

A movie poster for 'Meant to Be' featuring two men in the foreground and a city skyline at night with a fountain in the background. The man on the left is leaning forward with his hand on his forehead, looking thoughtfully at the camera. The man on the right is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. The background shows a city skyline at night with illuminated buildings and a large fountain with multiple jets of water in the foreground.

*Meant
to Be*

Rawiya

a love's landscapes short

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Love's Landscapes

An M/M Romance series

MEANT TO BE

By Rawiya

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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MEANT TO BE

By Rawiya

Photo Description

A black man hugging a white man from behind, both are shirtless. White male has a tattoo on chest.

Story Letter

Dear Author,

I'm a thirty-something successful African-American male and I'm gay. I don't fit the stereo-type for gay men in my neighborhood, flaming, sissified, acting like queens/women. I'm what my mother and most African-American females refer to a catch. I appreciate the female form but it doesn't do it for me, I love men! My mother always told me growing up "don't bring no white girl up in my house". Not a problem Mom, no women in my future... so how do I tell her I'm gay and the man I love is white. He completes me... he laughs at my jokes, holds me when I'm feeling insecure, and he doesn't judge me. So how do I tell my mother and the rest of my family that I'm gay and in love with a white man who is my everything?

Sincerely,

Bookjunkie12

Story Info

Genre: contemporary

Tags: interracial, librarian, homophobia, racism, tattoo, coming out

Word Count: 10,486

MEANT TO BE

By Rawiya

Chapter One

“Thad, Thad!” Lisa’s shriek woke Thaddeus Dawson from the most amazing dream. If only that vision would come true, just to save him the heartache to come. “Thad?” Lisa shook him repeatedly.

“Hmm? Yes, Lisa. Yeah, uh...” Thaddeus sat up straight, and his cheeks flushed. He was embarrassed about falling asleep in the library lounge. “I must’ve dozed off while reading this book.” Thaddeus removed his black rimmed glasses and set his copy of *Cross My Heart* by James Patterson on the table.

“Oh, I just bet you did, Thad. You’ve been *real* busy at night, huh?” Lisa lowered her purple frames to the bridge of her nose and swiped the wayward red strands out of her face. She flashed Thaddeus a smirky smile and waltzed to the other side of his chair. “How’s the new *man* doing, hmm?”

Thaddeus returned her grin with an even wider one. “He’s fine. Still trying to get things right with his life, but we’re coming along.” Thaddeus quickly stood, not wanting to discuss his love life with resident gossiper, Lisa Stanley. She could be a pain in the ass at times, and when she was bored, she didn’t take issue with sharing not-so-common knowledge about him.

“Oh come on, Thad. When you gonna spill about him, hmm? And when are you going to tell that meddling mom of yours that you’re gay?”

You’re gay... you’re gay... you’re gay.

Hearing the words echoing in his brain, Thaddeus clutched his chest and sucked in a breath. He’d been avoiding the humongous task of coming out to his family for months, fearing the worst. He’d read the horror stories; he’d seen gay friends shunned by those who claimed to love them before they came out. And yes, they all came out fine, for lack of a better word. They survived, but Thaddeus couldn’t see himself telling his mom about being gay. She thought she’d raised a woman-loving gentleman, not a gentleman-loving gentleman. And then there was the added pressure of...

“Don’t bring no white woman into my house!”

Carolyn Dawson spent many a day preaching that to him and his brother, Spencer, at the breakfast table, while Willis Dawson, their father, was alive, and beyond. No one of the Caucasian variety was allowed in the Dawson house unless they were selling something or preaching the words from the Bible.

Even the former would be under scrutiny, but the bottom line was, neither Dawson parent approved of their children being in interracial relationships.

With Thaddeus now being in his early thirties, college educated, and making good money as Senior Librarian at the Adams Park branch in Chicago, he was not only dating outside of his race, but he was seeing someone of the same gender.

Oh boy.

What would Carolyn think of him now?

Trembling slightly, Thaddeus grabbed a Styrofoam cup, filling it with coffee. Although not a fan of the house blend, he'd settle for it just to wake up and get back to work.

"Thaddeus?" Lisa stepped back around the corner, still smiling like the cat that ate the canary. "Come on, man. You have to go on and tell your mom about Seth. I've never seen you so happy until you started dating him."

Thaddeus stopped before taking a sip. He cocked a curious eyebrow. "Really? Does it seem that obvious?" He sighed inwardly and winced, readying himself for the grainy concoction he was about to drink.

"Yeah, and frankly, I think it's kind of cute." Lisa dragged her nubile fingers across the counter. "I mean, nothing hotter than man love, you know, and... oh..." Lisa gasped and clapped her hands. "Did you notice we have gay romances in the library now? Squee!"

Thaddeus reached in his shirt pocket, grabbing his specs. "Oh goody." He rolled his eyes. "Lisa, just because I'm gay doesn't mean..."

"Mean what, Thad? Don't you read them? I mean, I do, and frankly I think gay books are the hottest thing on the planet." She fanned herself, eyes wide. "Whew, the one I read last night, brother on brother, wow."

"Lisa, not now, okay? Maybe later." Thaddeus interrupted her, putting his hand up in front of his face. As much as he wanted to hear about Lisa's stroke book recommendation, Thaddeus turned her down for the time being.

At times he and Lisa would do lunch at one of the local eateries, but today Thaddeus was more concerned with sleeping than eating. After all, he'd spent a good portion of the night with the new love of his life, Seth Gottlieb. They'd only been dating two months, and even though they hadn't made it to the bedroom just yet, Thaddeus was *almost* positive this was the man he'd be

spending his life with. And, ultimately, the man that would finally force Thaddeus to tell his family the truth.

“Okay, well, if not now, then after work? And you’ll share some details about the date last night, right?”

Thaddeus grimaced and finished the coffee. He tossed the cup in the wastebasket. “There isn’t much to tell, Lisa. We went out for dinner and took a walk by the lake.” Thaddeus leaned against the counter and looked up into the lights, thinking of last evening with fondness. “We kissed a few times and held one another for a while, then went home.”

Lisa tilted her head. “That’s it? No sex, no rimming, no...”

“Lisa!” Thaddeus laughed and covered his mouth, feeling the heat rush to his cheeks. No doubt he’d thought about what Seth’s body would taste like. He already knew about his slim, kissable lips. His neck, which he’d sampled many a time already, and then his ears; they were both delicious. Yes, that was as far as they’d gotten. Not even to second base.

Thaddeus lowered his voice and exhaled deeply. He wished he hadn’t gotten into this conversation, but he had to tell someone else other than his gay friends. “No, not yet. We haven’t gone that far, because... because he told me we won’t have sex until I come out,” he managed.

“Well damn, Thad, that’s just cruel. Why haven’t you told your mom? Aren’t you horny?” Lisa appeared perplexed.

Thaddeus nodded and pursed his lips. He didn’t want to admit she was right, but what else could he say? Of course he was horny; the man was hot. “Miss Lisa, I want this man more than I want to breathe, but I don’t think I can handle my mother being disappointed.” Thaddeus toyed with his suspenders and eyed the cracks under his feet. “She made it *very* clear from day one what she wants and expects from me. Admitting I’m gay will tear her apart.”

Had a good time last night. Can’t wait for more, Love Seth.

Seth Gottlieb punched the last few letters in for his text and shoved his cell into his shirt pocket. He hadn’t been able to return Thad’s message until now, because his phone bill hadn’t been paid in over a week.

It sucks being unemployed.

Seth sighed heavily, wondering where he’d get the money to eat this week

and next. Thank goodness for his mother who didn't mind kicking him down some cash every so often, any time he looked pitiful. This time, however, Seth was determined to make it on his own without asking anyone, including his well-to-do boyfriend; nothing more embarrassing than asking your man for money when you hadn't even slept together yet.

What about after?

Seth grimaced at the thought and leaned against the wall, hoping he'd be the next one called. His unemployment benefits were screwed up, which was why he was wasting a whole day in line at employment security instead of searching for his next gig. His company, Braders & Levi, had gone belly up. The owners had to shut down due to lack of business. Seth had always considered himself in the lower class but never had he been jobless. This was truly one of the worst things to ever happen in his entire life. Despite this, Seth thanked the Jewish God above for his first breath and the sun rising outside his window every day.

And yet, even when he informed Thaddeus he might be unemployed *very* soon, living with other gay friends just to make ends meet, and losing his car to the repo man, this overly-smart and attractive man still took Seth in. Seth thought he was crazy for wanting to date him with all that baggage but then again, perhaps Thaddeus thought Seth could inspire him to do something he'd himself done over fifteen years ago: come out to his family and friends.

Yes, coming out to the people he loved, risking shame by being out, yet proud for his own sake. Luckily for him, his mother was very accepting, saying he was her son no matter what. As for his father, he only shook his head and said something about how he hadn't raised a Jewish faggot, but as long as Seth stayed faithful to his religion, he'd have to live with it. Seth never forgot that day and hoped to inspire others with his story. Most of all, he hoped to get Thaddeus to do the same.

"Jerry Taleser." In an annoying, nasally voice, the desk clerk called out another name.

"Damn it." Seth rolled his eyes and glanced at his watch, which now read quarter past three. "Why can't they call me? I've been here since eight this morning. I could be out looking for employment right now, you know." Seth raised his voice, hoping someone would hear and get the hint.

The same clerk looked up and pushed her red frames higher on the bridge of her nose. "Sir, we have more people to serve than just you, all right? There are

plenty of folks waiting their turn just like you are. Sorry to tell you, you're *not* the only one looking to get money from the government.”

Others behind Seth snickered, mocking him.

Seth scrunched his shoulders and hid behind the person in front of him, feeling his face heat up. He yanked his phone from his pocket to distract himself from the day whizzing by him in this line.

Instantly his frown turned into a smile, when he noticed Thaddeus had returned his message.

Me too. You wanna meet for dinner again tonight? My treat.

Seth nodded his head in agreement and returned the text.

Sure. After six?

Six o'clock since he'd need time to get home and change before Thaddeus picked him up for their date.

Chapter Two

Right after Thaddeus texted Seth, his mother called, urging him to come by. Thank goodness he still had time to stop by before his date; he didn't want to be late. One thing Thaddeus hated was being tardy for anything.

Once he secured his car, he jogged up the few stairs, flowers in hand, ready to give them to his mother. He grimaced, glancing at a couple of imperfections in the paint. Not only that, he heard creaks under his feet that sounded like the wood might need replacing. The small, white house he'd purchased for her a couple of years following his dad's passing seemed in need of some repairs. Thaddeus made a mental note to contact someone about fixing those issues.

"Mom?" Thaddeus opened the screen door and knocked as he entered, since he had his own key. "Mom, I'm here."

"Oh Thaddeus, I'm glad to see you." His mom Carolyn came in with her arms wide, puckering up for her son. Wearing a simple black dress with flat loafers, Carolyn still dressed as she had when attending his father's funeral five years ago.

"I'm really glad you came by. That older brother of yours can't even be bothered with his mother now that he's engaged to that *white* woman." She patted his shoulders.

Thaddeus sighed and hugged her back. "Um, Mom, I don't have long, but I came by as quick as I could. Did you want to talk about something important? Let me put these in water." Thaddeus scurried to the kitchen and grabbed a vase from the cabinet over the sink.

"I could've done that, baby. I know you've been working all day, so I wanted to invite you over for dinner. You know, to talk, just you and me."

Thaddeus shook his head, while he arranged the bouquet. "Can't Mom. I already have plans with um—uh... friends."

Silence.

Thaddeus finished quickly and walked into the living room to see his mother sitting on the couch wearing a huge frown. She petulantly crossed her arms over her chest. "So your *friends* are more important than your mother?"

"No, no, not at all, Mom." Thaddeus set the vase in the center of the coffee

table and joined her on the flower-print sofa she'd brought from the old house. As much as he begged her to buy new furniture, she refused, saying this sofa reminded her so much of his dad.

Yeah, old, broken-down, and stiff.

Thaddeus smirked at the thought and took both of her hands in his. He really did love his mom, but he was looking forward to spending time with Seth tonight, to try convincing him to go a little further. Besides, Lisa's insistence to talk about the hot book she'd read did nothing but make him antsy. Nothing worse than walking around with a huge hard-on in well-fitting trousers.

His mom didn't look convinced. She straightened her glasses. "Well, if it's not that then you have time to have dinner with your dear old mother. Your friends will always be here, I won't."

"Mom, don't say that." Thaddeus clicked his teeth and patted the back of her hands. How would he get out of the guilt trap his mom was laying down so nicely for him to step in? "It's just that, well—" He loosened his tie and looked away a quick second. He had to think of something fast, so she'd let him go. "The guys are supposed to be setting me up with someone, you know, a lady."

"Really?" Carolyn reached for Thaddeus and hugged him with all her might. When she released him, she clutched her chest and sighed. "Oh good! I worry about you sometimes, Thaddeus. You haven't even attempted to bring anyone around me. I thought you'd shock me by saying you're gay or something."

Oh boy.

He nervously laughed along with her and got up quickly from the sofa, unable to look her in the eyes.

What made her say that?

Thaddeus struggled with a reply to carry the lie on further. "I just haven't had time to date, and the guys are setting me up with someone. I'm a little tense about the whole thing, but—"

He heard her get up from the couch and, before he could get away, she rubbed his shoulders. "Oh Thaddeus, you'll be fine. As long as she's of our kind it won't be a problem with me."

He sighed inwardly and turned to his mother to ask her a poignant question. It really bugged him that his parents were so dead set against dating outside

their race. "Mom, let me ask you; what is the big deal about dating a white... person, hmm? I mean, people are people."

The age lines on Carolyn's face seemed to increase, and she wrung her hands. "Yes, yes, but, why on earth would you want people to be giving you funny looks? Mixed-race couples are always frowned upon and if you have kids, they'll be picked on. You don't want the issues Spencer has, son. Really, you don't."

In disbelief, Thaddeus shook his head. "Is that the *only* reason, Mom? You're worried about what others will think?"

"No, I..." She shrugged and waddled back to the sofa to take a seat. "I've never really trusted white people, son. We come from a long line of slaves on the plantation. As far as I know, no one in our bloodline has ever married outside of our race because of that."

"Well that's just silly, Mother. I'm sorry. You're going to hold the past against people who have nothing to do with what happened two hundred years ago? Mom, that's absurd."

"Don't take that tone with me, Thaddeus," she snapped back and pointed at him with a scowl. "It is my right to hold any grudges I like. I'm an older woman, and I'm entitled to my beliefs. Your brother already disappointed me by bringing that... that *woman* into this house, and I don't want you to do the same."

Thaddeus turned his back on her and shoved his hands into his pockets. No way would this woman understand that he was gay and falling in love with a white man, but she'd have to deal with it...

A lot sooner than later.

He had every intention of telling his mother about Seth Gottlieb, the man of his dreams. Why? Because their relationship was more than just a passing thought. He wanted to be committed, married if possible; happily married, as a matter of fact.

And when he got the balls to tell his mother about his new lover-to-be, it would be a glorious day.

When the heck would that happen?

Not even Thaddeus knew the real answer.

Seth nearly tripped getting out of the shower to go answer his phone. He just knew Thaddeus was calling to tell him he was on his way, or worse, downstairs waiting. He wiped his hands on the towel around his waist and exhaled. "Hello?"

"Hey, Seth, I wanted to call you and tell you I'm running a little behind schedule. My mom... yeah, we talked a little too long."

Seth released a sigh of relief and dried his hair. "No worries. In all honesty, I'm not ready to go anyway. I didn't even get called at the unemployment office until close to five. Then I missed my bus and train, so I'm just now getting dressed."

"Oh damn, Seth, I'm sorry. You should've called. I would've swung by and picked you up or something."

Seth shook his head and raked his wet locks with his fingers. "No, that's all right, Thaddeus. By the way, have you talked to your mom about us yet?"

Silence.

Seth knew he'd struck a chord with Thaddeus. If only he could tell Thaddeus's mom for him, since he already knew what to say.

"I..." Thaddeus seemed to struggle with the words.

"Never mind, I already know the answer. I'm not pushing you, believe me, because I know how hard it is."

"I know you're not, but I need to stop being such a wuss. It's just, well... heck, Seth, she's the woman who gave birth to me. If she's disappointed in me, it's kind of a big deal."

"I know, which is why I told you forget I even asked that. I just want you so bad, Thaddeus. I want us to move on with our lives, and you being in the closet kind of puts a damper on things."

More like a lot of a damper.

Seth rummaged through his old drawers, looking for boxer briefs. When he put his hand on a red pair, he tossed them on the bed. He continued, "Thaddeus, like I said, I'll be at your side no matter what, but I believe it's time you told your mom about the *real* you. I mean, aren't you tired of hiding?"

"Yes, but... well heck, she mentioned today how she was worried I might be gay, because I never bring any women around her. Damn it, Seth. I don't

want to cause my mom to have a heart attack. I can deal with the other members of my family disowning me and even some of my old friends, but I only have *one* mother.”

“And she should accept you no matter what.” Seth placed the phone down on the dresser and pushed the speaker phone button. “Hey, by the way, how far away are you?”

“Less than ten minutes.”

Seth's eyes widened, and he pulled up his underwear. “Shit. Okay, let me finish getting dressed. We'll talk more when you get here.”

Thaddeus laughed. “Well, you could stay naked, you know. I wouldn't mind, not one bit.”

Seth joined him in the chuckle. “I'm sure, but then we'd miss dinner.”

Thaddeus harrumphed, “So.”

Seth bit his lip and closed his eyes a moment thinking about his ultimatum to keep Thaddeus out of his bed.

Shit.

What the hell was he thinking, keeping this man from riding him like a bucking bronco until the wee hours of the morning?

Seth slapped his forehead to snap out of the haze. “Well, I'm hungry. Let me get dressed. You really are a distraction.”

“Yes, I am. I'll see you in a bit, Seth. Can't wait to kiss your lips again.”

Seth nodded in agreement. “Same here, Sexy Man. Same here.”

Chapter Three

Thaddeus pressed the button on his steering wheel to disconnect the call, then made a right turn on Wabash Avenue, heading to Seth's apartment. His smile widened when he pulled into the lot and shut off the engine to wait for Seth to come downstairs to meet him.

I was worried. I thought you were gay or something.

His mom's words killed the little joy he'd had about seeing Seth. He still couldn't understand why that came out of her mouth. He worried if she'd noticed anything, or if anyone had seen him around with Seth and he knew nothing about it. In all honesty, Thaddeus hadn't been all that careful with the places he'd taken Seth. Like his favorite restaurant, Leola's, in Bronzeville and another small sports bar on the near north side called Jake's. Although he hadn't seen anyone, it didn't mean someone hadn't seen him and told his mom about the white guy Thaddeus was hanging out with.

Thaddeus sighed inwardly and shuddered at the thought of his mom finding out before he got a chance to break the news himself. It would be worse for her to find out from someone else about the man in his life.

"Hey Thaddeus."

Startled by the knocking on the window, he jumped and clutched his chest as he unlocked the doors. "Hey Seth."

Seth jumped in and closed the door. A wide, boyish grin and big blue eyes gleamed back at Thaddeus, making his heart skip a beat. "Hiya, babe. Missed ya. I'm really glad to see you." Seth reached over and hugged him tightly.

Thaddeus melted easily into Seth's arms. Seth was not a big man, in fact, he was smaller than Thaddeus, and that was just fine with him. Despite his size, Seth still had strength.

He had a medium build, standing about five-seven, with large hands and long fingers that Thaddeus couldn't wait to feel on every inch of his body. There was nothing feminine about him. Seth's olive skin, with his bushy eyebrows, dark hair with touches of grey, and narrow nose and lips, made him quite the catch. Thaddeus still couldn't believe his luck when the two of them met in a coffee shop two months ago. The scar he had, resulting from the scalding coffee being spilled on him, still stung from time to time, but at least he'd always be reminded of Seth.

He'd never forget that day, running into the Starbucks only a block away from his building and literally bumping into Seth, causing him to spill his hot caramel latte all over Thaddeus's new suit. They'd caused quite a scene that day, but on the positive side, they made quite the connection from then on.

"Glad to see you too, Seth." Thaddeus held onto Seth's hand and brought it up to his lips. "I know you said you had a hard day, so I was thinking, why don't we have dinner at my place, hmm? I can whip up something really quick, and we can spend the evening relaxing by the fire." Thaddeus leaned in and dragged his fingers across Seth's face.

"I..." Seth hesitated. "Oh damn it, Thaddeus. You're tempting me to—"

"Yeah, and I'm hoping to win." And he was, thinking that their first time would give him more courage to tell his mom where to step off at.

He lightly kissed Seth's lips and traced them with the tip of his tongue. "Please, Seth. I know what you said, but honestly, I'm terrified about telling my mom what's going on."

Seth nodded and flashed a wry smile. "I know, but just think; you won't be hiding anything anymore. I mean, don't you think it's ridiculous for your workmates to know and not your family and childhood friends? I actually told my parents first, and I found that a lot easier than sharing it with my so-called buddies. Even though I knew I was risking getting thrown out or shunned by my folks, it scared me more to tell the guys. I just knew they'd beat me up or tease me and make me change schools."

"And did they?" Thaddeus asked almost immediately, since they hadn't talked in depth about coming out.

"No, they were actually really cool. They said stupid stuff like 'keep that gay shit over there', and they'd never heard of any gay Jewish boys, but it didn't matter. As long as they tolerated me, that was good enough. And hey, I know it's not gonna be easy, but I'm telling you, you'll feel a huge weight lifted off your shoulders when you finally tell them the truth."

Thaddeus exhaled, knowing neither would be an easy task, but Seth was right. It would be great to breathe again and not have to look over his shoulder. Besides, he was approaching his mid-thirties and shouldn't have to be sneaking his man around town. He felt like he had been stealing from the cookie jar on top of the fridge and would get caught any moment.

He fondly recalled when he liked to take cookies before dinner and hide them from his mom, so he wouldn't get caught.

This, however, wouldn't be that easy.

Seth waited with baited breath for his lover to answer. No question, he understood Thaddeus's anxieties about revealing his orientation to his mom and friends, but it was past time they knew the truth.

"Sweetheart?" Seth gripped both of Thaddeus's hands in his and returned the peck on top of Thaddeus's thick lips. He wanted to do more than that, but it wouldn't be fun for them to get caught making out in the car behind his building. "Thaddeus?"

"Yeah, I know you're right, but can we?" Thaddeus's light brown eyes met Seth's gaze, pleading for him to do something more.

Seth couldn't resist. His body and libido screamed for him to give in. Yes, he'd handed down the ultimatum, but he desired to be in between the sheets with his man more than anything. "We can... yes... we... can." Seth pressed his mouth on top of Thaddeus's, and then pulled away as the jolt in his groin reminded him just how long it had been since he'd had sex. Even his mom recently asked him if he had been getting any, because he'd been so tense as of late.

Seth exhaled deeply and held onto Thaddeus's right hand. "You know I want you more than anything, right? That's why I'm renegeing on my deal with you."

Thaddeus cleared his throat and flashed a wicked smile, making Seth's groin tighten even more. He moistened his lips while backing out of the lot. "And I'm glad you are, Seth. Spending nights alone thinking about you just isn't good enough, you know? Jerking off in the shower only goes so far."

Seth squeezed Thaddeus's hand, causing his own to throb from the pressure. He turned his attention to the scenery outside to distract himself from the sexy man sitting in the driver's seat. "Believe you me, I know, babe. I really, *really* do."

Within moments, they'd left Seth's boring near south neighborhood for the sparkling views of the lakefront property Thaddeus lived in. Drab mid-level buildings were quickly replaced by magnificent glass high rises, with abstract sculptures in the front yards and the museum campus in the background.

Although Seth had been to Thaddeus's place three times, each time the property took his breath away. Before they'd started dating, he'd only seen these buildings while leaving the downtown area after going to court to pay

default parking tickets, or when he came down for the various summer festivals. He could only dream of living on the lake in such high-class condos as the ones spread out before him.

“All right, we’re here.” Thaddeus turned the key and unlocked the doors, allowing his valet to get in.

Seth quickly unclicked his seatbelt and followed, still in awe of his surroundings. When he noticed Thaddeus reaching for his hand, he quickly took it and let Thaddeus guide him inside the lobby.

“Wow.” Seth felt like he entered a different world each time he visited Thaddeus’s lakefront condo; the marble floors and high ceilings, with chandeliers dangling from them, were magnificent. Simple browns, grays, and whites colored the hallways leading to the elevators in The Maxwell building Thaddeus called home. A part of Seth hoped someday to call this place home as well.

“Seth, you okay? I swear you look starstruck every time you come in here.” Thaddeus pushed the elevator lift with one hand while still gripping Seth’s palm with the other.

Seth didn’t want to act too much like a poor boy, but in truth, he loved Thaddeus’s building. “I am. It looks like a freaking museum, Thaddeus.”

“Well, it is majestic, and that’s why I like it. Mom, Dad, and I used to come downtown when I was little, and I always said I wanted to live in a high rise. Now I do.”

Seth watched the elevator go higher, looking at the small shops on the lower floors. “Yeah, you do. I don’t even want to know how much it costs to live in this place.”

Thaddeus leaned against the panel and yanked Seth over with him. “It’s a pretty penny, but worth it all. The views, the security, it’s all great. Most everyone is nice, too. I put my money down when I first heard about it going up four years ago. Giving up my lease on my other place, moving in with Mom for a year, and then waiting for them to get it done was hell.” Thaddeus smoothed the stray hairs from in front of Seth’s face. “I love living here. I *really* do, Seth.”

“Yeah, I’m sure you do, Thaddeus. It’s a great place. By the way, instead of cooking, why don’t we just order in?”

The bell rang and both men walked to the door. "I was going to suggest that, too. How did you know what I was thinking?" Thaddeus grinned and kissed the top of Seth's head gently.

"Well, we did just say how much we wanted to be together. Two months, Thaddeus. I don't wanna wait any longer."

Thaddeus led him down the carpeted walkway to his condominium, number thirty-five C. He slid his key into the lock and turned it slowly. "Neither do I, Seth." Thaddeus pulled Seth through and closed the door behind them. He took both of Seth's hands and held them above his head while engulfing Seth's lips with his own.

Seth groaned into his embrace, resting his arms on Thaddeus's broad shoulders. The heat between them caused his brain to turn to mush, and all he wanted was Thaddeus's strong hands roaming all over his body, today and forever. Never mind that Thaddeus hadn't come out just yet, all that mattered was what was happening between the two of them right now. An appreciation, a longing, a fire that burned inside of both of them, fueled something real to happen.

Seth sensed it in his gut, his soul. An emotion, more than just sex, a spiritual connection that reached way beyond their beliefs. And it choked him, taking his breath away, but he was more than willing to allow the feelings for Thaddeus to consume him.

"Thaddeus." Seth spoke once, his voice filled with need, breathy. He removed his jacket, giving it to Thaddeus who hung it on the knob nearest the front door.

"Seth—I want you... need you so much. I don't think I've ever wanted someone so bad in my life." Thaddeus gently caressed the side of Seth's face while shucking off his own suit jacket. He covered Seth's coat with his and began to loosen his tie as their mouths tangled in wild abandon.

"Thaddeus, oh damn, babe." Seth pulled away for a moment and yanked his shirt over his head, thankful he didn't wear a tie. Still he had Thaddeus's necktie to contend with, but it didn't bother him one bit.

To him, taking more clothes off Thaddeus was like opening gifts during Hanukkah as a child. He'd never had something as delicious as Thaddeus to unwrap, and he'd make sure to take his time doing it.

“Seth.” Thaddeus pecked him again and led him to the spacious living room, surrounded by breathtaking panoramic views. A single black leather couch sat closest to the biggest window, while a matching La-Z-Boy chair and a loveseat were off to the sides. Thaddeus picked up a small remote and turned on low lights as well as the sound system that seemed to vibrate throughout the space. When satisfied, he tossed the remote on the small table and shifted Seth around until he was one with the sofa. “Not here... but... perhaps a little foreplay?” Thaddeus nuzzled the space under Seth’s chin and made a trail to his Adam’s apple.

Seth gulped hard, feeling his erection bulging out of his pants. His breath caught in his chest. “Yes... yes, but I need you right now; whatever you want, Thaddeus.” He’d never been so intrigued by one person ever in his life until now. And he wouldn’t regret giving in to Thaddeus either.

Dinner would likely become a late night snack or possibly even breakfast.

Thaddeus pulled Seth’s shoes off, and then his socks, dropping them on the floor next to the couch. He pushed his own slacks down from his waist while Seth yanked the tie from his neck. Adrenaline raced through his veins as he yanked his own shirt away from his body, breaking nearly every button on his oxford.

I’ve got plenty more just like this.

“Wow, someone is almost as eager as I am.”

“Almost?” Thaddeus glanced down at his cock straining against his boxer briefs and smiled at Seth. “I think *this* shows I’m more than *almost* into it, hmm?” He quickly removed Seth’s pants and let them fall to the floor.

“Wow.” Thaddeus admired the short, curly hairs on Seth’s chest that covered a colorful tattoo, which appeared to be some kind of scythe starting at the top and carrying on down to his navel. The art intrigued him, but he’d wait until later to ask what it meant.

Wanting him, he spread Seth’s legs apart, rubbing himself against Seth’s crotch, creating friction and even more heat between them. Thaddeus threw his head back and grit his teeth, feeling the rush of wanting race through his body. Damn he wanted this man something fierce, but he desired more than just sex. He wanted to make love all night. He could have sex with anyone. This was the man he was falling for, quickly. The one he was willing to risk losing his mom’s love and friends’ respect for. Seth wasn’t some random man he’d just

brought home from a long night out. They'd been seeing one another over eight weeks, exclusively, calling one another every day. To Thaddeus, Seth deserved more than a bang on the sofa.

"Thaddeus, I swear, if we don't do something about this now... huh?" Seth cocked an eyebrow and pointed to his own hard-on tenting his boxers.

"Yeah. I got'cha, babe." Thaddeus pulled Seth up and smacked his buttocks, pushing him into the bedroom across the way. Once they made it to his four-poster bed, Thaddeus lightly shoved Seth down on top. He darted to his dresser, getting the necessities before returning. Teasing his man, Thaddeus hovered over him, grinding his body against Seth's slender frame.

"Oh God, Thaddeus." Seth clutched his back and ran his hands down to Thaddeus's ass, grabbing his hips to pull him in closer.

Thaddeus loved when a man screamed for him. His only response was another kiss before running his tongue along Seth's throat until he reached his collarbone. While he enjoyed tasting Seth, Thaddeus slid his hands downward, tugging Seth's boxers from his waist. Just the sight of Seth's length embedded within small black curls made his mouth water, but he wanted to be inside Seth more than anything.

Saving that for later.

Thaddeus stroked Seth, rubbing pre-cum into his skin while pulling down his own boxers. "Want this, want you... so bad." Thaddeus kissed him again and again then grabbed the condom.

"Me too." While staring intensely at Thaddeus, Seth squeezed the lube onto his fingertips. He rubbed the slick substance over that spot, preparing himself for Thaddeus entry.

"Ready for me?" Thaddeus licked his lips and spread Seth's legs wide. He rubbed the head of his cock against Seth's tight space, while he nibbled on his earlobe.

"Oh shit, yes, Thaddeus. There, and don't be fucking gentle."

Thaddeus had to chuckle at Seth's dirty talk. "Such rude language for a nice little Jewish boy."

"I'm not that—nice..." Seth struggled to finish the sentence. He grimaced while gnashing his teeth and sat up on his elbows, wanting to watch. "Ohh..."

“Yeah, there.” Thaddeus slowly pushed in and retracted. He did it again until he'd hit the wall of Seth's prostate. With each thrust, he felt as if he'd explode any moment. His breath caught in his chest, while his heart thumped a familiar rhythm. It had been so long since the last time, his body truly didn't know how to react.

“Thaddeus, oh sh...” Seth gripped the back of his neck and clenched his buttocks to make a tighter fit. He nibbled on Thaddeus's bottom lip, and sucked it into his own mouth.

“Fu... oh damn, Seth. I'm so—” Thaddeus clutched the sheets with one hand and held Seth with the other. Shots of adrenaline raced to his head, nipples, buttocks, and cock, causing him to lose all focus. Any minute now they'd be lost in the ecstasy of their climax. He desperately wanted Seth to come with him to make this first time extra special.

“Me too, Thaddeus. Please, yes, there.”

Thaddeus sped up the pace and leaned into Seth, until they were lying parallel to one another. With both arms on either side of Seth's head, he continued to press into Seth, grimacing, trying to hold on until just when Seth was ready to explode.

Seth grabbed his chin and kissed him roughly while moaning into his mouth. Warm streams shot between them onto Seth's stomach and Thaddeus's midsection.

Thaddeus pushed hard once more and cried aloud as he shuddered uncontrollably. He accepted the kiss and returned it with more fervor and passion. He sucked in a breath as he filled the barrier between them, wishing there was nothing keeping him from feeling Seth's tightness wrapped around him.

Someday.

“Thaddeus.” Seth exhaled and pulled him in again, thrusting his tongue deep inside Thaddeus's mouth while he rubbed himself against Thaddeus's crotch.

“Mhmm, Seth...” Thaddeus wanted to say he loved Seth, but he wondered if it was too soon to say the words. Besides, it had only been two months.

What if Seth wasn't ready for that next step?

Chapter Four

Morning seemed to come too soon, and Seth grimaced when the light from the window shone in his eye. “Fu... ugh.” When his joints protested his sudden movements, he was reminded about last night.

Oh yeah, last night.

Seth shrugged his shoulders, looking around for the man who made him so happy.

In more ways than one.

“Thaddeus? Babe, where are ya?”

A loud crash, sounding like pots and pans, came from the kitchen.

Seth’s eyes darted to the doorway. “You okay in there?”

“Yeah, Seth. Just whipping up a little breakfast, since you said you were hungry.”

“I did?”

“Well, your stomach was growling when we were hugged up together in bed, so I’m making you something. Something light but filling, so you won’t be too tired for round two.”

“Oh, of course I won’t.” Seth shook his head and leaned against the headboard, looking around Thaddeus’s bedroom; picturesque windows, mahogany armoire, along with matching side tables and dresser. Everything so simple, modern, and sleek, just like Thaddeus. Seth wondered if he’d decorated everything himself, or if he’d had a professional pick everything out. The man was so well put together. Hard to believe anything rattled him.

“Okay. Breakfast is served, my love.” Thaddeus stepped in carrying a tray with a single flower, plate, and a cup sitting atop.

When he came closer, Seth eyed the English muffins, watermelon, and oranges, along with the coffee. Yes, the coffee. Seth wanted that even more than the food. “Where’s yours?”

“Oh, I already nibbled a little while you were still sleeping. I don’t usually eat a morning meal, even on Saturdays.” Thaddeus sat the tray on the side table and got in bed next to Seth. He planted a kiss on his head and squeezed his

hands. "I really enjoyed last night, babe. Why don't you just stay through the weekend, and I'll take you home before I go to work Monday?"

Seth accepted the cup of java and sniffed the aroma of freshly ground coffee beans. "Sounds good to me. Hey, maybe we can catch a movie or something later on, hmm?"

Thaddeus dragged his long fingers down the center of Seth's chest. "Actually, I was hoping we'd stay in bed all weekend and explore each other's bodies. And, speaking of, what is this for?"

Seth's breath hitched at Thaddeus's touch. He face felt flush. "It was a dare. When I was a stupid freshman in college, we had a bet on a game, and I lost. I had to pick a tattoo that meant royalty, since the team I was betting on was the Kings." Seth laughed at his own admission and set the coffee down. Thaddeus handed him the plate of muffins. "It was just plain black, but I had some color added to the top and my father's name placed on it to signify how much I miss the King of Sarcasm."

"That's great that something bad turned out good for you. That would've been a bitch to have removed." Thaddeus planted a kiss on the bottom and licked the spot near Seth's navel.

"Mhmm, baby... you're gonna... wow." Seth stopped chewing the bread and closed his eyes a moment. Thaddeus's mouth set his whole body and soul afire. Just his kisses caused Seth's body to overheat. "Thadde..us..."

Thaddeus promptly stopped and flashed a wicked smile. His brown eyes nearly glowed in the sunlight.

Seth temporarily lost focus.

"Mhmm... finish eating Seth, so we can continue, okay? It's your turn to be on top."

"Oh yeah, I—"

Ring Ring

Both of them stopped upon hearing the phone ring and vibrate on the side table.

"Shii... I knew I should've turned it off. Let me see who this is. Don't move." Thaddeus kissed Seth quickly and got up from the bed. "Hello. Oh. Hi, Ma. Listen, now isn't a good time."

Seth grimaced and lifted another muffin to his mouth to make sure he was silent.

Damn right it wasn't a good time for Mother Dawson to call, but what could he really say? Seth eyed Thaddeus, knowing he was annoyed by his mother's sudden phone call at nine a.m. He hoped the phone call wouldn't be a long one, so they could get back to enjoying their Saturday morning alone.

"Mom, if everything's okay with you then I need to let you go. I..." Thaddeus ran his hand over his shaved head and down the back of his neck. He rolled his eyes and walked away from Seth, who looked so delectable in his bed eating his mini breakfast.

"One minute, okay?" Thaddeus mouthed to Seth so he wouldn't be distracted during the conversation with his mother.

Just what she could possibly feel to be so important at this hour was beyond him.

"Thaddeus, I won't keep you long, but I wanted to know how the date went last night. Is she what *I'm* hoping she is? You didn't pull a Spencer did you?"

"Hmph." Thaddeus shrugged and turned halfway to look at his man all tangled in the sheets on his bed. It was time to tell his mother about the man who made his heart sing and dance.

"No Mom, I didn't pull a Spencer, but I want you to meet..." Thaddeus said a silent prayer and exhaled, closing his eyes tightly.

Please God, let her understand.

"Him. It's a him, Mom, not a her."

Silence.

Seth looked up at Thaddeus with wide eyes and his mouth agape. "Thaddeus?"

Thaddeus inhaled again and wiped the beads of sweat from his forehead. "Mom, I'm gay. And actually, I *did* pull a Spencer. The man I'm falling in love with is white. Caucasian and Jewish, Mom. He's perfect for me, and I think if you give him a chance, you're gonna love him."

Still no word from the other end of the line, but he was relieved he didn't hear his mom drop the phone or, worse, hit the floor.

Seth flashed him a smile and got out of bed to stand right next to him. He grasped Thaddeus' hand and kissed it lightly.

"Thaddeus, so help me God, you did not just tell me you're gay. No you didn't, Thaddeus. You're not gonna disappoint me like that. No, no, no." Her voice was full of disbelief. She started praying aloud through the receiver.

"Mom, please stop, okay? There's no need to pray for me. I'm falling in love with another man, and—"

"Oh my God, Thaddeus. What on earth has happened to both my boys? One runs off marrying a white woman and the other claims to be in love with a white man? Where did I go wrong, Lord? What did we do to have these boys act in this manner?"

"Mother, listen. I want you to meet him, and actually, I want Spencer to know too. Can we have dinner with you tomorrow night? It would mean a lot to me if you met him."

"Oh Lord, have mercy on me." Carolyn Dawson continued to pray. "No, no, Thaddeus, I cannot do this. I cannot accept a gay son, because I didn't raise one. You know your father is turning in his grave right now."

Thaddeus squeezed Seth's hand when he heard that last sentence. His mom was acting just as he had feared, but he wouldn't allow it to deter him from being with the man he'd come to love. He hoped eventually she would come around and accept him as he was.

"Then so be it, Momma. I am a good man, and that should be satisfying enough. If you won't love me as I am, that's on you." Thaddeus allowed Seth to lead him to his bed. His heart sunk hearing his mother's scathing words, but he truly felt free by admitting he was gay. "You raised me to be a respectful, hard-working, caring man. That's what I am."

"I raised you to be straight too," she added. "I said I didn't want a white *woman* in my house."

Thaddeus laughed nervously and shook his head. "Well, I followed that to a tee, right? I'm not bringing a white woman in your house, so—"

She interrupted him. "Thaddeus, have you lost your mind? This isn't a laughing matter. I won't tolerate any gay kids in my family. Being gay isn't right."

Seth caressed Thaddeus's leg and kissed his cheek.

“I’m not right in your eyes, Mom, but I’ll let God judge me when I meet him someday. Until then, I’m going to enjoy my life as a gay man. Good-bye.”

“Goodbye, Thaddeus. I can’t talk to you anymore until you get your life back on track. I’ll make sure to give your number to Pastor.”

“No, don—”

Click

Thaddeus shook his head and placed the handset on the bed. “Well, that went exactly how I thought it would.” He grabbed Seth and held him tightly. Part of him wanted to break down and cry, but part of him was overjoyed and relieved. He’d finally come out to his mother. He had finally told her what’d been on his mind for the past few years.

And even though his mother’s reaction disappointed him, he felt liberated; something he hadn’t felt in a long, long time.

“Thaddeus?” Seth let him go and held his face in the palms of his hands. He planted a light kiss on his lips. “I’m so proud of you, babe. You finally told her. I’m just sorry she didn’t accept you for the great man you are.”

Thaddeus nodded. “Well, her loss, right?” Thaddeus returned the kiss and grabbed Seth again in a tighter embrace. “As long as I have you in my life, everything will work itself out.”

Epilogue

“Damn, Thaddeus, I haven’t been to this place since you moved in. It sure looks great.” Thaddeus’s brother Spencer leaned against the counter and grabbed a glass of wine.

“Yeah, I bought furniture,” he smirked. “I can’t believe it’s been that long. I told you, you were welcome to stop by anytime, but you acted as if I took the same attitude as Mom, not welcoming you into the house with Brenda.”

Spencer shrugged and drank the contents of his glass. “I’m sorry about that, bro. I didn’t mean to stay away. I wish Brenda could’ve made it, but when I told her Mom might be here, she decided to stay at home. Now it seems like Mom won’t be here either.”

Thaddeus crossed his arms over his chest and sighed, “Yeah, well, you invited her, and she refused to come by. She hasn’t talked to me since I came out to her that day either. It’s cool though, because I couldn’t be happier right now. I live with the man I love, and his mom accepts us—”

“And so do Brenda and I.” Spencer grasped Thaddeus’s shoulder. “People need to start accepting others for who they are and not judge them. Being gay isn’t a big deal.”

Thaddeus faced him and returned the gesture. “I thank you for that, Spencer. Maybe one day our mother will come around, but I won’t hold my breath. I have to live my life for me, not anyone else. I’m a grown man, and I’ll just have to accept that my mother may never understand. That used to bother me, but since so much time has passed, I don’t worry about it anymore.”

“Thaddeus, it’s only been four months. She still has time.” Spencer patted his back.

“I know, but that’s a long time not to talk to your own flesh and blood.” Thaddeus nodded at his brother and walked to the oven to check on the lasagna he was making for dinner. “I’ve talked with some of my other friends, and they encouraged me to accept the worst just in case. I can handle the disappointment better that way.” He closed the door and turned the dial to off.

“Don’t lose hope on Momma, all right? She didn’t like Brenda at first, but after a while she just dealt with it.”

“She still doesn’t really accept her as part of the family though, Spencer. Even that last time we talked, all she mentioned was that *white* woman, not even calling her by name. Our momma still resents white people because of slavery. I mean, damn, that’s been centuries. How the heck do we move forward if we keep looking back at the past?”

“I agree, bro, but what can you do, huh? She’s an old woman set in her ways. I still hope she’ll see the good in you and Brenda.”

Thaddeus turned to look at Spencer. “I sure hope you’re right. Hey, don’t drink all the wine before my baby and his mom get back, okay? Seth says she loves Merlot, and I bought that especially for her.”

“Oh yeah?” Spencer laughed in response.

“Yep. Maybe I should’ve bought another bottle of it. I didn’t think you’d be hitting this one as hard.” Thaddeus added a chuckle when he glanced at the wine nearly half gone.

“Maybe you should’ve. I can run out and get some if you like.” Spencer spun on his heel, heading out of the kitchen.

“No, no, it’s cool. I’ll just ask Seth to do it. He’s already out, so...” Thaddeus plucked his phone from his pocket.

“Hey, honey, I’m home.” Seth called out from the other room.

Ah, too late.

“Where’s my handsome son-in-law?”

Thaddeus grimaced. “Ah well, maybe you should Spencer, since Seth is back home.”

“You got it, man.”

“Thanks.” Thaddeus followed his brother out of the kitchen and walked into Seth’s arms. “Hello, hon.” He kissed Seth lightly and broke away just before he could reciprocate.

Spencer and Seth shook hands and exchanged pleasantries.

“Hey Mom, how you feeling?”

“Wonderful, future son-in-law.” Seth’s mom, Diana Gottlieb, hugged Thaddeus tight. Standing only about five-foot-two in flats, Diana Gottlieb was even smaller than her son. Bright blue eyes, just like Seth’s, with flaming red

hair and glasses, the stout woman appeared to be in her fifties. "And who is this handsome fellow to your right?"

"Oh, that's my brother, Spencer. Spencer, this is Seth's mom, Diana."

"Thaddeus you really have great genes. I bet your father was quite the catch." Diana beamed and shook Spencer's hand. "Are you gay, too?"

"Mom!" Seth shook his head and rubbed his mother's shoulders.

Thaddeus stood back, taking in the scene. He was glad to see Seth's mom and his brother talking.

If only my mother were here too.

He shrugged, sighing inwardly, wishing his mother would've changed her mind about coming, but then again, maybe it was for the best. Who knew what would've come out of Diana's mouth, since she was so bold.

Spencer laughed, "No, Ma'am. My fiancée is at home. She couldn't make it. Perhaps when we see each other again, you'll meet her."

Diana nodded in agreement and patted his hands. "That would be fine, my dear. And maybe Thaddeus's mom could be here, too. That woman needs to get a grip and realize gay people are just people. We all bleed the same, damn it!" Diana adjusted her glasses and moved slowly towards the couch. "Seth, get me a glass of wine, will you? I really love that my boy found someone as wonderful as you, Thaddeus. If only you knew how many losers Seth's dated in the past. Maybe you could convince him to go get a *real* job instead of working at the hardware store." She rolled her eyes and lay comfortably against the cushions.

Thaddeus and Spencer laughed at that statement.

"Mom, I swear." Seth nodded and took Thaddeus's hands into his own. "Let me get her some. Hey, Spencer, where you going? And where's Brenda?"

Spencer's smile turned down, and he whispered, "She didn't come because of... you know."

Thaddeus grasped Seth's fingers. "Go get Mom's wine. Spencer is grabbing another, since he's been hitting this one pretty hard."

"Oh, okay." Seth kissed him quickly and turned away.

"Seth, stop kissing your man and get me some wine! You can do all that after I'm gone!"

Spencer giggled behind him and headed out the door, putting on his jacket.

Thaddeus chuckled as well and closed the door, heading back into the living room to sit with Diana and chat. At least he had some kind of mother figure in his life, since his birth mom cut him out of hers, seemingly for good. Thaddeus tried to make amends, but with her latest refusal to come to dinner and sit with her sons and his new mother-in-law, their relationship might never be the same again.

Just before he sat down, a knock sounded at the door. "Okay, maybe Spencer forgot something. He probably wants money for the wine." One true difference between the two of them... his brother was truly a tight wad. Thaddeus unlocked the door, and reached for his wallet. "Hey, if you wanted something—" He stared blankly at his mom standing there with Spencer behind her.

"Hello, Thaddeus." She tightly clutched her purse.

"Mom, it's good to see you. I'm glad you came by. Come in and have a seat." Thaddeus waved her in.

Spencer followed. "She was at the security desk when I stepped off the elevator. I'll go get that bottle..."

"No, no, please, I want you to stay, Spencer." No telling what would happen when two strong-minded women like Carolyn Dawson and Diana Gottlieb got together. Thaddeus figured he might need some extra help, along with Seth, in case things got heated.

"Okay."

"Mom, this is Diana Gottlieb, Seth's mother." Thaddeus held his breath, hoping she wouldn't make any snide comments.

"Hello." Carolyn held out her hand.

Diana took it. "Well hello there, Ms. Dawson. I'm sorry, I have trouble getting up from sitting. My bad back causes me such pain." Diana patted the spot next to her. "Listen here, you and I have two great men for sons, and, it just so happens, the two of them want to be together. There's nothing wrong with that, honey. There really isn't."

Oh boy.

Thaddeus glanced at his mom, waiting for a reaction. He saw Seth coming back into the room with a shocked look on his face.

“I...” Carolyn seemed to hesitate. “Well, in God’s eyes there is, but I love my son too much to turn my back on him and—” She wrung her hands and sighed. “If Seth makes him feel as good as... Brenda does my other son, I won’t stand in the way. I was blessed with two beautiful children, and I won’t turn them away, no matter what.”

Thaddeus smiled and released a sigh of relief. “Thanks, Mom.” He grabbed Seth’s hand and squeezed it tightly, gazing into his blue eyes. “This man really does make me feel special. We *truly* are meant to be.”

The End

Author Bio

Rawiya is the more sensual erotica writer in the BLRawiya duo. She loves multiracial characters who overcome obstacles other than race. Sweet, sassy, and spicy would be the best way to describe her work. Happily married mother of two, loves music, computers, and travel. She blogs regularly at [Wicked Sexy Writers](#). For more, please visit Rawiya's blog on Wordpress.

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