screamed Rick; those words reverberated time and again throughout the stairwell. Brad had a tight purchase with his big hands on the man's hard bubble arse. He pushed those butt cheeks wide open with his thumbs, spat another gob for smoother lubrication while grabbing tightly around the sexy doctors' hips with his long fingers. He felt the heat of the hot tunnel surrounding his cockhead. Brad may not have been experienced in man love, but his instincts told him to give Rick a chance to adjust to the huge intrusion.

Surprisingly, Rick, despite the pain, had not pulled away from him. "Fuck! Oh, fuck!" He kept repeating. "Please don't move, Brad! Let me adjust... don't want you to tear me... please!" Brad didn't reply but obeyed the plea. It was all he could do not to push the remaining eight inches into the man. Eventually, he felt Rick relaxing, and then he pushed back, taking more of him in. "Dear fucking g-d, you feel so fucking good!" Brad exclaimed through clenched teeth as he slowly moved just an inch and a half of his bulbous head, bumping into Rick's nut sending excruciating volts of pleasure throughout his lithe, tightly muscled body. "Motherrr fuuuck! G-d, you feel good, you sadistic arsehole! Fuck! Fuck! Fuck! Keep doing that!" Begged the beautiful Apache. The Commander did as he was ordered. For no less than fifteen minutes, the thick cock pistoned in and out of the medical man's hole. Brad's twenty years of daily workouts were paying off.

Rick was shivering; he took pleasure in every drop of sweat that fell from the General's body onto his back. The large man's cock hammered his arse with relentless speed. Miraculously, Rick came, his jizz hitting the wall and oozing down it. Brad gave no notice and continued fucking that sweet arse without slowing down. Rick could not believe this was happening. Never had he been fucked like this before. Brad screamed, "I'm coming," and just fucked his way through his orgasm, like a runaway freight train, passing the station, not being able to stop. With his cock never softening, he just continued like the sex-hungry maniac he was. "I'm not

stopping, baby; I want more,” Brad grunted. His cum was leaking, and the sloshing sound was evident from the slickened hole he fucked. Rick’s used tunnel leaked cum around Brad’s pummeling shaft; the juices ran down Rick’s heavy ball sack. He couldn’t see it, but he could feel the wetness, and that, combined with the continuous tapping on his prostate, was pushing the young Doctor toward another orgasm.

“I’m going to cum, g-d yeah! I’m going to fucking cum!”

“Fuck you are!” Brad contradicted, moving a hand from his lover’s waist, grabbing the man’s cock, and tightly squeezing its base. “I have plans for that. Do not cum until I tell you to.” All Rick could do was suck in a breath and nod his head in acquiescence.

Satisfied he had been understood, Brad slowed his rhythm to a pace that allowed him to feel every sensory nerve in his cock luxuriating in the white-hot heat provided by Longarrow’s quivering channel. For what seemed an eternity, Brad relished in a feeling of complete carnal bliss, a pleasure he had never known possible. He bent over the man, who still had his hands clenched on the steel rails, interlaced his fingers with those of the young surgeon, and indicated for Rick to stand. The man did so slowly. His arse, still full of military dick; Rick waited to see what delightful madness was next.

“Try not to move. I want to be like this for just another minute. Then, inside you, holding you, I have to return to reality.” Brad rubbed his thumb along the man’s chiseled cheekbone and then followed that line with feather-lite kisses. “Give me your mouth Rick.” He did as he was told and soon found his tongue dueling with his new lover. Pulling away from the kiss only briefly, Brad said softly, “this is for you.” Brad pulled his throbbing cock to the point where only the head remained inside. Shoving the entire length of his shaft back inside, both men yelled, “fuck yes,” as stream after stream of jizz again shot into Rick’s hole. Brad had his arms clenched around Rick’s abdomen as he continued to ejaculate. Even after the contractions stopped producing cum, Brad’s

cock would twitch just enough that it caused orgasmic shots of euphoria through Rick's body.

Slowly Brad withdrew his length. His thick massive cock glistened in the low light of the stairwell. White spunk ran in rivulets down Rick's tanned, hairless legs. "I don't think I can walk," was all the well-bred man could say.

Brad smiled as he got on his knees behind his man. "Turn around and feed me! I've worked for it."

Rick turned to face his General. In so doing, the one leg still tangled in his scrubs at the ankle was drug through the semen accumulating on the floor as it continued to run down his legs and drip from his low-hanging sack. His dick arched up and out toward Brad. While not the girth the older man had, it was long and quite impressive. Uncut, the head peeked out from a thick foreskin, the tip shiny with fluid. Brad thought, in passing, how appropriate the name Longarrow was for the exquisite young man. No, he had never seen such a long cock, and the head did indeed resemble a wicked-looking arrowhead. The thought passed quickly as Brad licked his lips and took as much of the cock as he could into his warm mouth.

"Ahh fuck!" Rick hissed out, grabbing onto the rails that had supported him for the last thirty minutes. After getting his balance back, he found more pleasure with his fingers combing through Brad's hair as they fell into a comfortable face fuck. Rick and Brad both realized the Doctor would not last long. In maybe three minutes, he could feel the man's head begin to swell. "Don't stop. Don't stop...oh fuck please don't stop! Feels so damned fucking good! Oh, g-d, I never have... Aaahhh!" Yelled Rick as he blasted cream down his cocksucker's throat. Brad swallowed and swallowed, but still, some escaped his mouth and dribbled down his chin.

"Is everything alright up there?" Came a voice that sounded familiar. Brad was on his feet in a flash, tucking his half-masted manhood into his now pulled-up trousers and desperately signaling Rick to get his scrubs back up.

“I repeat, is someone hurt?” The steps were closer. Then at the base of the stairs stood Connor.

“Everything is fine, Connor! Just fine! Indeed, just fine. I was just giving Doctor Longarrow a highly confidential briefing as it were,” was the best Brad could come up with.

“I see,” was all Connor could think to reply as he studied the scene before him. Longarrow was barely standing, with his white scrubs wet and wrinkled. A pronounced outline of a penis was outlined beneath the fabric and going down his muscular thigh an impressive distance. The always immaculate General McCormick, his trousers damp at the crotch and wrinkled, stood wide-eyed looking at the young Irishman. Connor couldn't help but notice the leader's roughed-up hair, and what was that pearly substance on his chin? No couldn't be! “Well then, I'll just be on me way.”

“As I said, this was confidential, Connor,” Brad repeated.

“Yes, Sir! I'll inform the others at the base of the stairs of the confidential nature of this meeting.” Brad thought he saw a smirk on his young protégés face as he turned and disappeared down the stairs.

Chapter Sixteen

“Good morning, Phoenix residents.

*It is I Lasitor, wishing you a beautiful morning, it is now 6
a.m.*

*How ready is your emergency preparedness kit?
Preparation means ensuring that you have the supplies you
might need in case of an emergency or disaster. All Phoenix
residents must ensure they have the supplies they may need in
an easy-to-carry emergency preparedness kit. This kit can be
used at home or taken with you if you must evacuate.*

*On our community news page, take the short quiz to test
your readiness, then scroll down for our full list of
recommended supplies.*

*There is also a sign-up sheet to participate as an emergency
preparedness team member. Not only would you be the first to
know of any pending disasters, but you would know precisely
how to help those who were not signed up or ready to go.*

Breakfast is served until 8 a.m.

Thank you and have a fruitful day.”

Our descendants would all be princes

Tony Bonillo and the men had successfully, without any incident, repositioned the dishes in the valley within one day. As per Mika's weather forecast, the day was perfect, sunny with blue skies and no crosswinds. They had placed the satellite dishes as best they could for optimal wind resistance since dish replacements were a finite number. Therefore, it was critical to keep the ones in use functioning for as long as possible.

It had taken Connor a total of ten twelve-hour days to break the codes of the government satellites. Without Mika's help, it would have taken months, if ever, to break into the sophisticated Chinese orbiter. The biggest help was the fact there was no government authority on the other end to detect and thwart his hacking attempts. He had repositioned six satellites and programmed them to take close-up pictures of virtually every square mile of the earth's surface and much of the oceans. The project would take many months, and the study would be time-consuming. Photos would start coming in a matter of hours.

The next project for Connor was to try and dual program these same satellites to chart weather patterns and develop models for storm tracking. That was especially critical for Antarctica, but it would be helpful to know what was going on around the rest of the planet in the long term. One of Phoenix's initial delegations was to monitor the rate of global warming to prepare the world's populations for severe climate change. While that reason no longer existed, what they learned could be definitive in their future survival. This would be especially true if Mika were correct in his theory that the men of Phoenix would be able to reproduce artificially. That thought both frightened and delighted the Irishman

Connor, Mika, and Bryan were amazed at how relaxed Brad had become in the last two months. He was much calmer about problems that would have agitated him not too long ago

in their meetings. While always fair about his final decisions, the General no longer tried to bear the weight of Phoenix on just his shoulders. Instead, he delegated to his council and carefully weighed their feedback on more critical concerns.

Mika had mentioned several times that he had seen Brad and the two boys running or working out together. Connor and Mika were competitive tennis players and frequently would see the boys playing opposite Brad and Rick Longarrow. If you saw one in the dining hall, you would likely see all four sharing a table. Connor thought it was terrific to hear Brad laughing again.

Besides trying to be well-behaved and living a monogamous life for the first time. Mika continued working secretly with Peter von Leutzendorf on artificial embryonic growth. They had named it Project Omega because it was mankind's last hope. Mika was determined to present Connor a child within two years. He was also working on something that would be an additional benefit from the project. Mika thought of it as a surprise bonus. It never ceased to amaze Connor that his partner could stay focused on so many projects at the same time. The Russian Adonis had never slept more than two to three hours a night before meeting Connor. With all of their respective responsibilities, the two men had very little alone time. Both men knew that a healthy relationship required quality hours enjoying each other's company. Connor became a stickler that they spent eight hours each night in bed; if they got that much sleep was another matter.

Connor's schedule was as busy as his partner's. The men were still in the "learning about each other" stage. It was usually in the darkness of their bedroom that they would discuss concerns or simply ask questions of the other. One such night, while lying on the bed with Mika, who had just extracted his penis from him, Connor said quietly, "Mika, I need to ask you some questions."

"You can ask Mika anything...well except for how many lovers I have had...things like that," Mika answered, creasing his brow. "That is personal history involving others that are best left in Predoomsday world."

“I would never do that. I would never expect you to ask me about my past lovers.” Assured Connor.

“But I need to know about your past lovers so that I can profile the type of man you are attracted to, and then I will better be able to steer you away from them.” The Russian said, slapping Connor on his exposed buttocks.

“Seriously, I need to know some things. I find myself sharing my life with someone I have only known a little over a year.”

“Are all the Irish as nosy and paranoid as you? A year can be a lifetime. I knew you for thirty minutes, and I knew I would spend my life with you. My parents knew each other for over thirty years and knew very little about the other. But I know I am not going to get any sleep until you have the answers you need. I will answer your questions honestly and fully unless I decide not to do so.” Mika said, intent on finding out what was on Connor’s mind. “But in turn, you have to make this a mutual talk...one that is worthy of my time.”

“When have I ever not answered you honestly and fully? You can ask me anything you want. I daresay I have nothing to be ashamed of...” Connor was interrupted by Mika flipping him to his side, facing away, lifting his smooth muscular thigh and reinserting his cock in the still moist orifice, his spent cum lubricating his return.

“This is all I meant by mutual, and you go off on a tangent.” Mika chided him.

The intrusion caused Connor to have a quick ragged intake of breath. He adjusted once more to the fullness. “What am I to do with you, Yelda? The way you boss me around and take your pleasures with me, one would think your name referred to more than the old Imperial Russia.”

“Are you referring to the fact that my family name is Romanov? If you ask me if I am a Tsarist, I would have to answer that I am not. If you are asking me if my ancestors were Tsars, I would have to answer yes, they were.”

“That wasn’t one of my questions...are you serious?” Connor, a history lover, asked in disbelief. “How did you survive? I thought they killed all the aristocracy they could get to.”

“A dark time in my country, that is certain. Probably no bleaker than life under the Tsars who tried to maintain starving people under a feudal system and refused to change with the times. My part of the family made it out of Russia at the beginning of the revolution, to France; we were cousins to the last Tsar but shared a Tsar as a common grandfather. In the 1960s, using the surname of family servants, my great-grandfather and family immigrated back to Russia as Tsitkosky, a huge mistake. Once they got there, they were unable to leave. It was not until I defected while on an educational tour hosted by your mentor, Dr. John Saunders, that I proved my name and inheritance in France, and I elected to keep that name. True story, my love.” While talking, he was moving slowly in and out of Connor while fondling him.

“I had no idea.”

“Dr. Saunders knew. I am sure it is in the files you downloaded. I am surprised you have not read them.” Mika said.

“I would never read files about you. I want you to tell me confidential matters. I have peered through very few files of the people in this complex. Although I will admit I have done it with some, their contents have gone no further.” Connor replied, pushing back against the Russian for deeper penetration.

“Well, now that you have stumbled on to that little-known truth, do you still want to marry me? We have a ruthless history, you know.”

“I’ll deal with it. Does that mean you come with a title that I will share?” Connor asked as an afterthought.

“See, already you are getting grandiose. If I was a tsarist and chose to use it, then yes, I would be a prince. In further response to your question, it would be the first time in history, but you would be entitled to be my prince as my legal spouse.

Furthermore, our descendants would all be princes.” Mika laughed in his deep timbre.

“So you have a reason to blush when I refer to you as my prince among our friends,” Connor stated, feeling the hair on his lover’s legs tickling the backs of his thighs.

“I’m blushing now,” Mika replied. “What did you really want to ask me about?”

“Nothing that illuminating, I’m afraid. I just wanted to know how you keep up with everything you have going on without having a “meltdown,” as the Americans call it. I mean, how smart are you really?” Connor asked.

“I like to think I am brilliant, and then something will confound me, such as you, and I will think I am not very intelligent at all. So how smart are you, my noisy little leprechaun?” Mika questioned back along with three rapid thrusts that elicited three grunts of pleasure.

“You are probably the smartest man I have ever met or even read about. I know you made your MD barely out of high school before obtaining doctorates in three fields that I know of, and you studied and mastered multiple languages as electives.” Connor stated, recounting the Russian’s accomplishments.

“You embarrass me. It’s not important. But I guess it is for some reason critical that you know. First, how smart is my Connor.”

“I believe the intelligent quotient number was 178, genius-level, I am told. Which is high, but there are people with higher. I know I could never do what all you do, and that doesn’t bother me. I am quite proud of you, actually.” The Celt answered and sighed long and softly as his seed spilled on the bed from the internal thrusts he was receiving. “The truthful answer is that I don’t know.” Mika could feel the tenseness in the Irish for not receiving an authoritative answer from him. “I tell Connor the truth. I don’t know because they did not have tests that would adequately measure my intelligence. That is the truth, but if you feel better if I tell you a lie, I will give you the number 181...still three more than you!”

Connor laughed. “No, I don’t want you to lie. I believe you, and I am astounded that someone with an IQ as high as you would give me the time of day.”

“You have very tight arse that milks Mika without me even having to do anything but insert my cock, while I work out mathematical equations in my head. You were a logical decision.” Mika teased his lover.

“Why, you arrogant...” Connor started but then stopped, relishing in the final six thrusts and feeling the immense organ encased in him swell and fill Connor’s insides for the second time in an hour.

“You have more questions? I need to sleep.” With that said, Mika pulled Connor tightly against him, leaving the Irish impaled, and began to snore softly almost immediately.

So, I’m going to marry a prince. Connor dreamily thought, before drifting off to sleep with the Russian’s arms enfolding him. During the night, one of them would shift and Mika’s long member would be set free for a while.

Chapter Seventeen

“Good morning, men of Phoenix.

*It is I Lasitor, wishing you a glorious morning. It is now 6
a.m.*

*Have you ever woken up and wondered what happened to
the contents of your bowels or bladder and where it all goes?*

*Have you ever wondered why the Phoenix wastewater
system never froze and what sewage breakdown treatment and
method is being used to benefit the ecosystem while reducing
environmental pollution?*

*Visit our community news page to book a tour to learn more
about Phoenix’s underground pipe and tunnel system and the
fascinating transportation of your sewage to the treatment
plant.*

*Also, learn about your Phoenix’s architecture and how all
the types of man-made systems work in harmony with
Antarctica’s environment while promoting health and well-
being: enriching your lives aesthetically and creating a legacy
that reflects and symbolizes your culture and traditions.*

Breakfast is served until 8 a.m.

Thank you and have a sparkling bright day.”

Never put all your eggs in one basket

Not far from Connor and Mika's apartment (the men liked to use the term apartment vs. quarters as giving more of a home feel since, for all practical purposes, they were now home for the foreseeable future), Brad was flopping down in one of his favorite recliners. He had one brought in for Rick as well. The two of them had their shoes kicked off, relaxing while enjoying a coffee together. Brad's large apartment was situated in the living area located close to the eye of Phoenix, making him physically more available in the event of an emergency. Ever since Simon and Paul had moved out, he never really felt alone as Rick stayed over almost every night. They had amazing long discussions, and he appreciated Rick being someone he could talk to, someone to bounce ideas off, but most of all, someone he could hold and hold him back.

He was proud of the work accomplished by Mika's innovations. The orbiting satellites of both friendly and not-so-friendly governments had been commandeered for use by Phoenix. The General was curious to see pictures of the Postdoomsday world and also dreaded seeing firsthand the devastation that would be revealed. Mika never ceased to astound him. Such brilliance encased in an extraordinarily beautiful body. The man's knowledge seemed to rival that of a computer. Combined with his ability to reason, made the man awesome...to use one of Simon's favorite words. The amazing thing was that the Russian also possessed profound humanity. Brad had seen the tenderness and caring he directed to Connor despite his bravado with most people, always putting him first. He was happy for Connor; the poor Irish boy had grown up with few advantages and many hard knocks but still mainly was all heart. He could see why his own son considered the Irishman his best friend next to Paul, who was a bit more than a friend to his boy. Brad was grateful that Simon had Paul. He was thankful that he had Simon and Paul. Brad relaxed deeper into the recliner. He spoke honestly to his friend and lover.

“I just am not sure about your moving into my apartment Rick,” Brad told his lover.

“Why? I have spent every night here since Quik-Fix Hall. I have to get up at an ungodly hour to get back to my apartment. If I stayed here, it would give us both a couple of extra hours of needed sleep.” Rick argued.

“Like you would really let me sleep,” teased Brad. He had become very comfortable with Rick and the sex life they shared. He had learned that he trusted the man entirely. Yet, when he gazed at the doctor while the young man slept, he could not understand why anyone so beautiful and good would want to settle for a man who had just turned forty-two years of age. “I just don’t know if Simon is ready for it or if the men of Phoenix will understand.”

“You are afraid! My Commander, the general fears and the opinions others have about his personal life? You have to grasp the truth of things, Brad. The life that you and I would share here is the new normal. It is what we have to work within a Postdoomsday world populated only by men. The truth is I would have fallen for you anyway, even though I could never have had you. But you and I have each other, and that is saying a lot. The second thing is I think you underestimate your son and his partner. They both want you to be happy. Think about it, Brad, your son, and Paul have been fucking each other for some years. You found that out not too long ago, and you have accepted it. Why don’t you give them the credit they deserve? I am willing to bet you that they have us figured out. If they don’t have that much intuition, I will be very disappointed in them. As for the men of Phoenix, what can they say? You are the Commander. Your top three men are gay; two in a committed relationship looking forward to marriage. One is the captain of the guards, who fucks anyone willing to have fun with him, or at least he was until Tony. Just think about it, okay? I really am falling in love with you.”

The truth was Brad was falling for him as well. “I’ll think about it. In fact, you are probably right about Simon and Paul. I will talk to Simon about our situation.”

“Baby, that is all I can ask of you. I have to get to my office. I am doing some routine physicals today, and for some reason, every second man in Phoenix wants an eye exam lately.” Rick got up, put his shoes back on, walked over to Brad, leaned over, kissed him, and squeezed his crotch.

Brad playfully smacked the man’s hand. “Okay. Will you meet the boys and me for dinner at their place? They’re cooking. Check with me later, and I will be able to give you an exact time.”

“Sounds good. I get tired of the dining room, even though Juan’s cooking does not disappoint. We can work out later... here...in bed,” said the energetic physician on his way out of Brad’s apartment.

Brad smiled, thinking about how happy he had been lately. “Brad, Connor here. I think you may want to see some photos that came through.”

“Interesting?” Brad asked into his communicator.

“Depressing,” Connor responded. “Come to our apartment. It will be more private.”

“That’s what we expected. I’m on my way. Please have some coffee for me.” Brad told his Irish friend, clicking off the communicator.

As Brad walked briskly through the corridors, saluting the few military men he passed, smiling and speaking to civilian members of the community, he made a point of not showing his emotions on his face. Still, he could feel the tenderness in his arse with every step he took. His Native American had pummeled him hard, long, and deep during the night. It felt like he had chaffed his cheeks from the relentless in and out movements. But, at least he no longer bled from the man’s penetration as he had at first. Rick, on the other hand, had met the entry of Brad’s thick pole stoically. Knowing that he wanted Brad regardless of pain, the physician was gifted at relaxing his own arse enough for the General to make deep penetration before taking back control and tightening his arse on Brad’s lengthy thickness. As Brad approached the door to Connor and Mika’s apartment, he could not help but smile,

knowing that deep in his guts, Rick's sperm still lived. Rick and Brad changed their positions regularly, but Brad had to admit that he preferred to be fucked by the young doctor more often than to be the one inside Rick.

Connor opened the door, a grim look on his face changed to a smile for his old friend, and he gestured him into the cozy common room. "Please have a seat, Brad. Your coffee is ready. I just need to fill your cup...black, right?"

"Yes, please," Brad confirmed. "Where is Mika?"

"He's showering. We were up late studying some of the photos. I have it set up to project on the wall for you. It is depressing, as I already indicated to you, but there are some interesting developments as well." Connor told Brad as he set the cup of steaming coffee on the coffee table in front of the General. "Would you like some cookies with your coffee? Mika actually had a strange outcropping of domesticity last evening and baked these, himself."

"Then how could I refuse," replied Brad. "I would never have suspected that among his many talents that he would be gifted in the culinary arts as well."

"Am I being discussed?" Mika had come from his and Connor's bed-chamber, all six feet eight of him on full display as he ducked under the doorway and into the living area, casually toweling the dampness from his long hair. Brad nearly dropped his cup as he took in the magnificence of the hirsute Russian. His long ample cock hung against his left thigh, the foreskin retracted from the large head. Brad suspected the Russian had soaped and cleaned around the glans; that thought made his mouth water involuntarily.

"Mika...Jesus, Joseph, and Mary...where are your manners?" Connor scolded, his Irish brogue more evident than usual.

"Good morning Brad," Mika said, smiling as he lowered his hand and pulled the foreskin back in place after wiping the towel around it, assuring it was dry. "Sorry, gentlemen. I heard you talking and just wanted to say hello and get some of my baby's coffee. He brews the best in Phoenix, you know." Mika

walked past the blushing Irishman and to the kitchen. He quickly came back through the living area with a steaming mug in hand. "I'll be right out. Just have to slip on some clothes, so Connor here doesn't convulse." Mika winked at Brad and was back in his room but not bothering to shut the door.

"I am so sorry, Brad. Unfortunately, Mika is much less inhibited than I would like for him to be.

Brad chuckled, "Not a problem Connor. In fact, I can't really blame him for not being bashful about that body but can understand that you would not want him showing it off as a general rule."

"Never thought I would hear you say that," Connor responded, relieved that no offense had been taken.

"A lot has changed, it would seem. But, as my friend, I should talk to you about something that has come up..." Brad paused as if looking for words.

"You mean about you and Broderick Longfellow?" Connor said softly.

"How did you know? Are people gossiping?" Brad asked, quickly assuming the worst.

"No. You are our Commander and a much-beloved one at that. Quite frankly, it would be hard for someone like Mika or me to miss the fact you have feelings for each other. You are often seen with him. You look happy for the first time in months." Connor advised his friend.

"That obvious, ay? I never thought I could have feelings for a man, but..." Brad stopped trying to talk and shook his head.

"I would not stress out too much about it, Brad. You have to take into consideration the climate you now find yourself in. Dr. Longarrow is a wonderful and genuine man. If I was trying to fix a friend up, he would be the man I would choose for you." Connor confided.

"But to think that I would go in that direction after such a short time completely confuses me," Brad said, setting his coffee cup down.

“It really shouldn’t, Brad. Remember the last correspondence we had with Saunders at HQ. He was telling you to prepare to be more open. He also said the situation was closer to home than you might think.” Connor reminded him.

“Yes, he had completed psychological profiles on everyone. I assumed he meant I would need to adjust to the fact ant my son Simon is gay.”

“Perhaps,” Connor agreed. “However, Saunders was a man who left no stone unturned. For instance, he was able to access some of Mika’s work. Along with a psychological profile, Saunders tested genetics, specifically chromosomal makeup. Not only for abnormalities due to that vaccine shite of 2038, but he was obsessed with why his son was gay, why I was gay, why anyone would be gay. Mika had discovered a gene that seems to appear at random in people. If they possess that gene, they are almost guaranteed to be homosexual. Mika had little interest in that since his work had much more important implications. But while this gene seems to run in the family line, there is no predicting when or where it will show up.”

“That’s fantastic!” exclaimed Brad. “Why have I not learned of this before now?”

“Because it had nothing to do with our survival here. I didn’t know about it either. When I was downloading files in those last hours, I included Dr. Saunders’ personal records on the possibility they might be relevant to us somehow. I wasn’t prying, but I was intrigued when I discovered this phase of Saunders’ work. Even Mika, who found the process for identifying the gene, has never read these files.” Connor advised.

“Was Saunders aware of Simon and Paul being gay?” asked Brad.

“Yes...and also of... you. Hence the *much closer to home than you expect* statement.” Connor explained.

“My g-d! So my phobia and intolerance were probably an effort on my part to suppress homosexual desires. Very interesting.”

“Probably, but we will never know for sure. The important piece of information to be gained is that you have the gene, your son has the gene, and you have learned to love and accept that part of him, and you are beginning to accept yourself.” Connor told his friend with a gentle smile on his face.

“Well, Comrades, now that we have shared all of our secrets, shall we look at what the world has become?” the boisterous Russian said as he entered the living area, dressed and smiling. Dismissive of what he considered a mundane conversation, “Brad, would you like another cookie?”

The world Brad was being made privy to was not the world he had both hated and loved. A kaleidoscope of memories created visuals that ran through his mind overlapping the reality of what was actually before him. The magnification and clarity of detail from the government satellites were outstanding. Mika had captured day and night pictures of the earth just to verify that there were no lights showing from the earth’s surface at night. Here and there, Brad or Connor would point at something they thought was a man-made light source only to be convinced that buildings were aflame, possibly from lightning strikes or natural, spontaneous combustion. In the Gulf of Mexico, several oil rigs were in flames. Those could burn for years or until a strategic hurricane put an end to the blaze. Only then the oil would end up oozing into the world’s oceans until the pressure releasing it abated. Also noticeable in the night were active volcanoes, which Brad did not remember having been active just three years ago.

When he inquired about these, Mika responded, “That was one of the first things that attracted my attention. There seem to be many that were not active before. I cannot explain why this is happening. Still, I do suspect that a volcano was the initiator of our earthquake here last year.” He quickly programmed in a photo. “This photo is of a volcano here in Antarctica on Ross island just off the west coast. It has been active before and recent enough that the ground has been too warm to support ice covering for hundreds of years. The real problem with all of the oil fires, forest fires in the western

USA, combined with the volcanic activity, is the projection equations that have defined global warming trends will need to be redone and seriously evaluated. Suppose this is a chain reaction and the so-called “Ring of Fire” becomes many active volcanoes. In that case, the world will be seriously affected for centuries. The sea levels are already rising, and I am convinced that Phoenix is safe, at least from sea levels and earthquakes. But my real concern is with the cubic tons of debris going into the atmosphere. Our solar backups will not receive the light necessary for charging them. Our ability to grow food will be jeopardized. Another possibility is that the atmospheric debris might do one of two things: trap heat around the earth, expedite flooding, and the associated climate change. The covering may allow heat to escape and stop heat from entering the atmosphere, thereby initiating another ice age. Therefore, there exist two possible outcomes, and I could make a compelling argument supporting either one.”

“My g-d,” was all Brad could say at the moment. Next, he thought, *I would have to assimilate this information and try to plan a course of action.*

“Of course, these are just theories of mine and will need to be studied and evaluated by a team and then re-evaluated before we can really know the validity of them. There is always the possibility that I am taking in so much information that my predictions are over-imaginative or the earth might even correct itself, and I am in error. Let us first show you more of our photo studies, and we have some that you might find as intriguing as Connor, and I have found them to be. But let me prepare you some troubling material.” Mika cautioned.

“Might as well take in everything at once, I suppose. Connor, may I have some more of your delicious coffee and Mika’s wonderful cookies?” Brad asked, situating himself more comfortably on the couch. Connor smiled in the affirmative and went to get the pot of steaming coffee.

“This is Houston Metro,” Connor explained as he flashed several photos up on the screen, each one a little closer to the ground. “There has been a horrible hurricane in the past few months. In this community, you can see some of the buildings

have burned, but the vast majority of them have simply been destroyed. This is the downtown area...still pretty much intact, but not one sign of life. This is New York City; again, no sign of life is evident except for this pack of dogs. So we know that at least some animals were immune to the plague because of the dogs. There are photos of birds, the rare cat which has probably gone nocturnal. There are cows and such in the more rural areas. Here we have Los Angeles, which exhibits signs of earthquake destruction but prepare yourself for this," the Irishman said, bringing up a photo of Los Angeles airport; the remains or at least the remains of remains lay strewn everywhere. Connor did not dwell on that but instead flashed to images of London, Berlin, Paris, Rome, Sydney, Beijing, Bangkok, and city after city presented death. Wrecked vehicles, derailed trains, and a few crashed planes were all too common in the visuals.

"Connor, love, show the bases," Mika prompted, and in a flash, Brad was looking at the continent of Antarctica. "Here are five of the bases that had good survival possibilities. But, unfortunately, we did not get evidence of any living humans. On the upside, we do not have photos of human remains, and you will notice the plane here...at McMurdo is not iced over, and neither are two of the ships...they should be."

"You really think there are people there? Do we have the capability of reaching them?" Brad was getting excited at the thought.

"Well, we can't jump to any conclusions. We don't see people. That base was huge, and there should be activity going twenty-four hours a day. We must keep quiet about this until we study further. It is possible that, if they are alive, they could be carrier survivors. If there were people there, McMurdo would be prepared to survive a few years with no problem. Not as well prepared as we, but they will make it. Another possibility is that they prepared ships to leave but then, for some reason, took only one, and they are no longer there. Other bases along the coast may have gone to McMurdo for sanctuary, and we don't know if they were hostile or not." Mika covered as many probable possibilities as he could.

“I’ll be damned. We may not be alone...at least not as alone as I feared.” “Keep me posted as your work progresses.”

“Wait! There is a startling discovery we haven’t even told you about,” Connor chimed in. “Tell him, Yelda.”

“Yes. This is what confuses us,” Mika excitedly backed up Connor’s childlike enthusiasm to share a treasured discovery. “While we were studying the night skies, we found this...”

Brad was dumbfounded. The photo he was being shown looked very familiar. Of course, the terrain was all wrong, but...it had to be. Before he could ask questions, the giant Russian signaled his lover to show other photos.

“We also found this and this and this!” Mika said, jumping up and pointing at a specific position on each photo.

“But how...how would I...we not know?” Brad said in a loud whisper.

“Don’t you see Comrade...all were top secret? If one failed, there was a possibility that the other might succeed. We may never know how many, but we know of four! Saunders, in his genius, did this intentionally. Somehow he knew what was coming...not the plague perhaps, but the world climate change. It was his way of saving pieces of humanity and civilization.” It made perfect sense to Mika. Dr. Saunders had built numerous facilities like EP-1. None were as monolithic as Phoenix, but all were enormous and architecturally constructed in the same fashion.

Brad interjected, “so just like the man who invests his money in diverse industries hoping that if one goes bankrupt, the others will still provide an income. Haha...Saunders is written all over this.”

“More simply stated, mate, never put all your eggs in one basket.” Connor smiled.

“Where are they?” Inquired Brad.

“So far, the Himalayas, the northern Rockies, the Alps, and the outback of Australia,” Mika replied. “We would never have spotted them, but they cast amazing light into the darkness from “dead” earth, and the shapes of the facility

reminded us of what we must look like from space. Surprisingly, however, there is no evidence that anyone besides my little hacker here has attempted to pirate the satellites.”

“There must be thousands of humans housed in those facilities! This will be a boost for the residents here.” Brad was already heading for the door.

“Do as you will, Brad, but keep in mind Australia is the closest one, and it will be years before we can get there, if ever. Also, consider that those lights are solar-like ours and maybe on automatic. That’s doubtful but worth considering. Another fact is that the climate will rapidly change with all that is being put in the atmosphere. So some of those EP’s may not make it. We have the advantage of volcanic heat to generate power. That’s an advantage the other EPS most likely won’t have.” Mika’s realism put a damper on the whole discovery, but Brad agreed with his logic.

“I think it is still worth sharing with the caution that it will be a very long time before anyone can physically go to these places. We need to continue working on communicating with them. I leave that to you, Connor. Thank you, gentlemen, for sharing this fantastic news.” Brad was off to his office to dictate an electronic notice to the men of Phoenix.

Chapter Eighteen

“Good morning, citizens of Phoenix.

It is I Lasitor, informing you it is time to rise and shine. It is now 6 a.m.

Did you know humans need to surround themselves with family and friends to receive or give support and comfort at both happy and sad moments of their lives? Many studies have demonstrated that having supportive connections is an essential component in reducing your risk of developing mental illness and helping to improve your overall mental well-being.

Visit our local community news page to search for friends to become your family because they always have your best interests at heart. You never have to be concerned about their motives or mistrust their advice.

Breakfast is served until 8 a.m.

Thank you and have a productive day.”

Family Time

Brad's day had been busy as usual. Satisfied with his accomplishments, he noted the last thing on his schedule was to have a long-overdue heart-to-heart discussion with his boys. *Better to get it over and done with*, he thought, as flashes of his beautiful Apache's features with his intelligent, quick-witted remarks hovered in the back of his mind. He had agreed with Rick just that morning that he would speak to his son before moving his young lover officially and permanently into his quarters.

"Thank you for seeing me," Brad had said nervously as the steel door swooshed open to Simon and Paul's apartment. He had paged them earlier to inquire about their whereabouts; luckily, they were home and since they had planned to eat in, able to entertain tonight. Although the boys eagerly invited him over for dinner, they insisted that he invite Rick as well.

"So...well...I need to talk to you, Simon, about something that has come about," Brad said to his son, who was motioning him to come sit in a chair opposite from himself. Brad was impressed by the immaculate, cozy home the boys were running. Paul was busy cooking dinner, which smelled very good and hopefully would be, considering the cacophony of clanging pans coming from the galley.

"What is it, dad? Is there a problem?" Simon sat forward, giving his dad his full attention.

"Not a problem...no, not necessarily a problem by any means." Brad was not usually at a loss for words, but the older man thought this had to be put just right. What a handsome young man Simon was turning out to be, considered his father. At almost twenty years of age, the workout at the gym had turned him and Paul into well-chiseled hunks. They were well matched despite how young they were to be in a relationship. Brad heard nothing but glowing reports from their various teachers at the small Phoenix university. They were well on their way to becoming elite members of the scientific community. "I am sure you have noticed that Rick Longarrow

and I participate together in a lot of different functions here at Phoenix.”

I guess that's one way of putting it, thought Simon while trying not to laugh at his perception of “a function.” “He does seem to be involved in many aspects of your personal life, dad. So why do you bring it up? Paul and I think it's great that you have a lover who can keep up with your energy level.” Simon told his dad very calmly, still trying not to laugh and thoroughly enjoying the contortions playing out across Brad's face. But he thought it wise not to mention the night in Quik-Fix Hall when he had sucked Rick's cock. Simon was learning that many things in life should be left unspoken.

“Well...now...how did you know?” Sputtered Brad, who had just noticed the silence from the kitchen, and a smiling Paul was standing in its doorway.

“Oh, come on, dad! Paul and I have been lovers for almost five years. We aren't as naïve as our age may lead you to believe,” responded his son.

“Then you are okay with it?” Brad sounded relieved, choosing not to dwell on the fact that the boys had successfully kept him in the dark about their sexual escapades since they were fifteen.

“Pop,” as Paul had been calling Brad in recent months, “Simon and I are happy for both you and Rick. He's a nice man and seems to have made you very happy. That is what is important to us.”

“He's not that much younger than me, Simon,” Brad said to his son, feigning annoyance at the earlier comment.

“Sorry about that, dad. Twelve years difference isn't a lot. Unless you were my age and that would make him eight. I just wanted to get your reaction.” Simon said and went over to hug his dad and congratulate him again. Paul went over and gave Brad an embrace as well. Then, there was a knock on the door.

“That would be Rick,” Brad said with a big smile on his face.

“Dinner is almost ready,” Paul said, and to Simon, “sweetheart, will you help me set the table?”

“Sure thing, babe,” replied Simon bounding youthfully over to the kitchen. Brad got up to answer the door when Simon stuck his head out of the kitchen, “should we call him Rick or daddy?”

“One crack like that out of you, and you’re grounded... twenty or not, young man!” Brad saw Paul’s hand reach out and grab his son’s shoulder pulling him back into the kitchen.

As always, Brad was stunned by the gorgeous doctor’s sexy look when he opened the door. Rick had a bottle of red wine in his hand. His smile showed brilliant white teeth against his permanently tanned skin, inherited from his Apache ancestors; his blue-black hair hung long and straight and favored hanging over his left shoulder. There were essentially three styles of dress among the men in Phoenix: brown and white camo pants and t-shirts, lab coats, scrubs, or gym warm-up suits. Rick, however, had chosen Predoomsday civilian tonight, wearing a black and white plaid shirt with open collar, a thin gold chain around his neck, with a gold eagle pendant showing against his smooth chest. The shirt was complemented by a tight pair of black jeans that discreetly displayed a prominent basket and snugly encased butt. His belt was of woven black leather with a moderately sized buckle studded with a beautiful array of turquoise. Brad ushered his man into the room, and once the door was shut, he hugged him, whispering in his ear, “my g-d, you are perfection. I don’t think I can wait.”

Rick stepped back from the embrace, eyeing Brad with surprise, his eyes quickly surveying the living area for witnesses to the hug. “Apparently, my optimism for bringing my two hosts wine is not in vain.”

Brad shook his head in the affirmative, “how soon can you pack and move into my apartment?”

“Went well then?” Rick asked, his face full of love and his smile growing even more.

“I should have listened to you all along. They knew, just like you thought. I just didn’t want resentment to play any part

in our family dynamics.” Brad was totally delighted, and that delighted Rick.

“More than approve, Rick. Welcome to our family! Dad is very-very smart as a leader and a scientist but sometimes clueless in matters of family.” Simon, who had just entered the room with Paul, said to the doctor with a warm, sincere smile on his face stepping forward to hug his father’s lover, followed by Paul’s welcoming embrace and a light kiss on Rick’s cheek. Then, for the first time in his life, Simon saw a tear running down his father’s cheek.

“Well, unless we are going to break out in “Kumbaya,” the table is set, and it’s serve-yourself. Rick, I can only assume the wine is for us. Would you do us the pleasure of opening and pouring it for us?” Simon said, leading the three men to the small but cozy dining area. Rick’s heart swelled, loving the warm welcome he had received from Brad and his boys. Brad never ceased to amaze him, and it seems his boys are just as unique. Having opened the wine, he took a seat next to Brad.

“Your table looks beautiful!” Rick said, appreciating the plain white dinnerware and blue napkins highlighted with tiny blue LED candles, simplistic and yet stylish. As he poured four stemmed glasses with the wine, Simon added, “I think Paul’s culinary skills will impress you. I hope you can cook because dad certainly can’t. Tell us about that wine; it looks quite aged if judging by the state of the scratched bottle and the label.” Rick was glad they noticed. He had chosen the wine carefully for tonight.

“This is one of my favorite bottles from Bertlomia’s Vineyard. I kept it for a special time, and this is, indeed, a special occasion. This wine was known for its unique microclimate, and 2039 was a solid year for grapes. This Cabernet Sauvignon was noted to be the best of that year; being known for its aroma of bay leaf, mint, anise, dark chocolate, and distinctive palate.

Interestingly, it was aged three years in new French oak barrels, one in neutral oak, and an additional ten years in bottle before being released on the market. If you sip and savor it, you will taste the robust flavors of sweet black fruit, fresh red

plum, and a touch of warm vanilla, very smooth and hopefully a true pleasure to your taste buds. It will go perfectly with Paul's dinner; the garlic and the savory pasta salad will enhance the crispness of the fruity orange peel."

"I didn't know that besides being a brilliant physician you are also a wine connoisseur." Brad leaned over and kissed Rick deeply. The boys just smiled, oohing and ahing, like two happy meerkats. Truly overjoyed that their dad was happy and in love.

The merged family had an enjoyable meal that they would remember for the rest of their lives.

Chapter Nineteen

“Good morning, Phoenix residents.

It is I, Lasitor, urging you to wake up and face the day. It is now 6 a.m.

Have you ever woken up in the middle of the night fearing or dreading pending doom while you experience physical signs of anxiety, such as a pounding heart and sweating? Those are nightmares and aren't usually a cause for concern. But, if you develop a fear of going to sleep or having difficulty functioning during the daytime, especially while putting everyone else at risk. Lasitor urges you to visit the community news page to book a consultation with a doctor or a faith healer if you can find one.

Breakfast is served until 8 a.m.

Thank you and have a productive day.”

The Tony Bonilla Dungeon

Tony Bonillo had been working late in his office preparing the schematics for a pipe system that would tap into the steam of the volcanically heated water running far beneath Phoenix's dry valley floor. The end purpose of this project was to turn turbines that would augment the solar batteries, which were not designed to last indefinitely, and the solar cells that provided the energy needs of the vast Phoenix complex for use now. In the not too distant future, the volcanic steam would have to provide all the energy needs of Phoenix if Dr. Romanov's prediction of a nuclear winter darkened the sky.

As Tony completed the final notations on the blueprints and prepared to have dinner with Bryan and some of his engineers, he was grabbed from behind and enveloped in darkness. He opened his mouth to yell and something hard and spherical was forced into his mouth and then taped in place. He felt strong solid hands roughly bind his wrists behind him. He was lifted by what felt like two or possibly three men and placed in some sort of rectangular container. Cloth articles were thrown on top of him, and he felt movement. He knew instinctively that he was in one of the facility's laundry carts and rapidly transported as he heard the accelerated squeak-squeak from the wheels and multiple boots hitting the floor as whoever, pushed the cart along. *Where the fuck to*, he didn't have a clue. The unknown destination seemed far as the running felt like forever. At one point, he could hear the howling of the wind as it buffeted one of the passageways. He felt a significant temperature change. He knew he was being carted to one of the vacant domes, off-limits to save energy expenditure. *But why? Was someone trying to sabotage his volcanic power plans?* That made no sense; it was possibly the only chance Phoenix had of surviving a nuclear winter. *G-d, maybe that was it, a suicide plan. Some of the residents who could not tolerate the feeling of desolation...of being one of the world's few human survivors...they had decided everyone must die. Maybe his murder, they are going to chuck him out to freeze to death.* Many thoughts, some practical, some pure fantasy, ran

through his mind as this “prison” cart on wheels continued on its journey to a forbidden area of Phoenix.

After what the master engineer designer calculated to be thirty minutes, the cart came to a stop. Knocks could be heard; he thought he could hear a steel door move on its cold hinges and some muffled whispers. If only he could reach his fucking communicator. He always carried it; he could feel it pressing against his chest from a pocket even now. If only he could contact Bryan. The captain would send his whole militia after him if he could just turn on the damn communicator so that someone could hear that things were not right. The steel hinge sounded again, and the temperature was getting warmer...but there shouldn't be an area this warm in the forbidden sector. What was going on?

He felt the air start to circulate around him. Thank g-d they were pulling the pile of clothes off him. He hated being enclosed. He had almost begun to panic from not being able to move his arms from behind his back or straighten his legs because of the cart's restrictive size. Even worse, he was having trouble breathing through his nose, and the ball gag made it impossible to catch a breath through his mouth. Verging on a full-blown panic attack, he was beginning to feel like he would probably die from suffocation.

Not knowing if it was a good thing or a bad thing, Tony was hoisted by several hands from the cart. He felt himself being placed on a cold metal surface face down. He continued struggling desperately to breathe. The tape was ripped from his mouth in a stinging whoosh, and the ball was removed. Finally, he was free to suck in deeply and feel fresh air filling his lungs. No longer in fear of smothering, Tony began to yell for help. He felt the ball being placed against his mouth. It was obviously a threat...to be quiet, or he would once more be gagged. He immediately became silent. Why was no one saying anything? He could sense the presence of several men around him. He could probably recognize the voice and turn them into Captain Howell if they would just say something. Of course! That was why they were not making any sounds. He must know them. But what had he done to them that they would want to hurt him?

Still, Tony could hear only the sound of breathing and the occasional roar of the wind outside as it blew down from the ice-covered mountains to tease Phoenix with its strength. At least it was warm in this isolated place where the Italian was the captive of men with unknown intentions. He felt his soft-soled shoes and socks being removed. Being flipped over on his back, fingers were roughly undoing his belt and deftly unbuttoning his khaki trousers. His pants, along with his thermals, were pulled to his knees. Finally, the bindings on his ankles were removed. *Now is my chance*, Tony thought, *I'll kick them away and escape*. Even as he thought it, he knew the plan was ludicrous with his hands tied behind his back and the blindfold securely in place. So instead, he just lay there motionless, knowing he would not be missed until tomorrow. His dinner plans had been tentative; his friends and Bryan would think he was involved in his project and decided to keep working. That would not be unusual for him.

The leg bindings were removed, his pants and thermals were pulled entirely from his body and the bindings were quickly replaced. He was flipped back over on his stomach. The same procedure followed with his hands being freed and his shirt and thermal top removed. This done, he was flipped once again to his back. He now lay there totally naked in front of his captors. One of the men squeezed his large ball sack and fondled his cock. At the same time, he felt the heat of two mouths, one on each nipple, biting, sucking, and teasing with their tongues. *Fuck!* He felt the blood filling his dick, engorging it to its impressive length. Someone, perhaps the same man who had been fondling his cock peeled back his foreskin, causing the Italian to suck in his breath as his cockhead was exposed to the air. Quickly the retracted hood was replaced by a warm wet mouth attempting to swallow his entire staff. A hand replaced the warm mouth and squeezed his cock unbelievably hard. Tony thought he was going to pass out from the painful sensations. "Motherfucker!" Tony exclaimed. Liquid began leaking from his slit in response to the attention given to his cock. The warm mouth enveloped his cock again and it felt like his brain would be sucked through his dick.

The extreme pleasure of being sucked by a mouth skilled in the art of fellatio was countered by the sharp pain of his nuts being twisted and pulled. Simultaneously, his erect nipples screamed, sending intense sensations directly to his throbbing manhood. The pain-pleasure receptors in his brain, receiving contradictory inputs, sent stimuli that had Tony whimpering and writhing about uncontrollably. Suddenly, no, sadly, the mouth was gone, and the foreskin remained retracted.

The large fist was, once again wrapped around Tony's shaft, holding his meat perpendicular to his crotch. A cold liquid was liberally rubbed over his dick. Tit clamps were attached to his nipples, creating a pathway of more pain and pleasure directly to his groin. Tony felt something solid, hard, cold, and slick probing his piss slit, seeking entry. Never had Tony felt such pleasure and discomfort as the probe slid into his urethra the first two inches, then pulled back an inch and slid in until his cock was stuffed. Each time the probe descended or ascended the probe was tapped causing vibrations which created ecstasy of biblical proportions. Whoever controlled the sound was a master, as he pulled it out probably six inches and pushed it back in eight inches. Each time the exercise was done, Tony felt like he was ejaculating. Time after time, the action was repeated. The engineer gurgled out sounds that could have been from misery pleasure. Tony had read about this procedure but had never experienced it.

The probe stopped its movement halfway into his length. His cock, still held by the unknown hand, remained rigid. Then, there were a series of taps on the rod followed by a shrill humming sound. "Sweet Jesus!" Tony yelled as the vibrations hit every nerve in his sensitive cock and down into his balls. The pleasure was more than any man should be able to stand. Tony cried, begging his captors to stop. Another fucking tap on the rod and accompanying vibrations, then Tony heard an unfamiliar buzz. "Oh dear fucking-fuck. I can't stand more of this...fuck-fuck-fuck!" Tony prayed and swore simultaneously. Quick waves of electricity shot into one nipple arched to the other and back again. Tony screamed, and his unknown master of pain and pleasure tapped again on the inserted rod.

How long this went on, Tony did not know. It was like his mind danced in and out of reality. He felt the rod extracted; was he ejaculating...no, it just felt like it. He was still erect. He was lifted from the metal surface and moved what felt like a short distance. Placed in a standing position, his hands were raised over his head and cuffs placed around his wrists. He was given stirrup-like contraptions to hold on to so that his hands and wrist were not dangerously pulled. His feet were at a wide stance and laced into that position forcing him to stand on the balls of his feet. A large hand smacked his clenched arse cheeks once, twice, three times, and the handsome Italian begged for mercy, unsuccessfully, as his cock throbbed seeking release. With the spanking finished, he heard the shuffling of feet. He felt the clamps being connected, once more, to his tender swollen nipples. But this time, clamps were also clamped to his scrotum. He would not live through this. He knew he would not. "Sirs, please, I will do anything you want. I beg you, Sirs, don't hurt me! I will be your slave-boy willingly; just don't hurt me, please." He shook his bindings in a futile attempt to free himself. The buzz, now familiar, followed by volts of electricity shot into his nipples and his balls. He felt his humanity leaving him; he knew he was there to be used like a slut by his captors. "Sirs, you must know my lover, Captain Bryan Howell. He loves me very much and will make you pay for this humiliation. Let me go and as much as I love him, I will never tell him or anyone else about this. This savagery, to me, is not needed. Please, Sirs, I beg you!" Tony knew he was making a vain attempt to win his freedom and save his manhood from unspeakable humiliation and servitude.

He was released from the cuffs and foot lacings. *They listened to me*, he thought. But instead of release, he was carried and placed in what felt like a hammock made of cross straps. His legs were lifted and spread wide where they were placed in stirrups. His upraised arse was well presented to all present. He felt a sizable slippery finger rubbing his entry and then its insistent insertion, a constant pushing in and pulling out. A second and then a third finger was introduced, loosening the tight muscle ring, rubbing his sensitive spot, eliciting unintentional moans from Tony. "Thank you, Sirs; I

appreciate you getting me ready.” Tony thought showing thankfulness might help him down this deliciously torturous road.

The fingers withdrew, and he felt the intrusive rounded head of a huge cock pushing...demanding entrance into the Italian stud’s most private place. Fuck the thankfulness; Tony was getting mad. “No stop now, Sirs! Only my master Bryan can claim me there! Stop, or I swear he will hunt you all down and kill you! I won’t be able to stop him!” *Was that laughter I heard?* The cock plunged in, Tony could feel the man’s pubic hair against his smooth cheeks. Tears streamed from Tony’s eyes, not from the pain of the rape, but because he was feeling pleasure from the rapid thrusts even though he felt like he was betraying Bryan’s trust for letting this happen. The sound of the assailant’s ball bag smacking his arse and Tony only pictured Bryan in his mind. Tony could hear moist skin clicking all around him. These men were jacking themselves to full erection. They must all be planning on raping him... shooting their sperm deep into his gut. He would never be able to face Bryan again. Over the past year and a half, the man who had made him feel claimed and valuable would have no use for a man-slut who had been repeatedly used to satiate other cocks. So why shouldn’t Bryan reject him; after all, he could have any “respectful” single man in Phoenix?

Suddenly the man fucking him sped up his pistoning and then stopped deep inside him. He felt the man grab his thighs in an attempt to push in deeper. Followed by a grunt, the feel of even more expansion in his gut, and the heat of cum firing into him. Tony’s cock began to pulse in sync with his rapid heartbeat: he could hold back no longer. A cry from him and against his will, his large balls ascended into his body, the head of his cock flared, as he exploded, ejaculating the largest load of cum he had ever produced. Just as the white cables of sperm started to shoot in the air, the man who must be impaling him bent over and locked his lips around the head of Tony’s cock and swallowed every drop of Italian spoofs he could. The man then placed his hand around Tony’s dick and milked it until it was completely drained.

Finished, the unknown man pulled his face away from Tony's crotch. Still, he did not disengage himself from the engineer's arse. Tony could still hear the sounds of men masturbating all around him. *I wonder when he is going to hand my arse over for the next man to fuck me.* Just as he braced himself for another humiliation, he heard a gasp. He felt hot liquid heat fall on his chest, another gasp on his other side, and more liquid, a grunt. He felt cum splattering on his belly and filling his navel and another with what felt like a huge load hitting between his nipples. The mystery man's cock continued to throb in his arse. Tony heard the familiar shuffle of feet and then felt four unknown mouths on his upper body licking and cleaning the cooling liquid from him with their tongues. Whoever was darting his tongue into his belly button was creating a tickling sensation. Finished, he heard feet shuffling away, followed by rapid whispers, some laughter, and a loud shush from someone cautioning for silence. He felt the binding around his eyes being loosened and pulled from his head. A quick thought of *Oh no, they are going to let me see them. They will have to kill me.* The light, while not bright, blinded him for a few seconds. He tried to focus so he would at least see who and how they would kill him.

He had to be hallucinating! Standing between his upraised legs, his cock still buried deep in him, stood a beaming Bryan. Behind the captain stood four gorgeous men, Ay-Rab, Dylan, Ronnie, and Juan, holding a cake with twenty-eight candles flaming. "Happy Birthday, sweet boy!" Bryan said. The four naked men, their cocks beginning to deflate but still ample, yelled "Happy Birthday Tony" in unison and then began to sing the birthday song.

Tony wanted to cry, overwhelmed with all kinds of emotions. Then he remembered Bryan asking him what he wanted for his birthday the previous week. Being so busy with the Turbine designs, Tony totally forgot it was his birthday.

"Thank you, Sir." Tony, rapidly regaining his composure, smiled up to Bryan. "If we live another hundred years, you will never be able to top this one."

“That’s not all. A bunch of guys pitched in to build this playroom.” Bryan said, still lodged in his lover. “It’s for everyone’s use, but it’s called the Tony Bonilla Dungeon, and there’s a plaque over the door to prove it.

I’ve got to be the luckiest man in Phoenix.

Chapter Twenty

“Good morning, citizens of Phoenix.

It is I Lasitor, wishing you a happy morning, it is now 6 a.m.

*Are you stuck with a boring partner? Do you think it's time
for a change?*

You might borrow this fantastic idea from Queen Marie Antoinette, who mastered this trickery back in her time. By all accounts, the King was quite dull and always retired to bed at 2300. However, in her party chateau (le Petit Trianon), the queen was known to set the ballroom clock ahead by a couple of hours. Shocked at how late it was, King Louis would rush back to Versailles and to his bed, leaving the poor queen to find her own entertainment.

Visit our community news page for more trivia and other tips and ideas on getting rid of or dumping a guy.

Breakfast is served until 8 a.m.

Cheers and have a wonderful day.”

The Omega Project

Connor had completed downloading several thousand more photos, specifically capturing weather patterns in the southern hemisphere. It was imperative to keep a handle on the amount of debris being catapulted into the atmosphere. So far, findings indicated that earth was heading into a nuclear winter. After downloading the photos, Connor had an ingenious thought that even impressed him. There was one program that he had unsuccessfully been trying to hack for two years. How simple, why had he not thought of it before. Punching in a series of codes at lightning speed, his computer accepted and transmitted the data. In less than a minute, the object of his once highly illegal assault began to answer him. In two minutes, he had a visual of the earth being sent to him from the low orbiting International Space Station. It had been the last human-crewed space station. Connor wondered if it had been inhabited during the Doomsday event. If so, it would have been a particularly lonely way to die, knowing that no one from the earth's surface would be coming to rescue you. The Irishman gave silent thanks that if the upcoming winter sealed his fate, he at least would perish with Mika by his side.

Being able to communicate with the International Space Station would, Connor was confident, make it possible to communicate with other inhabited stations on Antarctica and the other Environment Projects built by Saunders.

Connor, wanting to see Mika's face when he shared the information, headed for his Russian lover's laboratory. Because of Mika's diverse projects, his laboratory consisted of several large rooms where he carried out his experiments and had meetings with various scientists under his authority. Entering the waiting room quietly so as not to interrupt a possible scheduled conference, Connor noted the door to the central lab was open. Peering in and seeing no one, he proceeded to the next room. Approaching the door, he heard a low emotional exchange of words. Connor stopped abruptly at the door, out of sight of the two men talking. He could see them, however, and he thought his heart would stop. Unlocking from an embrace were Dr. Peter von Leutzendorf

and Mika. “You know how much this means to me. But we must be careful and not say anything. If the timing isn’t right, it could break Connor’s heart, and he doesn’t deserve that because of me.” Mika emphasized to the arrogantly beautiful Peter.

“I respectfully disagree, Mika. I think you should tell Connor before we go further with this. He is very loyal to you, and you owe him that much respect. However, you do him a disservice by not telling him what we have done. You are, after all, engaged, aren’t you? Peter asked Mika and laughed, putting his hand on the Russian’s side affectionately.

“I just have to find the right time to tell him,” assured Mika. The two hugged again.

Connor was out of the lab, running down the passageways, with tears streaming down his smooth cheeks toward his apartment. ‘So this is why he frequently wandered in at two in the morning, almost too tired to kiss me goodnight. I completely trusted him. Why did he go along with the marriage plans? I really thought he had changed.’ Connor passed several people who spoke and whom he ignored. Once in his apartment, he slammed the door and went to bed, although it was only three in the afternoon.

Several times that afternoon, Mika tried without success to reach Connor regarding dinner plans they had discussed earlier. Finally, concerned there was a possibility that his Irish may have had another fall at home, Mika went to their apartment. Oddly, the bedroom door was shut, and the apartment was in darkness. Opening the bedroom door as quietly as possible, he switched on the low-light switch. He could see Connor lying across the bed sideways and facedown. Mika rushed to the bed “Connor, are you okay, my love?”

Groggily Connor responded without opening his eyes, “I’m fine. I just want to be left alone right now.”

“Okay, but do you want something to eat or drink? I get for you anything you want.” Mika said, nuzzling his ear and putting a slight accent into his speech. He had never seen his little *joie de vivre* Celt act like this.

“I said leave me alone! What I want,...you are incapable of giving me. Now get out...go eat or something.” Connor turned his head away.

Mika got up from their bed speechless for the first time in his adult life. He walked out of the bedroom, shut the door behind him, and walked out of the apartment. The Russian had never been in a situation like this and with Connor of all people. He needed to think. The more he thought, the angrier he became at the rude rejection without an explanation. Finally, the Russian tore back toward the apartment, entered, and burst into their bedroom.

“Look here, you fucking little leprechaun, you have no right and no cause to speak to me like this. I thought we had a relationship based on honesty and trust. If we are unhappy about something the other has done, did we not promise to be open with each other? When we agreed that we would marry, we promised the other that we would never have secrets and we would discuss anything at all that troubled us. If I have done something, I need to know it before addressing it or fixing it. You owe me that much respect. If someone has done something to hurt you, then you better fucking tell me, and we will get it set right if I have to throw them out into the Antarctica winter buck naked!” Mika yelled at Connor in anger for the first time since they had known each other. His deep booming voice forcing Connor into a fetal position was done in perfect English. “But by g-d, you are going to sit up like a fucking man and tell me what’s wrong, or I’m going to rip your pants off, spank your Irish arse like the child you are acting, and I won’t be back in this room until you beg me... and you will beg me to come back!”

Connor was an intelligent young man, and while he marveled at the Russian’s wrath, he also listened and what Mika was saying was true. They had promised the other to always talk before reacting. Connor had been the first to breach that agreement; he had reacted before talking. However, Connor reasoned that Mika had first broken the agreement from what he heard being said between Mika and Peter. Nevertheless, Connor sat up on the edge of the bed and directed his bloodshot eyes at Mika.

“That’s better,” commented the furious Russian trying not to show his concern. It was apparent his manly little Celt had been crying for a long time. “Did someone do something to you?” He asked with anger showing on his face.

“You did,” Connor replied, eyes downcast and looking at his feet.

“I did something? What exactly did I do besides love you with all my heart?” Mika pushed.

“You were unfaithful to me,” Connor stated this simply, his luscious bottom lip quivering at the memory of what he saw and heard.

Mika’s mouth dropped open in disbelief. “Who in the fuck told you that, and why in the fuck did you believe them?” He said, his bass voice getting louder. Connor was surprised at how proficient Mika had become at American/Irish vernacular. “You give me a name, and I will bring him in here, and he will recant his lie to you.”

“Oh, Mika, I saw and heard for myself. I am just more upset that you didn’t tell me your feelings, ha...”

“You saw and heard what yourself? Are you having hallucinations from that fall you had during the quake?”

“I had some exciting news I wanted to share with you. You are always achieving so many things, and I wanted you to be proud of me.” Connor told Mika about taking control of the ISS and what he thought the benefits to Phoenix would be.

“That’s superb, that’s wonderful, but for your information, everything you have ever done has made me proud of you. I find you to be the most amazing man I have ever met and the most attractive as well. I thought that the first day I met you... on the plane coming here. Now, tell me what happened that you did not share the discovery with me?”

“I wanted to deliver it in person. It sounds stupid now, but I wanted to see the expression on your face when I told you that I had finally cracked the NASA ISS program. Then I walked in and saw you and Peter von Leutzendorf hugging and breaking up from a kiss.”

Mika's eyes lit up. "Ahh, you saw me and Peter hugging?"

"Yes."

"You saw without doubt Peter and me kissing?"

"No, but you were breaking up from a hug, and then I saw you hug him again."

"Did you see me kiss Peter when we hugged for second time?"

"No, because that is when I decided I had seen and heard enough."

"So, you don't know we kissed or not? You are just assuming that we did. Is that not little unscientific?" Mika was playing with him now, and Connor knew it.

"But what I heard would support my assumption," Connor replied, knowing that Mika had him and that he had probably made a horrible assumption...one for which no doubt paid dearly.

"What did you hear?" Mika asked calmly.

"I heard you say that you didn't want to break my heart and that you would tell me about what you had done when the time was right. I heard Peter disagree with you and tell you that since we were engaged, I should know, and I could handle it."

"Did you hear anything about illicit affair? Did we say anything about our feelings for each other or what we had done that you overheard?"

"No, Mika, but what was I to think?"

"Vell, if I had been in your place and saw or overheard some conversation, let's say between you and Ay-Rab, I would have walked right in the room and confronted both of you. I would not be a respected scientist like you and turn into a teenage girl carrying on like she had just lost her first crush." Connor knew what Mika was saying was true. He would have confronted the situation head-on, and it would have been resolved one way or the other by now.

“You are right, Mika. I mishandled it, but what’s done is done. There is nothing I can do. There is an Irish saying that words set loose in anger wound the hearts of all.”

“What the fuck is that supposed to mean? An old Irish quote is not going to set you free of what you’ve accused me of doing.” So stated Mika getting off the bed where he had been sitting next to Connor.

“Where are you going? What can I do?”

“Get your little fairy leprechaun arse off the bed. You are coming with me to the lab to confront Peter now about our affair, like any good Russian worth his salt would do. I know you are not Russian, but you have enough of my blood in you, so get up...now! Or so help me I will carry you there for everyone in Phoenix to see.” Connor could tell he really was serious. Connor got up wearily, put on his shoes, and walked meekly beside the blond giant toward the labs.

Peter was busily jotting notes as he stood in front of a battery of plasma screens that had a plethora of graphs and changing calculations appearing and recalculating every so many seconds. The handsome scientist saw them peripherally and turned to face them. “Hello, Connor. I haven’t had the pleasure of speaking with you for some time. But, of course, Mika fills me in on you frequently.”

“I bet he does,” Connor replied. “He does not fill me in on you at all.”

Peter was taken aback by the usually bubbly Irishman’s caustic demeanor.

“It seems that my husband to be or to have been,” Mika began sarcastically, “came to the lab a few hours ago and caught us in an embrace. As a result, he knows that I have been unfaithful to him. I suggested that since he has confronted me, he should also confront the new man in my life. I would appreciate it, Peter, if you would reflect on the situation and tell Connor truthfully what I did not want to tell him for fear of possible heartbreak, but what you encouraged me to confess to him.”

“You want me to truthfully tell him, Mika? Are you certain you don’t want to do that? For me to tell the other man what he doesn’t know seems out of line.” Peter responded. Mika knew that Peter was a quick study and that this would go the way he wanted it to go.

“Absolutely! You were so right in advising me to be honest with the little leprechaun here. So go ahead and tell him truthfully everything.” Mika encouraged Peter, but his words got an annoyed look from Connor.

“Very well. Connor, you did see Mika and me hugging. In fact, to be totally accurate, we hugged several times today.”

“I’ve no doubt you have.” Pouted the petulant Irishman.

“Actually, believe what you want, but today was the first day. I swear that to you. We were ecstatic. Mika admittedly was more ecstatic than I, but I shared in his delight. You see, we successfully blended sperm for the first time some weeks ago and...”

“Ha! I thought so, and yet you just hugged for the first time today. Started things a little backward, didn’t you, Peter?” Connor was getting riled again, and Mika and Peter barely contained a laugh, but when Connor raised a fist and started toward Peter, Mika easily held him at bay until he calmed. “Think it’s fuckin funny, do you mate?”

“As I was saying,” Peter continued, “we successfully blended sperm.” Peter was walking behind the battery of screens, and Mika was guiding Connor along behind him. Peter stopped in front of a transparent cylindrical sphere full of a slightly yellow-tinged liquid with thousands of tiny bubbles moving about. The sphere had a translucent divider suspended mid-center. On each side of the separator was a minute deformed bean-shaped object that, while free-floating, was attached by a wavering straw-type hose to the translucent divider. Connor peered in quizzically, squinting his eyes, trying to make sense of what he was seeing.

“Congratulations, Connor, Mika. You are both the fathers of half Russian and half Irish twin boys, may g-d have mercy on

us,” Peter said. “I hope I have exonerated myself.” Peter walked out of the room, leaving the two men to sort it out.

“Oh, Jesus, Joseph, and Mary! Was he serious? Those are mine...ours? When did this happen? Why didn’t you tell me? What does he mean they are half Irish and half Russian?” Connor was so beside himself with joy that he had forgotten the earlier issues.

“Right now, Connor, I truly want to just share this moment with you. I want to be a part of the happiness that you feel becoming the father of a child that is biologically yours...at least one-third biologically yours. But in a bit, we need to talk about how you behaved and talked to me.” Mika emphasized the last sentence, but then he smiled and stepped forward, placing his long arms around Connor’s chest, placing his chin on the top of his lover’s head. The two stared at the two tiny embryos.

“What a complete miracle. Given even artificial opportunity, life tries to flourish.” Connor said with wonder as the tiny embryos swayed about in the bubbling liquid. “Mika, let us speak about my foolishness later, like in twenty years or so or when you really tire of me or if I have another temper shenanigan down the road. I think it was brought about by my having heard the stories about “Mika plays with all the boys,” you, seeing you hug Peter, the loneliness of the world outside of this complex, and how uncertain our lives can be. All of that was put together with the possibility of losing what we had, and I just had a wee meltdown. But, I realize, taking the situation apart and looking at it from a distance gives me a different perspective. I realize I should not be insecure with you. Okay?”

Mika drew Connor into an even tighter hug. “I wouldn’t ruin this for you for anything. I was hurt that you distrusted me so easily without confronting me immediately. I see no real reason to rehash it. I think we may have to agree on some rules regarding a code of conduct, just like we’ll be teaching them to those two boys. They should never have to detect distrust between their two dads. They should also never have to witness the violence of seeing Russian dad spanking their Irish

dad's arse for being stupid." Mika kissed Connor's hair, which he was letting grow longer. "Which one do you want?"

"What? Which one do I want? Is one mine and one yours?" Asked Connor, turning around and looking up at Mika, a scowl forming on his perfect smooth face.

"No, they are biologically ours. So you told Mika not thirty minutes ago you want me gone, it's only right I have one, and you have one. Reasoning simple, I no longer receive compensation for working here; I cannot tap into my millions since all the banks are closed, so I won't pay you child support. So I think one for you and one for me solves the dilemma. I will, of course, have to "put out" to pay a nanny..."

"You big Russian ox, you are not putting out anything... except for me, and I will be the one who picks out the blooming nanny!" Connor said sternly. "One other thing," Mika arched his golden-white eyebrows in question. "Thank you for this wonderful gift and for being Mika." Connor placed his hand up behind Mika's head and pulled him down to a deep kiss.

Turning their attention back to the sphere, the two lovers stood side by side, each with an arm about the other. Connor was the first to speak. "Mika, I want to hear the details of how you did this. I want to know everything about our children."

"It was the process that I explained to you, which had attracted Dr. Saunders' attention. When Peter and I started working on my embryo growth theories, we could provide solutions for most of the problems I had encountered in earlier attempts. Unfortunately, I have not been able to find a solution to successfully keeping both X and Y-bearing sperm alive. The egg only carries the X-chromosome, while, as you know, the sperm carries either an X or Y. If the X-chromosome penetrates the egg, the result is a female. If the Y fertilizes the egg, a male is a result. Something in my fertilization process destroys X carrying sperm. The result is that for the moment, only males will be produced. Hence, we have two sons." Mika shared, gesturing toward the sphere and its two tiny inhabitants.

“Amazing that you have achieved your process to the point you have,” marveled Connor. “I’m still not totally clear on what you have been saying about them being half Irish, half Russian.”

“Of everything I have done, this, to me, is truly the most amazing. In trying to determine the cause of the X-bearing sperm’s mortality, it occurred to me that perhaps I could splice into the sperm so that it would carry both X and Y chromosomes. If the sperm bore both, there was a possibility that when the sperm penetrated the egg that one or the other would survive producing either a girl or boy or that the intrusion of the pair would be a catalyst for the egg to split, should both survive, the result being female and male twins. The third possibility was that both would fertilize the egg, and the end product would be a new human...both male and female. There could be many disastrous consequences if that happened. So for preliminary tests, I spliced in DNA. It took many attempts, but eventually, the sperm survived and was healthy. The sperm donor’s DNA blended perfectly with another human male’s DNA, thus taking on characteristics of both donors.

To make a long story short, my love, the embryo on the right is the result of splicing your DNA into my sperm. The one on the left is the result of splicing my DNA into your sperm. In this case, I did not want to fertilize the egg with two sperm and have identical twins...just too risky this early. So, I used two eggs from the same female donor, and while we are two separate beings, these boys are equally ours and share the same mother. Also, I think you will be happy with the donor I chose for us.”

“Absolutely amazing,” voiced Connor in a whisper. “So the boys are Russian Irish in every sense?”

“Well, half Scandinavian...the donor egg did contribute half.” Mika corrected with a chuckle. “The egg donor was a five-foot-ten blond, her eye color matched yours almost perfectly, extremely high IQ, a nearly perfect family health background, a doctorate in physics, and paid for it by modeling for some of the top agencies in the world.

“So now I’m definitely going to have sassy seven-foot-tall teenagers towering over me, with both of our temperaments, who will probably blow the place up.” Connor laughed.

“Peter warned me about the potential dangers of mixing a Cossack warrior with a little six-foot leprechaun...said I could do better mixing with his sperm.” Connor was giving him a look. “I am, of course, joking with you. I hope the boys get my sense of humor.”

“Two fuzzy blonds, huh?” Connor asked, reaching up and pulling some blond chest hair showing at Mika’s collar.

“Not necessarily love. Dark tends to dominate. They may be blond and smooth, beautiful black hair like yours and smooth, or hairy, a combination of both, or one could be more like you physically and the other like me. One or both may even take more characteristics from their maternal side. The fun will be waiting to see and watching as they grow into men,” advised Mika, smiling and looking from Connor’s glowing face back to the sphere.

Connor had a sobering thought, “Mika, you and I love each other and wanted a family together...after I convinced you we did. But the boys may be straight, and there are only men around. They will grow up thinking something is missing no matter how much love we give them.”

“My love, you worry too far in advance. Life tends to take care of itself. I think all men are potentially bisexual; they will find someone they are content to share their lives with. Also, don’t forget, we are very early in this new field. I am sure there is a scientific explanation for the failure of X-chromosomes to survive the process. Peter and I will continue working on the solution.” Mika assured the young Irish father to be.

“You are right. I am becoming my sainted mother. I’ll let you worry about bringing them into this world, and I’ll worry about having twin boys out of wedlock...speaking of my sainted mother, I’m sure she must be spinning in her grave.” Connor said, sticking his bottom lip out and looking up at Mika.

“Connor, I’ll never get the catholic out of you, will I?” Connor shook his head in agreement with the question, still pouting. ‘I’m going to suck that luscious bottom lip right off his face in a little bit,’ thought Mika.

“Very well, little Irishman. We will have...what Americans call it...shotgun wedding...as soon as you can arrange it. We wouldn’t want the neighbors to talk about your virginity and how easy you were.” Teased Mika, then he remembered the night he showed up at Connor’s quarters, vodka in hand, the goal in mind, and decided he should drop the subject. “Speaking of having a wedding performed, Brad doesn’t know anything about this project. How do you think he will take all this?”

Connor thought for a minute, “Good question that one is. If he was still like he was when we first got here, he would not be thrilled at all. The General must consider that two more lives will be supported and coming into the world encapsulated in an artificial environment located in a hostile climate. He will wonder if everyone starts wanting children. He will have to set up guidelines for permitting everyone to have children in an equitable format. We only have a university, he will have to think about setting up an entire education system, and the list goes on. I think we are going to have him pretty stressed.”

“The boys will be born in about eight months if all goes well,” Mika said.

“That gives us some time to think about how to tell him. Maybe we could approach Rick Longarrow and see what he thinks. I know he certainly seems to have some influence with Brad since they moved in together. Simon is another possibility and...” Connor was cut off by Mika.

“This is crazy talk. I don’t have to hide the birth of my two boys from anybody. They are more than a quiet little secret that has to wait to see if their existence is okay with the upper hierarchy, of which, by the way, I am one. What did I just scream at you a little while ago? The best way is to always confront a situation so that it can be properly assessed. It is the Romanov way...just disregard the last Tsar.” Mika ranted as

he picked up his communicator and watched in amusement as Connor's eyes grew very wide. Wisely, his Irish fiancé kept quiet and watched the scene unfold.

"General Brad, Mika Romanov here," Mika said into the device. Connor thought he must be a little nervous because his accent was coming through, which only happened these days if he was nervous, which was very rare for Mika, or when he was trying to be cute, which was pretty often.

"Brad McCormick here, Mika."

"Brad, good to talk to you," Mika said, his voice wavering with nervous laughter.

"Yes, Mika, same here, but you are the one who called me. How can I help you...is everything okay? Is Connor okay?" questioned the Commander.

"Yes, yes, I am fantastic...no...more than fantastic. Connor is more than fantastic as well, Comrade General."

"What's going on, Mika?" pressed Brad, beginning to sound impatient.

Mika looked at Connor, who had placed his hands lovingly on the sphere. That is all Mika needed to see. "Brad, Connor, and I would like to know if you will do us the honor of performing a marriage ceremony between Connor and me tomorrow night."

"Ah well, I thought that was a few months off, but I can clear my schedule to do that. Sure, I would be happy to perform it for you." Brad said, a little confused by the call. Mika looked at Connor, who was staring at him. Then Connor smiled and rolled his eyes. This was the shove that Mika needed.

"Thank you, Brad. Oh, and there's one more thing," Mika said rapidly and before Brad could respond, "Connor and I are growing embryos. So we would be honored if you and Rick would agree to be godfathers to our twin sons."

Connor's mouth dropped open in shock. "You Russian shillelagh! Is that how you confront and get a handle on a situation? I don't believe you...no wonder there was a

revolution to oust the Romanov dynasty.” Connor said, grabbing the communicator from the flustered man.

“Brad, Connor here. Please don’t ask any questions. Just trust me and get Rick. Come to Mika’s office, both of you, as soon as possible.” Connor turned off the communicator as soon as Brad assented to the request.

“We’re growing embryos. What a thing to say.” Connor criticized.

“But it’s true,” Mika said defensively.

“It’s bloody true that your dad stuck his cock in your mother in a fit of passion, came in her, and she got pregnant. But you don’t bloody say that about your wee ones. Instead, you say you’ve been blessed, and you’re expecting a baby or two, as the case may be. Good lord, Mika! You big gigantic, beautiful man.” Connor burst out laughing and punched Mika’s shoulder. He could not stop laughing, and the more he did, the more confused Mika became.

“Mika does not understand all this Irish blarney,” Mika accented, acting like Connor’s point was not hitting home. “We are not expecting babies...we have them right there. To expect something means it has not arrived. These boys have arrived.” He pointed at the sphere to back up his statement. Then he started laughing deep and loud. “I would have loved to have seen the look on Brad’s face when I said that. I guess I could have chosen my words more wisely.”

“All in all, Mika, you did well. I’m just a nervous father-to-be. We had better get out of here and into your office. I’ve no doubt Brad and Rick are both running over here.

When they went through the series of labs to Mika’s office, Brad and Rick were indeed waiting on them.

Later that day, the four men stood before the sphere with its yellowish-tinged bubbles. Connor, with the proud look of a father looking at his most cherished possession, Mika with his look of aristocratic beauty, was indeed in love with the dark-haired splendor holding his hand and grateful for the two tiny lives that were part of the two of them, Rick Longarrow

looked at the sphere with a look of scientific amazement, and General Brad McCormick looked at the bubbling container of life with righteous concern.

“I want you to both know that I am truly happy for the two of you. Even as a student, Connor often wished for a family he thought he would never have. At the time, I thought he was referring to his career and that he would not have time for a family and marriage. But somehow, out of the chaos of the Doomsday Event, he has the life he wants with a man he loves, and somehow that man has given him two children that are biologically theirs. So I am happy for you...just don't go giving Simon and Paul any ideas until they have their degrees.

That said, I want to know why I was not told of this study and the tens of thousands of eggs sent here without anything being said to me. I would be directing that to you, Mika.” Brad was seriously annoyed at this breach of conduct. He remembered vaguely, *Dr. Saunders told me to ask Mika, but I could swear it was about something else. So much happened that day....*

“Well, Comrade General Brad, you never asked me, and you always seemed happy with whatever Mika works on. Your interest was in the present, not in the continuation of mankind, so I could see no reason that I could not work on present projects and my little sideline here. It's not like you were paying me for one thing, and I was doing another.” Mika responded to the General in his most charming way of speaking. However, seeing the annoyed expression still on Brad's face, Mika continued, “Seriously, Brad, you must understand that this is why I was recruited by Dr. Saunders. He could see much of what was going to happen on the planet ecologically. I'm not so sure that he didn't see the outbreak coming. That we will never know unless Connor finds reference to it hidden in his files. He knew that men and women would be here, and there would undoubtedly be births. Still, he wanted a huge genetic base to draw from, not one that would be limited to relatives in a few generations. My process would have pleased Dr. Saunders; I truly think it would have. For the present, we can only have male births, but I am optimistic I can find out why and probably remedy that. If I

cannot, perhaps my sons will find an answer or someone else's son...the point is because of this, mankind will go on. Hopefully, after the upcoming nuclear winter, we will go back into the world, and this time we will know how to treat it. That will probably not be in our lifetime, but now there is hope that we can make it our legacy to our descendants. The only other option I can see is the eventual extinction of our kind. Suppose you don't allow future births, and I say future births because I know you will let our sons be born. In that case, we will grow old, die one by one, until there are only my sons and perhaps Simon or Paul left alive in this entire complex...then they will grow old and die alone on this frigid continent...and that Comrade will be the end of everything we represented. The death of your son, Paul, and our sons will be a lonely one. Phoenix would heat its vast rooms and send light out into space for who knows how long..."

"Jesus Christ, Mika, you've sold me!" Brad snapped. "Did you also get a doctorate in method acting?"

Connor was undoubtedly impressed by Mika's performance, as was Rick.

"I considered it Comrade, but there is only so much time yet so much to do." As humble as Connor had ever seen him, Mika responded to the General's sarcasm with a dramatic bow.

"Well, guess that's settled then," said Rick, who walked over to Brad, placing his arm around his lover's waist, "I think Brad and I might want to talk to you about giving Simon a little brother.

"Don't even start, Rick," warned Brad, knowing that now the idea was planted, he probably would have little to say about it.

"What I don't understand is how the embryo is nourished. I understand you have created an artificial placenta, and the embryo is attached to it by an umbilical cord. It is very complex how the fluids are taken in by the placenta and filtered to nourish it. But can you elaborate just a little, Mika?" Rick asked the man he was once so crushed on until he witnessed his love for Connor that day in the makeshift

emergency room. If any two mates deserved the life they wanted, it was Connor and Mika, he thought. Now, he was just as in love with Brad...he would work on crusty old Brad, he smiled to himself.

“Sure,” Mika replied, “let me introduce Project Omega, the first of its kind and the last hope of humanity, very simple... child could understand.

As you know, six to ten days after fertilization, the embryo attaches, or implants, itself into the lining of the uterus, and then, a week or so later, the embryo starts receiving its nourishment and oxygen from the cells that make up the lining of the uterus. This is the same with my system. During this first trimester, my artificial placenta, which is artificial only in the sense that I initiated its existence, is organic in makeup and clings to this divider. In this case, I have used packed red cell plasma and very complex proteins and lab-created vitamins in the liquid you see. Dr. Peter von Leutzendorf can tell you more about the vitamins. He is running his own research project as well, Brad.” Mika stretched his eyes as big as saucers, and his eyebrows almost disappeared into his hairline. “You should ask him about that, and by that, I mean, please ask him as soon as you are able.” Mika hoped Brad got the message loud and clear. He continued explaining the process of placental adaptive nutritional support.

“Note the yellow tinge of the liquid caused by the packed red cell plasma being yellow in color. The artificial placenta sustains its life-giving equilibrium by balancing nutrients through positive osmotic pressure. It delivers the enriched formula to the fetus while simultaneously exchanging the fetus’s waste products collected via artificial siphoning, almost like human kidneys or livers. But instead of recycling it back to the placenta, we discard it. Oxygen, of course, is infused much the same way. I hoped, Rick, that you would share the birth with us since I know your birthing skills are much more up-to-date than my own. The first few births I anticipate will be high risk, and considering I am the father, I can see where Peter could use a cool head working with him, delivering the babies.”

“I was really hoping you would ask me. It will be my pleasure. Hopefully, you will do the same for me when we have ours.” Brad shot Rick a look, but before he could speak, Rick continued, “I look forward to your wedding tomorrow night. Come, Brad, we need to leave these two alone, and you and I need to go to dinner and talk.” He hooked Brad’s arm in his and led him out.

“I think we may have started something,” Connor told Mika.

“Probably, but little Ivan and Cian will need playmates.”

“I don’t think so on the names. A son of yours would soon be known as Ivan the Terrible throughout Phoenix, and you know how things went for him. So I’m thinking rather than Shawn and Patrick.” Connor responded.

“We have a few months to decide and for me to talk some sense into you. But I can tell you right now Shawn and Patrick Romanov sound really weird.”

“Who said they were going to be Romanov?” asked Connor.

“Well, whoever heard of any boy called Ivan and Sergei O’Hara? Besides, you are marrying me, so I think you should take my name.”

“Connor Romanov, that’s weird, but I guess Mika Ivan Nicolai Peter O’Hara doesn’t sound good either,” said Connor, referring to Mika’s royal birth name by an insistent grandfather. “How about we compromise...Romanov-O’Hara for legal purposes, and we’ll just go by Romanov. I mean, we rarely go by last names around here anyway.”

“You are learning, my little Irishman. That sounds like the way to go. But what about the boys? Is it fair to stick them with a name like Ivan Patrick Romanov-O’Hara and Sergei Shawn Romanov-O’Hara?” teased Mika.

“Let’s think about it. I’m hungry and drained after all that has happened today.” Connor said. “But I hate leaving the boys here unattended.”

“They won’t be. I will call Peter. That’s why I have been coming in so late. I stayed with them or Peter was with them,

and most of the time we were both presents. Now that the cat's out of the bag, as you people say, this area will have to be on lockdown and off-limits, just so nothing gets accidentally changed on the sphere controls. I'm sure Bryan Howell will be more than happy to supply us with soldiers for around-the-clock guard duty also."

Connor was impressed with the care Mika was taking. "Don't you think round-the-clock soldiers might be overdoing it?"

"Connor, these are Romanov twin boys. The first in over four hundred years, I might add. Round-the-clock soldiers are not overdoing it. "Mika countered, fatherly pride showing in his icy blue eyes.

"I understand just how you feel, love. As the other father, I would like to spend time with them as well. I'm sure you could teach me the controls...not to tamper with...just to be familiar enough with the readings that I would know if anything were heading in the wrong direction. I have work I could definitely do remotely from here."

"I think that's an excellent idea. I could actually have a bed moved in here so when we watch together, we would not have to be bored," Mika said in a deep sultry murmur as he nibbled Connor's neck.

"In front of the boys...really, Mika...well, if the bed isn't within direct view," replied Connor leaning into Mika's kisses.

"Little leprechaun, these boys are Romanov; seeing lovemaking will give them a sense of self."

"I hope I'm not interrupting," Peter said as he entered the room and saw the two entwined in a kiss.

"Ah, Peter, thanks for coming so soon. We are going to have dinner and such, and I will be back to relieve you." Mika told him.

"The "and such" part of your statement causes me to doubt how soon you will be back," Peter said, looking at the two of them and winking. "Just be careful. Two children are enough to handle."

Mika explained that General McCormick and Dr. Longarrow were now in the baby loop of knowledge. He also told him the plans to make the lab off-limits to absolutely everyone unless they had clearance. Bryan would be selecting armed guards, just as a precaution. "I hope the General will also ask you about your Enriched Vitamin Project; I did not elaborate on it, I felt it's your project, and you may have the floor, dear friend.

I would appreciate it, Peter, if you would help me make a schedule of qualified people to be in here, so we don't wear ourselves out. Please include Connor on that schedule." Mika told his colleague.

"Not a problem. I am happy to help any way I can." Peter assured the two fathers.

Once out of earshot from anyone, Mika bent down to Connor's ear. "First, we eat in the dining room, then we get a bottle of champagne to celebrate as I had planned to do earlier today before being chewed up and spit out."

"Said I was sorry, and that sounds like a plan," Connor replied.

"I wasn't finished yet. So after the champagne, we are going into our bedroom, where I am going to spank your arse for the way you acted, I might even take you to Tony's playroom, and then I am going to fuck you so long and hard that you will have to wheel yourself down the aisle at your wedding tomorrow night."

"Christ, the wedding...I forgot...I've got to get with Simon and Paul to help me plan it all out." Connor said in a panic.

"First we eat, drink champagne, get your arse spanked, and Mika gets rewarded with a piece of Irish bottom! Then you can call Simon and make all the plans you want while I go back to the lab, my cock drained, and babysit your sons." They both laughed and headed into their apartment.

Dr. Leutzendorf, with the financial backing provided by Dr. Saunders and his benefactors, was able to continue and build

on Mika's research. This gave birth to solving one of humankind's oldest dilemmas. The quest for longer life spans without disease. The Eden Project branched off the DNA gene manipulation, which coincided with the Omega Project, not the artificial wombs, but their synthetic amniotic fluid. The placental nutrients originally developed for optimal fetal growth and development were structurally slightly adjusted to be injected as a slow-release gel bullet, almost the size of a kidney bean. The capsule would dissolve and release its magic over ten years because aging happens over time; the serum can not be injected like an immunization. Immunity is also lost over time. Peter thought of a simple, easy replaceable solution. Depending on each person's preference. Some people do, and others don't want to live forever. The working mechanism is basically an antigen for chromosomal structural damage. Aging would cease completely while the new genome sequence deprogrammed cells from breaking down. This also included fending off disease, for example, cancer which is ultimately nothing more than abnormal growth of cells.

Since Mika and Peter were able to splice the two male sperm and inseminate an egg, Peter decided what the hell, he could remove the human SIRT6 gene and spliced it with a shorter linked but identically SIRT6 gene from the Bowhead whale. Which was easy enough to obtain. Animal specimens, including eggs and sperm, were frozen and stored in the freezers behind him for precisely these purposes. Bowhead whales are one of the few whale species that reside almost exclusively in Antarctic waters. Of all large whales, the bowhead is the most adapted to life in icy waters, and they lived over 200 years. Peter felt giddy. He started to talk to himself as he usually does when alone in his lab.

"I fucking did it, Daddy. I just hope Brad and the Men of Phoenix appreciate it for what it is."

"What do you have there, Peter? How many times do I have to tell you little boys don't talk that way?"

"Oh, this, I isolated the Bowhead SIRT6 gene and replaced and then reprogrammed signals to repair and rejuvenate broken down strands on the human DNA."

“Oh my, whatever do you mean, Peter, you brilliant and wonderful chap of a man?”

“I just created this little old thing that would increase human health and add an extra 200 years to their lifespan, maybe longer.”

“Wow, Peter, you are a genius.”

“I know, right? Thank you very much, and guess what.”

“What, you sexy scientist? Tell me, or I’ll pull you over my lap and spank your Bavarian buns?”

“Oh my, Daddy’s going to spank me? Okay, Daddy, I will tell you.”

“That’s a good boy.”

“Yes, Daddy, if we freshen the genomes in ten-year cycles, we not only buffer but bypass the defective degenerative qualities on the DNA strands; we could increase their lifespans by hundreds of years.” Peter monologued like a crazy scientist. The side effects of being lonely and being left alone with frozen dead people for a little too long.

His Cryonics Laboratories was a gigantic frozen zoo, human and animal. The men of Phoenix don’t know that some of the rich and famous celebrities were frozen inside those freezers. After all, they paid billions of dollars to be there. Waiting to be thawed and cured of whatever disease they have. Of course, Peter was apprehensive about all that, but they paid for his laboratory, so for now, he just talks to them and uses the equipment they paid for.

Peter has already injected himself with his Eden Bean. He felt the best spot would be four fingers below the clavicle, in line with the nipple. Then, with a small nick of the skin, slipping it in and stapling it close. Just between the muscle layers. That is one of the immobile spots, padded with muscle, and easily accessible so the person can feel and monitor their Eden Bean’s size and position.

Like a child, he was excited about going to the wedding, “they are going to shit their pants when they open my gift. Especially after they made their vows for as long as we both

shall live.” He chuckled at that, wrapping Mika and Connor’s wedding gift inside a ten-inch square black box with a big red bow.

Chapter Twenty-One

“This is your wake-up call, Phoenix residents.

It is I Lasitor. It is now 6 a.m.

Did you know not all animals urinate through their penis? Fish, for example, urinate either through their gills or through a “urinary pore.” Scientists have found evidence to suggest that eating oily fish may help you live two years longer and extend your life.

And, did you also know, in contrast to historical views on fellatio, it is revered as a spiritually fulfilling practice in Chinese Taoism, which regards it as having the ability to enhance longevity.

The point is whether you urinate through gills, a pore, or a penis, you can prolong someone’s life.

Visit our community news page for the beginner’s guide on instructions on the reverse wheelbarrow position. You can exercise and prolong your life. FYI if I had a body, you’d frequently find me in this position.

Breakfast is served until 8 a.m.

Cheers and have a wonderful day.”

Connor and Mika exchange vows

The next night Connor and Mika exchanged vows; they had invited fifty of their closest friends for the ceremony. Unbeknownst to them, Juan and Drew could not let the first marriage in Phoenix go down without a celebration. They had cornered Brad and Rick that morning right after breakfast in the dining hall. Juan and Drew had no respect for rank. “This way, please, Sirs.” The two cooks herded their leader and his partner into a small storage room and closed the door. The motion sensor lights were flickering on when the door shut. It was about ten feet deep and five feet wide, just enough space for floor mops and cleaning supplies, an emergency kit, and a firehose. Brad and Rick were caught so off guard they had followed the men without question. Once inside, Juan started explaining like a drag queen with purpose before either man could ask a question.

“Soory for catching you unannounced like thiss, but, this is a secret operation of high importance.” Juan looked back at Drew, making sure he had back up and continued. “Sirs, Drew and I are baking a wedding cake for the lucky lovers getting married tonight. But we have also organized a little entertainment, a small celebration of sortsss. But for this to happen, we need your help, Sir.” Juan said, just before Brad opened his mouth to speak and continued without giving the General a chance to stop him. “We need you to divert Mika and Connor to the ballroom directly after the ceremony, so we all can have a little get-together. Serve some cake, real cake, okaay? Wedding cake and of course a classy showing of our asssss.” Juan flicked his hair for dramatic pause and then continued.

“We understand that only their closest friends were invited to the chapel, but we are a big family here, and we all wanted to celebrate the occasion with them. Both Connor and Mika are respected and loved by everyone.” Juan explained. He truly wanted to create a memorable evening for the men. Of course, Juan being Juan had a hidden agenda. He knew from experience, the best way to realize what he had planned was to get his illustrious leader to see things as if it was his idea.

“Uhm, that’s not a good idea. The newlyweds want to keep it small and intimate.”

“Yesss, but we have never had a wedding, and the ballroom is perrrrfect for the men to say their congratulations. We have prepared a special show for them.” Explained Juan, eyes flickering back and forth between Brad and Rick, preparing to stop the reply he didn’t want and hoping for the words he wanted to hear from Brad’s mouth.

“What...kind...of...show?” Brad asked, slowly, not sure he wanted to hear the answer. “I know you two are always up to something, and you do have a reputation of the two mischief-makers in Phoenix. But, if this is a strip show...wait, wait. Wait a minute. To be honest, I still think you did something to Rick and me that one morning.”

“Who me, nooooo, I...we would never. I mean, how, what do you mean, Sir?” Juan spattered, trying his best. Although mischievous, he was a horrible liar. “You mean, put something in your drink. Ah, forget about it, it’s nothing. Okay, okay, we may have given you special energy orange juice.”

“You little shits, the both of you! I knew it. I have never fucked....” Brad caught himself before he blurted out the events of that particular morning. Fucking Rick over the railing, coming twice without a softening prick, he had drilled the poor doctor like a demolition hammer. It wasn’t something the leader of Phoenix wanted to advertise. “What do you mean special? If you drugged the food, you could kill someone!” The doctor immediately jumped in, not only to defend Brad but his honor too. “Damn, giving someone drugs is never safe.”

Aaand Juan lost his cool.

“Come on, Doctor! I knew what I was doing. It is not my first rodeo with chemistry. I’m not just a cook with weird-ass proclivities; I have a Ph.D. in Chemistry. So I know what I’m doing.” Juan defended himself, making sure the doctor knew there were two doctors in the storage room.

“Dear g-d, what have you been doing in that kitchen? Have you been cooking up drugs and feeding it to the men? Juan, if

I find out you have been drugging the men, you will be the first person to be court-martialed. And you Drew,” he pointed his fingers to the two cooks, back and forth. Brad thought about Simon and Paul. He worried about his kids getting drugged. “You are in this with him too, so you are just as much in trouble.”

“No, Sir, the men know about Juan’s “Rooster Booster Juice,” they ask for it all the time.

“Are you saying the men of Phoenix are addicted to your what? “Rooster Booster Juice,” Drew and Rick said in unison. Brad looked at Rick, seeing the man wanted to laugh at the situation.

“Nooo, they can’t be addicted, it’s just vitamins, it’s harmless, it just wakes the brain cells that signals you are aroused,” Drew said like it’s nothing. “Anyway, even if you overdose, it is just like edging someone for hours. No one has died from a bit of edging. At least not that I’ve heard off. If you take the person out of the situation, the horniness goes away and they piss all the vitamins down the drain. It’s all in the mind.” He pointed to his head and then to his dick. “All in the mind,” he repeated. You were just very hornyyyy for your doctor here.” Juan said.

“You should stop that immediately. It’s not safe. Men might die.” Rick, the healthcare professional said; who looked at Juan and Drew, reprimanding them as if they were ten-year-old children.

Juan, batting his long eyelashes at the general, feigned acquiescence. “Okay, you tell the men the “Rooster Booster Juice” is not safe; they have had the juice for almost five years, it’s not killed, anyone. And when we have our shows, we have the liquid all the time. But tell them one of their few pleasures in life is now forbidden and I can respectfully assure you there will be an outcry of cruel and unusual punishment. I’ll bet you my dildo collection on that.”

“Shows, what shows? Why haven’t I heard of shows?” Brad asked, disregarding Juan’s emotional outburst. He was getting increasingly irritated with the whole prisoner in the closet

game. It was stuffy in the small supply room, and Brad's enormous perimeter of personal space was not being respected, so the room was not working for him at all. *Drew takes up most of the bloody space, and he is so sturdy, he can block an oil tanker from entering a harbor.* Brad thought as he tried to conjure up an escape plan.

“Exactlyyyy, that is what we are saying. Wait! You didn't know about the shows? How were you not sent an invitation? Drew darling, make a note to find out how the General's many invitations fell through the cracks. Oh well Sir, no worries; we'll fix the glitch. Come to the ballroom tonight, after the wedding. We will organize the rest. I will speak to Sirs, after the celebration, only if you see what we can do, then you will understand. Chop-chop!” He brazenly snapped his fingers at Brad and Rick. Brad decided to respond with silence because he would either explode or pass out, so going with the flow was the fastest route out of the tiny room.

Spoiling this day was the last thing he wanted to do to Connor and Mika's day. *Anyways, this is not a military institution.* He reminded himself again; it's a mantra he had on autoplay in his mind. He also knows Juan had never been in the military, so he didn't have the same reference to respect and discipline as a soldier. Also, there was something amiable, although feminine, about Juan, especially how he snapped his fingers and flicked his wrist at them. Brad found the pair was growing on him; the longer he spoke to the “Laurel and Hardy team,” the more they amused him. Both were colorful weird creatures and so bloody, uniquely demanding; he doubted anyone ever said no to them.

“We have lots to do and a wedding cake to bake. Just let the men know it is a tux affair. We want to have a posh night for Mika and Connor. They should page two-four-four-five for a tuxedo, or if they want to wear a ball gown or something else, it doesn't matter, they will page and we will help them get ready for an astronomical night.” Juan said with a lot of flair and pizazz.

“What do you mean you will supply them with tuxedos, a ball gown, or whatever?” Brad felt confused again; Juan was

talking circles around him. At this stage, he just wanted to get out of the damn small room, but the two fuckers were blocking the entrance. So he caved. “Okay, I will page the general population, not Mika and Connor saying we have a wedding tonight and the reception would be in the ballroom. Anyone wanting to come needing a tuxedo should page two-four-four-five and they would be assisted, right?”

“Riiiiight, I, Juan, and Drew will sort the rest. Don’t forget to mention the ball gowns. Some of the soldiers love wearing the ball gowns.”

“What time is the wedding?” The friendly teddy bear of a man asked.

“It starts at 6 p.m. Unfortunately, I don’t have a Tuxedo. Can you help me?” Rick asked, realizing he never planned on wearing something special for the wedding; he would have just arrived in smart casual street clothes.

“I have my formal Mess Dress, I did plan to perform the wedding wearing that, so I guess I won’t be needing a tuxedo,” Brad said as he started to understand the plainness of the wedding he had planned. He began to feel guilty because he never thought of treating his best friend with a wedding to remember. He started to appreciate the two characters in front of him. “I see where you are going with this, thank you. Maybe we should tell Mika and Connor to postpone. That way, we can all be ready for what you envisioned for a wedding reception.”

“Absolutely not, no, no, no, no, no, no!” Again, with the wrist flicking, but this time, the nos flew left, right, and up and down, across and over Brad. Like a holy cross, an exorcist fending off evil. Brad and Rick couldn’t keep up with all the nos. “We have lots of helpers.” Finally, Juan stomped his feet and said very convincingly, “yes, we have lots of tuxes, just page us, so we can give you directions. General, you just do that for us, and we will sort the rest; we will be ready at 7 p.m. in the ballroom.”

With that, he swung around and swooshed the door open, and with the flamboyance and happiness of a demon leaving

hell, he chuckled at them.

Brad and Rick were stupefied. “Fuck me sideways, and swivel on it. I swear those two are incubi,” Rick chuckled, grabbing his knees to prevent himself from falling over.

“Absolutely not, no, no, no, no, no, no!” Brad copied Juan as they laughed. “I will see you tonight, lover,” Rick said and leaned in for a deep kiss. “We better go, or we will never leave the closet.” They laughed and excitedly decided to meet up for a shower before the wedding later that afternoon. Brad felt like he was walking on air, but in the back of his mind, he knew this day of happy tidings would be short-lived. He was worried because he knew winter was coming.

“I, Connor Patrick Sullivan O’Hara, promise to love you, Mika, and take into serious consideration all that you ask me to do. I willingly give you my respect, my love, my loyalty, my body and promise my fidelity to you alone for as long as we both shall love the other.”

“I, Mika Ivan Nicolai Peter Romanov, promise to love you, Connor, and take into consideration all that you ask me to do. I willingly give you my respect, my love, my loyalty, my honor, my body, and my family name, and promise my complete fidelity to you alone for as long as we both shall love the other.”

“Mika and Connor, I pronounce you husband and husband,” Brad stated with a smile and a wink. “You may kiss your husband.” Mika put his arms around Connor, and the two kissed long and deep until Connor, his face red from the neck up, forced Mika to let him come up for air. Laughter could be heard throughout the simple little chapel. “Having heard both of these men speak soberly from their hearts and voicing their love and commitment each to the other in front of these witnesses, it is my pleasure to present to you Mika and Connor Romanov!” Simon and Paul were tasked with taking pictures. Brad had asked them, and they eagerly accepted. “Smile for the camera,” Paul asked while clicking away. While he was doing the photos for Mika and Connor, Simon was taking

videos in the background. They already knew what Juan and his minions had planned. They would leave ahead of the entourage, so they would have the best view of the newlywed's faces when they entered the ballroom.

As soon as they were out of the chapel door, Connor turned to Mika. "That was a dirty trick you played, Mika."

"Mika doesn't know what you are talking about. Let's get to apartment before people think I am happy to see them," Mika said, indicating his tented trousers and changing the subject.

"Don't pull that Russian accent on me, Mika. You changed your vow to say that you give me your family name. That wasn't there at rehearsal, and then Brad introduced us as only Romanov, not Romanov-O'Hara."

"I know my Gille-Toine, but please understand I just want you to have my name. I don't want to share you with another family name. We are one family, not a hyphenated one. But if it upsets you, we can change it before Brad has it entered into his logs."

Connor thought about it very quickly. "No, let's not change it if it means that much to you. It's a compliment to me that you want me to be yours alone and for everyone to know it. But you are going to have to quit calling me Gille-Toine. Calling the father of your son's a little fuck buddy just won't do."

"But they won't know Gaelic unless you teach them. However, they will learn Russian; it is their cultural obligation, so you must stop calling me Yelda. They will wonder why their father is always calling their father Big Cock. They might slip up and call me that in front of their teacher or something." They laughed and kissed. Before they could escape down the corridor, Brad and the guests sped past them.

"Gentlemen! The men of Phoenix have a surprise for you before you get any ideas about slipping away. We will all now proceed to the ballroom." Brad said, very proud of his maneuvering with Phoenix's men today. They were all so excited, and Brad was happy to be part of the plan. He decided

to let Juan and his vitamin “Rooster Booster Juice” go but would ask Mika to test a sample to ensure its safety. If it had not had any adverse effects over the last five years, why worry about it now? Nevertheless, he would call on Juan and Drew to discuss things like this that need council and medical approval before putting something into residents’ juice.

“What ballroom?” Connor and Mika asked. “The Blue Ballroom,” the crowd collecting around them answered. They looked like sugar starved kids in front of an ice cream truck, arms stretched out, trying to shake hands with the grooms to congratulate them.

Brad was acting as traffic director. “Wait, please wait, men, let’s move along; we might trample each other to death.” Brad continued leading the crowd while he explained over his shoulder, “ I know right, it was a secret affair room, and now we are all privy to it. The Blue Ballroom is the one on the far side of the Communications Dome. Drew and Juan from Nutritional Services have a cake cutting and a little entertainment planned for you there. The men wanted to congratulate you and be part of your nuptial celebrations!” They all followed Brad, Mika, and Connor. The boys, Simon and Paul, click-clicked as much as they could as the line behind them got longer and louder, like a gaggle of geese.

Juan, Drew, and their teams of busybodies had worked fast, hard, and efficiently. Juan had organized them into four groups of ten men to answer the pager, assist with clothing options at the clothing warehouse they had discovered a year ago. Rows and rows of tuxedos and suits and gowns of every style, size, and color, just hanging there waiting to disintegrate and be eaten by moths or whatever eats clothes in Antarctica. But, of course, a proper drag queen can’t have that, so ever since then, they’d had their Blue Ballroom events on a weekly basis. Tonight they would perform a Moulin Rouge early 1900 cabaret for the grooms to be.

To create an authentic city of love, Paris, where lovers like to travel to when they go on a honeymoon, they had constructed an eleven foot Eiffel Tower on the left side of the stage, the tables were decorated with silver and blue

trimmings, and for fun, each had chocolates in little Eiffel tower shapes. For lights, tiny toy street lamps on Christmas LED's decorated the tables and walkways. Ten massive flat-screen TVs had been installed on the walls every fifty feet for those who wouldn't be able to directly see the stage, they would have close-up views of the performances. When no one was on stage performing; scenes from the City of Love, the Arc de Triomphe, and people walking hand in hand in the streets at night would play to enhance the romantic ambiance.

On the stage was a gigantic red windmill, which had been constructed a while ago. This was one of Juan's favorite acts, therefore readily available for tonight as it was stored backstage with the other props, so that had been easy enough to bring in.

As the humming noise of men grew closer, the guests jumped up to form a human tunnel or guard of honor, so the newly married couple could walk through and receive their congratulations.

It took the couple a good 45 minutes to walk through, and by the time they sat down, Mika grabbed the bottle of champagne and downed it. When the show began, Connor was still talking to one of the last men, slapping him in a congratulatory man hug. Servers ran as Mika waved them on, "bring me a bottle of Vodka. If you can't find one, send Paul or Simon to get one in our apartment and another bottle of champagne for my husband. Spasibo," he thanked him in Russian.

"What's wrong, husband? Is the attention-getting too much for you?" Connor asked Mika, really enjoying the surprise. He would have been happy just going to their apartment and locking Mika and himself up and away from everyone, but it felt good to see so many happy faces, just accepting them and their love.

"No, Mika is just thirsty, very thirsty. And, hungry for cock!" He shouted, and those sitting close enough to hear cheered.

As the couple settled down, the show was underway; Connor moved his chair so he could sit-lie onto Mika's side.

Juan was on stage, in the highest heels Mika had ever seen. "Look at those heels," Mika told Connor, who replied, "he has damn beautiful legs." Mika just laughed; it was precisely what he thought his husband would say. The man on stage lip-synced while dressed in black fishnet stockings and a black and red corset. His hair was gelled to the side, making a slight wave and a curl at the end, so he looked the part of a 1900 lady of the night in Paris as he finished the first song from the "Moulin Rouge" soundtrack called Your Song. Mika and Connor sang with the chorus to each other, "how wonderful life is while you're in the world."

Juan finished his performance, putting on a thick black faux fur, shoulder to ankle-length coat. Then he congratulated the happy couple, thanked everyone for helping, and gave Brad an extra deep curtsy, for helping and supporting the effort. Next, he announced the second act and that dinner was self-serve, starting with the newlywed's table. Thus, guests could grab their dinner during the performance. And, after dinner, the third act would be a surprise guest performance.

While finishing their dinner, one of the servers called Mika, saying he had a question about the Vodka. Connor thought that odd but was too full and tired to care much about it. So, he sat and enjoyed the last bits of the show.

All went dark and quiet. Then, finally, Juan announced that the last surprise performance was about to get started. Connor wondered where his husband was. Then, the lights came on, and there in the middle of the stage, stood Mika. He was dressed in a traditional Russian wardrobe. He had a pair of bright blue narrow silky trousers on, an oversized traditional Russian rubakha, a black belt with high black boots. Around his neck was a shiny gold chain with a medal-like piece of jewelry.

Connor was shocked, speechless. In front of him on the stage stood the last Romanov Tsar in all his glory. Not that he is advertising it. "Fuck, he is beautiful," Connor said as the room roared with approval of his g-d of a man.

“Gentleman, the groom has prepared a dance for his husband. It is a traditional Russian warrior dance. Connor, we want you to come to sit right in front of the stage.” Juan announced, and with that said, Connor and his chair flew into the air as six men lifted him, while still sitting in his chair. Connor was overtaken by emotion. Tears rolled down his face. As soon as Mika saw his tears, he started crying. Then the whole room was teary, “g-d, what a beautiful night,” Connor said. Then the room fell silent as Mika lifted the microphone and began to sing in Russian. You could hear a pin drop as his magnificently pure voice enthralled the whole of Phoenix as they listened to the Russian serenade his lover, his husband. Connor spat snot, smiles, and tears left and right.

When the song was done, the room exploded with applause. Mika threw the microphone down to Juan, who caught it and switched it off. Then, all the lights went off, except for one spotlight on Mika and Connor. On the television screens, both men shared the screen, so those in the back could enjoy both reactions simultaneously. Paul and Simon were managing the lights and cameras like professionals.

Rhythmic clapping and feet stomping started; it was coming from the stage. It was Mika, and Juan followed suit, and not long, the whole bloody Phoenix were clapping, while Mika went down on his haunches, shooting one leg after the other into the air. That’s when Connor realized he had tapping boots on. His man jumped up and tapped to the beat of the clapping crowd. It went on and on, and Mika was drenched in sweat. He ended his groom dance extravagantly as he jumped up in the air, tapped his boots, spun, and landed at the end of the stage an arm’s length from Connor. All Connor could think was, *don’t you dare have a heart attack, because tonight I’m going to fuck you till you die.* Drew brought the Russian a towel and a bottle of water. As Mika caught his breath and finished the water, he beckoned Juan closer for the microphone.

“Phew, what a night!” The crowd cheered, then Juan signaled them to shut the fuck up, or else. So they shut up.

“Connor, my husband, that was my way of blessing our marriage. I will fight for you and our family to my last breath.

Thank you for taking my last name; you know my name has a big significance. I sang for you how much you mean to me, I danced for you to show you how hard I will fight for you, and with this last gift, I want to show you how precious you are to me. I want to present to you the double-headed eagle. The Romanov crest is a family heirloom. Created by Fabergé, a gift Nicholas II had made for the czarina. The last royal commission to Fabergé. But was never delivered and was retrieved by Mikas' great grandfather at Fabergé in Paris." Connor got up and kissed Mika long and deep and appreciated the gold-encrusted sapphires and diamonds. He did not have words. Mika was in the process of lifting the Irishman fireman style.

"No, no, no, no, no, no!" Juan stopped them before it went further. "Not now, come cut your cake, then you can go."

"Yes, please, I want coffee, too," said Connor. The cake was pushed closer on a small serving trolley. It was a plain white cake, three layers with two husbands on top. Connor and Mika cut and fed each other cake. Then Mika grabbed Connor's hand and ran for the exit.

The two men made a hasty retreat to their apartment, where they remained for three days; their meals cooked by Juan were delivered to them, a gift from Brad and Rick.

Bryan and Tony, as their gift, had set up a monitoring system in their apartment that had one camera focused on the bubbling sphere and another which gave constant readouts of all the graphs and recalculations.

Announcements about the couple's sons were not made before the ceremony so that the wedding would focus only on Mika and Connor. General McCormick's orders were that no one was to bother the couple during their three-day retreat.

News about the impending births of Connor and Mika's sons was released to the general population two days later, but only after guards were put in place and a schedule posted assuring that a qualified person would be monitoring the development of the boys at all times.

Even the darkness that was enveloping the world did not dampen the spirits of the men of Phoenix. Tony Bonillo's volcanic tap had been successful; the turbines turned to keep the batteries charged, the food growth lights lit, and the men warm. So far, the fossil fuel generators had not been used but made the men feel safe and secure if needed.

In the next few months, the Romanov fetuses were developing into healthy baby boys. Connor and Mika enjoyed standing by the large sphere and watching the boys kick and move to different positions. Connor was fascinated by the tiny hands that would make fists. Mika liked to see the movement of their eyes beneath lids so delicate that capillaries were visible. The time before they could hold their sons seemed like an eternity away, but it was set for less than two weeks.

Brad presented a set of rules pertaining to having children, which the council supported, as did the entire voting population. Several applications were already in and approved, including one from Paul and Simon. After some convincing, Brad himself signed the approval for the birth of a grandson, stipulating that first, both parents had to have their degree, be assigned to a working project, and work on their masters, to which they readily agreed.

Connor's photo gathering showed more volcanic activity, but the dreaded ring of fire had not had a chain reaction in eruptions so far. Mika was concerned about how much longer the powerful telescopic satellites would penetrate the growing debris in the atmosphere. Weather patterns were radically changing, and tidal waves indicated heavy seismic activity. Fortunately, none had reoccurred in the vicinity of Phoenix. As a precaution, Mika asked Tony to design a balancing station with steel lattice on the sides and a solid top for the precious sphere and its instrumentation to be done post haste. In the event of a severe quake, the globe would gently rock as the intricately designed floor balanced itself.

Chapter Twenty-Two

“Rise and shine, Phoenix residents.

It is I Lasitor, wishing you a happy morning, it is now 6 a.m.

Of particular note, yours truly will be giving a historically significant seminar called “Live Your Happiest Life.” It is a two-part miniseries. The first part will teach you the art of pleasing a woman intimately, conversationally, and how best to keep her feeling like the queen she is: opening a car door for her, pulling her chair out, etc. Part two is the art of flower bouquet design and examples of how to say, “I was wrong, you were right, I’m sorry.”

It’s a dark comedy written to not only amuse but inspire and give hope to those who are waiting for a woman to materialize. So please don’t jam the internet by signing up. Yes, you’ve guessed right; it’s available on our community news page.

Breakfast is served until 8 a.m.

Good luck, it’s going to be a busy day.”

Best case scenario

Two things happened before the birth of the Romanov twins. First, a wide-angle shot of the former United States indicated that California, Oregon, and part of Washington were not there, only an expanded Pacific Ocean. The second thing was a signal via the International Space Station calling for assistance and referring to themselves as EP-III.

Emergency meetings were called, and response attempts were discussed. However, a rescue mission could not be formed given Phoenix was amid the natural seasonal winter, which meant constant-dark with extremely low temperatures and fierce storms. Also, a worldwide storm was taking place outside of Antarctica.

While Connor worked on getting more information and connecting with EP-III, Mika evaluated the missing landmass from the United States. He made calculations of which only he knew the meaning. Then grimly called Connor, Brad, Rick, Simon, and Paul to his lecture room. When all the men were assembled, they knew by his face that something cataclysmic was about to be shared.

“Gentleman, this may be the last time that we meet together,” he began as he walked over and took a seat by Connor and took his husband’s hand in his. “Approximately one-thousand-mile-wide stretch of land from where the Baja Peninsula used to be up into the former state of Washington is under the ocean. A gigantic wave of near extinction level will hit all of Asia over the next few hours. I suspect that somewhere in this area is or was EP-III. We may never know the answer to that.”

“Good g-d, Mika. What’s it mean for us?” Brad asked.

“I was coming to that, Comrade. If my calculations are correct, I must caution you that I only have part of the facts; there will be a chain reaction of events caused by seafloor quakes, producing waves of unbelievable size. So, if I am correct, this wave will be wind-driven and given birth by the America-Asia wave. That wave will be typical, devastating,

but typical. It will come across the Pacific floor and not show itself until it is ready to swell and rise as it nears land. In our case, it will be a visible sea top wave. Hitting the coast near McMurdo, they might grow higher as the waves travel inland towards Phoenix, but I doubt it. The speed of the tsunami waves may be as fast as jet planes. Still, when they hit the ice surrounding Antarctica, I took into account the fact that we are in the middle of winter and that the ice stretches for miles, forming a protective ring around Antarctica. That and the fact that Phoenix was built deep into the shadows of a mountain range on three sides and those could be factors that would help slow down the water and lessen the force of destruction. Our higher altitude and the blocks of ice forming natural water breakers may be our saving grace, but I don't think we would escape untouched."

"What will happen, Mika?" Simon asked, holding hands with Paul.

"Best case scenario is that it will be diverted by the ice and the Victoria Sound mass. In which instance we will get a windstorm of cataclysmic proportions which Phoenix may or may not survive."

"The worst-case scenario will be what?" Asked Brad, letting Rick hold his hand.

"The wave will head and breach the glacial pass and flood this valley we are in, which means that I have to narrow developing a favorable survival statistic," Mika stated simply and softly.

"When will this event take place and what are your recommendations, Mika?" Brad asked.

"If I were Commander, I would make an overhead announcement activating the emergency response we practiced. There is no time to call a general assembly; we have sixteen hours at best, but it could hit in twelve. I would order the dome lids shut and secured by titanium bolts. I would have Tony's men activate the water breaker system. Also, flatten and place as many satellite dishes as possible face down to the valley floor. Just like we prepare for earthquakes, order all

medical supplies and machinery possible to the caverns, and have anything that can be transported taken to the caverns. When this is done, Bryan and Tony, who knows the lava tube system probably better than anyone, should guide everyone up the tubes to be as high in the mountain as possible; the water may not reach you, and it should recede in a matter of weeks if you are lucky perhaps days. If we have done our jobs well and Phoenix is air and watertight, it just might survive with minimal structural damage. However, if we were breached, the water would freeze within hours. I see no way to save the airplane and other heavy equipment not stored in the machinery dome will be lost, which means leaving here will probably be out of the question.

I hate to rush off the good company, but you best get started now. My and Connor's thoughts will be with you. Gentlemen." That said, Mika and Connor stood and started for Mika's lab.

"Where are you two going?" Demanded Brad.

"To be with our sons. It is impossible to move the sphere without endangering them, and we have chosen to sit by them."

"You are essential here! You must come with us," insisted Brad.

"Brad," Connor smiled at his friend and superior, "would you leave Simon if he was confined to a bed and moving him would kill him? I think you would not. You can't expect Mika and I to do any differently. If we survived, we would never be able to forgive ourselves. Also, those alarms could sound any minute, indicating that the boys need to be extracted from the sphere. Who knows, we may get to hold them, if only for a while." Brad nodded agreement and started making a general announcement even as Connor and Mika left the room for the lab.

Hours went by with a flurry of activity. Finally, nearing the twelve-hour mark, winds could be heard like thunderbolts assaulting the domes of Phoenix.

"Soldiers, you have done your job well. You best get to the cavern and tubes while there are still people to guide you up."

Mika told the two young men who had been charged with guarding the unborn children.

“Thank you, Sir, but we have talked about it and decided to stay on duty with you. If those alarms go off, you will need help,” Private Fritz told Mika.

Malcolm, the other Private, agreed, “When I left home for here, my wife had given birth to our son, not a month before. I would be overjoyed seeing a baby one last time.”

“Thank you, but that is going above and beyond,” Connor said to the men. “You should be with your friends in case they need help.”

“You are our friends, and Malcolm is a little more than a friend to me, and we want to be here,” Fritz explained.

In about ten minutes, as the storm picked up outside, the inhabitants of Mika’s lab could hear the occasional crash of metal or possibly rocks hitting the lab pod. “Is it here?” Connor asked nervously.

“No, love, it’s too soon. If I calculated correctly, this is going to go against the law of nature. The wind will not come with the wave but a few hours before. So it will be a while if the water comes at all.” Mika replied, leaning over and kissing Connor lightly on the lips.

A noise was heard at the entrance to the lab. In walked Peter and Rick. “What are you doing here?” Demanded Mika, standing up.

“I’m here to help bring those boys into the world in a few hours,” Peter responded like it was an absurd question.

“They need you. You must think of the men of Phoenix.” Connor said, but selfishly feeling thankful to see his friends.

“Well, in a few hours, you are going to need me more than they do. Besides, if the water destroys the buildings and the labs, they will have little need for a geneticist. I’ve spent a lot of time working for these boys to come into the world safely. So I’m not abandoning them or you and your husband now. Besides, I don’t have anyone, just the occasional mouth at

Quik-Fix Hall. So I won't discuss it any further." Peter explained while assessing the health status of the twins.

"Rick, are you sure Brad doesn't need you? Maybe Fritz and Malcolm can escort you down to the cavern? He would be lost all over again if something happened to you." Connor pleaded, now worried about his friend being alone.

"I talked to Brad. He is a man of dedication and practicality, just as I am. His commitment is to save the men of Phoenix as best he can. My commitment and oath is to save lives. At the moment, I can best do that here. Brad agreed that realistically if Phoenix is destroyed, every man in those tubes is doomed by drowning or freezing to death over the next several weeks or months. I would be able to do little about that. Besides, I'm an Apache. I will walk with Brad always in my heart even if my heart does not beat."

The men got quiet, and all of them, even the soldiers, sat on chairs in a semi-circle behind the two fathers and waited. Occasionally someone would share a Predoomsday memory about childhood and babies. Connor and Mika held hands and watched their boys kick and raise their tiny arms. Fritz and Malcolm shared a kiss and held hands. All of the men had pools of water in their eyes, ready to spill over onto their cheeks, thinking of things that could have been.

Epilogue

The usual chaos and confusion accompanying emergencies and natural disasters were not present when Brad activated his well-chosen emergency preparedness team. No one panicked; The men of Phoenix knew what to do down to the last man. Brad had announced that it was not a drill but the imminent threat of a tsunami. Immediately the titanium metal shutters closed, securing each dome and their connecting corridors. They had taken the steps diligently prepared over the past three years. The emergency management group consisted of soldiers, medics, and other volunteers who managed the evacuation smoothly. The buffering system and water breakers were initiated to break and divert the waters down the valley between the plateau and the foot of the mountain range. Thus, hopefully, avoiding flooding Phoenix and the upward slope of the cave system in which Brad and the men taken refuge. After the first big earthquake, Phoenix had taken that as a learning opportunity. The population was broken up into small groups; each had a task to complete before they made their way into the winding tubes of the vat cavern system. . The smaller teams encouraged group cohesion and prevented splintering and unnecessary rescue missions. Right now, the group of most concern was the one deciding to stay with the unborn twins.

Brad had convinced himself that he had been given a lifetime of happiness with Rick in the last several months. But, like the soldier and scientist he was, he accepted the finiteness of existence. He and the men of Phoenix had waged an honorable battle for survival. The next several hours would determine the direction fate would take them. Would Phoenix be repairable, assuming it still stood, or if the water came and did not recede as Mika thought it would, or would they be sealed in a tunnel only to suffer a slow demise? Fortunately, they had an emergency preparedness plan in place, so they grabbed personalized emergency kits that included enough drinking water and food for each person to last several days. In addition, each man carried something that would contribute to the group's survival, including portable radios, batteries,

chargers, oxygen tanks, blankets, axes, and sundry other useful items.

In the lab where the six men sat waiting, accepting, and hoping, a huge wrenching of steel twisting was heard, and a thunderous crash against the side of their pod shook the structure to its foundation; the precious sphere swayed gently, thanks to the ingenuity of Tony Bonillo. They could not see the outside; all windows had been placed in protection mode with quarter-inch titanium steel sheeting. Now only the steady rumble of the wind assaulted their ears. Connor leaned against Mika. “I have truly loved you above anyone else who has ever been in my life,” the Irishmen whispered even though he knew the other four men could hear him.

“I know you have, and you are the first person I have ever loved. It has been enough,” replied Mika, running his thumb along his husband’s ivory, pale cheek and kissing his black hair.

The alarms sounded, the intense medical whine was emitted from several monitors; the men jumped from their chairs, some of them overturning.

“It is time!” Mika yelled. “They must be extracted.” The lights in the room flickered but did not fail. They flickered again and went out. Backup batteries kicked in at the same time Tony’s turbine reactivated and sent a surge of electricity to the delicate machinery, causing some pops and cracks, but nothing that shouted fire. Connor was the first to notice. “The sphere has stopped bubbling, is it supposed to stop?”

“Fuck! The oxygen infusion system has failed! We’ve five minutes to do a fifteen-minute extraction!” Mika yelled and started manually undoing valves, afraid the auto-open would either fail or take too long. He was working from gut instinct/challenging for any scientist to do. Peter was on the opposite side, mimicking everything Mika was doing. Mika shouted to him in German, thinking it would speed up Peter’s responses if he didn’t have to mentally translate from English to his native German. Rick and Connor were scrubbing up and trying to avoid being in the way. The two young soldiers, on Connor’s

orders, were retrieving a small table and linens. Hands now sterile, Connor could only stand back and pray.

, A wave of leviathan proportions going six hundred miles per hour, sped toward the Antarctica continent and the men of Phoenix. As Mika had predicted, it hit Antarctica near McMurdo Bay, the ice sheet surrounding Antarctica, which ran in a two-hundred-mile radius along the continent, and grows to maximum thickness and distance from the coastline during winter, would help buffer against the wave's impact.

Ivan and Cian were born five minutes before the Tsunami hit Antarctica; Mika and Peter suctioned the babies airways while they rubbed and stimulated the twins to take their first breath outside their artificial womb and cry. Peter clamped both umbilical cords. He did not offer the dads the traditional opportunity of cutting the cords as there was no time for tradition. Instead, he gave each boy their vitamin K shot before wrapping them up in their pre-warmed baby blankets. The boys were screaming their little lungs open. Mika and Connor had seconds to hug and congratulate each other as they both admired their newborns; they were pink and healthy-looking, indicating they were getting enough oxygen. "Apgar score of ten out of ten," Rick told the new proud fathers. Mika and Connor nodded a thank you. Each held a baby swaddled in their safe cocoon when the whole of Phoenix rumbled, and the ground underneath their feet trembled. Just like the day the earthquake first hit Phoenix, but this time the rumbling never ceased, it continued, and it grew louder. Finally, explosive cracking noises startled all of them into action.

"Come, we need to get to the highest point. We have minutes before the worst hits us; that was the wave hitting the coast," Mika said as they ran for the tubes.

Halfway there, Mika had an idea, *we should climb into one of Peter's fridges, the empty fridge*. "Peter, your office? The temperatures are regulated, and it is supplied with oxygen. If the valley floods, we would be safely sealed inside until it recedes. I can not think of a safer place for the babies to be. We can feed them, keep them warm and wait the worst out. What do you say, Connor?"

“If you think it is safer for the twins, we should go; what do you say, Peter?”

“Excellent idea, let’s go!” Peter yelled, turning in the opposite direction from the cave system. As they started to run, Rick stopped in his tracks, “I’m not going. I want to find Brad, you go on without me.”

The two guards looked at each other, and nodded in the affirmative to each other, “it’s decided, we will accompany him. Come Doctor, we will escort you. We know these tunnels. Come Dr. Longarrow, follow us!” Connor and Mika nodded in agreement.

“Be safe, my friends!” Connor called after the three men who were darting into the underground caves. Once again, the building shook, and anything that was not tied down was rattling, bouncing, and crashing to the floor.

“Come this way,” Mika yelled, pressing his thumb and forefinger protectively over the baby’s ears. It looked like they were walking at a steep incline as the building was undulating, stretching to maximum capacity. Just as they entered the Cryonics laboratory, the steel door behind them swooshed closed. That was the automatic door locking system; sealing the pod, just as Tony had designed it to do.

All corridors and domes had activated the double sealed vacuum locks. A safety mechanism designed to unlock only when the pressure on both sides stabilized and the sensors did not detect H₂O or outside climate would the doors reopen. *The safest place we can be is inside a walk-in freezer.* Mika confirmed to himself.

“Come, friends.” Peter indicated, pointing at a nondescript door. This one I use as an office and to sleep in.”

The room /office (or the walk-in refrigerator) wasn’t big by most standards, about 15 feet by 15 feet, but adequate enough for a desk, a chair, and a small cot. “Sit there on the cot, make yourselves at home. Have you decided on names?” Peter asked in an attempt to lessen the angst in the air.

“Cian,” Mika said, “we are naming the baby after Connor’s grandfather.”

Connor got the little glass bottles filled with lab-created milk for the twins’ first feeding. Peter proceeded to close the massive steel door manually; it closed with a whoosh, sealing them inside. The office desk lamp gave enough light, so Mika, who sat next to Connor, was able to adoringly watch the two baby boys. Connor said, “this one is definitely Ivan; I think I am deaf in the right ear; he hasn’t stopped screaming for his brother.” Connor handed one milk bottle to Mika, and the two boys fed hungrily. A sudden silence fell over Phoenix.

In the cave system, Rick and the two guards ran as fast as they safely could; Rick had to stop a few times to catch his breath. “Come doctor, it is not far now; it’s just around the next turn,” Fritz shouted. The rumbling was deafening; loud snaps and cracks were heard, coming from no identifiable direction. It sounded as if the mountains were going to crash down on the three asylum seekers.

“How will we know if the water has reached us? I keep thinking the rumbling can’t continue this long; something else must be going on!” Rick yelled above the roar.

“Come, doctor! This is not the time to stop and ask questions.” Just as the lead soldier was rushing Rick, a massive piece of rock fell from the cavern roof. “Fuck, we are going to die here, run doctor!” His guard repeated. They ran. Rick did not stop to look back. Suddenly all the tube lights went black, leaving the men running blindly in the dark. “Stop! We can’t run if we can’t see.”

“Wait, what’s that?” In the distance, small lights glittered, “I think that is Brad and some of the men. Brad!” Rick shouted.

They heard someone calling back, so they stayed in place and waited to be found and be led out of the darkness. When Brad and his men reached them, Fritz discovered Malcolm was no longer with them. “Where is Malcolm?”

“Who?” Brad asked.

“Malcolm and Fritz volunteered to bring me to you. I don’t know where we could have lost him.”

“We have to find him!” Brad ordered. Three men jumped up. “We will go back for him, Sir; we have light.” Fritz and the three volunteers sprinted into the darkness, with Brad and Rick on their heels. The inhuman wailing from Fritz echoed through the tunnels, signaling that the search party had found Malcolm.

“Here! We found him!” They called as Brad and Rick ran another thirty yards into the dark tunnel. Fritz held Malcolm, but his body lay at an odd, unnatural angle. The young soldier gave heart-wrenching cries and repeated “no, no, no,” as he sat on his knees with his best friend and lover’s body draped over him. “Malcolm, what is wrong? Are you ok?” He asked as he turned him over and cradled his head in his arms. The men were horrified by what they saw. Where the left eye should have been was a mushy hole filled with minced brain matter and bone fragments. The right eye had a dilated pupil. It was stiff in his head, staring into nothingness, all glazed over. Obviously, Malcolm was dead, his hair was drenched with blood dripping from the empty eye socket. Fritz sobbed his lover’s nickname, “Mally, Mally,” he cried over and over but got no response. Rick did a quick A-B-C assessment, uselessly checking for vitals. Then, finally, he looked up to Brad and shook his head. Brad came over putting his arm around Fritz, who was crying hysterically for his Mally.

“Must have been a projectile rock,” Brad said softly to Rick.

“Or something,” Rick said as he pointed as inconspicuously as possible, to the back of Malcolm’s head. Indicating an exit wound.

“Let’s carry him to the light so I can do a thorough assessment.”

“Sorry, about your friend, my boy, come,” Brad said, as he started to help Fritz carry Malcolm.

“He was more than a friend, Sir. Please let me carry him.” Brad honored his soldier’s request and backed away. After putting him down safely, the boy held and rocked his lover, softly crying over his body. The men respected his time of

sorrow, giving him space and support. The sound of despair was chilling and hair-raising. The Phoenix men were all gathered at the highest known point they could reach. It was not cold; in fact, the warm mist was stifling. They were high above the dry valley of Phoenix domes; the roaring had stopped, and the men waited for whatever might be next.

Some prayed to a g-d that never seemed to respond but somehow eased their minds. Others tried to fathom what entering an eternal black void would feel like but could not grasp the concept. Others took the opportunity to find a hidden cove where they could grope, fondle or suck another man in the darkness, not giving a damn if their sounds carried to others.

Simon sat between his father and Paul, the two people he loved most in the world. He was glad that Rick had come to join them. Rick was comforting the men and asked around to offer help. Most had their hands linked together. They spoke of new allegiances and happiness they had found since coming to Phoenix. But always, their conversations drifted back to the men watching the twins, hopefully, safe inside Peter's Cryonics lab. The baby boys had given them all hope for a future.

The water reached Phoenix but at a snail's pace. As Mika predicted, it reached a height of three feet and then froze in place. Most of the damage was due to earthquakes and wind. Somehow, they were all but one spared. Phoenix's total number of residents is now precisely two thousand and one souls.

Several hours later, Rick had performed an autopsy on Malcolm, confirming he had died from traumatic brain injury due to an unidentified projectile, typical of a gunshot wound. Brad, Rick, Mika, Connor, and Bryan decided to keep the information quiet so Bryan could investigate. After the funeral, which was a cremation, Phoenix was moving back into normalcy; they ensured that the water supply had been inspected and officially declared safe for use. Not a single area of Phoenix had been breached by the water. The Romanov

family grew into a bigger apartment. The twins were visited by so many, and so often, new uncles popped in daily with gifts and good wishes. Connor decided to break through to the empty apartment next door to them, so the boys had a bigger room to entertain their numerous visitors.

Brad's lottery system was working; couples wanting children were spaced with a realistic time frame so Mika and Peter could keep up with the demand. They decided on two families a year. Research and training continued to be provided to ensure growth and keep up with the need by balancing population growth. It made sense because Peter's anti-aging gel capsule implants (referred to as Peter Pan Drops by the general population) were made available to the general population of Phoenix. Mika had developed a theory that the gel could possibly slow aging to one year for every twenty.

Enthusiasm and motivation to continue progress were overwhelming as the men of Phoenix believed more than ever in their own capabilities, their leadership, and the promise of hope and a future to survive and overcome any disruption to their magnificent community.

The End

To be continued...

About The Author

Stefan Pride



Stefan Pride has been writing since he was in grade school. It was while attending university in NYC he developed a love of m/m romance. After earning his undergraduate degree he did his master's studies at the University of Michigan. Finding that writing m/m fantasy was a great way to relieve stress, he continued his writing while living with his two dogs in California, Texas, and now in the mountains of Arizona.

About The Author

Kashel Char



Kashel resides in the southern parts of the Rocky Mountains of BC, Canada. Co-writer and author of dark and ominous characters. They are twisted with a dash of humor. They live in worlds peppered with erotic taboo subjects and they struggle and strive for a life filled with pleasure and freedom. Who doesn't?

Their stories are centered around gay characters and they reflect on not only Kashel's wild and erotic imagination but also pieces from their day-to-day life.

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