



THE HATE GAME

HENNESSEE ANDREWS

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Love's Landscapes

An M/M Romance series

THE HATE GAME

By Hennessee Andrews

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.

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Photo Description

Two men stand in front of an arched window. They are holding hands, shirtless, adoration for each other in their eyes. What is held behind their gaze, the emotion the camera cannot capture, is the intense feeling of hate one model has for the other. They may be each other's worst nightmare, but anything is possible, and they just might discover their sweetest dream.

Story Letter

Dear Author,

*Can you see the caring smiles on our faces and the love in our eyes? Yes? Well, that's bulls**t!*

We are models and it's our job to fake emotions. To tell you the truth, I hate his guts. He is arrogant, violent, smug, and manipulative. What's there to like? And why do I keep bumping into him everywhere I go? He's my worst nightmare! ... or maybe my sweetest dream?

Cheers!

Sincerely,

Elly

Story Info

Genre: contemporary

Tags: alpha male, enemies to lovers, humorous, male models, spanking, verbal banter

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THE HATE GAME
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Chapter 1

“You have to be kidding me,” Chase Woods said under his breath when he caught a glimpse of Heath Marcum on the opposite side of the room.

Heath stood there, chatting with the photographer, all smug and full of confidence as he flipped up the collar of his button-up shirt. His dark brown hair was wild, styled in an “I care not, but I’m fucking fabulous” sort of way. And what was up with his gleaming white teeth? Average people didn’t have teeth that damn white.

Infuriating, that was Heath with a capital-damn-I. Chase tried to get his irritation under control, but made a mental note to have a chat with his agent later. This was the third photo shoot in the last month where Heath was modeling as well. Chase couldn’t seem to get away from the guy.

“Ah, look what the cat dragged in,” Heath drawled with a hint of southern sarcasm.

And that was the other irritating quality about Heath. That damn accent! Hours and even days after being around Heath, Chase caught himself using certain phrases, or drawing out his words like the guy. Damn, would the madness ever end?

“Heath, uh, I thought you were sort of past the puberty stage,” Chase said and motioned to his chin, as if the guy had a zit rearing its ugly head there.

“Fuck!” Heath immediately touched his face and hurried to the nearest mirror.

Dumbass.

Chase was city from his attire to his intellect. He was well educated, but found modeling a more lucrative use of his time than sitting behind a desk reviewing stock portfolios. Some of the hottest brands requested him—well, until Heath came along. As far as Chase could see, Heath wasn’t all that and a bag of chips. Sure, he was gorgeous and well put together, but the guy was crass and rather rude. Heath was also a conceited, Dapper Don sort of dickhead. What was there to like?

Not far away, Heath was studying his reflection. Chase shook his head and wished the shoot was over with already. After receiving a quick pep talk from

the photographer, Chase headed toward the dressing room, bumping into Heath on the way.

“Funny guy,” Heath said sarcastically and punched Chase in the arm.

Chase resisted the urge to rub the area. Heath was also too physical, and whether he meant it to or not, the punch stung. Instead, Chase tried to ignore Heath, shook his head, and continued to walk on by. The sooner this day was over, the better. Again, Chase wondered about the forces at work. Why advertisers lately liked the two of them together was anyone's guess. They were complete opposites. Heath was a little brawnier in the chest area, with thicker pectorals and nearly black hair. His skin was a golden bronze, hinting at his inner sun-lover. Chase, on the other hand, was on the lean side, muscular and well-defined, but not nearly as solid as Heath. Chase's skin was also lighter, he realized—about four shades lighter, in fact. The height difference was more than obvious as well. Heath was taller by more than three inches. They just didn't fit together.

After Chase dressed in the Italian suit with a white starched shirt underneath, he sucked in a deep breath and prayed for the strength to do his job and not get distracted by Heath's mouth. Heath always had something to say, whether anyone wanted to hear it or not. He was also verbally abusive in his tone and liked to jab Chase as much as possible while on set. Chase didn't understand why he did it, but suspected Heath tried to rile him in order to make Chase look like an amateur and steal upcoming jobs. Either way, Chase vowed to not let Heath get to him. He'd grown accustomed to his lifestyle, and if Heath for one minute, believed he could steal work from him, he had another think coming.

“All right, places,” the photographer, Joe Santory, barked. He was an all-business sort of guy and liked to get his shots, and get the hell out of the studio, for a shot of alcohol most of the time. Joe had an affinity for the hard stuff, but it didn't seem to affect his work. He was one of a handful of the most sought-after photographers in the industry.

The set resembled the boardroom of a Fortune 500 company. A large mahogany table set center, with brown leather high-back chairs surrounding it. A fake bottle of whiskey and two tumblers were placed at the end on a silver tray. The background mimicked a high-rise view of a city below.

“Heath, you take a seat at the end of the table. Chase, you sit adjacent to him on the right. I want a shot with the city scene as a backdrop.”

Chase took his place, and the set coordinator hurried to his side and fussed with a tie before wrapping it around his neck. She unbuttoned the top of his shirt, and allowed the tie to hang haphazardly and loosened against his chest.

“You two are in the middle of negotiations. It has been a long fucking day,” Joe said as he took light readings and adjusted his camera. He motioned for a crew member to move an umbrella light and took another reading with his meter. “A lot of money is on the line, and this deal needs to be closed. Heath, you’re the man with all the cards. You’re cocky and sure this deal will go your way. Chase, you’re in a tough spot, and don’t like what has been set before you.”

Chase nodded, agreeing with Joe’s last statement wholeheartedly. He took a casual posture in the chair and rested his elbows on the armrests.

Heath grinned and raised a brow. “I always like to be on top,” he said with amusement dancing in his dark eyes.

“Now, Chase, you’re exhausted, and Heath will offer a drink. Hold a document up off the table a little and look at it with disgust.”

That won’t be hard to manage, Chase thought, and left the scowl he knew was already on his face.

“All right, we’ll shoot a series. Get into character, and go with your gut based on the instructions I gave you,” Joe said and unhooked his camera from the tripod. “And go.”

Chase had worked with Joe a few times and knew he didn’t like to continue to give instructions. Joe liked to get his models into character, and allow the story to play out with him moving and capturing the scenes.

Click, click.

Heath began slowly pouring whiskey from the bottle. He grinned as if amused by his role. Chase glared as he looked at him, allowing Joe to catch a few shots. They continued with the scene. Heath leaned forward and placed his elbows on the table while scratching his jaw with his thumb and forefinger. Chase shifted in his seat. He leaned back casually and appraised Heath with a raised brow.

Click, click.

“I can see you’re falling into your role nicely,” Heath said and put his glass to his lips. His eyes twinkled with enjoyment. “Could it be you really despise me?” He sipped his drink and stared into Chase’s eyes.

Chase couldn't help the small smile that tugged at his lips. It was a wry kind of smile, the type not meant to be affectionate. "How'd you guess?"

Heath leaned back with his drink in hand, taking on an authoritative yet relaxed posture. "I don't believe you hate me. Secretly, I think you have the hots for me."

Chase rubbed his eyes before clasping his hands together on the table in front of him and sitting upright.

Click, click.

"You're an arrogant asshole, Heath," Chase stated in a whisper and chewed his lip with irritation.

"Fucking brilliant. I love it!" Joe shouted and continued to move around the set, firing off shots.

Apparently, their roles were matched perfectly for this shoot. The love/hate emotions that bounced back and forth between Chase and Heath pleased Joe. The man was in a fury, kneeling, standing, hurrying around, firing off shots, and motioning for them to continue.

"You say the sweetest things, Chase," Heath said and sipped from his glass again. "I just don't understand what there is about me that's not to like." He paused and poured himself another. "I mean, I'm drop dead gorgeous. I have a body built for sinning—"

Chase waved his hand, stopping him. "You're a conceited dick." He reached for his own glass, suspecting it to be colored water, needing to quench his drying throat. A burn tickled his tongue, and he realized the bottle wasn't a mere prop, but rather the real thing.

Needing to curb the anger and the desire to choke Heath, Chase downed the glass and thumped it back to the table. The entire time, Joe captured each moment.

"Good shit, huh?" Heath asked and wet his lips before partaking again. "Joe only buys the best."

Chase wasn't a whiskey drinker, but he enjoyed the burn that raced down his throat to his stomach. "It'll do."

"So, uh, I was thinking," Heath began as he wrote on a piece of paper in front of him, glancing up every couple of seconds as he doodled. "Me, you. My bed. Later." He slid the note over to Chase.

Chase picked it up and read it.

I'd fuck you so hard and good you'd become addicted to me.

Below his statement were two stick people. One was bent over a bed and the other stood behind him with a long dick in its hand.

Chase crumpled up the paper and tossed it to the side.

“Fucking great emotion!” Joe shouted.

Chase felt his nostrils flare. The only thing he would become addicted to was the glorious time spent not seeing Heath... at all. Heath seemed pleased with his reaction and chuckled. He began to write on another piece of paper. It was then Chase reached for the bottle to pour himself an extra drink. His hands begged to wrap around Heath's neck and squeeze instead.

Lights continued to flash from the strobes in sync with the camera. Chase barely noticed, keeping in character with Joe's instructions, and probably more so given the history of hate he had for Heath. *I'm so going to get lit later.*

Heath seemed pleased with his latest creation and slid it across the table with a wide smile on his lips. Chase rolled his eyes and lifted the edge of the paper, curiosity getting the better of him.

My dick, your ass.

Below was Heath's third-grade artwork of a rounded butt with a penis pointing toward it.

Again Chase crumpled it up, with a little more force and irritation this time. “Won't ever happen,” he said, and thumped Heath between the eyes with the ball of paper.

“Aw, come on, baby,” Heath said in a sickeningly sweet southern drawl. He leaned back and propped his elbows on the arms of the chairs and raised his hands. “It's just sex.”

“I'd rather jack off, but thanks,” Chase replied as he grabbed the glass of whiskey and gulped it down.

“Hot damn!” Joe shouted and placed his camera at the end of the table. “I got what I needed.”

Heath grinned and glanced over at Chase. “I didn't.”

Chapter 2

Heath enjoyed today's shoot more than any he'd been to in a while. Underneath his cocky smile and false bravado, though, he hated the fact that the one man he desired most despised him. Being a model wasn't an easy line of work. And while deep down he had his insecurities, he couldn't let them be known. Advertisers didn't want to see weakness in their spreads. They wanted confidence.

Confidence was the one trait Heath lacked. He tried hard to keep in his role, but like today, it was a difficult challenge. He was a gay man, but mostly had been called for jobs depicting tough men in high positions. He had to bring all of his ammo with him, and continually give himself pep talks during each and every shoot.

The problem with his act was the fact he could no longer differentiate between the real Heath and the one everyone wanted to see. Was he really a conceited dickhead? He pondered the thought as he slid on his jeans in the dressing room. Well, he decided, he did have the panache for being a dick, even off camera. And in a so-so sort of way, he had to be a little arrogant, given his profession. Either way, he hated that Chase thought so, but secretly knew the guy sort of enjoyed his banter.

One day, Chase. One day, you will be mine.

While Heath had been talking with Joe after the shoot, Chase darted off, dressing and leaving before Heath could catch up to him. Heath had it bad for Chase, and had since they first met a year ago. Over the past few months they had worked together quite a bit. Heath had made it a mission to break Chase down, one piece at a time. Sooner or later, Chase would realize how insanely attracted to him he was. Currently, Chase wouldn't admit it, but someday he would.

Heath finished dressing and headed out. He fished his phone from his pocket and called his agent. He had caught wind of an upcoming job for a well-known men's underwear company. The campaign was aptly named "Show Your Colors". The CEO of the company was not only gay, but knew he had a market for his brand with the right advertising. From what little Heath had heard, the shoot required a loving gay couple. Well, acting couple that is, and he wanted the job.

“Hey, Tony, how’s my favorite straight guy?” Heath teased.

“I, my friend, am fabulous. I just got a call from Joe about the shoot today. He’s fucking thrilled,” Tony replied.

“Awesome,” Heath said and pumped his arm in celebration. Joe wasn’t the easiest photographer to please. Kudos like those would only help Heath’s career.

“So, what can I do for you besides take twenty percent?” Tony laughed.

“There is a job for that underwear campaign in a couple of weeks,” Heath said as he slid into his car.

“It’s as good as yours, my friend,” Tony replied. “I’ve already been in touch with them.”

“Are you kidding?” Heath asked, feeling a wide grin overcome him.

“No, sir, I don’t kid. Well, not about jobs anyway.”

“Ah, man, that is great news, but I have a request.”

“Sure, anything,” Tony replied.

“Get Chase Woods the other spot.”

Tony snorted over the phone. “I don’t represent Chase.”

Heath leaned back in his seat. “Twenty percent says you do right now.”

“Okay, okay,” Tony said with a growl. “You’re lucky I’ve worked with the ad team before. Otherwise, I wouldn’t have a snowball’s chance in hell of making it happen.”

“You’re the man who gets shit done,” Heath said as he merged into traffic. “I like that about you.”

“I’m not making any guarantees. All I can do is make a suggestion to them. That’s it,” Tony warned. “And by the way, why do you want Chase? I thought you two were mortal enemies. Is there something afoot I need to know about?”

“No, except for the fact I want to fuck him.”

Tony coughed over the phone, obviously mid-drink of something. “Oh, geesh, I didn’t need to know that!”

Heath chuckled. “You asked.”

“Damn, man, you can’t say shit like that to me and not expect me to spit my soda everywhere. Fuck, what a mess. Gotta go,” Tony said and cut off their conversation.

Heath continued to laugh and tossed his phone into the passenger seat. He really got a kick out of aggravating Tony. Poor guy. He made the next right and headed toward his apartment building in the heart of the downtown district. It wasn’t much, but it was strategically located for work that was in the city, and also to a club or two.

Heath hated going home to an empty apartment, though. Secretly, he desired a mate. Random trysts here and there did little to satisfy him. He also had to be careful, not wanting to wind up in some sort of exposé. While he wasn’t famous yet, Heath was slowly becoming known more and more with each job he landed. The upcoming underwear spread would do well for his image, and also his heart if Tony could get Chase in as well.

After parking, Heath trudged up the long flight of stairs to his apartment with multiple locks on the door. One couldn’t be too careful in the area he lived in. The money was coming in more and more all the time, but not enough to afford better accommodations at the moment.

Once inside, he stared at the cold, redbrick wall opposite him. Sparse seating and an open floor plan put everything on display with the exception of his tiny bathroom. Heath had positioned the big screen so that he could watch from the couch or his bed. Most times, his bed was the preferred spot.

After a quick shower and a call for takeout, Heath settled on his bed with his Chinese cuisine. He flipped on the television and only casually watched. The device was more or less company, distracting noise to the solitary life he was actually leading. He chewed his lo mein thoughtfully, thinking about the day and Chase. Damn, the guy was gorgeous. Chase’s green eyes mesmerized him, sucked him in whether they were glaring or smiling at him. Most times, any look Chase offered him was in the form of a glare, which, by the way, was the hottest look the guy possessed. Maybe that was the reason Heath goaded him so much, because his eyes were fucking sexy as hell when filled with hate.

“All that emotion,” Heath whispered to no one but himself and took another big bite. A long noodle hung from his chin and he slurped it up, wiping his chin afterward. “How I’d like to have one night with him.”

It would happen, and Heath was certain of it. Behind Chase’s hateful stare was a hint of interest. Chase could pretend all he wanted, but the truth was their

attraction for each other was growing with each encounter. Hate and love—the feelings seemed so opposite, but in truth they were really the same to a degree. Both were led by strong emotions, and it could be hard to differentiate between the two when affairs of the heart were concerned. At least, Heath felt that way where Chase was concerned. If Chase only passively disliked him, well, Heath would know he wasn't interested at all. But since Heath knew he stirred deep emotion in Chase, well, game on. Chase could lie to himself, but secretly he wanted Heath as much as Heath wanted him, and maybe more so.

With his meal finished and boredom settling in, Heath got comfortable in his bed and flipped through the channels. He supposed he could go to a club for a while, but dismissed the thought. Wednesdays were notoriously as boring as his apartment. Only the hardcore drinkers or desperate seemed to venture out for some reason. He was neither, but did enjoy a hearty drink from time to time.

“Not a damn thing on worth watching,” he complained and tossed the remote to his side. He stared up at the ceiling, not yet sleepy enough to go to bed, but tired enough that he didn't have the energy to get up and put a movie in the DVD player.

He lay there and thought of Chase and the shoot that day. He smiled and recalled how riled Chase got when he slid him those notes with his silly artwork on them. The look on Chase's face was priceless, and also sexy as hell. The best part was when Chase had thrown the wad of paper at him. *Mmm*, he thought, such fire and spirit. Yeah, he'd like to divide and conquer that ass.

Outside of desiring Chase so much his balls hurt at times, Heath was attracted to more than just the physical. Chase was intelligent and worldly, quite the opposite of himself. Heath was just a country bumpkin that had had a stroke of good luck and landed the right job at the right time. Hell, Heath had never even been out of the country.

Born and raised in Tennessee, Heath couldn't shake the accent, although he tried. Tony advised him to keep that part of him, citing that it helped when wooing advertisers, especially female clients. Everything was an act, all designed to get his way, or rather, their way. Money was the object, and only lately had it begun to roll in with significance.

The money was great, especially for a guy whose other option was working in a factory back home. Heath didn't complain and reveled in his growing riches. But he wanted more, needed more. Each time he saw Chase, Heath was reminded of what he wanted desperately, but had yet to obtain.

His cell on his nightstand buzzed, and he reached for it. "What's up, Tony?"

"Friday night you have a party to attend, courtesy of the advertisers from the shoot today. They got the preliminary, unedited images earlier, and were thrilled."

"Wow, that's great news," Heath replied, more excited about the opportunity to see Chase again than anything.

"Boy, you're going places. Schmooze your ass off. These people are big names with lots of connections."

"Are you coming?" Heath asked. He really liked to have Tony with him at functions like this.

"No, you're on your own. I have a meeting out of town."

"Fuck," Heath whispered. He was small town, a fish out of water. The only part of his occupation he was really good at was on set. Talking and ass-kissing wasn't something he enjoyed doing.

"You'll be fine. Don't worry." Tony tried to reassure him.

"I think we need to re-negotiate our contract, Tony."

"Have I ever let you down?" Tony asked and chuckled.

"Not yet, but hell, my mouth can get me in oodles of trouble."

"Just rub elbows for a while. Put on your award-winning smile and kiss ass like you enjoy it."

"Fine. I'll be there," Heath grumbled.

"I'll email you the address and particulars. Get some sleep."

Heath clicked his phone off and chewed his lip.

The text message alert on his phone chimed and he almost didn't look at it, but decided he better.

BTW, Chase is in.

A smile crept across his face. That little bit of info would help him get through the week and the party on Friday. Heath knew he couldn't let on that he knew about the upcoming shoot, and hoped Chase didn't know the particulars, like the fact Heath was the other model for the project. Some things were better left to be a surprise.

“Oh, Chase, you sexy thing you,” Heath whispered, snuggling down deeper into his fluffy pillows, and closing his eyes. He could see Chase’s expressive gaze and the way his plump lips looked when he chewed his bottom lip. Chase didn’t realize, but that sexy act sent a jolt of blood rushing to Heath’s dick every freaking time. How Heath would love to bite that lip for him. Yeah, he’d nibble on it all right, as well as every inch of his delectable body.

With the stress of the day behind him, Heath allowed his mind to fantasize about how hot his first encounter with Chase would be. Heath knew well every inch of Chase’s chest and abs since that shirtless spread they’d worked for a jeans manufacturer a few weeks back. Chase was nice and lean, with defined muscles and a sprinkle of dark hair that led south below his waist. Heath had imagined on more than one occasion seeing Chase nude, and even more times he’d imagined how Chase would look bent over his bed naked.

The urge to stroke his dick hit Heath like a fast-moving taxi in rush hour traffic. His cock strained in his form-fitting boxers, begging to be touched. Heath would rather Chase’s hand do the work, but since that wouldn’t happen tonight, he slipped his own hand into the stretchy cotton underwear. Gentle strokes began while he imagined Chase’s nude body and brought his cock to full attention.

“*Mmm,*” Heath softly moaned and tugged. Inside his mind, Heath was nipping Chase’s neck, slowly making his way down to his chest. Chase moaned and fisted Heath’s hair in his hands. Heath flicked his tongue over his hard nipples. Heath teased and laved the erect flesh, stopping to gently bite and pull back the tender nub in his mind.

“Oh, God, yeah,” Chase groaned and caressed Heath’s face. The tender touch of Chase’s hand furthered Heath’s desire, propelling him on, as he kissed down Chase’s abdomen to the soft curls that surrounded his prick.

Heath began to stroke himself with a little more vigor as his mind continued to feed him erotic images. He dared to guess what Chase kept hidden, but suspected he carried an adequate-sized dick, perfect for Heath’s mouth to wrap around. And wrap around it he would. He would suck Chase into a fucking dreamland if he ever got a chance.

Mmm, nice and wide, Heath decided, based on his mind’s interpretation of Chase’s size and girth. He sank his mouth around Chase’s pole, teasing with his tongue, almost tasting precome on his taste buds. He began to suck with more

enthusiasm, pulling soft cries of pleasure from Chase's mouth. The moment was dreamlike as energy pulsed, firing off the desire that Heath knew well zinged between them. Chase hissed and ran his hands through Heath's thick locks, gripping tight, channeling pure lust with every pump of Heath's mouth.

Before he could continue into hotter scenes, Heath's release burst forth, coating the inside of his boxers and making his stomach a sticky mess.

“Damn, it has been too fucking long.”

Chapter 3

“Okay, here’s the deal,” Chase said and paused when he noticed his flamboyant friend already allowing his eyes to wander to men in the banquet hall. “Hey, snap out of it.” He flicked his fingers in front of Nate’s face.

“I’m here. Okay, I promise I won’t let you down,” Nate said and nodded enthusiastically. “Can I take a sneaky peek here and there? Pretty please?”

Nate was a good friend, but unfocused as hell. They had become friends after a blind date. There was no love connection and never would be. Since that time, Nate was Chase’s main source of support, a trusted friend, even though Nate leaned toward the extreme from time to time.

This was a rare occasion for Nate to be dressed so normal, so male. Chase chuckled and patted him on the arm. “Okay, sneaky peek all you want, but when a guy named Heath comes around, you better be my bitch.”

“Ooh, your bitch?” Nate teased with a quirky grin on his face. “Honey, I aim to please.”

Chase closed his eyes and fought back the laughter welling inside of him. Nate was funny without trying. Really, anyone who cross-dressed and could walk in a pair of stilettos had to have a damn good sense of humor. “Right. Save that for your date later.”

“*Mmm*, look at the ass on that,” Nate said with a purr in his voice and pointed.

“No pointing.” Chase scolded him and Nate pouted. “Come on. Let’s make an appearance and get the hell out of here as soon as possible.”

Chase wasn’t big on functions like these, but he could network with the best of them. This was a good place to meet those who’d hired him, and also ensure further photo ops in the future. So, yeah, this was a critical part of being a model.

As they walked, Nate behaved, only passively staring from time to time. Chase’s goals in bringing Nate along were to put off Heath, aggravate him a little, and maybe see how jealous he could get. *Did I just think that? Nah, I don’t want to know if he is jealous. Do I?*

In an instant, Chase felt troubled. He hated Heath, despised him, and hoped he got hit by a fast-moving bus, or maybe a taxi full of clowns. He thought to

himself and chuckled. *A taxi full of clowns? What a decidedly disturbing, yet humorous, image.*

“Ooh, champagne,” Nate squealed and snatched a flute from a silver tray the waiter held out for him. “Honey buns, would you care for some?”

Chase snorted and rubbed his eyes. This was going to be one crazy night.

A half dozen introductions and handshakes later, Chase stood by a window, looking out over the city lights on the horizon. The sun had begun to set and the city was coming to life with twinkling lights of various colors and sizes. He loved the view, and would rather be alone on a rooftop with someone he connected with while sharing a bottle of champagne than rubbing elbows with advertisers. But that was the nature of the beast, and he had to participate in the entirety of the modeling world, not just the parts he enjoyed.

Nate had said he needed to powder his nose ten minutes previous and had yet to surface. Chase's agent approached and introduced him to the Italian designer of the suit he wore for the shoot earlier in the week. Chase smiled and made small talk, all the while remembering his manners and trying not to seem in a hurry to get out of the place.

High class and formal attire flowed through the hall. This was business at its finest, and money scented the air. Women sparkled with expensive jewelry and extravagant dresses. Chase himself wore a suit, but had forgotten his tie. He really hated the things and was sort of glad he'd forgotten. Instead, he left his collar unbuttoned, going for a sophisticated and casual look. Heck, he was a model. He decided he could have done worse.

Still no Nate and Heath had made his appearance. Chase rolled his eyes. Even from as far away as he was, Chase could hear the twang of Heath's loud voice. “Where in the hell is he?” Chase muttered under his breath when Heath waved from across the room.

Fuck, he saw me.

Chase had a little time, judging by all the handshakes being exchanged with Heath. As usual, Heath seemed to wow the fuck out of them, and smiles abounded. How he really hated that guy. So why was he watching him so intently? He turned around to gaze out over the cityscape. He should be out shaking more hands and kissing babies, but he really wasn't in the mood. All day he'd felt odd, and it got worse when Heath arrived.

Realizing his anxious feelings stemmed from Heath, Chase got control of his attitude, deciding to put on a smile and woo the fuck out of money. His livelihood depended on gatherings like this, and he couldn't afford to mess it up.

A half an hour went by, and Chase had basically introduced himself to everyone in the place. Two women old enough to be his mother invited him home with them, and one blatantly grabbed his crotch. He had to admit, he wasn't expecting that. Across the room, Chase could see Heath coming his way and internally groaned.

Before he could wonder about Nate's whereabouts, Nate patted him on the ass and slid up next to him. "Hi, love. Miss me much?"

"Did you fall in?" Chase had to ask. By his last estimate, Nate had been gone nearly an hour.

"Better," Nate said and grinned widely. "I met a cute guy and we may or may not have found the janitor's closet."

Chase shook his head and chuckled. "You're such a slut."

"Jealous?" Nate snapped back.

"Hardly," Chase replied and noticed Heath closing the gap. "There he is."

"Mmm, can I take that to go?" Nate stared at Heath and wet his lips.

"No!" Chase barked, and Nate looked at him with a quizzical expression.

"Uh, huh. So you hate this guy? *Pfft*. Whatever. You want to fuck him. I know it."

"No, I-I don't," Chase stuttered and shut up when Heath was within earshot.

"If you don't, I will," Nate said in singsong voice and put on a smile when Heath walked up.

An immediate hum of energy pulsed through Chase's body when Heath grinned at him, and he hated it. When Heath wasn't running his mouth, spilling out tactless sarcasm, he was quite a sight to behold.

"Chase, you look dashing," Heath said with his signature sarcasm, and gave him an appraising look from head to toe.

"You too. I didn't realize one could hide their tail and horns so effectively. Kudos," Chase replied quickly, and Nate giggled next to him.

“Hi, I’m Heath, Chase’s future boyfriend.” Heath extended his hand to Nate.

Nate smiled. “I’m Nate, and get in line, honey.”

With that said, Heath let out a loud, obnoxious laugh. “I kind of like this guy, Chase.”

Chase put his arm around Nate and pulled him close. It felt odd and he tried to dismiss the feeling. Nate was a friend, not a lover, and while he could act for the camera, real life was a different story. Nate played along and wrapped his arm around Chase’s waist.

“So, Nate, what kind of work are you in?” Heath asked with amusement evident on his face.

Chase didn’t know what was so humorous, but he played it off. Now, if Nate was dressed like he normally was, Chase might understand.

“Sales,” Nate said and looked up at Chase.

“I see,” Heath said with a purr and sipped from his flute. He turned his attention back to Chase and grinned with that irritating, smug, quality Chase despised most. “So, uh, tomorrow night. Me. You. Dinner?”

Nate snapped his fingers and became indignant. “Excuse me? I believe I told you to get in line, not ask my boyfriend out with me standing here.”

Heath laughed with enthusiasm, deep and throaty, loud enough that heads turned to see what was so funny. “Oh, my.” He held his stomach and tried to contain his amusement. “If y’all think I’m buying your act, you’re mistaken.”

“What is that supposed to mean? There is no act,” Chase snapped back.

“Yeah, there is no act!” Nate said, acting wounded. He hugged Chase around the waist.

Heath nodded and wet his lips with sickening slowness, eyes leveled with a cocky expression. “Chase, do you hold all your boyfriends with such non-affection? Look at yourself, limp wristed, barely making contact. It’s almost like you’re posing for an awkward prom picture.”

“For your information, cocky boy, we’re not much on PDA,” Nate chirped before kissing Chase on the cheek.

Wow, weird.

Chase wasn't expecting Heath to see through their act. Damn, this sucked. A waiter walked by and Chase snatched another glass of champagne and immediately gulped it down. He could feel perspiration already beading on his temples. Was it that hot in there?

"Excuse me, lovebirds. I have a couple more introductions I need to make," Heath said, giving them another quizzical look and a grin before walking away.

"*Mmm*, break me off a piece of that," Nate whispered.

Chase elbowed Nate in the ribs. "Trust me, he isn't worth your time."

Nate turned and chuckled. "Yeah, probably not, but he is most definitely worth yours."

"I don't think so," Chase replied and set down his empty glass. "Stay out of trouble while I'm gone."

"Okay, honey buns," Nate teased, and Chase rolled his eyes.

Chase walked with long strides, heading for the men's room. He was hot and all out of sorts. Tugging at his collar, Chase wished for an arctic breeze to blow through the room to help cool him. Must be the champagne, he thought, and felt better as he pushed through the bathroom door.

Once inside, Chase approached a sink and cranked on the cold water. He splashed water over his face, wishing he was anywhere but there. He still couldn't understand how Heath saw through their act. Was he holding Nate limp wristed? Chase had to admit, holding Nate felt strange, sort of like hugging his kid brother for pictures when he was younger.

Nah, Heath was just bullshitting. The guy wasn't that fucking intuitive, Chase decided, and shut off the water. After grabbing a handful of paper towels, he dried his face while closing his eyes, and prayed for the strength to make it through the remainder of the evening.

An all-too-familiar voice drawled, "Someone once said 'The essence of lying is in deception, not in words'."

Chase froze, slowly removing the towels from his face. He swallowed hard, nervousness making the heat return in a tidal wave. "John Ruskin, but I'm pretty sure you didn't know that," he said, once he had his composure.

Heath beamed. "Maybe, maybe not, but my act is better than yours."

"Damn, you are so full of yourself. How do you have room in your body for your entire ego?" Chase asked and tossed the damp paper towels into the trash.

Heath smiled with his cocky little grin, the one he seemed to get when he felt at an advantage. A quiver rolled through Chase's stomach and he tried to ignore it. When Heath stepped closer to Chase, Chase backed up a step, feeling more anxious than ever before. They were alone, in the men's room, and the look in Heath's eyes was a mix of humor and determination.

"I love the banter, Chase. Each time you speak negatively of me, you give yourself away."

Chase stepped back again as Heath continued to approach. "*Pfft*, I don't know what you're talking about."

Heath grinned, now a few inches away, and Chase was out of places to go. He bumped against the wall and Heath stopped, appraising him for a moment before skimming his tongue over his bottom lip. "I think you do."

"You are invading my personal space," Chase replied. He felt a little out of breath, but it wasn't because he was claustrophobic.

"Am I making you nervous? Or is it that I'm turning you on?" Heath asked, closing what was left of the gap between their bodies.

Chase wanted to shove Heath away, but didn't. His body buzzed with little shocks. The proximity of their bodies was so close he could feel Heath's heat radiating off him. Chase swallowed quickly, trying to hold his ground. "Neither. And you're wrong about me and Nate. We've been dating for a few months."

Heath chuckled low in his throat, the sound stirring Chase deep in his groin. "So uh, I guess you two have an open relationship then. Lucky me. I ran into Nate and a bus boy earlier, coming out of a janitor's closet while zipping their slacks."

Heath grinned triumphantly and Chase knew he had been busted. Words couldn't dig him out at this point. His anger and frustration propelled him to push Heath back a step. Heath laughed with pride and quickly grabbed Chase's wrists, shoving him back to the wall.

"Busted," Heath said and pushed his body hard against Chase. He leaned close to Chase's ear, his hot breath sending a jolt of awareness pinging throughout Chase's body. "That's so cute. You wanted to make me jealous."

And there was Heath's mouth rattling again.

"Fuck off," Chase said with a growl and struggled in Heath's hold.

“Why do you fight the attraction between us?” Heath asked with a more serious expression now.

Chase stared into Heath's dark eyes, and for a moment he got lost in them. *How did he answer that? There was no attraction between them.* His semi-erect dick said otherwise. God, how he really hated the guy. “Don't flatter yourself.”

It was then Heath pressed his lips firmly to Chase's. Tilting his head, Heath angled his mouth and forced his tongue between Chase's lips. A soft moan vibrated unexpectedly from Chase's throat, and between the hate and the rage he was feeling, desire tamped down the fire in his gut. He reciprocated, overwhelmed, giving back with intensity. Their tongues collided, swept together in a sensual dance. Heath's mouth was hard against his, demanding, and taking what he wanted. Why did Heath stir such deep emotion in him? And why did it feel so fucking good to be at his mercy?

Heath slowed, teasing with his tongue, pulling back a little to trace Chase's mouth. Chase took a shuddering breath and opened his eyes when Heath stopped. Their eyes met, noses touching. Heath rasped out a shaky breath and squeezed Chase's wrists. “I knew you wanted me.”

Chase growled, his anger boiling out of control, and used all the energy he could to break free of Heath's hold. “You're a fucking asshole!”

Heath stood shocked for a moment and wiped his mouth with his fingers. Slowly a grin curved over his lips. “Does the truth hurt?”

“Go to hell,” Chase replied and pushed past him, leaving in search of Nate and the nearest exit.

Chapter 4

It had been two weeks since Chase had seen Heath and he was on the fence about whether he was happy or bothered by the fact. So far, his wish had come true and he was having second thoughts about wishing such. But damn, the guy was so obnoxious, so infuriatingly handsome, and so sexy with his sarcastic charm until Chase thought he'd go mad just thinking about him. And why was he worrying about such nonsense anyway? He asked himself that question as he readied for the shoot less than two hours away. The dream spread, the moneymaker, the image-propelling ad of his career was literally right in front of him.

Thoughts of Heath did nothing more than internally rile him, replays of the scene in the men's room with Heath a distraction. That was something Chase didn't need at the moment. He continued to shave and directed his thoughts to a more positive note. Nervousness rose a little when he realized just how big his upcoming day really was. A whole new world could open up for him, taking him from small time to big time.

He rinsed his razor and set it aside. Staring into the mirror, he gave himself a small pep talk. "Don't blow it."

Chase's stomach churned and growled, but he didn't dare eat for fear his anxiety would bring it back up. He settled for a cup of coffee instead, and sipped it as he pulled a pair of jeans from his closet. Walking out and into his bedroom, he tossed his jeans to the bed and sat down. Why wouldn't Heath's image leave his mind? And why couldn't he stop thinking about him?

This was getting ridiculous, he thought, rubbing his eyes with irritation and confusion. After he had left the party with Nate, he made the mistake of telling his friend about what happened with Heath. Since then, Nate had bombarded him almost daily with talk of the guy, encouraging him to go for it. Chase shook his head. That would be a monumentally stupid idea. Heath was a self-absorbed ass, not capable of thinking of anyone but himself. The thought of having any type of relationship with him, well, it was ridiculous, because Heath had made it clear he was in it for sex, and sex only.

Chase wasn't one to indulge in his desires, quick flings or otherwise, especially not with someone in the industry. No, falling into bed with Heath would be a big mistake, and one he'd be reminded of a lot, judging by how often they were on the same shoots.

“Damn,” Chase whispered, annoyed at himself for allowing Heath to bother him. This wasn't like Chase. He didn't lose control. He didn't fantasize about men he'd rather punch than look at. “What an infuriating asshole.”

He stood up, placing his coffee cup on the dresser, and reached for his jeans. He shoved each leg in with annoyance, knowing he needed to shake it off. The upcoming shoot was to be a depiction of a loving couple. The only emotion Chase could convey at the moment was frustration. Maybe he needed a drink to calm his nerves, he wondered, then decided against it. Where was all of this coming from? Was it because the break he sought from Heath happened, and he wasn't happy about it after all?

“Ridiculous,” he said out loud as he pulled a shirt from a hanger and jerked it over his head.

After slipping into his loafers, Chase brushed his teeth, checked the time, and headed out. He looked forward to a nice brisk walk, anything to help ease the emotional battle taking place in his mind. Jogging down the stairs, he relaxed a little, the exercise getting his blood pumping.

Focus.

Outside, a cool spring breeze blew on his face, and the bright sunshine lightened his mood. He squinted and shielded his eyes, looking for a cab to hail. People moved efficiently around him, all heading to jobs of their own. Horns honked, cars and buses zoomed by. He smiled and inhaled a deep breath of crisp morning air. Waving his hand and whistling caught him a cab, and he slid in the backseat, giving the address of his destination as he did so.

The cab lurched forward, the driver honking his horn, trying to merge into traffic. Rock music lightly played on the radio. Chase tapped out the beat on his leg while he stared out the windows as buildings raced by. The distractions helped ease and wash away his anxiety. His mind went blank as colors melded together in a steady stream.

It's going to be a good day.

Fifteen minutes later, the cab stopped in front of Chase's destination. He pulled out his wallet and paid the driver, giving him a nice tip as well. After he got out and the cab zoomed away, Chase looked at the entrance of an old, but renovated building. The property hinted of architecture from the thirties, with tall arched windows, a white stone façade, and intricate designs on the exterior.

Large steps led to a landing with tall pillars and neatly trimmed trees in large box planters. He took a deep breath and started up the stairs. *Break a leg.*

After meeting with the photographer and editor for the shoot, Chase was directed to a room to change into the company's apparel. He shut the door behind him, surveying the rack of underwear in the middle of the room. A small chaise of gold with a paisley design set on the far wall, with an ornate expressionist painting above. Gilded molding encased the angles of the room, and an oversized Persian rug completed the décor.

According to the photographer, multiple shots would be taken in front of the large cathedral window in the main room. Various colors of underwear lined the rack, some with stripes, others with pop art, while others were solid, including a pair of tighty-whities.

Chase kicked off his shoes as he unbuttoned his shirt. Apparently there was a shooting order, he realized, when he noticed another rack of underwear on the opposite side of the room, lined up accordingly. He tossed his shirt onto the chaise and unfastened his jeans, wondering who he'd be paired up with for the shoot. As he bent down to untangle his foot from his jeans, he heard the door open and close. He continued with his task, suspecting the other model had finally arrived. Being in various states of undress with other models was the norm, so he didn't think much of being bent over, slipping his jeans off.

When a hand connected with his ass, slapping hard enough to make him lurch forward, Chase stumbled and turned. "You have to be fucking kidding me!"

Heath grinned, casually walking to the opposite side of the room while he pulled his T-shirt over his head. "Hello, lover."

This isn't happening.

"I'm not your lover," Chase said with hate in his tone and glared. His ass was on fire.

"I don't see why not," Heath said. His wide chest was bare, and his fingers were unbuttoning his jeans. "You're single. I'm single."

"And you're an asshole," Chase replied and turned to the rack of underwear.

Damn, his ass really hurt.

Heath shucked off his shoes and jeans. Chase tried not to look, but found his gaze veering in Heath's direction. Underneath, Heath was well, wow, Chase

decided, yet tried to ignore the guy's amazing washboard abs, the defined pecs, his hard nipples, little cute nubs of flesh. Chase always figured him for a boxer-brief sort of man, and closed his eyes while trying to wash away the image of the navy fabric hugging his thick, muscled thighs.

How fucked up is this?

Chase flipped through the underwear, although he didn't need to. The designer knew his size, they were all the same size, and in freaking order. *Gah*, he shouted in his head. Maybe he should seek modeling jobs in a different country so he could get away from Heath.

It wasn't fair, not by a long shot. Chase couldn't understand why he was so attracted to a guy he hated so much. Why should such a conceited dick have it all?

"I'm still holding out for dinner with you," Heath said and blatantly spoke as he shoved his briefs down, causing Chase to look in his direction.

In front of him was Michelangelo's masterpiece. Toned and fit from head to toe, Heath's body commanded his attention. Thick hips and muscled thighs made him look ready for battle in a kilt on a Scottish highland. The only thing he was missing was the fair skin and, obviously, the kilt.

No, no, no!

"See something you like?" Heath asked, unabashed by his nakedness, standing with hands outstretched, begging for Chase's eyes to drink him in.

"Uh, no." Chase lied and averted his gaze. He pulled the first pair of briefs from the hanger, nervous about taking his last article of clothing off.

Heath was waiting. He stood proud with arms now crossed over his chest. His prick hung, not affected by the cool air or sizzling heat zinging through the room. Chase felt a quiver in his sack and prayed to whatever gods had the power to tamp his stiffening dick down. Turning his back to Heath, Chase shoved down his briefs, stepping out of them before tossing them to the chaise with his clothes. He could feel Heath's eyes watching him.

"Stop staring at my ass," Chase said and bent over to put on the first pair of underwear for the shoot.

"You have a cute little mole on your butt," Heath said, snickering behind him.

Chase was mid-thigh with the briefs. "Do not!" He turned his head to glare at Heath.

Heath was smiling with his head cocked to the side. "Do too."

Looking down, Chase of course couldn't see his ass, but was curious to know if he really did. "Oh, fuck this." He gave up and finished covering his anatomy with a pair of patriotic underwear.

"Stars," Heath noted, and pulled his first pair from the rack, striped red and white. "I'd like to put a stripe in your star."

"Damn, is everything about sex with you?" Chase asked and worked to keep his mind from conjuring images.

Heath stopped and scrunched his brows together, apparently deep in thought. "Huh, well, sometimes I think about food. At times, I think about food and sex." He laughed. "Hot combination."

"Bacon and grits?" Chase asked with sarcasm.

"Actually," Heath started, and stepped into his striped underwear. "I prefer whipped cream."

Thoughts of Heath's stiff prick coated with whipped cream immediately flashed in Chase's mind.

"You know, foreplay is really underrated," Heath said and snapped the elastic band.

"I'm not even going to ask," Chase replied, averting his gaze once again and starting for the door. He was asking for all he was receiving by engaging in conversation with Heath to begin with, and that's not what he wanted.

"No need. I'll tell you anyway," Heath said, following Chase out the door. "Of course, at times, I like to just get to the good stuff. You know, bodies banging together, skin slapping, cum dripping."

"You're still an asshole," Chase said, borrowing Nate's singsong tone.

Heath stopped Chase at the end of the hall, grabbing his arm and turning Chase around to face him. "Don't act like you haven't thought about it. About us together."

"I don't."

Heath grinned and licked his lips. "Baby, I grew up in an area where a poker face can make or break you. My parents played cards every Friday night. I

caught on to the tells that people give when they're bluffing, and you, you are bluffing."

"Nice, so now if your modeling career fails, you have a fallback as a hustler. Too bad you don't know what the hell you're talking about. I don't think of you at all. Well, except for the few moments I envision you getting hit by a taxi full of clowns."

Heath raised a brow and snickered. "Now that I can believe."

"Uh, we sort of have a job to do here. Are you done boring me with redneck life?"

"Ah, and there it is again!" Heath sounded triumphant. "When you try to deceive, your lips sort of quiver on the left side."

"Do not," Chase argued, and felt his lips tremble.

"Oh, yeah."

"Whatever," Chase said with an irritated huff and headed to the main room where the staff was waiting.

Multiple shots were taken from different angles with Heath and Chase in various shades and styles of underwear. During it all, Heath worked to break Chase down, one sexual innuendo at a time.

The more Heath talked, the harder it seemed for Chase to retain his focus. They were supposed to be a loving couple, standing in front of a window while holding hands, filtered with natural light. God, Heath loved when Chase got into character. Chase was looking at him with adoring eyes, a sweet smile on his lips. Together they stood in standard-issue white briefs, the basics. The sunlight highlighted the green in Chase's eyes, giving him an angelic look, but Heath knew otherwise. Underneath his soft portrayal, Chase was wicked, delightfully so, with a sharp and sarcastic tongue that drove Heath insane with desire.

A long beep and a flash of an umbrella light brought Heath back to the present. For a moment, he had gotten lost in Chase's eyes, far away on a tropical beach with white sands, waves gently rolling in, leaving thousands of bubbles in its wake. And for an instant, Heath could almost hear the sounds of the ocean creating a romantic backdrop for them.

Click, click.

“Don’t grin like that. You look like a cartoon character,” Chase said, keeping a sweet smile on his face while holding Heath’s hands.

“How should I look at you?”

Chase snorted, still smiling affectionately. “I hate you.”

“Liar.” Heath felt a natural smile replace his forced one. In front of him was the guy who owned his heart and didn’t know it. The sad but true tale of it all was the fact Chase would deny any kind of inkling of a feeling in return. Chase had convinced himself that Heath wasn’t worth his time or his affection, tossing him away like yesterday’s garbage.

Well, Heath had news for Chase. He was, in fact, the man Chase was seeking, but didn’t know it. In no shape or form was Heath about to change to earn Chase’s attention, but rather, he was going to be himself, win Chase, devil be damned.

“Lucky for me, this shoot is almost over,” Chase said, grinning in a way that was almost sickening.

“You don’t know what you’re throwing away, Chase.” Heath became serious, hurt by the care-not attitude Chase portrayed.

“I think I do,” Chase replied, putting on a pleasant face for the camera. God, the camera loved him.

“No, you don’t.” Heath gripped Chase’s hands tighter in his.

Chase’s effervescent grin faded a little as he struggled to break free. “Yes, I do. I’m not a one-night stand. I’m not a good fuck because I’m available. I’m not an in-between until something better comes along. I’m not even a friend with benefits kind of guy.”

Heath felt his lips tug into a wide grin. “I know.”

“I’m not a conquest—” Chase stopped and stared at Heath. “What did you say?”

“I said I know,” Heath repeated and rubbed the backs of Chase’s hands with his thumbs.

Chase looked confused, unsettled. His eyebrows pulled together. His lips pursed like he wanted to speak, but the puzzled look in his eyes told the tale. Chase was speechless.

“Have dinner with me. Tonight,” Heath whispered with the photographer firing off shots and the staff struggling to hear. No doubt they had listened to every word he and Chase had exchanged since the shoot started.

“I need a little more affection,” the photographer said, interrupting the moment. “Maybe a kiss as well.”

Heath placed his hand on Chase's cheek, adoring the shocked and nervous expression in his gaze. Pulling their clasped hands up, Heath rested them against his chest, never taking his eyes off Chase. Heath leaned closer, searching for any kind of reaction. “You heard the man. I'll need to kiss you now.”

Chase stood motionless, lips slightly parted, with uncertainty in his stare. Heath deliberately brushed his lips over Chase's, barely touching the surface. Around them, the room had gone quiet, eerily still with only the sound of the camera. Heath gently flicked his tongue out, skimming Chase's bottom lip, and caught the faint sound of a groan from Chase.

“Have dinner with me,” Heath said again, lazily brushing their lips together.

Chase nodded, their noses gently rubbing. His eyes were wide for a moment. The green color of them was mesmerizing Heath.

Heath cheered inside and took a shaky breath.

“Now kiss me,” Heath whispered, pressing his lips firmly to Chase's.

At first, the kiss was slow, tentative, and unsure. Heath could feel their skin touching, heat radiating, and prayed his dick wouldn't happily pop up and introduce itself. He squeezed Chase's hand, allowing a soft moan of pleasure to hum between their mouths.

Chase raised his left hand and ran his fingers through Heath's hair before clutching a wad and thrusting his tongue into Heath's mouth.

Fireworks abounded behind Heath's eyelids, and his heart beat erratically, joyfully.

“Fabulous!” the photographer shouted, and the crew whooped and hollered around them.

Chase smiled against Heath's mouth for a brief moment. He groaned, clutching Heath's hair tighter, the kisses becoming more urgent. Dear God, Heath chanted in his head, a triumphant euphoria making his skin tingle. They had an audience but he didn't care. He was too happy to give a damn, and gave into the moment, seized it.

The clicks of the camera and hushed, whispering voices evaporated. No one else existed, no one was there. Heath was consumed by the moment, lust fueling his kisses. He needed to kiss Chase everywhere, anywhere. Breaking their kiss, Chase grunted his disapproval and softly gasped when Heath trailed kisses down his neck, stopping to suck his tender flesh.

“I suddenly have the urge to masturbate,” the set coordinator’s soft voice cut through the room and laughter abounded.

“I love it!” shouted the photographer, clicking multiple shots in seconds.

The camera quit making noise and soft chatter filled the hall. Heath moved back up Chase’s neck and gently kissed his lips. “I believe the shoot is over,” Heath said, and Chase nodded, opening his gorgeous eyes to stare at him. They were smiling, bright and lust-covered, hinting of enjoyment.

“We’ll, uh, we’ll leave you two alone,” the set coordinator said and giggled as she walked away.

Heath and Chase stood locked in the moment, uncaring about the world around them.

“So, uh, where can I take you for dinner?”

Chapter 5

Heath tossed his keys on a table and shut the door to his apartment behind Chase. "It's not much, quite lonely at times," he said.

Chase looked around, noting the quiver in his stomach hadn't bothered to go away. Never in his wildest dreams would he have ever believed he'd be with Heath anywhere, let alone his apartment. He gazed at Heath, searching for the hate he had always harbored for the guy, and it wasn't there.

"You realize I'm not as big of an asshole as I portray," Heath stated, matter of fact in his tone. "A year ago my only option was factory work. College wasn't a goal, not that we had the money for such things."

Chase swallowed, nervous about what was to come, but also regretful perhaps, always seeing in Heath what he wanted to believe. Heath's dark hair was still a little wild from Chase's hand, making him look even sexier than before. His dark eyes were sincere, with no hint of sarcasm or conceit.

"I'm—"

Heath waved for Chase to stop before he continued. "I don't need your sympathy or anyone else's. I worked myself out of a bad situation, and for that, I'm proud." He smiled and walked toward Chase. "I've gone from a small-time country hick to a model making a name for myself. Sure, that kind of pride goes to my head every now and again. At times, my charm is a little rusty, maybe even in need of a tune-up. I'm loud, obnoxious, too rowdy, and I'm as wild as they come. Inside, though—" He stopped to chuckle. "Inside, I have a heart of gold, one that yearns for life, for happiness. It had been lonely, and then I met you."

Chase felt heat rise in his cheeks, remembering their first introduction. Wow, that wasn't the most pleasant of experiences.

Heath snorted, as if thinking back, amused by his recollections. "I hated you from the instant we met, but honestly, would have given my soul to the devil for one night with you."

Wow, Chase thought, unable to believe what he was hearing. This wasn't Heath. Heath was obnoxious, sarcastic, covering up his true feelings with bullshit words and tactless remarks.

“Of course, it didn’t take me long to realize I truly didn’t hate you. I envied you and over time fell for you,” Heath said, close now, his fingertip grazing Chase’s jaw. “And I believe you feel the same.”

Chase started to object, but closed his mouth. Heath’s hand on his face felt right, it belonged there. But he had to pause, collect his thoughts, and organize his feelings. He’d hated Heath for the better part of the year, wishing to be away from him, while secretly hoping to see him.

“The hate game. That’s what I’ve called the game we have been playing. And now I’m tired of playing. It has been great foreplay, but I want more, need more. I need you.”

Cocking his head to the side, Heath grinned with devilish flair, leaning in slowly, taking his time, and making Chase want to scream for him to hurry up already. “Here’s the thing, lover. I’m truly, one hundred percent a cocky asshole, and I hope you can see past all my hang-ups to give us a try.”

“Us?” Chase whispered, choked up with emotion, uncertainty rushing through his mind while blood pulsed to his groin, causing his dick to stir.

“Don’t lie to yourself or to me. We both know there is a fine line between love and hate. Underneath the act, we’re wildly crazy for each other. You know it, and I know it.”

Rational thinking was becoming harder the longer Heath lovingly stared at him. His words were an aphrodisiac, heating Chase from the inside out. Then it occurred to him, and it was an interesting revelation, everything that he hated about Heath was everything he sort of enjoyed. Was in fact all their banter nothing more than foreplay? Could a relationship built on hate turn to a fulfilling union?

“You’re thinking too hard, and where I come from, that means—”

Chase smiled and interrupted. “Let me guess. I should just let go, follow my heart?”

“No, actually I was going to say that where I’m from, it means you’re either constipated or a little slow.”

Heath grinned, bright teeth shimmering while Chase wrinkled his nose with irritation.

“And there’s that mouth of yours. And your Hillbilly 101. And—”

Heath grasped the front of Chase's shirt and pulled him roughly against his body, cutting off Chase's words with his mouth. Chase fought his hold, simmering over Heath's statement.

What an ass.

"And then there's your fire, something I love most about you," Heath said between kisses, tugging Chase to follow.

"You infuriate me," Chase replied, pulling at Heath's shirt, yearning to be closer, free of clothing.

Heath laughed, pulling Chase to the bed. They landed hard, hands seeking to free their bodies of the material separating them. The bed felt like a cloud, all soft and fluffy under Chase's back. Heath's body pressed to his felt especially divine. His hard muscles flexed as he moved, positioning himself over Chase.

Kissing became erratic and sloppy as they fought against the clothing between them. Heath sat back, jerking his shirt over his head. Chase stared, amazed by the perfection greeting his eyes. Thick bands of muscle lined Heath's abdomen. His sun-kissed skin looked like finely woven silk that Chase's hands begged to touch.

The cocky smile Heath possessed only furthered Chase's desire, the truth slamming into his gut. Chase needed Heath, yearned for his affection like no other person he'd ever encountered. His fingers touched Heath's chest, tracing the contours, alive with wild sensations traveling and pinging in his toes. Chase lifted when Heath grabbed the hem of his shirt, allowing him to take it off. Heath dipped his head down and flicked his tongue over Chase's sensitive nipples.

"I've dreamt of this," Heath said with a raspy tone, kissing and sucking Chase's tiny nub of flesh.

All Chase could do was give in and revel in the attention. It had been ages since he'd been touched, so long since his needs had been met. He inhaled a deep breath, feeling Heath tug at the button on his jeans. Awareness of what was to come made him quiver.

Heath tugged and pulled, stopping to shuck off Chase's shoes, all the while keeping a cute grin on his face, and dimples evident in his cheeks. And then Heath was there, at the point most in need of attention, gently lapping at the head of Chase's cock, tickling the slit with his tongue.

Arching his back, Chase hummed and fisted the comforter on the bed. Blood raced through his body, exhilaration making his skin tingle. He writhed and moaned, giving in to the moment, allowing his heart to soar with the sensation. Heath sucked him hard and fast, humming up and down the length of Chase's prick.

"Heath," Chase called in a whisper, unable to form a full sentence. Bright lights flashed behind his lids, all coherent and rational thinking nothing more than a faint memory. Blood rushed south, pulsing at the point where it was needed the most, leaving his brain in a drunken, euphoric stupor.

"That's it, call my name," Heath said, sounding out of breath, and resumed his task, leaving Chase almost boneless and at the verge of release.

"Heath, no, oh hell. I'm going to blow!" Chase shouted and felt his skin begin to sweat.

Heath stopped, rising slowly with pride in his smile. He teased the head of Chase's cock with his tongue, prolonging what bubbled like a volcano ready to erupt under the surface. Heath was enjoying himself and Chase was held at his mercy, needing so badly to let go.

"Don't tease me," Chase said and ended with a growl. His muscles were bunched up, tight with excitement.

"Beg for it," Heath said, lazily swiping his tongue up and down.

"Are you serious?" Chase asked. His cock was hard as steel, aching, fucking hurting!

Heath chuckled with pride. "Beg me, lover."

"Fucking suck it off already!"

"*Mmm*, you're so damn hot when you're angry."

"Jesus Christ, Heath!"

Heath plunged down, sucking Chase hard, beckoning the blood to pulse to the tip. His hand slid under his sac, gently rubbing the soft flesh. Chase's head fell back and he bucked his hips, flexing his ass, stomach muscles, gearing up and... heaven.

A loud moan erupted from Chase's lungs, satisfaction washing over every inch of his body. Heath pumped his cock, letting go with his mouth.

"Come for me, lover."

Extreme joy and ecstasy held Chase's body tight, cum erupting from his prick as shuddering spasms took over. Heath climbed over Chase, straddling his body. He kissed him, humming while he did so. Chase held his eyes closed, enjoying how good he felt, how good it felt for Heath to be the one to bring him to this high.

Gentle kisses swept over Chase's throat. Heath's scent enveloped him. It was distinctive and rich, clean like fresh rain. He held Heath, allowing his fingertips to drag down his back, desire building again with more fervor than before.

"You're an asshole," Chase rasped and began to open the fly of Heath's jeans.

"So I've heard." Heath laughed and rolled to his side, working his jeans down to his ankles.

Chase got on his knees and leaned over, his rear directed toward Heath. He took Heath's dick in his hand while Heath kicked free from the denim. He needed to taste Heath. Everything about Heath excited him, made Chase desire him. It was the perfection of his body, the way he carried himself with such confidence, and especially the cocky nature of his tongue, ripe with sarcasm and witty charm. Everything he hated, he loved.

Heath moaned when Chase took him all in, feeling his throat tense as the head bumped the back of his mouth. Chase was overwhelmed with lust for the guy—body and, surprisingly, soul. They were opposites, salt and pepper, oil and water, yin and yang. There was nothing they held in common except their careers, but Chase didn't care, seeking only the pleasure they could create together as his head moved up and down.

"Is it too soon to say I told you so?" Heath asked with a groan.

"Yes," Chase replied, pumping Heath's cock with his hand and mouth, determined to drive the guy out of his mind.

Heath caressed Chase's back, humming from the pleasure, stopping to give a tender slap to Chase's ass. Chase grinned, trying to maintain his amusement. He pushed Heath's boundary, the small band of muscles between his scrotum and tiny puckered hole, making him cry out and wiggle from the buildup.

"Damn, lover. Your mouth is awesome," Heath purred.

Abruptly, Chase stopped and sat back.

Heath chuckled, apparently expecting the reversal. Chase smiled with adoring eyes and slid off the bed, retrieving his underwear and stepping into them.

“What in the hell are you doing?” Heath shouted and sat up. His eyes were wild, bulging open wide.

“I’m leaving,” Chase said and reached for his jeans.

“You have got to be fucking kidding me.” Heath pointed to his hard and erect cock, disappointment crinkling his brows. “Look at my dick!”

Chase glanced at the bobbing member, smiling softly, enjoying the hell out of himself. “Huh, looks like you have a big problem.” He put one leg, then the other into his jeans and pulled them up.

“Oh, hell no.” Heath hopped off the bed and stalked toward Chase. “We are going to finish what we started. If I have to, I will bend you over my legs and spank your bratty ass.”

“Bratty?” Chase asked, amused by his choice of words. Heat rose in his groin, loving the banter.

“Yeah, bratty and fucking spankable. You will get your ass back in that bed. Now.”

“And if I don’t?” Chase asked and reached for his shirt.

“That’s it,” Heath barked and jerked Chase to him. “Damn, I want to spank your ass, fuck you, and then love you until we fall to sleep.”

Chase flipped the end of Heath’s dick with his fingers. “Interesting. Tick tock.”

Heath grinned wide, jerking the shirt from Chase’s hand. His chest expanded, cock sticking straight up. Grabbing Chase by the arms, Heath turned him around and pushed him back, making short work of removing his jeans.

“Don’t move.” Heath growled, walking around the bed to his nightstand and pulling out a condom and bottle of lubricant.

Chase watched, elated by the thought of their bodies joined. A tremble shook him as Heath rolled the condom over his thick length. His breathing hitched, and he felt his puckered hole tense up. Heath was everything he wanted, and didn’t. In a not-so-charming sort of way, Heath had touched him, no matter how hard Chase had tried to deny the fact. Somewhere underneath his

calm demeanor, Chase harbored a need for a guy like Heath, and he suspected he always had.

“On your knees,” Heath said, moving to the end of the bed while stroking his glistening prick.

Chase complied, feeling his dick twitch with excitement. Peering over his shoulder, Chase admired Heath. He was strong and confident, virile, with a body built for sinning. Chase admired him, hated him, and longed to be joined with him.

A bite of pain radiated out, and Chase took a deep breath, beckoning his muscles to relax. Soft kisses peppered Chase's back, causing him to sigh and smile. The tough and pushy side of Heath's personality had taken a back seat, leaving a gentle lover behind. His lips felt like velvet on Chase's skin, wonderful and luxurious.

Chase felt his body relax and Heath eased in. They both moaned in unison. Heath wrapped his arms around Chase's chest, holding him as his hips moved gently. Chase rocked on his knees, exhaling the breath he had been holding. He hadn't dreamt of this, would have sworn it would have never happened, and here he was, overjoyed by the fact, loving each and every stroke Heath delivered.

The moment was surreal, but deep in his heart Chase knew it was right, perfect while being imperfect. They grunted their satisfaction, sweat beading on their foreheads. Heath impaled Chase stroke after stroke. Soft and gentle gave way to lust, pushing their bodies a little faster, seeking more.

Chase cried out as the momentum increased, Heath's hips pounding against his ass. Chase loved feeling the raw emotion channeling from Heath, the overwhelming need in him to please, to push their bodies to complete ecstasy.

Heath's hands gripped Chase's hips tight, controlling the movement, pulling when he pushed, their bodies slapping together. Heath growled, pumping harder, faster. Chase felt the bed move, finding a steady rhythm.

A slap from Heath's hand stung Chase's ass cheek, morphing into sublime pleasure. Another slap, followed by another, caused Chase to wail, overcome with the various sensations pinging through him.

Not normally a physical person, Chase was learning much about his desires, secrets he never knew he had until now. Stronger and larger physically, Heath was in control, and Chase found himself enjoying it, wanting more.

Heath stopped and angled Chase's head to the side so he could kiss him. Chase felt his toes curl when their mouths connected. Searing heat rippled through Chase's body, and he knew without a doubt, he had fallen for Heath as well.

"I have this overwhelming urge to fuck you so hard you'll never forget I was here," Heath said, roughly flipping Chase to his back. His chest flexed with intent, hands grasping Chase's ankles and shoving Chase's knees to his shoulders.

Chase quivered, unable to move if he'd wanted to. One part of his mind screamed for his control back, while the other side yearned for the domination.

Heath wet his lips as he stared down at Chase. Anchoring his feet on the bed, Heath lifted, putting more pressure on Chase. He resembled an athlete, all muscled perfection, with sweat glistening on his body. Moving his hands to the back of Chase's knees, Heath teased Chase's bud, barely piercing in before retracting.

With a forceful grunt, Heath shoved inside of Chase, the impact causing Chase to whimper. "Yeah, I love being on top," he said, inching back and pounding inside again.

It was wild, rough, overwhelmingly so, as Chase struggled to breathe between crushing thrusts of Heath's hips. The bed swayed with force, smacking against the stone wall, loud clanking a backdrop to Chase's cries of pleasure. He was full, Heath's cock thick and long, stretching him, pushing his boundaries.

"Fuck yeah!" Heath shouted, his hips pumping hard, sweat dripping off his face and onto Chase's chest. His breaths were coming fast and he shuddered, grunting as he flexed his hips, relentlessly pounding against Chase's ass.

Chase felt his eyes roll back, inundated with the feeling, the emotions swimming in his mind, and the submissive state he was in, yet loving the release of his control. All he could do was hold on, riding the waves of bliss, knowing he'd never be the same again.

"Yes," Heath drawled, plunging deep and grinding his hips against Chase's rear, creating a new and wildly pleasing sensation. He pulled out, releasing Chase's legs and growling while gently stroking his cock. Falling to his back, he motioned for Chase to straddle him. He grinned, positioning his body, cock straining, thick and ready. "Ride me, lover."

Chase climbed over, squatting above Heath's prick, the tip brushing between the cheeks of his ass. Inching down, Chase inhaled deeply, being filled completely by Heath. He moaned, fingertips digging into Heath's stomach.

Heath cupped the cheeks of Chase's ass, lifting him slightly. "Get ready to ride, boy." His thick accent tickled Chase's ears, raw and raspy, deep and demanding. Heath pumped his hips, getting extra momentum from the bed, cock gliding in and out of Chase's bud.

The bed squeaked with disapproval and Chase's legs trembled. "Dear God," Chase moaned, feeling his prick hard between his legs, bouncing up and down, slapping on Heath's stomach. His skin was wet, droplets of sweat racing down his chest and forehead. He began to strain, his legs not accustomed to such a vigorous workout.

"You were made for me, Chase," Heath said between grunts, relenting and pulling Chase down, giving his legs a much-needed break. He guided Chase's hips, pushing and pulling him back and forth, his cock wiggling in Chase's ass.

"Fuck." Chase moaned, lightheaded, the friction creating a wild feeling. He was out of breath and panting, heart racing, blood pumping, adrenaline skyrocketing.

"Come here, lover." Heath beckoned Chase, wrapping his hands around Chase's neck when he leaned over.

Their lips crashed together, tongues immediately thrusting in each other's mouths. Heath held Chase tight, breathless between kisses, grunting as he resumed, gentler this time.

"It feels so good to be inside you, Chase," Heath admitted and stilled, holding Chase down, his cock firmly wedged deep inside Chase.

Chase nodded between kisses, wanting to race to the finish line. "Fuck me, Heath. Don't stop and get all mushy on me now."

Heath chuckled as he pushed Chase off and rolled to his side. "Come here," Heath whispered, pulling Chase's leg and turning him to his side. "I guess I have yet to fuck the sarcasm out of you," he teased and wrapped his arm up under Chase's leg, opening him wide.

Positioning his prick at Chase's rosebud, Heath entered him swiftly, tugging Chase's leg further up. Chase hummed and reached down, feeling Heath's dick stretch his muscles, entering him with long and purposely slow thrusts. Heath

wrapped his other arm around Chase's neck and pulled Chase to his mouth, breaths coming hard and fast.

Heath kissed Chase over and over, seeking air in between. Hard muscles and wet, sweat-drenched skin slid together effortlessly. Chase hummed. He could sense his cock building, Heath's prick tickling his prostate, each ridge and every thrust pushing Chase to the summit. He grabbed his erection and began pumping it from base to tip.

Heath stilled, holding Chase tight. He grunted and heaved his breaths, growling as his release took him. "Fuck," he rasped, squeezing Chase harder, his hips gently moving his pulsing prick in and out of Chase's ass. "Come for me."

Chase couldn't hold off any longer, so keyed up that his cock was ultrasensitive to his own touch. He let go, crying out as Heath pumped his semi-erect cock deep in his ass and stilled. Chase quivered, all ticklish and satisfied. With a trembling hand, Chase entwined his fingers with Heath's that were draped over his hip.

Thinking about the past year, Chase had to smile as he curled up next to Heath. The intensity between them was wild, the sex hot. Where did they go from here? Chase wasn't certain, but was sure it would be one hell of a ride. Not sure what to say at this point, Chase smiled, knowing no better words were necessary to express his heart than the ones he was about to say.

"I hate you," Chase said, squeezing Heath's hand.

Heath chuckled, reciprocating with his fingertips. "I hate you more."

The End

Author Bio

Hennessee plots by day and writes by night. Her creativity seems to be at its highest when the world around her slumbers. As a mother of two, she is prone to fits of insanity, random babbling, and answering her own questions. She has an affinity for things that go bump in the night, mythology, ancient religions, and history. Geeky to the core, she loves to laugh, goof off, and make people smile while interjecting crazy historical facts that make her husband often roll his eyes.

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