

LOVE'S LANDSCAPES



Don't Read in the Closet 2014

KNICKERS IN A TWIST

Ofelia Grand

Table of Contents

Love's Landscapes.....	3
Knickers in a Twist - Information.....	5
Knickers in a twist	6
Author Bio	42

Love's Landscapes

An M/M Romance series

KNICKERS IN A TWIST

By Ofelia Gränd

Introduction

The story you are about to read celebrates love, sex and romance between men. It is a product of the *Love's Landscapes* promotion sponsored by the *Goodreads M/M Romance Group* and is published as a gift to you.

What Is Love's Landscapes?

The *Goodreads M/M Romance Group* invited members to choose a photo and pen a letter asking for a short M/M romance story inspired by the image; authors from the group were encouraged to select a letter and write an original tale. The result was an outpouring of creativity that shone a spotlight on the special bond between M/M romance writers and the people who love what these authors do.

A written description of the image that inspired this story is provided along with the original request letter. If you'd like to view the photo, please feel free to join the [Goodreads M/M Romance Group](#) and visit the discussion section: *Love's Landscapes*.

No matter if you are a long-time devotee to M/M Romance, just new to the genre or fall somewhere in between, you are in for a delicious treat.

Words of Caution

This story may contain sexually explicit content and is **intended for adult readers**. It may contain content that is disagreeable or distressing to some readers. The *M/M Romance Group* strongly recommends that each reader review the General Information section before each story for story tags as well as for content warnings.

This story is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are the products of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental.

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[Morning mist background 6](#);

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Photo Description

A man is standing with his back to the camera. He is shielding his face with his arm, displaying muscles and strength, but hiding. He is wearing a black garter belt in lace with matching stockings, gloves and a harness in black leather, and nothing else. He is a beautiful contrast of strength and delicacy.

Story Letter

Dear Author,

So I'm a man and I like to wear lace. Sometimes I like to wear leather and lace. Is that such a crime? I don't want to be dominated, I don't want to submit, I just want a partner who will look at me and think I'm hotter than the sun. I just want a man who won't see me as weak because of what I wear under my clothes. But it's hard enough to find a partner as a gay man; how am I ever going to find one who will enjoy my kink as much as I do? God, I'm so tired of hiding who I am.

Please, no BDSM. The rest is up to you.

Sincerely,

Kiracee

Story Info

Genre: contemporary

Tags: lingerie salesman, teacher, underwear fetish, sports, sex in public, Sweden, disability

Word Count: 15,060

KNICKERS IN A TWIST

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Oh, that felt nice. He fingered the cool, silky fabric. The colour would look so good on him, creamy champagne against his golden skin. The stretchy lace waistband seemed comfortable and would've hugged his hips perfectly. They would've been perfect, if they had been made for a man, that is. He stretched the lace, tested it. Yes, it would have felt nice to put them on.

“May I help you?”

Peter jumped, startled. The shop assistant had materialised out of nowhere. She was wearing heels, which should have alerted him to her presence, but he hadn't heard her coming. He stared at her and tried desperately to come up with a casual response. “Eh...” He didn't blush, he did not, but his face felt a little too warm for him to really believe it.

The assistant fixed her gaze on the white-knuckled hand that clenched the crumpled silk. “No, thank you. Just looking around,” Peter managed, a little breathlessly. He would be looking for the exit as soon as he could convince his hand to release the amazing fabric.

“Looking for something for your girlfriend? We have the most beautiful longline corset that came in yesterday. I would die to have one. If that's a bit too much, then we have some new balcony bras in wonderful colours, some lace demi-cups and a few new contour bras, all with matching panties and some with matching suspender belts.”

Suspender belts. Oh, that would be nice. He would love to have a suspender belt. No, snap out of it! Focus on bras. Peter stared at her. He knew nothing about bras, and he had no intention of learning. “Err, no, thank you. I was just looking around. I'll go now.”

“Come back any time,” she said with an amused smile.

Did she know? She looked like she knew, but how could she? No, it didn't show on the outside. He looked down at his thighs. No line was visible. Peter was always cautious. A revealing line could give him away if he wasn't careful. His finger found the barely-there lace-top of his thigh-highs, but it wasn't visible. The trousers stretched uninterrupted with each step he took; they weren't catching on anything. He looked proper in his suit, he was sure of it. No one would know just by looking at him.

Yet somehow, his mother had always known, hadn't she? She could give him one look, and then she'd start to spew her hatred. How could she always tell? Even if he just wore something plain, like satin briefs, she'd know. Maybe it did show.

Peter rushed out of the shop. He was not going back, he wasn't. He had to stop gawking at women's underwear. He didn't even like women all that much. But even though the internet gave him access to shops that sold beautiful panties for men, online shopping wasn't ideal. He needed to feel the fabric, make sure that it lived up to his expectations, and he couldn't do that in an online shop.

Twelve days later Peter relapsed, and found himself just inside the door of *Underneath*. Again. The shop beckoned to him. It wasn't very big, but the interior design reminded him of a warehouse. Everything apart from the lingerie was in black and grey which made the colours pop out even more. He liked it. A concrete bunker decorated in colourful lace.

He'd promised himself that he wouldn't come back, but then he saw a pair of hipster panties online made from some kind of mesh he hadn't seen before. Peter had mesh panties, of course, but the mesh in the photo seemed very wide, and he just wasn't certain.

The bell jingled as always, but he didn't see anyone. He could hear the shop assistant's voice from somewhere in the back, and prayed that whoever she was talking to was important enough to keep her occupied until he left. He didn't want to remind her of his existence. This was a typical Swedish small town, and you couldn't help but be recognised if you stayed for more than a couple of weeks, and by now she'd probably know him if she saw him at the grocery store. He really needed to stay away for a while.

He found a rack of thongs in different fabrics. One pair had the same kind of mesh as the hipsters he'd found online. Mesh felt nice, it always did. He wouldn't be able to wear the hipsters he'd been looking at on Tuesdays or Thursdays, since the teachers' floorball games had started up again, but other than that they would work as everyday underwear, even the widely meshed ones.

"You want those?" Peter was startled by the gruff voice and looked up to see a dark haired man with a five o'clock shadow that didn't seem to be a fashion choice. What was it about this shop that made Peter incapable of hearing people moving around?

“No, thank you.” He was sure he’d never seen a man in here before, and he was proud that his voice didn’t betray his surprise. At least he didn’t think it did. The man was staring pretty hard, and Peter felt a bit intimidated. The guy was not huge. In fact, he was quite average, like Peter, but bulkier. Still, there was something about him that made Peter stand up a little straighter.

“Buying for the wife or the mistress?” The tone was challenging.

“Not buying at all,” he answered through gritted teeth.

The shop assistant sounded amused when she shouted from the back, “Alex, don’t scare the customers.” Peter wanted to run even more than before. Had they both seen him caress the thongs?

“I’m not! I just...” Peter was out the door before he could hear the rest of their conversation. He was not going back, he wasn’t.

Alex turned back to the customer only to realise he was no longer there. What the fuck? He looked at the door just in time to see the man walk out stiffly without a backward glance. Great. He hadn’t really meant to scare the guy. It was just that when Alex came out from the back, the man had been worshipping a pair of panties, and something about that made him a little angry. One shouldn’t stare at women’s lingerie in such a way.

His back was hurting like hell, and he was freaking starving. Maybe he’d been a little harsh, but that was no reason to run. Alex grimaced. It could’ve been a smile, but since he hardly ever smiled these days, it was probably a sign that it was time for another pain pill. His back was stiff, but every time he tried to stretch it he got a most uncomfortable twinge.

He shut his eyes only to see the man’s shocked expression in his mind. Maybe it was a smile that made his lips stretch after all. The guy had been pretty plain looking, body on the slim side, but nice as far as he’d seen. It was the eyes, though, that were etched into Alex’s memory. They were big and blue, and that deer-caught-in-the-headlights look made Alex want to kiss him.

It wasn’t the panties that bothered him, not really, it was the way the man had been looking at them. However, Alex would’ve been perfectly happy to be the object of a look like that. Who was he kidding though? The man looked smart, all preppy, and proper just like all the men Alex wanted but could never get.

He was probably straight as an arrow. This town tended to scare away any decent gay guy brave enough to set foot in it, so it wasn't like Alex expected to meet someone.

“Did you scare him away?”

“No.”

“So where is he?”

Alex gave his sister a hard stare. “He just had to leave,” he said with a shrug. God, he was so not the right person for this.

She smiled. “Yeah, he's a bit skittish, that one.”

“Does he come here often?”

“Every now and then. Always acts like it's a crime to look at panties.”

“What does he buy?”

“Nothing.”

Alex raised one eyebrow, suddenly more curious about the man. “He doesn't buy anything?”

“Just looks at panties,” she said with a laugh. “He's harmless, really. I think he just wants to have someone to buy lingerie for. If I wasn't taken, I would offer myself in a heartbeat. He's one gorgeous man.” Gorgeous. Was he gorgeous? Alex usually agreed with his sister when it came to looks, but at the moment he couldn't think of anything beyond those stunning blue eyes. “Oh, that skin,” she said with a dreamy look. “How can he be that fair and still be honey-coloured? I don't get it. But don't feel bad, I usually scare him away too. The trick is not to talk to him. As soon as he realises you've seen him, he's out the door.”

Alex pursed his lips looking at a dent in the grey concrete floor. He wasn't cut out for this. He wasn't smart, and he really wasn't blessed with the social skills to make people feel welcome. How would he be able to run a women's lingerie shop for four months?

“Have you really thought this through, Linda?”

“It's a bit late to back out now, isn't it? I'll be leaving in a couple of hours, and don't you try to stop me. You'll be fine. Just read what needs to be read at your own pace. You're fine with numbers, so don't fret, and if anything goes wrong or you need help, give Anna a ring. She'll know what to do.”

Anna had helped Linda out in the shop on a few occasions, and probably knew more about how to run it than Alex ever would. He would not, however, ring Anna. He couldn't think of any reason good enough to make him pick up a phone and confess that he was too stupid to go through the post, or whatever he was meant to do. Alex still couldn't believe that he'd agreed to take care of his little sister's shop while she went backpacking in India. How would he manage to be polite and give advice about bras for several months without scaring away every potential customer, not to mention any skittish men who might venture in here?

Peter was going out today, and he was not going to wear lace. He had to stop this lace thing. He was not going out in his soul-draining Tuesday underwear, but he was going to prove to himself that life could be good without beautiful lingerie. Everyday people were happy without the touch of lace, satin or silk against their most intimate parts. Lace was not the solution to any world crisis, and it was possible to have great sex without the tantalizing stretch of the coarse fabric against your prick.

He was getting a little hard just thinking about that sensation, but he was not going to give in. He was not going to wear lace. Not that it really mattered. He could hardly remember the last time he'd gotten lucky in this town. Gay men were not exactly scarce, but the supply was far from plentiful. Half of them were in the closet and did not want to come out. The other half were either too young, too old, too femme, or acted as if he was supposed to fall to his knees and lick their boots. So far he hadn't met anyone who shared his tastes.

He didn't have unreasonably high standards. Peter just wanted a man. A normal guy who loved him for who he was. Someone who could look at him in frilly lace panties and still think that he was one hot man. Not someone who thought he was effeminate, a sub, or even a total bottom. He wanted a man, who saw him as a man, and who wouldn't assume that pink satin meant he had some pent-up need to submit.

Tonight he was going for a more butch approach. He wanted something not associated with women, but he was determined not to wear his Tuesday boxers on a Saturday. That would only kill his weekend spirit. He had a nice jockstrap in leather. Leather was hot, and butch, and smelt nice, and it felt good too.

He picked up the phone and rang Tom, his very best and very straight friend. Ever since his last boyfriend, if you could call him that, Peter felt a bit

insecure about going out alone. He hated to feel insecure. He had fought hard as a teenager to break free of his mother's hold, and he knew he'd taken some backward steps these last months. It didn't feel good at all. He'd always been one to stand proud, but things with Nick had left him broken.

The phone rang a few times before Tom screamed, "Peter," over what sounded as a lot of wind.

"Yeah?"

"Oh, it is you. I couldn't see the display very well. My eyes are tearing up," he continued to shout.

"What are you doing?"

"I'm fishing. Can you believe it?"

"In this weather?" The Swedish autumn wasn't very forgiving, and especially not at sea.

"Yeah, Adam bought this sweet little motorboat that we're testing out."

Peter shivered. He didn't like sailing, especially not if it was windy. "Okay, have fun!" He was about to hang up when Tom shouted again.

"Hey, was there something you wanted?"

"Nah, I just wanted to go out and grab a beer or four."

"Sorry man, but don't let me stop you. Go down to the pub anyway. It's been ages since you went out, and you deserve to relax a little."

"Sure..." It was just that Peter was afraid Nick would be there, and he didn't know if he could hold his head up high without the emotional support of a friend.

"Have fun!" Tom disconnected, and Peter headed for the shower. He could go out on his own, it was no big deal, right? He could do it.

Alex motioned for the bartender to give him another whisky. He'd been sitting at this bar since returning from dropping Linda and Marcus off at the train station four hours ago. What was he to do with his life? Thirty-six and alone with nothing to fall back on. He was living in his sister's flat and doing her job, for now, but what did you do when you were getting close to forty and couldn't do your job anymore?

Someone sat down next to him, but Alex didn't invite conversation. His ambition was to drink the night away, forget about the pain in his back, his lonely life, and the fact that he was now a fucking lingerie salesman. The whisky was, in fact, taking care of the pain for the moment. Self-medication was something to consider.

God, he wasn't normally this morose. It was this town. He had gotten out once, but now he was back. It was a small town, all about the white picket fences, and straight couples with two point four children and a Golden Retriever. It was a miracle that Linda's shop was doing as well as it was. But of course, if all the straight men bought sexy underwear for their special someones, both the wife and the little secret on the side, then bra sales were sure to remain steady.

Just as he was about to take a sip of his whisky, someone bumped into him from behind, and the golden elixir sloshed over the rim. "What the fuck," Alex growled and turned around to find himself face to face with deer-caught-in-the-headlights guy. The panty worshipper was wearing that very same expression again, and Alex melted a little. He swallowed the snarl that had been halfway out of his mouth. Fuck, he wished he could have a man like that.

Darn. What was it with this guy? Not that Peter expected him to be overwhelmed with joy about spilled whisky but still, it wasn't as if Peter had set out to spill it. Some kid had walked right into him and, like a domino effect, he'd been tumbled into the man. He didn't have to be all growly about it.

"Sorry," Peter mumbled, not wanting to infuriate the guy more than he already had.

"Hey, it's my almost-customer."

Was that a sneer? Peter tried to be nonchalant, but it was hard when he was reminded of being caught red-handed, fondling a pair of mesh thongs. He straightened his back, he was not going to cower for a stranger.

Slurring slightly, the guy asked, "You want my job?" Was that a reference to earlier? Peter wondered just how much whisky the man had chugged down, and if it was safe for him to hang around. He was pretty sure he wouldn't stand a chance if the man decided to whip some sense into him. He'd met them before, the people who thought he was sick and ought to be punished for it.

“Sit down and talk to me.” He didn’t seem angry now so Peter sat down, but mainly because it was the only unoccupied stool in the place. On a Saturday night in a small town like this, you either went to the night club with all the kids, the fancy restaurant with the older men in expensive suits or here, to the pub, where you could drink and still be able talk to the person next to you without having to shout at the top of your lungs.

“So,” the man continued, “what kind of work do you do?”

“I’m a teacher.”

“Ah, so you’re smart,” he hissed acidly.

How do you respond to that? “Erhm...”

“What do you teach?”

“Maths and...”

“So you were a brainy kid. I bet the teachers loved you. Never did well in maths myself. Better than other subjects but still not well.”

“No?”

“No. I don’t really get it. I mean, I understand numbers but I never understood what to do with them, you know? All that text describing a problem, x’s and y’s and some poor bloke with apples.”

“Sure,” Peter tried to sound as if the guy was making perfect sense while he flagged the bartender down for a beer.

“So you want to swap?”

“Swap?” He gazed in confusion at the man’s almost empty glass of whisky and his untouched bottle of beer.

“Yeah, I teach the kids something important, and you sell lingerie.”

“You’re selling lingerie?” Wouldn’t that be a dream?

“For four months. Starting today. You were my only customer, so that went well. The shop’s closed on Monday, but come Tuesday and I’m on my own in the dungeon of see-through undergarments and pantyhose.”

“Well, it can’t be that bad, can it?”

“Really? You want to do it?”

Did he? No, he wanted to wear lingerie, not sell them, at least he didn’t think so. “Maybe?”

“Good, I’ll give you a ring when I can’t stand it any more.” Then he mumbled something Peter couldn’t quite make out, but it sounded like something about missing fires.

Peter smiled. “You do that.” He was just about to move along when the guy caught his arm.

“I’m Alex.”

“Peter.”

“You want to get out of here, Peter?”

Alex needed some fresh air, but he didn’t want to let Peter go just yet. He was hot. Had he really thought of Peter as plain before? Even though he was pretty sure Peter was just humouring him, he thought that maybe he could get him to step outside into the chilly night.

“Out?”

“Yeah, get some fresh air.”

Alex needed to sober up in the worst way, but he wasn’t pissed enough to miss how Peter was scanning the pub, as if making sure no one was looking. “What, afraid someone’ll think less of you if they see you leave with me?” That came out a little harsher than he’d intended.

Peter burst out laughing, but it wasn’t a happy laugh. “No, I don’t think that’s possible.”

Alex looked over his shoulder to the place where Peter’s gaze lingered and saw a tall, muscular man staring at them. The man leered at Peter before saying something to the people around him who all laughed and turned to look at them. Whatever that was about, Alex didn’t like it. He didn’t give a flying fuck what people thought of him, and they usually didn’t give him any shit, but Peter looked nervous. He felt oddly protective of the other man and wanted to keep him away from the smirking group.

“Who’s he?” God, he sounded more sloshed than he felt.

Peter shrugged a little. “No one. Just a guy I used to know.”

“A boyfriend?” Oh, way to blurt that out, Alex, and none too politely either. He wasn’t even sure if Peter was gay. He thought that maybe he was since his eyes tended to linger a little on some of the men but still, he’d been looking at women’s underwear.

Peter looked surprised but not angry. "Not really."

Did that mean that he was gay, and the man wasn't a boyfriend or that he wasn't gay at all? Alex was boozed-up, and when he was he tended to think that all men were gay, so he'd probably imagined the heated looks Peter had given some of the men. Fuck it, Alex needed some fresh air.

"Come on, baby, let's go outside for a while."

Again, Peter looked a little shocked but smiled and trailed after Alex. The wind came right at them when they stepped outside, and Alex shivered. It wasn't really weather for a stroll along the riverside, but he tugged Peter in that direction anyway.

The river went straight through town, so it only took a few minutes to get there. Alex leaned drunkenly against the rail. "So, Peter, tell me something about yourself."

"Not much to tell, really."

"I find that hard to believe. Handsome guy like you doesn't have a wife?"

Peter shot Alex a cheeky look, making him forget how to breathe. "No, no wife, no girlfriend, no boyfriend, not even a cat."

"Good."

"Good that I don't have a cat?"

Alex slipped a finger through one of a belt loops in Peter's jeans and stepped in close. "Good, that you don't have a wife, or a girlfriend... or a boyfriend. I don't really have an opinion about the cat."

Peter felt a little dizzy. He was pretty sure he was about to be kissed, and he really wanted to be kissed.

"God, you're hot," Alex mumbled near his lips. His breath felt warm against Peter's chilled skin, and he wet his lips in anticipation. "Say, Peter, would you be awfully angry if I kissed you?" Alex's thumb caressed Peter's bottom lip, and Peter thought he might pass out if they didn't kiss soon.

"I might be if you don't." That earned him a little smile just before Alex's lips descended. Peter groaned. It had been a long time since he'd felt a hard body against his. Alex fit perfectly, and he felt so good. Peter didn't even mind

the taste of whisky on his tongue. He was kissing Alex deeply and grinding against him as if it were possible to get even closer.

Peter broke the kiss to suck in some oxygen and tipped his head a little, baring his throat to give Alex room to do whatever he wanted. Alex nipped and kissed on Peter's exposed skin until he found a magic spot just below the ear that made Peter shudder. God, that felt good.

Alex never stopped his ministrations as he walked them backwards toward the trees that stood a few feet away. Peter's back hit a trunk, and he looked around. They were pretty secluded, no one nearby as far as he could see.

Swiftly, Alex's fingers found their way to Peter's trousers. He was fumbling with the fly before Peter could find his voice and utter a warning.

"Eh..."

"Leather?" Alex asked with a smile as he opened the zip and fell to his knees. Peter searched his face to see if he was going to say something else. He felt his hard-on falter a little. Normally leather was okay. Guys usually didn't laugh at him as they did when they uncovered lace, but some still found it funny.

Alex took hold of the waist of Peter's jeans and pulled them down to mid-thigh. The chilling wind kissed Peter's skin, and he shivered from the cold, but the warm breath that ghosted over his hipbone made him forget all about it. Feather-light fingers followed the straps of his jock before gripping his bare buttocks.

"Fuck, Peter. I could eat you up."

Peter was flabbergasted, his cock growing harder by the second. He'd been prepared for Alex to say something, criticise him, make fun of him, or tell him that he was repellent. He was not prepared for appreciation, and Alex appeared to truly appreciate the choice of underwear. Of course, he had to remind himself, it was leather. Not like he'd discovered what Peter really preferred. He probably wouldn't be ecstatic about that.

Peter's cock was aching, straining against the unyielding pouch, but he couldn't make his brain shut up and enjoy the moment. What was wrong with him? He should savour what Alex was doing, not wait for condemnation.

Alex gripped the waistband of the leather jock and pulled down, baring Peter's leaking member to the cold night air. He nuzzled the light brown curls and groaned before he followed the vein on Peter's shaft with his tongue from

root to tip. Peter stood transfixed. Alex was damn beautiful, a little rough looking, just the way Peter liked it.

Wicked dark brown eyes sought out his before Alex's lips locked around the head. The tongue was teasing, dipping into his slit, swirling around the tip, and then Alex took him deeper, looking like there wasn't anything in the world he'd rather be doing. Peter grunted, then remembered that they were outside and took a quick look around. Still no one. His fingertips sunk into some grooves in the tree trunk, and he let out a shuddering breath.

He was—not shy, exactly, but being outside made him a little nervous. He really, really hoped no one would venture down to the river. Not many did when the weather was this cold and windy, but still.

The slurping sounds Alex made drowned out the noise from the nearby pub and yanked Peter out of his worries. God, he couldn't believe this was happening. Alex took him down deep and swallowed around him, nearly making Peter come in an instant. He tried to slow down, but Alex didn't let him. He tried to form some kind of warning and managed to utter some stuttering sounds that only made Alex look into his eyes and wink around a mouthful of cock.

Peter felt the initial sparkles of his orgasm and let go of the trunk to pull Alex away, but Alex wouldn't have it. Alex fondled Peter's balls with one hand, and urged him to shove that cock as far down his throat as it would go with the other. When Peter did just that, Alex moaned appreciatively, sending vibrations all the way through Peter. What little control Peter had slipped away. He gripped Alex's shoulders in a bruising hold and thrust deep into the warm, wet heat. One time, two and then it was over.

Panting, Peter sought out Alex's gaze. He felt a bit embarrassed. Not only had he climaxed down a stranger's throat in a public place, but it had ended much too soon. Had he been too rough? He took a few deep breaths and looked down at his softening dick, fighting the urge to hide.

Alex rose to his feet, helped him pull up his trousers, and gave him a sloppy kiss before he started giggling. An honest-to-God giggle. "Well, that was fun," he said, still giggling.

Peter looked at him with raised eyebrows. "You're plastered."

"I know. But still, you gotta agree that was fun." Peter shrugged. "Aw, come on, man. Don't hurt my feelings."

"I can kiss it better." Peter grabbed hold of Alex's shoulder and traded places with him. He wasn't sure that he could give a good blowjob in a setting like this, but one should reciprocate. That was common courtesy.

"Nah, it's okay. I'm too old and too drunk."

"Too old?"

"Yup, you'd better tuck me in," Alex said with a smile. Peter smiled too but didn't really know what to do next. What was the custom here? Should he offer something else as a thank you for getting him off?

God, Peter was hot. Alex could probably suck him for hours. He tasted so good, and the sounds he made were so sweet. Alex wasn't kidding, though. He was suddenly very tired. He did not, however, want to part ways with Peter just yet.

"So you want to go for a cup of coffee?" Peter sounded insecure, and Alex didn't like hearing that. He loved it when Peter straightened his back and gave him a challenging look like he'd done in the pub after the initial frightened one. To see that there was steel underneath Peter's vulnerability made Alex hot as hell.

"Yeah, sure. Your place?"

"Eh... I was thinking some place in town, but okay, why not?"

They walked quietly along the river for quite a while. The silence became strained, and Peter kept sneaking glances, probably thinking Alex was too sloshed to notice. The further they went the more uncertain Alex became. He wanted to spend more time with Peter, but maybe this wasn't the way. It wasn't as if Peter had invited him to come along, he'd invited himself. Maybe Peter just saw him as a one night stand and didn't want to get to know him now that he'd had his fun.

"You know what? I think maybe I should head home instead, or to Linda's flat, that is."

"Linda?"

"My sister."

"You sure?" Peter sounded both relieved and disappointed at the same time.

"Yeah, I think so. Say, why don't you stop by the shop on Tuesday and I'll let you try on every piece of flimsy lingerie we have," Alex said with a laugh. Peter froze mid-step and gave him a guarded look.

“Sure. Goodnight.” Before Alex could say anything else Peter had turned the street corner and walked away with the same stiff stride he’d used to stalk out of shop earlier. Baffled, Alex watched him go. That was not how he’d planned it. He thought Peter would say something funny in return, and they could set a time and place for a cup of coffee, or exchange phone numbers, or something.

Peter was the first person he’d met in this godforsaken town who he wanted to hang out with. Not that he knew him all that well, but, somehow, it felt good to be with him. It felt right. Alex sighed and shivered. Too tired to chase after Peter, he turned around and headed for Linda’s flat.

A week had passed and it was Saturday again. Peter was in town just like everybody else. It was a Swedish tradition to spend Saturday morning visiting market stalls and doing some shopping. When you were done, you went to one of the cafés, indulged in something sweet, and gossiped with everyone you met.

Underneath was just a block away, and Peter desperately wanted to go. He couldn’t get Alex out of his head, but he wasn’t sure if he would survive being rejected yet again. It didn’t matter how many times he swore that he’d never put on another pair of panties. He knew that he would. Maybe he could play normal for a while, but it wouldn’t last.

With Nick he had thought that he would let the man get to know him first, then maybe it wouldn’t be such a big deal. That had obviously been the wrong approach as he’d learned in a painfully humbling way. He really hoped that Alex had been too drunk to notice that they’d been laughed at by Nick and his friends in the pub last week.

It wasn’t easy finding a partner, and Peter knew he would probably never find one who could love all of him. Still, he hoped for someone who could at least love him enough to ignore his underwear. He wasn’t wearing them for anyone else. It was just one little thing he did for himself. He couldn’t understand why people would care, but they did.

He wiggled a little, reminding himself that he was wearing a pair of his favourites—yellow low-rise boxer briefs completely in lace that showed a bit of cheek. They were beautiful. They made Peter feel beautiful. Maybe he should run home and change if he planned to go see Alex, though. What if the man wanted to rip his clothes off? Yeah, like that was going to happen after his little drama queen adieu.

In that moment, he'd thought Alex was making fun of him, but once he got home, he realised that he had probably overreacted. He still hadn't manned up enough to go see Alex. The joke about letting him try on lingerie made Peter think his tastes wouldn't be appreciated, and he was afraid things would turn ugly if, or when, he was found out.

God, he was ridiculous. How could he ever meet a man who would love him for who he was if he couldn't even stand up for himself? Since when had he become such a coward? He'd been confident once, hadn't he? At least after he'd moved away from his mother. Leather, lace, satin or silk, it didn't matter. He'd always been a man who stood up for who he was and what he wanted.

With a deep breath he walked toward the shop, and he didn't hesitate once, not until he had his hand on the door knob. For a moment, he considered letting go and walking away, but then a woman leaving the shop pulled the door open and held it for him. Not much choice left. The bell above the door chimed, and Alex looked up from behind the counter ready to greet a customer. He looked surprised to see Peter.

"Hi there, handsome. I'd almost given up on you," Alex said with careful smile.

"Oh, yeah, me too."

That made the smile more real. "Come to take me out for that coffee?"

"If you like."

"I'd love to, but I'm the only one working, and since I know diddly-squat about lingerie it's gonna be a while. Don't know what my dear, deluded sister was thinking."

"Rough week?"

"Like being shot with a Taser every day."

"That bad?"

"No, not really. It's just that I used to be a firefighter, so I'm mostly used to yelling at people for false alarms and occasionally helping someone who's in actual need. Here, I have to be all soft-spoken so I don't frighten the women. I learned earlier this week that, even though she's buying lingerie, it isn't appropriate to hint that it might spice up her sex life if she bought a certain piece." Peter laughed a little. He could see it, Alex trying to help and it coming out all wrong. "So I had this epiphany. It's not really earth shattering, but okay, here goes; I'm really not that into women's underwear."

Peter laughed. "What about men's underwear?" He fought the blush that wanted to make an appearance.

"Wearing leather today, baby?"

"No."

Alex smiled fondly. "Shame. I liked those."

Peter swallowed. Was this the time to tell him? No, Alex probably never wanted to see his stuff again, and Peter wasn't sure he'd ever have the guts to tell Alex. Maybe show him, he'd done that before. Sometimes he even put on lace before he went to the pub. Not in this town, but in neighbouring ones. He'd always dreamt about going out in suspender belts. Those, with a matching pair of panties, were about the hottest thing Peter could imagine, but he didn't dare. He didn't even own a suspender belt.

"Okay then, what's your take on teddies" Alex asked mischievously.

"Scandalous," Peter said with a straight face. Alex let out a surprised laugh, and Peter smiled. It was a nice laugh.

Alex was having a hard time playing it cool. He was thrilled that Peter had shown up, but fuck if he wanted it to show. He'd been waiting all week, and every day he'd scolded himself for pining after someone who didn't want him. He knew he wasn't smart enough to land a guy like Peter, but he wanted to try. Now he felt the need to establish something, to make sure he'd at least see Peter again.

"Would you like to go out for dinner?"

"What, today?"

"No, not today. I've been working late every fucking day this week, and there's still a lot to do, so it'll be another long day. Even if I have to stay here until dawn to get everything done, I will, because there's no way in hell I'm coming back here this weekend." Alex thought about the post that was piled up in the office. It would take him hours to go through it all.

"No trip to the pub tonight, then?"

"God no, I'm never drinking again! I spent all of Sunday nursing my hangover, and I still felt half dead on Monday." Peter laughed. God, Alex loved that sound. He would do just about anything to keep this man laughing. "Unless you want me to go, that is."

“Nah, I guess you’re right. No use in spending what few days you have off being hungover.”

“So can I take you out? Dinner, tomorrow night?”

“On a Sunday?”

“I work Saturdays and have Sundays and Mondays off.”

“I work Monday, but sure, as long as you’re not planning to get me drunk.”

“No, just a glass of wine or two. You like wine?”

“Sure, I guess.”

“Great, six o’clock, okay?”

“Sure.”

Alex made sure they exchanged phone numbers before he let Peter get on with his day. He even smiled for the rest of the day. The smile, however, disappeared when he sat down with the paperwork. God, he hated paperwork. He figured it took him about three times as long as a normal person.

He felt a bit guilty about not telling Peter that he’d agreed to a date with a dim-witted idiot, but he really wanted to keep Peter for a bit longer, so he was faking it. He’d even pretended to read the paper while Peter had been in the shop. Pathetic.

Linda really hadn’t thought things through when she suggested that Alex should take care of the business while she was away. He knew next to nothing about bookkeeping and even less about lingerie, but she’d insisted.

He was pretty sure it was because of the accident. She probably thought it would help him move on. Alex had been feeling low ever since his forced retirement from the fire brigade. All he’d had was his work, and the guys there. Now, he had nothing.

Maybe he should give the guys a ring. He’d been shutting them out since his injury, but he missed them now. He was stranded in this hellhole of a town for four months, and he didn’t have anyone apart from Peter. And even though he really liked Peter, he couldn’t be sure that it wouldn’t end badly, or end before it could even start.

Peter was nervous and excited at the same time. He was fussing in front of the mirror. There weren’t many places to go to in this town, so he was pretty

sure a suit wasn't required. But he looked so darn good in them that he'd put one on anyway. The midnight blue wool picked up the colour of his eyes in an almost unnatural way. He wanted his thigh-highs underneath but put on ordinary black socks instead. He was not, however, going on a date in his goddamned Tuesday boxers.

It made him nervous to think about how Alex would react if they got naked. Peter knew that he was different, but he'd never feared to take his clothes off before things with Nick went bad. Nick had ridiculed him for being the total freak Peter now knew that he was. It was a perversion to want to wear panties when you were a guy, he'd said. No self-respecting man would ever be caught wearing something like that. Peter hadn't shown his panties to anyone after things with Nick had ended, but what could he do?

He was fretting while he waited for Alex. He kept pacing by the living room window to force himself away from the bedroom and his safe, boring, soul-killing Tuesday boxers. By the time the doorbell rang, he had managed to distress himself to the point where he actually considered cancelling the date altogether.

Alex looked a bit shocked when Peter opened the door but his expression soon turned to wonder. "You look beautiful." Peter was pleased to hear Alex's breath hitch a little and smiled.

"Thank you. You look pretty hot yourself."

Alex smiled nervously and looked down at himself in an almost self-conscious way. He wasn't wearing a suit—just jeans and a button-down—but to Peter he looked cracking. The way the jeans stretched over well-formed thighs had Peter salivating. He loved nice thighs, and Alex had very nice thighs.

"So, ready to go?" Alex asked. He wasn't responding to the compliment, but seemed excited about the date.

The restaurant was almost empty. Peter wasn't surprised. Sunday wasn't a big date night, and the few restaurants they had in town closed early. Once they were seated and had ordered their meals, Peter couldn't help smiling. Alex seemed so happy to be there with him, and he couldn't figure out why.

Peter thought of himself as a boring, average looking guy who liked to teach maths, play floorball with his colleagues, and solve Sudoku puzzles while having his morning coffee. Whereas Alex was gorgeous, and amusing, and a firefighter for God's sake—how much more of a fantasy could anyone be?

“Why did you stop being a firefighter?” Peter asked. Immediately he saw some of Alex’s good mood evaporate.

“I was in an accident, and now I can’t do the job.”

“Oh. Sorry.” Peter felt bad and a little unsure of how to proceed.

“Yeah, well, it happens, you know. I fell through a floor and hurt my back. Not much to do about it.”

“Was it a long time ago?”

“Eight months now. I don’t know what to do, really. I think Linda’s whole backpacking thing is a scheme to get me to work again,” Alex grumbled like a child. Peter couldn’t help but smile.

“Really?”

“Absolutely! No, not really. I think this is the last thing she and Marcus will do before they succumb to the white-picket-fence-thing this town’s got going.”

“Ah, one last journey before the doom?”

“Yeah, she’s probably already knocked up and planning for me to run the shop for an unforeseeable future.”

“Would you?”

“I hate this town but yeah, I probably would. She’s my little sister, not much I wouldn’t do for her. And she’s working too hard. It’s more work than one person should do.”

“But could you be content living here?”

Alex shrugged. Peter tried to stop his brain from making plans for the future, especially if Alex couldn’t see himself living here. Not that Peter was overly fond of the judgemental little town but his life was here, his job, his friends. If he couldn’t share that with Alex, he didn’t really see any point in dating him. Peter wasn’t getting any younger, and he wanted a partner in his life, not a casual fling. But he probably shouldn’t be thinking like that. He should enjoy this while it lasted. He knew how abruptly a good thing could come to an end.

Alex was hot and funny. Apart from that lingerie comment last Saturday, he hadn’t made Peter feel bad about himself once. Besides, Alex couldn’t really be blamed for how Peter had interpreted the comment. He probably still thought Peter was a nut job for storming away from him like that.

The date was going well. Alex was having a great time. He didn't want the night to end, but he knew that Peter had to work in the morning. Still, on their way home he was hoping for Peter to invite him in.

Peter's terrace house wasn't new, but it wasn't worn down either. It looked nice from the outside. Nothing fancy, but a perfectly good place to live either alone or with a family. Alex could sort of see himself living like that, with a partner and maybe a dog.

Oh God! He was succumbing to the white-picket-fence-thing.

"So, eh... you want to come in?" Oh, Alex wanted to alright, but he was trying to read Peter. Last time, when he'd invited himself over, the evening hadn't ended well.

"You okay with that? I mean, you don't feel like you need to go to bed right away?"

"Maybe you could tuck me in," Peter said with a soft smile.

Yes! "Maybe I could."

Peter had barely unlocked the door before Alex grabbed him from behind and pushed him up against the wall in the hallway. "God, I've wanted to do this all night," he growled into the crook of Peter's neck as he let his hands wander over the suit that had been driving him mad since he first laid eyes on Peter earlier. "You look so damn good, I've been wanting to rumple this suit for hours."

He found the spot beneath Peter's ear that made him shiver and groan like crazy. God, he wanted to fuck him right here, right now, up against the wall. Grinding his cock against Peter's arse made his back twinge, but he ignored it.

"Can I fuck you?"

Peter shuddered and nodded.

"Here? Can I fuck you here in the hallway?" Peter nodded again.

Alex feasted on Peter's neck while he searched his pockets for a condom and lube. Peter broke free, shrugged off his suit jacket, and started to unbutton his shirt, but Alex knocked away his hands. "I want to do it," he mumbled between the kisses he planted on the naked skin of Peter's throat. Alex's lips found the collarbone, and he sucked hard, leaving a mark.

Peter moaned and wiggled while Alex undressed him. Alex felt him tense when he started unbuttoning the trousers, but Peter didn't try to stop him. He

searched Peter's face to see if he'd changed his mind, but he avoided his eyes. He slipped his finger in under the fabric and felt... lace? His eyes found Peter's, and he raised a brow in question.

Peter tried to look away, but Alex trapped him with his gaze. Peter looked nervous, ashamed, and a little defeated, not a good look on him, and Alex wanted it gone. Gone as soon as fucking possible.

"I, eh..." Alex couldn't let him finish that. He didn't want to hear what was about to come out of Peter's mouth, so he took the easy way out and covered it with his own. He kissed Peter hard, and deep, and dirty, and maybe a tad more possessively than he had the right to. He was grinding, and groaning, and devouring Peter in every way he could.

When he felt that Peter was distracted, he pushed at the trousers until they fell to the floor and glanced down. Holy shit! Peter was wearing pink bikini briefs completely in lace.

His preppy little teacher appeared to have an underwear kink. Alex groaned. That was so hot. The realisation that Peter had been sitting in the restaurant in his immaculate suit looking all hot and proper while wearing these underneath made Alex whimper.

He turned Peter around so that he was facing the wall again. Oh God, that was hot. Peter's body, cut and lithe, in something that should've been feminine but most definitely was not. Alex wanted to caress every part of Peter but his hands were shaking. He had to focus on getting himself under control.

Peter had gone very still, not saying or doing anything. The muscles in his back were taut. Alex wanted to soothe him, but at the same time he wanted to follow every line of muscle with his tongue, keeping them flexed.

"For me, baby?" Alex asked raspily even though he was pretty sure they were for Peter and not for him at all. He didn't really care, they were for him now.

Peter still didn't say anything, but he loosened up a bit. Alex stroked the fabric. It caught a little on the rough skin of his fingers. He grabbed Peter's arse and kneaded it. It was an awkward angle, but he wanted to watch as his movements made the fabric tighten over Peter's cock. The lace had to be coarse against that sensitive skin, but Peter was panting and whimpering as if it was the most pleasurable caress imaginable.

He lifted the lacy elastic waistband and peeked inside while parting Peter's cheeks a little. Jesus, he wanted to fuck him with the panties on, wanted to pull the fabric aside but still be able to feel it while he pounded into Peter.

Alex's fingers found their way under the lace and in between Peter's arse cheeks. He was too dry. Fumbling, he retrieved the sample-sized lube packet, tore it open with his teeth, and wet his fingers. He groaned as he forced Peter's legs a little further apart for better access. The panties stretched over his knuckles as his fingers slid in between the cheeks and teased the hole.

"Fuck, Peter."

Up until then, Peter had seemed a little shocked by Alex's reaction, and had remained quite passive as if he were waiting for something. Now, though, he was starting to make those amazing sounds that Alex had fantasized about the entire week. He caressed the furrowed skin, letting the tip of his finger slide in just a little. Peter moaned louder when he was breached and goose bumps broke out across his back. Alex didn't have patience for nice and slow; that would have to wait for another time. He prayed to God there would be another time.

He stretched Peter fast, adding another finger each time he thought Peter could handle it. "Fuck you're hot. I just want to bury myself balls deep in that sweet arse of yours."

"Yes!" Peter hissed and nodded.

Alex fumbled a little with the condom before he squeezed out more lube from the package and slicked himself. What was left he put in the palm of his hand, about to reach around and take hold of Peter's cock when he realised his dilemma. Peter's cock was still trapped in lace. He froze a little in indecision.

Alex hadn't even gotten inside of Peter, and already he was having a hard time keeping himself together. He stepped up close, keeping the fabric out of the way and let his cock slide between Peter's cheeks. He felt the panties pull at his balls and had to stretch the lace so it didn't hinder his access. Growling he nipped at Peter's shoulder, placed himself right, and pushed forward a little. He felt the muscles give way, the head slid into the tight, welcoming heat. He fisted the lace in his hand to prevent himself from ripping it off altogether.

Peter was standing with his legs apart and his hands placed on the wall as if a police officer had told him to assume position.

"Baby, you make me so hard, driving me insane. I want to fuck you until I can't stand up any more."

Alex had to force himself to take it slow. Peter made an unintelligible sound and bucked against him. The lace scratched against the skin on Alex's hip, and he shivered. Shit, how was Peter doing this? He was not going to last, and he didn't even have a thing for lace, not really. He got off more on Peter getting off on it, not the lace itself.

Suddenly, he felt frustrated by the way the panties limited his ability to touch Peter. He wanted to rip the flimsy fabric away and touch the man as he pleased. So he did. He took hold of the fabric by the hip with both hands and ripped it, leaving smears of lube on Peter's skin. One hard pull at the seam and the panties fell to the floor, still around one of Peter's legs.

"Hey! I liked those."

"I'll buy you new ones." Alex rolled his hips, feeling Peter surrounding him. He would give him a freaking lingerie shop if it pleased him.

"You will?"

"Anything you want, baby. Anything that makes you happy."

Peter cursed softly against the wall, not loud enough to hear unless you were leaning in close. Alex rolled his hips again and fisted Peter's hot, velvety cock. Peter moaned and writhed while Alex thrust into him, trying to find the right angle and consciously ignoring the pain in his back while he did. He soaked it all in, Peter's groans and shudders, the way their bodies fit together.

This was like the ultimate fantasy. Well, maybe not the ultimate. He'd never fantasized about panties, but he had hundreds of fantasies like this one, fucking in unusual places—like a hallway. He wanted to try them all, with Peter. Every single one of them. He was so damn responsive and somehow classy and dirty at the same time. Alex thought he'd die.

"Not gonna last," he said through gritted teeth.

"Uh-huh." Peter nodded and let out a growly moan, his inner muscles gripping Alex hard, suddenly bringing Alex to a bright white heaven. In the same moment, Alex felt Peter's hot cum run down his fingers. The smell of sweat and spunk was filling his senses. Glorious. Peter was fucking glorious.

He rested his sweaty forehead against Peter's shoulder, half hanging onto him, half holding him up. Peter was breathing hard but otherwise didn't move a muscle. Alex started to giggle. It wasn't the manliest thing to do, but who the fuck cared? He grasped the base of the condom before pulling out and slid down onto the cold hallway floor, tugging at Peter to make him follow. Both of

them still had their shoes on, trousers crumpled around their ankles. Alex's giggle transformed into full-out laughter.

"What are you laughing about?" Peter sounded angry and hurt at the same time.

"Nothing, it's just... I sort of fantasized about doing that ever since I saw you opening the door earlier. But this wasn't part of it. Cold floor, feet tangled up in trousers, a used condom in my hand." He turned to Peter and kissed his elbow since that was the part nearest to him.

"That's what you're laughing about? Cold floors?"

"Yeah, I guess, though I think I find the condom funnier."

"You don't... you don't mind?"

"Mind what?"

Peter was holding the pink lace a little sheepishly.

"Mind? Why the hell would I mind?" Alex hadn't meant to raise his voice but he had, a little, and Peter flinched.

"It's just that... some of the guys I've hooked up with... didn't like it."

"Baby, you're hotter than the sun, and if they didn't see that, it's their loss and my gain."

The following weeks Peter was on cloud nine. He and Alex would go out or stay in a few times each week. They stayed together from the time Alex closed the shop on Saturday afternoon until Monday morning when Peter went to work. Altogether, life seemed pretty awesome.

Peter even gave Alex his extra key after finding him with chattering teeth on the doorstep one cold evening after work. It was no big deal, they weren't living together or anything, but that way Alex could come and go as he pleased.

Today, Peter was finishing early because one of his classes was away on a study tour, and he thought he'd surprise Alex at work. He bought coffee and Danish pastries on the way, hoping that Alex would have time to take a break while the coffee was still hot.

The bell tinkled as always, but before Peter even crossed the threshold he heard a whiny female voice echoing through the shop from the fitting rooms at the back. The voice was answered by a defeated grumble from Alex.

A few moments later Alex walked into view with his arms full of bras in different shapes and colours. He was pale but brightened when he saw Peter. Peter wasn't fooled though. There was a strained expression beneath the smile, and he wondered what was wrong.

"Everything okay?" He felt a bit foolish standing there with his bag of pastries and cups of coffee while Alex was wrestling with bras.

"I'm not smart enough for this."

"You're smart."

"No, I'm not," he snapped. During the weeks they'd spent together, Alex had never snapped at him. He could be a little growly and raise his voice sometimes but not really at Peter.

"What's wrong?"

"There's this... bitch," he hissed. "She's been here for forty-five fucking minutes and wants my advice about every fucking bra in the shop. I don't know shit about bras! I've just figured out what a T-shirt bra is."

"You could just read to her from some catalogue."

"It would take me forty-five minutes just to figure out what the text meant." Their eyes met, and a desperate, pained expression crossed Alex's face. "I can't read! The only way I ever finished school was with Linda writing my essays and reports."

Little things fell into place, the way Alex seemed hung up on intelligence, and how he often said that Peter was smart. "So, you have dyslexia?"

"Fuck if I know! It wasn't like they'd give you an excuse for being stupid when I went to school. I swore I would never come back to this hellhole. Being the dumb kid is not much fun, you know." Alex looked as if he was about to burst into tears. "I guess you don't want me now. A brainless idiot with a busted back, not much of catch."

"Shh." Peter threw his arms around the mountain of bras and Alex. "Now, that was stupid. Of course I want you. How could I not want you?" Alex was rigid in his embrace. "Why don't you sit down by the counter and have some coffee while I talk to the little lady in the fitting room."

"There's nothing little about her, and I can't sit down..." Peter raised his brows in question. "I hurt my back trying to lift a box," Alex rumbled. Ah, that explained the paleness and the tension.

“Do you have your painkillers here?” Alex nodded. “Well, take a pill, drink some coffee, and I’ll see what I can do about the customer.”

“She’s a walrus and doesn’t want any lines to show through her clothes. It’s an impossible feat.”

“We’ll see,” Peter laughed softly and went to the woman in question. He focused on keeping his face blank, and his mind off Alex’s walrus metaphor—or at least he tried.

“How can I help you?” he asked when he met the not-so-pleased plus-sized woman.

His customer explained that she was going to a wedding and was wearing a satin dress and that there couldn’t possibly be any bra or panty lines. He let his eyes wander, trying to think about what he knew about lingerie.

The woman was quite plump but she had beautiful curves, and Peter thought she would be stunning in the right dress. A bra would create bulges, and Peter knew that wouldn’t be flattering in satin but there were other choices. She needed some kind of bust support; otherwise, the dress wouldn’t fit as it should.

“Have you tried a corset?”

“Are you kidding me? My husband would die!”

“And go to heaven, darling!” No one would mind Peter flaming and going a little limp-wristed in this situation, right? He was having so much fun that he had a hard time containing himself. “Trust me, if you have a one-piece there will be no bulges, and you can pick one with suspender straps. That way you have the stockings sorted too, without bulges in the waist. For that I would recommend a G-string to minimize the lines altogether.”

The woman looked a little pale and started to object. “I can’t wear a G-string.”

“If I can, you can.”

She actually blushed at that but she didn’t seem to be put off. He heard a soft laugh behind him and almost jumped out of his skin. Alex gave him a fond smile before going back to the counter. Peter felt a little flutter in his stomach but quickly returned to the customer.

“I’m sure we have some full body shapers if that’s what you really want, but believe me, corsets are so much sexier, and your husband will be blown away.”

The woman left a short time later with a smile on her lips and a huge bag of lingerie.

“How did you do that?” Alex asked with something close to adoration in his voice.

“I know all about unwanted lines,” Peter answered with a wink. He strutted away to sort out the mountain of bras Alex had left piled on the counter, feeling darned good about himself.

Alex was waiting for Peter to come home. They didn't usually meet on Tuesdays because of Peter's floorball practice after work, but he'd been going mad in Linda's flat. He felt like a caged tiger in that cluttered space. Peter's house was much better, open spaces free from knick-knacks and bits and bobs. Here he could relax and feel right at home.

He thought he ought to surprise Peter with a hot meal, but his lack of cooking skills was one of the reasons he'd become a fireman in the first place, so he steered clear of the kitchen. You do not impress your boyfriend by burning down his house. He had, however, stopped by the sushi bar on his way over and hoped that Peter would be pleased.

Sitting on the living room sofa with his laptop before him, he started to search for something nice for Peter to wear. He hadn't replaced the panties he'd ripped that first time in the hallway but he intended to, if only he could figure out how to spell what he wanted to buy.

It was harder than he thought to actually find a good e-shop. He'd figured there would be a wide selection but there really wasn't. Sure, he found some shops, but the choices were pretty limited. Maybe he should leaf through Linda's product catalogues and see if any of them traded in panties for men. Alex smiled just thinking about it. That would be a shock for her, coming home to find that she was now selling men's lingerie.

He'd never thought that men in lace or satin would be hot but, God, they were. Peter standing tall in the bedroom wearing nothing but pink thigh highs and a raging hard-on was about as hot as it could get. He loved it when Peter took something as feminine as pink stockings, put them on, and gave Alex a defiant look. Those times always ended with Alex manhandling him into whatever position he saw fit and fucking Peter within an inch of his life.

He wanted Peter in a suspender belt and stockings, preferably in black lace, and he wanted Peter to fuck him dressed in it. So far, he had always topped but not because he wanted it to be that way. He liked to top just fine, but he wanted to bottom as well. He thought Peter would be okay with that. They hadn't talked about it, and Alex didn't think that Peter would take control if Alex didn't give him the verbal go ahead.

He found the lace he was looking for and added it to his shopping cart. He also found a suspender belt in black leather. It wasn't really designed for stockings but it made Alex's mouth go dry, so he bought that too, even though it cost a pretty penny. Just as he clicked to confirm his purchase, he heard Peter's car in the garage driveway. He put away the laptop and went to meet him in the hallway, prepared to explain why he was there on a Tuesday.

"Hi," Peter said. He gave Alex a smile and a quick kiss, walking past as if Alex's presence had been expected. Oh! Freshly showered man. Fuck, that's hot! Alex returned the smile and trailed after him.

In the bedroom, he leaned against the door frame and watched as Peter busied himself with unpacking his gym bag and then repacking it with clean clothes. He always did that, packed the bag right away, and put it in the hallway so he could take it to the car the next morning. Alex hadn't actually seen him do this before since he usually wasn't there on Tuesdays and Thursdays, but Peter had told him once that he did it so he'd always have a set of fresh gym clothes in the car.

Alex wasn't smart, but he remembered shit like that. If Peter told him something, no matter how trivial, he remembered. And he loved to watch Peter, memorizing everything he saw. He liked all the little things he did—how he placed his coffee cup next to his Sudoku puzzle in the morning, how he organised his work papers in different stacks with colour coded post-it notes on them, how he always straightened the towels in the lavatory after his shower.

Peter was dead sexy and didn't even know it. Alex couldn't understand what had made him think of the man as average-looking that first time they'd met. Peter was gorgeous, all warm colours and big blue eyes. His body was well defined, slender but not skinny.

Alex was getting hard just from watching Peter as he pattered around. The other day he'd laid Peter down on the bed and used only his mouth to get him off through a pair of baby blue satin panties. That had been so fucking hot, the

moisture from Peter's cock seeping through the fabric, the hard shaft straining against the unyielding satin.

The next time Peter passed him, Alex pounced, taking Peter down on the bed. He ground his hard cock against Peter's thigh to let him know what was on his mind.

"I've been waiting for you," he mumbled against Peter's throat.

"Have you, now?" Peter sounded pleased but a little subdued.

"Oh yes, I have."

Alex found the button in Peter's trousers. "I was thinking about the other day." He undid the button and started to open the zip, wondering what beautiful treasure would be waiting for him today. He looked down and saw... plain boxers. Ordinary boxer shorts in a dull dark blue.

"What's this?" Alex asked, before he could school his disappointment.

"Tuesday boxers," Peter mumbled and looked so sad that Alex wanted to scream. No one should ever have to wear Tuesday boxers.

"Why?"

"Floorball."

"So?"

"So... The guy who teaches Religion is on the team, he's sixty-two and very conservative. The gym teacher is a total phobe, and the English teacher always tries to set me up on blind dates with women, no matter how many times I tell her I'm gay. They already think I'm weak because of my sexuality. I must be more woman than man because I like dick, right? What do you think would happen if I showed up in lace or silk?"

"Yeah, okay, but why not a jockstrap? That ought to be okay. I mean, that's acceptable amongst athletes, right?" Alex was getting a little excited. Not excited in the way he would be if Peter had been wearing something nice, but maybe he could help Peter find something to wear that wouldn't make him sad.

"Don't you have jocks?" Alex was up off the bed in a heartbeat shuffling through Peter's drawers. God, he probably had more panties than they had in stock at *Underneath*. He was going to find something. He would make his man happy again.

"I had a jock on the first time we met."

Alex shivered at the memory. "So you did. Why don't you wear that on Thursday?" Peter burst out laughing, and Alex was pleased to hear it.

"Leather would probably be a little better than lace, but I still don't think it's a good idea."

"God, baby, do you have anything that's both leather and lace?"

"Not in jocks but I do have a pair of hipsters that are leather with frilly lace down the thighs."

Alex groaned. "So, what do we have on the jockstrap front?"

"Not much. I have some that are sheer."

Okay, maybe not solving the problem but what the hell. "What are you waiting for? Put them on."

Peter gave him a smile that made Alex's insides melt as he started to rummage through the mountain of underwear.

Peter was having a horrid day. He and Alex had overslept, and he'd had to rush to work, just to make it in time for his first class. He'd then had to improvise, since there hadn't been time to pick out the books he needed, and there'd been no opportunity to go to print materials. The day hadn't gotten any better from there. Now, he'd just realised that this was Thursday!

Thursday meant floorball. Floorball meant Tuesday underwear. And was Peter wearing Tuesday underwear? No, of course not! He had no idea how he would solve this problem. He could skip practice and go home early, but that felt wrong. Why should he stay away from the locker room just because he didn't wear the same kind of underpants as other men did? He would just change quickly. They probably wouldn't even notice.

It could be worse, it really could. He could've been wearing thongs or sheer panties, the satin boxer briefs weren't that bad. The problem, however, was that they were red with a little border of black lace in the front.

Before he headed to the locker room he went to the loo, and took off his stockings. Better to be barefoot than to take off his trousers and reveal the thigh highs he wore underneath. He didn't usually wear stockings at work, but Alex had caught him caressing them as he got dressed this morning, and had given him a smouldering look. On they went, and off he went. He had a pair of socks in his gym bag, so he wouldn't have to be barefoot during the game, just on the way home. It was no big deal.

He was late, again. Theme of the day! When he stumbled into the locker room it was already filled with men. There was no way around it, Peter realised. He tried to turn his back as much as he could and dropped his trousers. Faster than ever before, he stepped into his shorts and pulled them up.

“What the hell, Peter! What was that?” Great. Thomas, the gym teacher. “Are you wearing panties?” Peter tried to ignore the guy, but his voice held the same tone his mother’s always had. “You sick fuck! Not enough to take a dick up your arse, you have to dress like a girl too?”

Peter felt like he was seventeen again. At that time he hadn’t dared to wear anything other than the briefs his mother bought him, but he had silk, leather and lace hidden in his room. His mother had found them, of course. It was now more than fifteen years since they’d last spoken, but her voice still rang loud and clear in his head every time someone judged him. He’d loved her, tried to please her in every possible way, but the woman, who’d strictly forbidden every curse word since the day he was born, had spewed so much filth that he’d feared he’d never recover from it.

Peter fidgeted with his T-shirt. He didn’t know how to handle this. Nick, his mother, every hook-up that ever laughed at him—too many old ghosts were surfacing.

“I guess that answers any question about who’s the girl in your relationships.” Some of the others were snickering, and Peter felt the walls closing in.

“Sickening,” Thomas whispered to him in contempt.

Peter threw his clothes in the bag and ran from the locker room, fighting down tears on his way out.

Alex had just hung up the phone. That had been one of the hardest conversations he’d had in years. Not only had he been avoiding everyone he used to hang out with, he hadn’t told any of them that he’d moved away, packed up his things and gone back to his home town.

David had given him a lashing he wasn’t likely to forget any time soon, but everything was sorted now, and he couldn’t wait to tell Peter. He’d told the guys that he had a new boyfriend, and they were all excited to meet him. Alex hoped that Peter wouldn’t mind that he’d invited them over next Saturday. It was a bit of a long drive, but not too bad. He’d ask Peter to make his divine lasagne, and everything would be great.

Alex put his phone in the charger on the kitchen counter. At first, he hadn't planned on coming over this evening since Peter had floorball, but he'd realised he hardly had anything left in Linda's flat. His charger was here, and his battery was down to one bar. His laptop, most of his clothes, all of his shoes, even his gym bag was here.

He was pouring himself a glass of water when he heard the front door slam closed. "Peter?" No answer. He stepped into the hallway, and was almost knocked over as a badly dishevelled Peter charged past. Some water spilled out of the glass and onto Alex's shirt, but Peter didn't seem to notice. "Hey, are you all right?"

"Yes," Peter hissed without looking at him as he headed for the bedroom dressed in shorts, a T-shirt, and nothing else. Strange.

"Baby, could you make a lasagne for next Saturday? I invited..."

"I'm not your fucking wife!"

Alex was shocked by the hostility in Peter's tone. "No, of course..."

"I'm not a girl. I'm not weak. You can't just screw me..."

"Hey! What are you talking about?" What the fuck?

"I'm not a girl!"

"I wouldn't be here if you were."

"You just asked me to cook for you. I don't cook for you, or clean for you, got it? Just because I suck your cock, it doesn't make me your slave. You know what? Get out."

"What?" Alex stared at Peter in disbelief. What the hell just happened?

"Didn't you hear me? Get out!" Peter was screaming, and his eyes were brimming with tears that threatened to spill over.

"Baby..." Alex said softly.

"Get out!"

Alex did. He turned around and left. He didn't want to, but he did. He'd give Peter some time to cool down. Tomorrow he'd come back and get to the bottom of this, whatever it was.

The moment he heard the front door click shut, Peter began regretting that he'd yelled at Alex. Alex had never done anything that made Peter think less of himself. It was quite the opposite, really. Alex always made him feel good about himself, and what he liked. He had even tried to help Peter find a way out of his Tuesday boxer blues. It hadn't helped, but still.

How could he have screamed at the first man who'd ever really accepted him for who he was—the first who seemed to like Peter's panties almost as much as Peter did? Alex was the first who'd ever told him that he looked hot in lace. He'd had partners before who'd laughed it off and been okay with it, but they hadn't truly appreciated Peter's kink. Alex did.

Peter wondered how he could ever set foot outside his house again. This was worse than when Nick had left him with his trousers down, and then told everyone he knew about it. This time it was his colleagues, the people he worked with every day. He couldn't even imagine what kind of rumours would be flying around the teachers' lounge come morning. He knew he couldn't face it. He contemplated ringing in sick, maybe even resigning. There had to be some other job he could do.

He was so tired. Tired of always hiding who he was and what he liked. That was probably why he loved being with Alex so much; he never had to pretend. He could wear what he wanted, and Alex would still tackle him every chance he got.

But that was also part of the problem. Thomas' comment, about which one was the girl, had stung because it echoed Peter's own fears. He was afraid that Alex saw him, not as a girl, but as the weaker half of the relationship. Alex never did anything that made Peter think of himself as less of a man. He knew it was all in his head, and he hated that he thought something like that. He knew that being a bottom had nothing at all to do with being weak, but he wanted a relationship where he felt that he too could do the tackling—where he could be dominant even if he was wearing panties. But he wasn't like Alex. Alex would shove him up against the wall, and growl that he wanted to fuck him. When he did, Peter got so hot that it never even occurred to him to suggest they'd trade places.

He went to bed early, but sleep didn't come. He got up and phoned in sick. At midnight he finally caved and gave Alex a ring. Alex's phone rang, and rang, until it went through to voice mail. After the beep, Peter mumbled a "Sorry," and hoped that Alex would ring him the next day.

Alex was in a hurry. He'd overslept for the second day in a row. Today, it had happened because his phone still was on the charger in Peter's kitchen. He didn't have any clean clothes in the flat. Not that it was important, but some people frowned on wearing the same clothes as the day before. Still, he couldn't be bothered. He couldn't really find it in him to care if he was late, or what people would think of him when he showed up all wrinkled and unsorted.

Lunch came quickly, and he had to get his phone because he was expecting a notification about the package from the e-shop. He didn't have a minute to spare. He was going to give this gift to Peter, even if the man didn't want anything more to do with him. Alex couldn't understand what he'd done wrong, but he wouldn't force his presence on Peter if he didn't want him. He might be stupid, but he was not that stupid.

He practically ran through town to get to Peter's place. He put the key in the front door, but it was already unlocked. Alex opened it carefully. He had every intention of speaking to Peter about what had happened, but he didn't have time for a confrontation right now.

The house was completely silent. Surely, if Peter was home there would've been some sounds, a radio, the telly, or something. He wiped his shoes on the doormat, and proceeded into the kitchen. His phone was where he'd left it on the counter. He took it, left the charger since he planned on coming back, and was just heading for the door when he heard the shower start. He had about two minutes before he had to run back to *Underneath*.

He glanced into the bathroom. "Peter?" Peter's head flew up, his eyes locking with Alex's through the misty glass of the shower enclosure.

"Alex! Wait." Peter stuck his head under the spray, rinsing out the shampoo. "I'll be out in three minutes."

"I don't have three minutes."

"What? You won't even give me three minutes?" Peter looked hurt.

"I'll be back after work, okay?" God, he wished he could stand there and watch the suds run down Peter's body all day. The light from the fixture above the mirror reflected on wet skin, making it glisten.

"You'll be back?" Peter asked, sounding uncertain.

Alex raised one brow. "Of course. I practically live here, you know."

"You do?"

Alex smiled and shook his head, he would've thought that Peter had noticed all his things lying around. "See you later, honey."

Peter nodded, looking a little dazed as he returned to his shower.

Peter was waiting for Alex to come home. He actually thought of it as that: home. Not just for him, but for Alex too. He wasn't quite sure when that had happened, and he certainly hadn't noticed Alex moving in, but as he went through the house he realised that Alex's things were everywhere. His clothes were in the cupboard, his laptop in the living room, his charger in the kitchen, everywhere he looked something reminded him that Alex was mostly living here too.

He was nervous. Alex should've been home by now. Maybe he wasn't coming, after all. Maybe he'd thought things through and decided that Peter wasn't worth the trouble. He was pacing the living room, and had been for a while, when he heard the front door open. In a heartbeat he was in the hallway.

Alex smiled at him. "You okay, sweetie?" Peter flinched, why did he have to call him sweetie, or baby, or anything, it wasn't very... manly, was it?

"Sure."

"Sure?"

"I'm sorry," Peter blurted.

Alex nodded. "Talk to me."

Peter couldn't really look at Alex. "I forgot that it was Thursday." He watched as realisation dawned, and then Alex burst out laughing.

"No way! What were you wearing?"

Peter smiled weakly. He wasn't even close to finding this funny yet, but Alex's reaction was amusing. "Red satin."

"Oh. Those are pretty." Yes, they were.

He didn't know how to continue. Alex deserved an explanation, and an apology. "I'm sorry," he said again.

"You're forgiven," Alex said, and handed him a pink package with a black bow. Again, not very manly.

"You know... I'm not a girl. You don't have to buy presents for me." Alex gave him a strange look.

“I didn’t.”

He hadn’t?

“Did you make it?” Peter eyed the package sceptically.

“No, but I didn’t buy it for you. I bought it for me.” Alex had a predatory gleam in his eyes. “But if I want to buy you presents, I’m going to buy you presents, end of story.”

“You bought it for you? You want me to believe that you bought a pink package, for yourself?” Peter started to give it back, but Alex pushed it back at him.

“I did. Is there a problem with me liking pink packages?”

Peter blushed, as if he could ever criticise someone for liking something that was considered feminine. “No, it’s just that sometimes... well... you call me ‘sweetie’ and you buy me pink presents. I am a man, you know?”

Alex maintained a calm and gentle tone. “For crying out loud, Peter, what has that got to do with anything? I like pretty things just as much as anyone else, and I want to call my man ‘baby’ or ‘honey’ or ‘sweetie’, and I bought that pink package for me. I bought what’s in it, for me. For you to wear, while you fuck me.”

“While I... fuck you?” Peter almost stuttered. He never used that word unless he was really angry. For a guy with a kink, he really was a prude. “You want me to?”

“Oh yes, I want you to. I want you to fuck me, and me to fuck you, until we’re too old to do it any more. I want to love you for the rest of my life. But for today, I want you to fuck me wearing that,” he said, pointing at the package. “I want you to put that on, and bend me over the washing machine.”

Peter started to smile. “Well, get moving then.”

The End

Author Bio

Ofelia Gränd is Swedish through and through. She is constantly thinking of stories she would love to write. Anything and everything is a source of inspiration that has her lost in thought, staring off into space, in no time at all. Sometimes she turns a street corner, and sees a different world. She is often walking around mumbling to herself and her intended characters. Every so often she is painting mental pictures of their appearances, or wishing that she was better at Photoshop, because she knows exactly what the cover of the story in her mind should look like. Real life, however, interferes all too often, and the stories mostly remains unwritten.

In real life, Ofelia is living with her husband and their three children in a small town on the southwestern Swedish coast. When she isn't a stay-at-home mom, she is teaching Swedish and Swedish as a second language to teenagers and adults. She has been thinking about teaching English, but since she isn't fluent in the language, she is sticking to the one she knows well. Therefore, she, more than anyone, is a bit perplexed about why she thought it would be a good idea to try to write in English. But, she'll probably come to her senses—sometime.

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