

LOVE'S LANDSCAPES



Don't Read in the Closet 2014

SORRY IS THE MAGIC WORD

MA Jackson

Table of Contents

Love’s Landscapes.....3
Sorry is the Magic Word - Information5
Author’s Note.....6
Sorry is the Magic Word.....7
Chapter One8
Chapter Two.....18
Chapter Three.....24
Author Bio32

Love's Landscapes

An M/M Romance series

SORRY IS THE MAGIC WORD

By MA Jackson

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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[Arizona sunrise](#), [Yellow sunset with boats](#)

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Photo Description

A young man stands facing a wooden privacy fence, arms raised behind his head. He wears a flipped sun visor, no shirt and his white shorts are pulled low, exposing his muscled back and tanned bottom.

Story Letter

Dear Author,

I am a Dom who blew it with my boy; see the picture and you will see I sent him to the corner for punishment out in my backyard. Unfortunately when I did that some friends of mine and some of his friends were there also for a BBQ party. After the party was over, he left and it has been five days. He isn't with any of his friends or his family, and I am worried. I have tried calling him, emailing him, and texting him, but no response. I finally got a clue, I remembered him telling me about a chance to be a counselor and trainer at an intense tennis camp where they are not allowed to have any contact with anyone except for emergencies. The camp ends next week Friday—will he come back to me or by humiliating him, did I lose him for good. I love him. Please write this story and let him know I love him.

Sincerely,

Roger

Story Info

Genre: contemporary

Tags: BDSM lite, established couples, hurt/comfort, medical personnel, spanking, masturbation, hand job

Word Count: 9,537

Author's Note

BDSM practices, ideals and beliefs described in this story are based on the individual author's preferences and experiences. They are not meant to convey the only way to participate in this form of lifestyle, an instruction manual or a reference guide.

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SORRY IS THE MAGIC WORD

By MA Jackson

Chapter One

"It's over," Bryan murmured as he laid a quick smack to Dylan's ass, squeezing the plump, tanned cheek for a moment before letting go. His fingers trailed over the light pink imprint of his hand and Bryan pinched Dylan's flesh, digging his nails into the soft skin he cherished.

The look Dylan gave him, though, as he jerked up his shorts killed all amusement and thoughts of make-up sex from Bryan's mind.

"Thank you, Bryan, sir. I appreciate the opportunity to be guided by you," Dylan murmured and laid a quick kiss to Bryan's cheek, and then he turned and walked away.

Bryan blinked, too stunned to do anything more than watch, as Dylan left him standing alone at the corner of his lawn. Dylan stopped and hugged a friend of theirs. Greg chuckled at something Dylan said, and Dylan's mouth curled into an easy grin. He clapped Greg on the shoulder, nodded at Ellen, Greg's wife, and then pushed through the crowd and into the house.

Still, Bryan just stood there, watching as Dylan walked away from him. *What in the hell had just happened?*

"Fucked up, big time, Bryan."

Bryan turned and looked at Marshall. "What?"

Marshall took a long draw off his beer, and then chucked the bottle into the trash can. The glass shattered, the sound extra loud in Bryan's ears, and in the distance under the clatter, Dylan's bike started up. The buzzing whine of the engine on Dylan's Suzuki motorcycle rose over the conversation and music in his backyard before it lessened and faded into the distance as Dylan drove away.

Dylan's exit had caused a release of sorts, and an exodus of the people partying. On autopilot, Bryan watched as the group of people began to leave his backyard. Some ducked out the tall privacy fencing gate and others meandered through the sliding glass doors into his home and out the front door. Cars started, voices called out goodbyes, and Bryan just stood watching it all happen around him as if he was frozen, waiting for Dylan's return.

"You are so fucked," Marshall said again, and Bryan turned to stare at him. Melanie, Marshall's wife, sidled up to him. She handed him a plate and waited

while he tasted the potato salad Bryan had made just last night. Marshall hummed as he chewed then turned the spoon through the creamy sour cream sauce again and scooped up a red potato flecked with green onions and celery. He offered her the bite and she closed her eyes as she chewed.

Bryan waited for their plate sharing to end and his explanation.

“Thank you, sir,” Melanie murmured.

“You humiliated him, Bryan, sir.” She cut her eyes at Marshall, and he nodded at her. “If I can say so with impunity, you are going to need to grovel like a bitch before he’ll forgive you.”

Bryan scowled. “I did nothing wrong. We talked about this. He asked for it, and he knew what was coming.”

Melanie whistled and walked away as Marshall shook his head.

“What?” Bryan asked again, still wondering why Dylan had acted as he had, and what he had done that was so terrible.

“He asked you to humiliate him in front of our friends? That doesn’t sound like D at all, Bry.”

Bryan ran his hands over his face and sighed. The world had taken on a surreal sort of quality, and he felt as if he was in shock. A cold, hard sensation rumbled in his gut, and he pressed a hand to his waist as he looked around the enclosed space of his backyard. His lawn was empty of visitors now, and only Melanie sat at the cedar wood picnic table, sipping on a cold soda and eating a hotdog. Bits of rubbish had fallen out of the bins he’d set out to collect the debris from the party. The pool water, so bright blue, lapped slowly at the side walls, a neon orange, green and white inflatable beach ball drifted along the surface of the water and bumped into a reflective silver tanning float.

The shining grill still smouldered, the scent of meat lingering in the air as the coals cooled. Dylan had barbecued hamburgers and franks for the entirety of their kink group’s monthly munch meeting not too long ago: the extras were piled up on the small shelf attached to the large square grill.

And his boy was gone. Without so much as a goodbye, see you later, or even a fuck you. Bryan ran a hand over his face and dug his cell phone out of his pocket. He already had a text composed when he realized Dylan wouldn’t be able to answer it as he was riding his cycle. He shoved the phone back in his pocket without sending the text.

“Talk to me, Bry. D asked you to humiliate him?”

Marshall's voice broke through his haze, and Bryan took a deep breath before speaking to Marshall.

Marshall had mentored Bryan when he and Dylan had joined the local BDSM group. Dylan had wanted to make their kinky fun something more official, more structured, and they'd sought out other like-minded people. Just a couple of years had passed since then, but both Bryan and Dylan had found something suited to their desires, a core group that was similar to their wants. Mentors, both dominant and submissive, other couples that had twenty-four/seven relationships. And they'd moved in that direction, too. Dylan also attended a monthly submissive's meeting while Bryan went to the Dom's discussion nights.

Bryan and Dylan weren't without their problems, both still learning how to fit in with the changed relationship dynamics, but this was the first time something had happened, and Dylan didn't let Bryan know what had gone wrong for him.

“No, he didn't ask for that. Dylan asked for more intensity in our play.” Bryan bent and picked up a soda can that had dropped out of the recycling bin and tossed it in. He continued to clean up as he talked with Marshall.

“I gave him exactly what he asked for. He wanted to be displayed, put out for show, to the group. I told him we'd do it at the munch.” Bryan looked back at Marshall. “Dylan agreed to it when we talked about it at the last full group meeting.”

Marshall grunted. “That didn't look like a display to me. Seemed like a punishment.”

Bryan groaned and dumped all the paper napkins and plates into another trash barrel. “It was a punishment because I couldn't exactly reward him for doing something stupid and dangerous. You saw how he acted with that idiot Michael. Someone could have gotten injured with the horseplay. As it was, Michael turned his ankle and ended up drenched when he fell into the pool, and all Ian did was laugh his ass off while Michael swore like a sailor. Fuck, even I know better than to speak like that in mixed company. Did you see how red Marla turned? And Charity was pissed, too, because Michael's fall soaked them and their food. Both of their behaviours were offensive, and I'm the only one who did something about it.”

Marshall snorted. "Yes, well, we're all adults, aren't we? And really, doesn't everything nowadays offend someone? Nothing is sacred anymore. Fucking crazy-assed kinksters. What the fuck were they thinking, acting like they were having fun at a party?" He laughed.

Bryan shook his head. "It's not so much that or the language that bothered me, and yeah, I suppose you are correct in the fact that this was supposed to be fun, but really... someone could have been seriously hurt. Michael landed awfully close to the diving board. What if he had hit his head? The concrete around the pool was slick from people going in and out, and that's why he fell when they were having their shoving match. It is common sense not to act like a fool around the water like that."

"Yup. It's all fun and games until someone gets hurt, and not in the kinky, fun way either. It was dangerous, and could have been potentially deadly," Marshall replied. "While I agree with you something had to be done, did you have to do it in front of all of us?"

"I don't know." Bryan crashed down onto a low-slung lawn chaise. "Maybe. Ian sure as hell wasn't going to say anything." Bryan scowled. "D had to show his ass in front of everyone, so I just made certain they saw it. What better way to drive home the lesson? Seriously, safety first, in all we do, yeah?"

Marshall nodded and settled down beside Bryan on the grass. "Ian took Michael to the ER and he's fine. Just a sprain. He wasn't even bruised, and neither was Dylan, which I am thrilled to say after he bounced his ass on the ground like that. It should have been embarrassing enough, but for them to continue to shout at one another..."

"You see why I did something about it. It was completely irrational."

"Possibly. You think you could have waited to dole out the punishment?"

Bryan huffed. "No. We said that if something was off, if it didn't feel right between us, we wouldn't wait to remedy it, especially if one of us was injured." He eyed Marshall. "You think I should have let it go?"

Marshall shrugged. "Can't say. I'm not in your relationship; all I can do is offer my advice. Dylan is an entirely different person than Melanie, and we've been together a long time. I know that her being exposed like that in front of our friends would have had an impact. Did you know Dylan would react as he did?"

Bryan shook his head. "Dylan is used to being in front of people. I had no idea he'd go off and be pissed over something like this." He looked Marshall in

the eye. "But I don't think I did anything wrong. I didn't violate our agreements."

Marshall hummed. "Could be that you are still adjusting to the roles. You didn't do anything more than give him a time out, in my opinion. I'd have done the same if Melanie had been doing something stupid."

Bryan looked up at Marshall as he stood. Marshall snapped his fingers and Melanie came running. She hooked her fingers in his belt loop and smiled up at Marshall.

"Give him a bit to cool off then talk to him. Open communication, Bry. That's almost as important as being safe," Marshall offered as he wrapped an arm around Melanie.

"More. He trusts you to make the right decisions since you are the top and in control," Melanie added and Bryan looked at her. Marshall shushed her. She arched a brow at both men.

"What? It is. I've been where he's at now and really, it will work out if you just *talk* about it." Melanie shook her head. "You can't help it, I suppose, though." She grinned at them both then rested her body against Marshall's. "Gay or straight, you men are all emotionally stunted."

Marshall rolled his eyes and leaned down to kiss her forehead. "Doms are human, too, pet. We can make mistakes, as well."

Bryan nodded, and then tugged out his phone. He read over the text again, changed a few words then sent it off. He glanced up at Marshall and Melanie before looking around the backyard. "But I don't think it was a mistake. Dylan could have injured himself or someone else fooling around like that, and I took the appropriate actions. If he's given me leave to do so then I don't see how I went about it the wrong way."

The knock on the door startled him out of his doze, and Bryan blinked, reaching up to rub his eyes. The banging came again, and Bryan heaved himself to a sitting position. "Yeah, just a minute!"

Sunlight streamed in through the windows and Bryan blinked again, groaning as he realized he'd fallen asleep in his living room while listening to the television last night.

Pushing off the sofa, Bryan grabbed the remote and turned off the television, the low sound of the music station cutting out brought the silence of

the room into bold relief. His visitor rapped on the door a third time, the echo of the noise extra loud in the wake of the music. Disappointment speared him as he realized that Dylan would have come in because he had a key.

“Chill the fuck out,” Bryan grouched as he lurched to his feet. Rubbing a hand over his head to straighten his blond hair into some sort of style other than just-crawled-out-of-bed, he crossed the room on bare feet and opened the door.

Michael stood on his doorstep, running a hand through his long, dark hair and fidgeting slightly. “Hey, Bry. Is Dylan around?”

Bryan shook his head and held the door open for Michael. “No. You want to come in though?”

Michael shook his head. “Look, I just wanted to apologize for the disruption at the party yesterday. I’m sorry about that, and I’m glad D didn’t go into the pool with me.”

Bryan nodded. “You’re okay then?”

Michael nodded and smiled. “Yeah, Ian wasn’t happy with me after he finished laughing, but it turned out to be nothing more than a sprain.” He sighed then spread his hands. “So I just wanted to say, I’m sorry for acting like an ass. You’ll pass my apology on to Dylan?”

“As soon as I see him.”

“Thanks, man. See you later,” Michael offered and ambled down to his car in the drive.

Bryan watched him go, and then closed the door. He padded back over to the sofa and checked his cell. While there were a couple of messages from his friends thanking him for hosting the party, not one was from Dylan.

With a sigh, he punched in Dylan’s speed dial number and listened to the ringing. Three, four, five rings and nothing. Time enough passed that Bryan knew Dylan hadn’t ignored his call because the voice mail picked up after the seventh ring.

“Hey, Dylan, it’s me. Look, I don’t know where you are or what you are doing, but call me. Or text, or whatever. I’ve got the night off again if you want to have dinner.”

Ending the message, Bryan tossed his phone onto the coffee table and ran his hands over his face, rubbing his cheeks roughly before sighing again. He

pushed to his feet and began stripping off the clothes he'd had on since yesterday and made his way into the bathroom to shower.

Adjusting the faucet, Bryan let the water warm then stepped under the spray. The almost-too-hot water cascaded over his body, and Bryan let the warmth and wetness sooth over his muscles that were waking up after a night spent on the sofa.

Slick shampoo scented with Dylan's cologne assaulted Bryan's senses as he lathered up his blond hair. Even the creamy conditioner carried with it Dylan's smell and forced a memory of Dylan interrupting Bryan's bath after a particularly long stretch at work.

Bryan tensed for a moment recalling how much fun they'd had and how that night had been the beginning of what led to yesterday's disaster.

His hands clenched the washcloth tightly as he wrapped the soap into the fabric, then he scrubbed the soapy cloth down his chest. Large, shiny bubbles appeared on his skin as the vigorous washing took a turn for the sensual and Bryan relaxed. He slowed his movements, the tension easing from his body as he leaned against the shower wall and thought of Dylan.

His prick lengthened as Bryan daydreamed of Dylan's golden skin. Dylan's tight, compact body was strong in the right places, muscles firm and his skin warm and soft in other places. Exercise and days spent on the courts in the sun kept Dylan fit beyond all measures in Bryan's opinion. Not unlike his body, though that had been hardened just by sheer determination and action in rescue operations.

Dylan's uniform—crisp tennis whites—starred in many of his fantasies, and even a few of their play nights, contrasted nicely with his sun enhanced skin. Even his own starched, dark blue paramedic's dungarees had made an appearance, but this time all Bryan imagined as he dropped the washcloth and curled his hand around his cock was he and Dylan wrapped about each other, warm skin brushing pale skin as they writhed against one another.

Bryan saw, in his mind's eye, Dylan dropping to his knees. Bending his head in submission as he assumed the position and waited for Bryan's command.

"Touch me," Bryan murmured with his fantasy, ignoring the shower spray that washed over him while he began to stroke himself.

Dylan smiled at him as he lifted his head. "As you wish, sir." He pivoted gracefully on his knees and nuzzled Bryan's groin. His tongue stretched out and

carefully ran down the length of Bryan's cock as his fingers gently cupped Bryan's sac.

Bryan groaned, his hips canting into his fingers as he stroked and pushed his prick through his tight grip. In his fantasy, Dylan's hands ran over his thighs and then he leaned forward, swallowing down Bryan's prick. He sucked hard for a fleeting second, curled his fingers beneath Bryan's balls and stroked the delicate sensitive skin just behind his sac.

Cutting his eyes up at Bryan, Dylan smiled around his mouthful and winked at him. Bryan sucked in a breath in remembrance and coughed out some water that flowed in from the shower head. He thrust forward into his fist as he imagined himself fucking Dylan's mouth. His moans mingled with those from his fantasy as he gugged harder.

Unmindful of the cooling water, Bryan continued to stroke himself off, pulling in time with each dream push of his hips into Dylan's face. He cried out, spilling semen over his fingers as Dylan's eyes closed and the fantasy swallowed each and every last spurt of Bryan's seed.

Panting, Bryan watched soap and come swirl down the drain. Dylan looked up at him and Bryan reached out to caress the imaginary face. Dylan's eyes closed as he drew in Bryan's fingers, sucking on the long digits, his expression, happy and sated, lingered in Bryan's memory.

"I'm sorry, D," Bryan whispered as the scene vanished, leaving him with the satisfaction of release but with a huge ache still in his heart and stomach. He yelped when the cold water beating down on him registered, and Bryan fumbled with the faucet, trying to extract a bit more hot water from the tank to rinse the rest of the soap from his body.

Turning the taps to shut the spray off, Bryan stood for a moment, drops of water running down his body to plink on the ceramic of the tub. Reaching out past the curtain, he grabbed a towel and wrapped it about his waist before stepping out of the bath. He stared at the steamed-over mirror then scowled at his blurry reflection.

Steeling his shoulders, he took a deep breath. "I did nothing wrong by punishing Dylan for his actions. He put himself in danger and that scared me, so I reacted..."

The condensation had slowly started evaporating from the bathroom mirror while Bryan stared at himself, thinking about what he'd just said and how yesterday had played out. He'd reacted out of fear for Dylan's safety and

treated him much like a two-year old, despite being well over the age of consent. Dylan was twenty-five to his thirty-two, and they were adults. However, there was no sense in the childish way Dylan had acted, was still acting if he would admit to the truth, especially if they were going to continue this relationship. That realization hit him rather hard.

Did Dylan want to continue their relationship? Did Bryan? He did want Dylan, but not as he was acting now.

Bryan rested his hands on the sink, falling farther into his thoughts about what was happening in his life.

He and Dylan were adults and not just playing at some game. This was their life, and they had chosen to take these steps, to move what had been play into a lifestyle. Both of them were responsible for their actions because those actions affected both of them equally regardless of whom topped or bottomed, or who was dominant or submissive. Perhaps he wasn't the only one at fault, and with that thought, Bryan decided he could be just as angry with Dylan as Dylan was with him.

Communication was essential, that they had agreed on at one time. If Dylan persisted in keeping his head up his ass and not returning Bryan's calls, then perhaps they hadn't progressed as much as he'd thought.

The insistent beeping of his work pager as well as the ringing of the house's landline filled the air. The loud klaxon he'd programmed for the dispatch office on his cell rang out at the same time, startling Bryan out of his thoughts.

Scrambling out of the bathroom, Bryan put Dylan out of his mind. The calls and pager signified an emergency situation, and his requested weekend free wouldn't have been interrupted for anything less. Bryan's boss at the firehouse would have made certain, since it was he himself who had told Bryan to take the weekend off before the summer could become as hectic as it would soon. He'd never had a holiday off and apparently never would now.

Bryan was proven correct to hear Garth's barking commands to answer the damned phone on his voicemail as his pager and cell continued to scream at him. He silenced his cell and jerked up the house phone receiver.

"Connell," Bryan snapped as he shut off his pager and returned Garth's call. The news wasn't pleasant.

Five accidents, including a three car pile-up on the interstate, *and* a fire in progress from early celebrants of the upcoming Memorial Day weekend,

demanded Garth take action. He was recalling everyone on furlough. *When it rained, it poured*, Bryan thought as he listened to the dispatch instructions after he called the firehouse his ambulance was attached to.

The towel dropped to the floor as Bryan began pulling on his uniform. He raced out the door just a few moments later, buttoning up the trousers as he tucked in his shirt. His boots loose on his feet, still not quite tied correctly.

Seventy-two hours later, Bryan collapsed back on to his bed, damp once more from another shower that, again, hadn't been as satisfying as the one in his memory. He could still smell the lingering waves of fire and smoke, hear the cries of the woman trapped in her car but the only thing that registered was the fact that Dylan still hadn't called. He surrendered to Morpheus' arms wishing it was Dylan that cradled him instead.

Chapter Two

Dylan lay back on his bed, staring up at the latest bit of technology in his hand. His four hundred dollar Galaxy phone was nothing but a useless bit of plastic and glass in the mountains surrounding the Amherst Tennis Camp and Resort. Still, Dylan flicked his finger over the screen, reading the texts and listening to Bryan's voice mails he received before the range had forced him into a no service area.

Guilt began to burn in his chest as he read over the text once more. Bryan's anger came through the message and that made his stomach roil as he'd been so upset with Bryan, too. He still couldn't believe, two entire days later, what Bryan had done.

Dylan felt his face heat with embarrassment once more despite being alone in his appointed room. Sent to the corner like an errant schoolboy, his ass bared to all and sundry, and for what? A bit of horseplay because Michael had been drunk and teased him about being a good little subbie.

He groaned and ran a hand over his face, trying to put aside the incident, but it was all for naught. His game had been crap today, and that day was the cause of it. Another thing that tugged on his conscience was the fact that he'd left matters unsettled between him and Bryan, and that just wasn't on. It smacked of deception and Dylan had no way of remedying it until next week.

The lack of communication hadn't even registered on his radar when he'd signed up for the tennis camp. He'd told Bryan about it, about the intensive training he wanted to attend and how they would be separated for nearly two weeks. Bryan had been encouraging about Dylan's desire for extra training, and they'd made plans for their reunion afterwards.

The heart of the matter was that they had talked about it and Dylan felt better for that. He'd walked away from Bryan this time, though without so much as a word. And that weighed most heavily on him since it had been his condition in their relationship that they not end a day in anger.

The relationship Dylan and Bryan had was unlike anything Dylan had ever been involved with before. They *talked* to one another, for fuck's sake, was that such a crime? And Gods, what they had was good. He missed it and scowled at his reflection in the phone's screen. Was it such an unmanly thing to admit he missed his lover?

He'd been teased enough about being the "girl" in his affairs. But it was better than the stilted atmosphere he found himself in now. And Dylan had sworn that once he'd found Mr. Right, his relationship wouldn't be the stagnant environment his parents' lives had been.

Bryan and Dylan had spoken for hours about their wants, needs and desires. Talked for days it seemed about careers, schooling and what they wanted from their lives, relationship and arrangement. Both had come to a mutually satisfying conclusion or so Dylan had thought. And Bryan had fulfilled each and every desire until recently.

Anger threaded through him as Dylan thought back to the party night. All he'd been trying to do was have a little fun before leaving for his training camp duties. Dylan was one of the best players on his college team, and though he was in school on scholarship for tennis, what he really wanted to do was be a sports medicine physician. He was excellent on the courts and had even been told he most likely could play professionally or even try for the Olympics; it had been a one chance meeting with Bryan that had changed his entire outlook on his life.

Dylan's mind trailed back to his introduction to Bryan and how they'd gone from a couple to a kink relationship. He grinned as he imagined Bryan in his tight blue dungarees and the way he'd dropped out of the ambulance when it had arrived at the club.

Employment at the country club was part of Dylan's scholarship and the job was fun. It allowed him to play tennis and also to instruct young children in the sport as well. Dylan liked working with kids, especially when they were enthusiastic about the same things he was interested in.

However, there was always one in the bunch, no matter how hard they tried; they couldn't quite comprehend the basics. His one had been a small-for-her-age little girl named Sheila Mansfield. Sheila's mother, Anastasia, came to the country club with her husband Conner looking to improve her daughter's agility and clumsiness.

Sheila was awful at just about everything it seemed; inflicting bruises on Dylan and herself trying to return on his serves. Skinned knees from diving to catch and return the easy lobs he offered her or just complete falls to the rough court ground as she drove herself to catch what should have been out of bounds balls. She just didn't seem capable of improving, but she and Dylan both persevered, and when she turned her ankle in a last-ditch effort for points, it was the last straw.

Sheila crashed to the ground, grabbed her ankle then tossed back her head and wailed to the heavens.

Dylan dropped his racket and raced over to her, kneeling beside her as he motioned to the towel boy to call for aid. He drew Sheila into his arms rocking her and rubbing her back to soothe her.

He looked up as the paramedic came through the door and just stared at the man.

“I’m medic Bryan Connell and I’m here to help.” Bryan had knelt beside them and smiled, and Dylan was lost. Sheila was as well, it seemed, because she sniffled and listened to his every word.

Dylan watched Bryan charm Sheila as he swiftly and gently assessed the damage, then wrapped her ankle. Anastasia had arrived by then and she thanked Bryan before whisking Sheila away. Dylan had nearly swallowed his tongue when Bryan turned the thousand watt smile on him and asked. “Do you need attending Mr. Masters?”

Dylan swallowed and shook his head. “No, but I’d like to take you to dinner,” he’d blurted.

Bryan’s deep laugh rolled out, and he nodded, holding out his hand to Dylan. Dylan gripped Bryan’s hand, feeling a small card in between their palms. “All right. Call me about that,” Bryan had murmured then walked away.

Dylan hadn’t hesitated, and they’d been together ever since. It was hard to imagine that had been nearly five years ago. So much had changed and yet, despite the incident at the barbeque, Dylan was happy with Bryan.

The moment when their play turned into something more had both stunned and awed Dylan. He’d always been one for adventure, and had talked Bryan into attending a munch. He’d wanted to see what the hype was about after a certain series of books had been published.

What he’d found hadn’t been anything like what he’d read. Yes, some people practiced the way that had been sensationalized in the stories. But others lived in a way with their kink that made the stories he’d read seem like nothing more than a shameful way to excuse supposed inadequacies of self. Neither he nor Bryan was ashamed of the things they engaged in whilst alone.

It had become a game between him and Bryan to see if they could find a particular story that titillated them and try out any activities on their own.

However, after a particularly intense night where Dylan had spent several hours deprived of his senses, he decided he wanted—needed—more than just kinky sex.

Dylan had wanted validation that they weren't alone or mentally deficient in any way because of the things they enjoyed. Bryan had told him so, more than once, but seeing was believing, Dylan felt. And saw he had. Every day couples, both gay and straight, in loving satisfying relationships with a little extra on the side. Vanilla ice cream with chocolate sauce and nuts was how one presenter had likened a kink-filled relationship.

He felt alive, more so than any other time, after a session with Bryan. His entire body and mind reeled with sensation, feeling and completion. After an emotionless upbringing, Dylan desired a permanent way to retain those emotions. And Bryan had agreed to go along with him as he searched for a way to find what he needed.

Finding like-minded individuals to share and instruct in their experiences was a boon. After checking into some non-fiction books on the subject, Bryan and Dylan had written their own agreement out. They might never be able to marry, but the simple statement between the two of them was all the documentation Dylan would ever need.

“Both parties agree that any accidents, miscommunications, etc. will be handled in a timely and constructive manner,” Dylan murmured the last line of their declaration and groaned.

Oh yes, indeed, Dylan had royally screwed the pooch this time. Bryan had every right to be upset with him, and would probably be well into an earned and deserved sulk when Dylan came home.

Sighing, Dylan checked the clock on his phone then swore. It was late and tomorrow's exercise was a difficult one, not only physically but mentally as well. Despite still feeling justified in his anger at Bryan, he listened to Bryan's message once more before turning out the light. Bryan's voice brought him a small bit of comfort as he tried to make himself settle down enough to sleep.

“Tennis is hard work, requiring almost constant movement and even more visual awareness. It is a leg sport, aerobic and anaerobic exercise that requires one to develop the entire body in preparation for a match. Tennis is, however,

still only a game unless it is your livelihood and even then, we still want you to enjoy it.”

The woman giving the lecture, “Tennis: Sport, Game and Serious Business”, was pretty in an athletic sort of way. Her ponytail of thick, dark hair bounced as she paced back and forth in front of the group of players gathered for morning session.

Dylan listened to her with half an ear as she demonstrated several warm-up techniques. Many of the other players followed along with her as she moved on to the exercises and spoke about an individual trainer setting up an appointment time to work with everyone on a one-on-one basis.

“Doing this lessens the chances of injury not only to you but also to your partner or opponent. As I said, we at Camp Amherst want you to have fun with your game and each other. What we don’t want is someone hurt in the name of the sport.”

Dylan started as the words filtered in through his skull. He blinked and had an epiphany on not only his game, but his life and relationship as well. While he’d been wallowing in self-pity and his own righteous embarrassment, it dawned on him that what had happened at the party was, in fact, his own fault. Or more accurately, their fault. Together. Collectively. They were a unit after all, and if one team member let down another, grave consequences could happen.

Bryan had acted accordingly, well within the confines of both their agreement and lifestyle. Bryan knew Michael was an irresponsible person who took greater chances than necessary, and Bryan had done his level best to not only drive home the point, but to also show Dylan why. They’d forgotten the follow through, though.

They had let one another down, he and Bryan, and at this particular moment in time there was nothing he could do to fix it.

Granted, he still felt like a chastened school boy, but at least now, he understood why. Twirling his racket, his mind racing with the possibilities and the things he and Bryan needed to talk about once he returned from camp, distracted his game again.

He lost his individual match with another player and scowled at the outcome. He was better than that, and his trainer, Ron, told him so. Ron set

Dylan to running a few practice drills to remind him to keep his focus on his game, and a tiny spark of awareness again made itself known.

Cause and effect of his actions directly affected his game, and the irony of that revelation wasn't lost on Dylan as he applied the same thinking to his relationship woes. He shook his head and forced himself to put his personal business aside when a stray ball nearly blackened his eye.

Chapter Three

Bryan was certain that if one more person tried to analyse his relationship with Dylan, he would have to resort to violence. And not any of the fun kind either. Not only had he not heard from Dylan in almost two weeks, but Dylan's sister, Aimee, and Dylan's aunt, Barbara had both made their displeasure with him known.

Dylan was close to his sister and aunt in ways that he wasn't with his parents. Over the years, it had ceased to be a point of contention between them as Bryan's family was close-knit, and he came to understand the dynamics of the Masters family.

"You lost my brother?" Aimee asked when he'd called to see if Dylan had decided to stay with her instead of his apartment near the university.

Bryan felt guilty immediately. "No. No, I didn't. I just don't know why he won't return my calls."

Aimee sighed. "What did you do?"

"How do you know it's my fault?" Bryan demanded.

Aimee giggled. "Oh, Bry. It's nothing personal, but it will always be your fault as D is my brother."

Bryan sighed. He should have known Aimee would take Dylan's side no matter what happened between them. She was loyal to a fault and had been one of their biggest supporters when Dylan had introduced him at a Masters' family gathering. He loved her for that quality, even if it wasn't doing him a bit of good at the moment. "So, you've not seen nor heard from him lately?"

"Not a word, but considering it's Dylan, and I know my brother, give him some time. He'll come over in a day or two, bounding with energy about something or other and you guys will work it out."

"Thanks, Aimee."

"You'd best treat him right, Bryan Anthony Connell, or I will hear about it."

Bryan flinched, but promised to call her once he reconnected with Dylan. His next phone call hadn't gone over so well, and he deserved it, he supposed. Barbara Stratton, Dylan's mother's sister, had appointed herself Dylan's surrogate parent in light of her sister's indifference.

“Mister Connell, I had wondered when, and if, you were going to contact me.” Barbara’s voice was low and forceful. Bryan always felt as if he were sitting in the principal’s office whenever he and Dylan had gone to see the woman.

She loved Dylan fiercely, and after a grueling interrogation session during the holiday meal in which Dylan had introduced Bryan as his partner, she’d grudgingly come around to the fact that Bryan was now a part of her nephew’s life. The only thing that grated on his nerves more than anything else he had endured, was the fact that she had never—and probably wouldn’t ever—refer to him by his given name. Of course, he returned the favor to her with the caveat that he used her maiden name instead of her married name since she’d divorced her husband recently. Still, he tried for Dylan’s sake.

“It’s Bryan, Ms. Stratton. I just want to talk with him. I need to apologize and I can’t do that unless he contacts me.”

There was silence for a long moment on her end of the line, and Bryan was almost certain that his call had been disconnected, or perhaps she’d hung up on him purposely, when he heard her exhale.

“I wondered what had happened,” Barbara said. Her tone had softened some, though Bryan could still hear the censure.

“You know where he is?” Bryan blurted out.

“I do, indeed, Bryan.”

Stunned by her use of his name, Bryan just listened, holding his breath as she told him of Dylan’s call the night of the party.

“He said you’d had a disagreement, but he still wanted to attend his training camp and that if you happened to phone, that he would speak with you once he returned. I will be shuttling him from the airport to his apartment on Friday.”

Bryan swallowed. “I forgot about the camp.”

Barbara chuckled, the smoky sound soothing him even though she was most likely laughing at him. “Dylan said you might, and asked me to remind you to check your calendar on your phone. He also informed me that the only way you would remember was if he set it to a specific alarm and even then you might disregard it if something from work came up.”

Bryan smiled, remembering the little notes he received on his phone after Dylan had stayed over or they’d gone to dinner. They had never said the words

as both believed actions were more than enough, and Dylan's notes to him said "I love you" more than anything else. He'd saved almost every one of them on the phone's memory card. "Something did, but I don't remember any alerts."

"I believe he mentioned a klaxon ringtone would be the only one you would always respond to."

Bryan closed his eyes. He'd heard the klaxon and dismissed it as work related. Considering all that had happened that weekend, it wasn't too far outside the realm of possibility that he'd seen the reminder but had been too distracted to process it. "I think I know what happened, Ms. Stratton, and if you don't mind, I'd like to retrieve Dylan from the airport when his flight arrives."

Barbara hummed. "Barbara, if you please. And I shall pass on the message to Dylan as soon as I am able."

Bryan ended the phone call feeling a bit better as well as completely reprimanded. He had many things to contemplate over the next few days until Dylan came home.

Dylan let himself into the house, trying to remain quiet even though Bryan wasn't at home. He was almost certain that this stunt would earn him some sort of recognition from Bryan, although he wasn't able to figure out if it would be good or bad attention.

Once he'd started the trip down from Amherst camp, his phone signal had reengaged, setting off a plethora of noise indicating the numerous texts and voicemails he had not been able to receive prior. Not the least of which were several from Bryan and one intriguing message from his Aunt Barbara.

Since he'd finished his trials early, Dylan had decided to surprise Bryan and refused his aunt's request for Bry to meet him at the airport. She hadn't been happy with him to learn the truth behind the estrangement but set him on the right course to correct it.

Dylan had just settled himself on the sofa when he heard Bryan's key in the lock. The door opened and Dylan stood, waiting for Bryan to enter.

"Hello Bryan," Dylan said in a low tone, the soft sound carrying across the room despite the quiet greeting.

Bryan's head jerked up, and Dylan fought off the grin threatening to curl his lips at the expression on his lover's face.

“D?” Bryan breathed and stared at him.

Dylan stood while Bryan looked him over, feeling a bit uncomfortable in the silence of the room. Bryan shut the front door with a heavy thud, and stood stock still staring at Dylan.

Dylan took a deep breath. “Are you going to say hello or are you just going to stand there staring at me?”

Dylan watched Bryan swallow, his Adam’s apple bobbing, and his mouth working for a moment before Bryan said anything.

“You came back.”

Dylan nodded, waiting for Bryan to work through whatever it was he had decided to put himself through while Dylan had been gone. “Did you think I wouldn’t?”

Bryan crossed his arms over his chest and glared at Dylan for a moment. “You left me.”

Dylan arched a brow then bowed his head. “I guess I did,” he admitted. “But you had advance warning that I wouldn’t be available for a couple of weeks.”

“That’s beside the point, Dylan, and you know it.”

Dylan knew it, and it almost seemed as if Bryan hadn’t come to the same realizations he had during their time apart. He wanted to be angry, but he couldn’t. He had been the one to leave matters between them unsettled, and he was more stunned than anything about Bryan’s attitude, especially in light of the surprising things Barbara had told him. Again, he answered in the affirmative. “I do, and yet, you are still upset it seems.”

Dylan looked up at Bryan to see he had turned around. It hurt to have Bryan’s back to him and despite becoming upset; he couldn’t muster the energy to be angry. He looked away and tried not to feel the emptiness that was slowly filling his gut.

“I think I’ve a right to be,” Bryan murmured.

Dylan nodded, bowing his head again as he considered Bryan’s words. He heard Bryan’s footfalls, slow and deliberate, never registering that each step was coming closer.

“Don’t do it again.” Ghosted across his ear. “Don’t leave me again, Dylan.”

Dylan gasped when Bryan's arms came about him and squeezed the breath from him. He forced himself to focus on the rest of the words that Bryan was speaking to him.

"I'm sorry, D. So sorry. Please? Forgive me? I didn't know how you'd react," Bryan whispered. "You scared the fuck out of me, and then left me. What the hell was I supposed to do, Dylan?"

Dylan drew in another breath as Bryan held him out at arm's length and shook him. "You ever walk away from me like that again and I will... I'll—"

"What?" Dylan interrupted, suddenly finding the necessary wherewithal to be angry in spite of Bryan's apology. "You embarrassed me in front of our friends and you want me to forgive you just like that? What will you do to me if I decide to leave, hmm? What are you going to do for an encore, Bryan?"

Bryan swallowed and stepped back from Dylan, and Dylan wondered if shouting had been the right thing to do when Bryan answered him.

"Beg your forgiveness for being an insensitive ass when it comes to putting you in that position."

Dylan blinked, not understanding what he heard just yet. "What?"

"I'm sorry, Dylan. I shouldn't put caveats on an apology."

"I..." Dylan began, then shook his head. "That's right, you shouldn't. And in saying that, I owe you an apology as well." He sighed and looked Bryan right in the eyes. "I'm sorry for walking away, especially when I knew that it would upset you."

Bryan nodded. "Don't ever do it again," he whispered.

"I won't," Dylan answered, stepping closer to Bryan. "Don't treat me like a child as I don't need protection."

"Everyone needs to be protected once in awhile," Bryan began, but Dylan shook his head.

"Stand beside me or behind me, but let me make my mistakes, Bry. I'm just as human as you are and will, in time, learn from the experiences."

Dylan waited while Bryan processed what he said.

"As long as you know that if it ever comes to that situation again, I am only acting in your best interest. You could have been injured and that's what scared me."

Dylan licked his lips. "All right. I'll try not to put myself in a place like that again so long as you realize that you can't keep me from being hurt. I know I'm younger, and sometimes even stupider, but life happens and you can't stop it. You don't truly live unless a bit of pain is involved."

Bryan closed his eyes and nodded again, and Dylan felt the weight ease from his stomach. He smiled and took another step closer to Bryan before wrapping his arms about Bryan's shoulders.

Bryan's arms came around Dylan, squeezing him close, and Dylan closed his eyes and relaxed into the embrace. Bryan's hands drifted over his back, rubbing along his muscles and soothing away the tension.

"I missed you," Dylan muttered and nipped at Bryan's ear.

"Oh?" Bryan chuckled, his hands resting on Dylan's ass, fingers cupping the curve of his cheeks and digging into his flesh.

Dylan moaned and nodded, biting down on the tender skin of Bryan's ear again. "Yes, sir. Missed you something terrible," he breathed and licked Bryan's lobe before sucking on the sensitive spot behind his ear.

Bryan laughed again, tugging his ear out of Dylan's mouth. "Something terrible, huh?"

"Yes," Dylan started to say then yelped as Bryan's palm came down hard on his ass. The smack, though softened through his jeans, still stung. Shock and pain radiated through his body. He rocked forward into Bryan, feeling the hard outline of his cock against his own. "Bry?"

Bryan's hand connected with his ass once again, harder this time, and Dylan tried to pull away. Bryan's other arm tightened around his waist holding him in place. "I believe the correct response is, 'One, sir. May I have another, please?'"

Dylan leaned back just enough to look into Bryan's face. He grinned at him, licked his lips and said, "I believe that was two, sir, and may I have another, please?"

"Cheeky little bastard," Bryan growled and released Dylan. He leaned forward and snarled. "Run."

Dylan nearly tripped, turning around and racing for the bedroom, Bryan hot on his tail. Stumbling into the room, Dylan fell across the end of the bed and Bryan landed on top of him. He never had the chance to turn over because Bryan landed another smack on his ass, the sound echoing in the room.

Dylan groaned and Bryan rolled them, manhandling Dylan across the bed and over his knees. Prime position and Dylan wriggled his ass at Bryan. His fingertips brushed the carpet and Dylan offered, "Three, sir. May I—"

He never got the rest of the words out before Bryan's palm flattened against his bottom again. He rocked against Bryan's leg, his pride and ass on fire even as his cock brushed up against Bryan's thigh.

Two more swats landed, and Dylan bit back the tears and cries that threatened to escape. Bryan rolled him off his lap; and he shuddered as Bryan's hands tugged at his clothing, divesting him of his jeans and briefs. Cool air graced over his skin, taking some of the heat Bryan had laid there.

Legs caught in the tangle of clothing, Dylan struggled as Bryan brought his legs up and spanked him again, his hand burning into Dylan's skin when it connected. He howled this time, and Bryan leaned over him, letting his legs fall back to the bed.

Bryan's hot hand wrapped around Dylan's cock, squeezing and stroking him as Bryan hissed at him. "Next time any punishment will be in private. No one but me will see you like that and I'll finish you when I'm done, so you'll know it's over."

Dylan nodded, canting his hips into each pull on his cock. Each stroke brought him closer, despite the throbbing of his ass and the friction on his skin. "Please," he begged. "Bryan, please."

Bryan nodded and leaned closer to Dylan's face. "Now, D. Now," he murmured and slanted his mouth over Dylan's.

Dylan whined into Bryan's mouth, his body drawing up bowstring tight before he came. Hot splashes of semen slid through Bryan's fingers, landing on Dylan's stomach as Bryan continued to stroke Dylan past orgasm. Dylan curled around Bryan, his skin overly sensitive to the prolonged caress.

"Enough," Dylan gasped, and Bryan drew back. Sprawled on the bed, Dylan allowed Bryan to divest him of his jumbled clothes. He stretched out properly on the bed as Bryan used Dylan's T-shirt to clean the semen from his stomach.

Bryan settled down beside him, and Dylan relaxed as Bryan rested his head on Dylan's chest. "It's over, D," Bryan murmured.

Dylan tensed for a moment then realized Bryan's fingers were stroking along his hairline, carding through his hair, and he sighed, wrapping an arm

about Bryan's back, understanding what exactly was over. The fight, the misunderstanding and all the tension surrounding the last two weeks. The time apart hadn't dissolved their relationship, but instead strengthened what they had between them.

Dylan leaned up and pressed a kiss to the top of Bryan's head. "Yes, sir. It is, indeed, over."

The End

Author Bio

MA Jackson is an independent author who has written speculative, fantasy fan fiction under the nom de plume unbroken_halo for nine long years and is now working toward publishing her original works. Lately, she writes M/M BDSM erotica. And w00t, she is a real-life Domme who was into kink long before it was cool.

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