

# LOVE Has NO Boundaries



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# OPEN ARMS AND OPEN EYES

# Michelle K Grant

# Love Has No Boundaries

*An M/M Romance series*

## OPEN ARMS AND OPEN EYES

By Michelle K Grant

### Introduction

The story you are about to read celebrates love, sex and romance between men. It is a product of the *Love Has No Boundaries* promotion sponsored by the *Goodreads M/M Romance Group* and is published as a free gift to you.

### What Is Love Has No Boundaries?

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 they 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 Has No Boundaries*.

Whether you are an avid M/M romance reader or new to the genre, 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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# OPEN ARMS AND OPEN EYES

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## Photo Description

A young man with warm brown eyes and shaggy, tousled brown hair looks seriously into the camera before pulling his long bangs back to reveal “I Love You” written in symbols on his forehead. His face breaks into a huge open smile as his secret is revealed.

## Story Letter

*Dear Author,*

*I was surfing YouTube the other day and I came across a vlog my boyfriend made. I didn't even know he had a YouTube channel. He's never told me he makes videos. He obviously wants to remain anonymous because he's using a fake name. I only watched two of them. Even so, I feel like a total creeper. He's not real great at talking about serious stuff, at least not to me, so it was really weird watching him open up in those videos. In one of them, he talked about me. It was nice, but I don't think he meant for me to ever see it. A couple of the titles really have me wondering about things... Should I watch them? I know he'd be embarrassed if he knew I knew. I don't know what to do.*

*Sincerely,*

*Madison*

## Story Info

**Genre:** contemporary

**Tags:** friends to lovers, gay for you, interracial, sweet no sex, college

**Word count:** 5,374

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Lionel sat at the small wooden table, thumbs tapping in rhythm to the mellow jazzy beat playing on the overhead speakers. His eyes darted repeatedly to the glass front of the upscale coffee house. The afternoon rain pelted the sunbaked Florida street. The resulting steam condensed on the glass, obscuring the passersby.

He picked up his empty cup for the third time, realizing again that he had already drained the contents. He picked up his phone, for the fifth time, checking for messages. The front door opened. He tensed and slowly looked up. It was only a stranger coming in from the rain. He slumped back down into his chair.

*Oh, well. At least now I'm not the only brother up in here,* he thought. *Huh, except this dude looks like he belongs here.* The light-skinned man that had just entered was well-dressed: button-up green and white striped oxford, stone-washed jeans, leather slides, and short, thick dreads crowning his head. The man's picture was probably right next to the definition of metrosexual in the dictionary.

*Me?... Not so much.*

Lionel looked down at his less-than-metro outfit: torn jeans and plain brown T-shirt, and worn camo jacket. *Good thing shabby chic is "in" on campus.* It didn't matter that his clothes came with that well-worn look from the thrift store. Thankfully he had been able to pick up some nice Adidas at the consignment shop. With the right kicks you looked stylish, no matter what you're wearing.

*And Momma always said, "Black is Beautiful,"* Lionel thought, brushing a hand nervously over the coal-dark skin of his forearm before running it over his closely shaved head.

A familiar shape walked by him on the other side of the glass, shoulders hunched against the rain. When he entered, Lionel's heart leaped into his throat.

*Oh, God. Here goes nothing.*

Christopher perused the room, searching for Lionel. His deep brown eyes widened just a bit when he caught Lionel's gaze. He nodded at Lionel, but didn't smile. He rarely smiled. He stood in the doorway, rain dripping from his black London Fog trench. His pale skin grew slightly whiter. Taking a deep breath, he flipped the water out of his shaggy brown hair and squared his shoulders.

Lionel's stomach sank into his shoes as Christopher strode toward him.

Everything about Christopher screamed money, from his Doc Martens boots to his True Religion jeans. The black T-shirt he wore would have some band logo on it, Lionel knew. Christopher dressed the exact same way every day, and had since high school. The only thing that had changed with college was the genre of the bands emblazoned on his chest. The emo-goth of high school had given way to pop-punk.

Lionel had noticed the change the very first day Christopher dropped back into his life.

Lionel stood up quickly, nearly knocking over the tiny pedestal table. His empty coffee cup bounced on the floor between them.

Christopher gently steadied the table as Lionel bent to grab his coffee cup off the floor. A slight smile graced Christopher's face as he draped his trench coat on the chair across from Lionel's. Today's shirt paid homage to Green Day. They stood facing each other as the smile slowly faded from Christopher's face.

"Hi," Chris finally said, his rich tenor ringing out over the hustle and bustle of the coffee shop.

"Hi." Lionel's normally resonant bass cracked and he cleared his throat. "Want some coffee?"

“Yeah, that would be nice.” Chris nodded as he sat down.

“How do you like it?” Lionel asked.

Chris’s face broke into one of those rare, heart-melting smiles before he answered. “I’ll take it black.”

Lionel coughed in his fist and turned away. One benefit of his dark skin was that the flush burning up his face wouldn’t be obvious to the barista taking his order.

*Okay, he’s making jokes. Maybe it’s not as bad as I think.* Lionel looked back at Chris while he was waiting for the order. Chris’s face was serious again, and he was staring at his hands. *Or maybe it is.* Lionel sighed. *Or it will be when I tell him the truth.* Too soon the order was ready. Lionel sat down and slid Chris’s cup across the table to him. *No time like the present.*

“Thanks for coming.” Lionel began.

“I’m sorry I’ve been avoiding you.” Chris looked down at his coffee cup. He traced the rim round and round with one slim finger. “There are some things that I need to tell you and I have just been afraid to do it.”

“Me, too Chris.” Lionel coughed. “I mean... I need to tell you some things too. I meant...”

“Lionel,” Chris interrupted, placing his hand on top of Lionel’s on the table. “Can I go first? I have to say something to you that you aren’t going to want to hear and I would rather get it out of the way.”

*Okay here it comes. The big “let down easy” speech...* Lionel coughed again. “Of course, you first.”

A burst of laughter from another table startled them both. Christopher sat up, placing both hands in his lap. “I’m not very good at talking.”

“You got that right,” Lionel interrupted. At Chris’s dirty look, he leaned back and put his hand up defensively. “Sorry!”

“Don’t interrupt.”



Lionel sealed his lips, gesturing with his hand as if he were zipping them closed, locking them and throwing away the key.

“As I was saying,” Christopher continued. “I am not very good at talking. But there are things I need to tell you... things you deserve to know before this goes any further.” Chris closed his soulful eyes and hung his head. When Lionel took a breath as if to speak, Chris held up a finger, silencing him. “So please be patient with me.

“I never told you how important you were to me. You were my rock in high school, my lifeline.” Christopher looked up into Lionel’s eyes. “If it weren’t for you I don’t know what I would have done.”

Lionel drew back, attempting his best impersonation of Gary Coleman’s “What’chu talkin’ ’bout” face. Christopher laughed at his expression. It was like sunshine breaking through an overcast sky. Lionel captured that smile in his memory, tucking it away in that special folder in his heart where he stored every stolen smile, every hard won laugh.

“If you remember,” Chris’s expression turned somber again. “I had a difficult time in high school.”

Lionel remembered, probably more clearly than Chris did. Lionel had been the class clown. He remembered how often he struggled to drag a laugh out of the quiet, solitary boy and how often he failed.

“You know it wouldn’t have been easy, even without the media circus. I mean, the divorce itself probably wouldn’t have affected me. That dickhead was an absentee father long before he left my mom for his assistant. But the changes: new house, new school, new town... I never handled changes very well.” Chris snorted. “And, of course realizing that I was gay didn’t help.” Chris closed his eyes and rubbed the bridge of his slim nose. “I would have had a hard time adjusting even if he hadn’t been a senator. Even if he hadn’t quit his office the same time he quit his family.”

Lionel slid one hand slowly across the worn wooden table, palm up fingers outstretched. To his intense relief, Chris took his hand in his own. One smooth white thumb caressed the calluses on his palm before tracing the crease of his

love line, still embedded with the garage-shop grime that no amount of scrubbing would remove.

“You are the only thing that kept me from going completely insane.” Chris smirked. “I don’t know why you took me under your wing, but if you hadn’t, I might not have survived our junior year.”

Chris wasn’t the only one who didn’t understand Lionel’s fascination with him in high school. Racial tensions had been high at their public alma mater. Desegregation laws bussed the black kids from Lackawanna to the same high school the preppy Ortega-ites and red-necked Westsiders attended. Like oil and water, the three cultures existed simultaneously in the same container. Fights were more common than friendships.

“I could have used you that summer between our junior and senior year.” Chris sat back in his chair, pulling his hand away from Lionel’s. “I found another way to cope.”

“Chris,” Lionel interrupted, and reached farther across the table. *You don’t have to say it, he thought. I know. I shouldn’t know, but I know.* But the words didn’t come and Chris wouldn’t take his hand. Lionel slid his hand back to his lap.

*I really should have known back then,* Lionel berated himself. *I should have seen it.* The smiles had been fewer that year and the laughs harder to come by. Lionel had to resort to some pretty extreme antics just to get a reaction from Chris.

“Mom didn’t cope well either. As soon as we moved here, she started medicating her heartache instead of dealing with it. And... that summer... I started stealing her pills.” Chris looked up into Lionel’s eyes. “Xanax, Valium, whatever I could sneak. It took her a long time to notice, even though I wasn’t exactly careful.” Chris shrugged. “She spent so much time gorked out; she thought she took them herself. When she finally realized it was me, she just got me my own scrips.” Chris looked down again. “Money buys everything I guess.”

Lionel leaned over, sliding both hands across the table to reach for Chris's. Chris took them, squeezing them tightly as he drew a steadying breath.

"I spent most of our senior year high. I am amazed that I passed at all. Maybe money bought that too." Chris looked up again. "I know it bought my way into Cornell. Just like it did for dear ole Dad." Chris snorted. "Did you know drugs are very easy to get in an Ivy League university? That's where I found heroin." Chris let go of Lionel's hand to rub at the crook of his left arm. Faint track marks were still visible on his pale skin. "I failed out my very first semester." Chris picked up his forgotten coffee and drained it all at once. "I spent my second semester in rehab. Voluntarily, I might add." He twirled the empty cup on the table. "I haven't used since."

Chris looked up at Lionel again. "When you kissed me, I realized our friendship was developing into something more and I thought you deserved to know what you're getting into."

"I do know, Chris." Lionel sighed. "I already knew."

Chris blinked at Lionel, his mouth slightly agape. "You knew?"

Lionel took a deep breath. *And here it goes...* "Okay, you've had your say." Lionel let go of Chris's hands. "Now it's my turn." Lionel rubbed at some of the grime embedded in this thumb before pointing his finger at Chris. "Your turn to be silent." Chris repeated the lip-locking pantomime Lionel had used. "I never told you how important you were to me in high school, either." Chris *humphed* in response and Lionel gave him an exaggerated glare. Chris held both hands up in a gesture of surrender.

"You might remember that I was a bit of a clown in high school. It always seemed to me that life was just too damn hard not to laugh whenever you can. So I did my best to make sure that happened." Lionel pointed in the air with his right hand. "I'm not going to bore you with tales of how hard life was 'in the ghetto', 'cause really, it wasn't that hard for me, and our 'hood certainly wasn't the worst in Jacksonville. My momma and daddy worked hard to get the best for us kids and we never went hungry, never had to do without. Most kids in our neighborhood didn't get piano lessons... or college funds..."

Christopher lifted Lionel's hand to his mouth. With his eyes squeezed tightly closed, he very gently kissed the back of each of Lionel's fingers. Lionel froze. It wasn't until Christopher laid his hand back down on the table that he could continue.

"Uh, yeah..." Lionel sputtered, the blush heating up his neck again. "If I was lonely, I just rode my bike up to Dad's garage. He made me work when I did, but I didn't mind. Hell, I liked it. I liked hanging out and talking with him and my older brothers. I liked making them laugh. I liked feeling like I was doing something for the man who did so much for me. I guess it got to be a habit because before you arrived there wasn't nobody who hung around me that didn't have a near constant smile on their face." Lionel reached across and brushed Chris's forearm with the tips of his fingers. Christopher picked up that hand and cradled it against his cheek.

"Until you." Lionel looked into Chris's eyes. "Poor little rich kid dropped in our school in the whirlwind of a political scandal." Christopher dropped Lionel's hand and smacked him in the shoulder. Lionel laughed. "Not that I knew that at first. I never did stay caught up on current affairs. It was my momma who opened my eyes to that a few weeks after you arrived. Evidently she didn't care for your father's politics long before he shacked up with his secretary. Once she realized you were in my class, she would rant and rave about what he did to you and your momma." Chris rolled his eyes in response. "That day the reporters were outside the school trying to get pictures of you, she nearly hit one of them with her handbag. I had to drag her away." Lionel chuckled. "That woman is hell on wheels when she gets going.

"She ranted about you so much she got me thinking. Which was a good thing. You were so quiet and withdrawn that I had just about decided you were an asshole. Momma made me realize maybe you had reason to be. And maybe I could do something about that." Lionel slid his fingers into the curve of Chris's palm, caressing the back of Chris's hand with his thumb. Christopher squeezed his hand in response.

"If it seemed like I followed you around..." Lionel nodded as if agreeing with himself. "I did. I was determined that I was going to help you. It turned

out to be much more difficult than I thought it would be.” Lionel looked down at their intertwined hands. “The summer before our senior year, when I kept thinking about you even when you weren’t around, I began to suspect that I might be just a little too interested in you.” Lionel looked up to face Chris. “About halfway through the next year, I knew I was.

“I didn’t say anything then. You know, before that, I had never thought about boys the way I was thinking about you. I mean, I knew you were gay. Everyone did. But I wasn’t so sure about me. What if I was just curious? You know? It wouldn’t be fair to burden you with my feelings when I wasn’t even sure about them myself.” Lionel chuckled. “At least, that was Momma’s advice. After she spit her sweet tea all over the kitchen table that is.

“She got her shit back together and said, ‘Lionel, I love you to death, and if you wanna be queer that is all right with me. But know what you’re doing before you drag someone into your mess. Especially that poor boy.’” Lionel laughed again. “She did box me on my ear for telling her something like that when her mouth was full.

“So I didn’t say anything to you.” Lionel’s face turned serious. “And after graduation, you were gone, just like that. And it was too late to say anything.

“But Momma was right. I didn’t like boys like that. Or at least not any other boys. So maybe I’m not gay. Maybe it’s just you.” Lionel traced lazy circles on the back of Christopher’s hand. “So when I ran into you at beginning of the summer term I almost jumped at the chance to open that door. I mean, I never stopped thinking about you. And when I saw you, standing in front of the UNF bookstore, it felt like a lightning bolt went right through me. So obviously my feelings for you hadn’t changed.” Lionel drew his hand back to his side of the table. “Do you remember that day?”

“Of course I do.” Christopher smiled. “I was so happy to find you. I couldn’t believe my luck.”

“I felt the same way... lucky. Do you remember I startled you? When you turned around to see who was calling for you, your spiral notebook slid off the top of the pile in your arms and fell to the ground.” Chris nodded, obviously

confused. Lionel picked nervously at the table. “It had fallen open. I read where you had written ‘Open Arms and Open Eyes’ over and over again, pages of it.”

“It’s a line from a song by Incubus. To me the song is about staying clean, about not using.”

“Yeah, I figured. I found it on YouTube. It’s a good song.” Lionel coughed nervously. “It’s also the name of your vlog entry.”

“My vlog?” Chris practically shrieked, pulling his hand away. Lionel winced.

“I found your vlog, Chris, that very day. I’m sorry I didn’t tell you. I kept meaning to, but...” Lionel sighed. “I was afraid you’d be pissed.”

“Oh my god...” Chris leaned back into his chair.

“In that video, you talked all about your addiction, about how much change bothered you. And about how you were getting a new home, a new school, and a new life all over again, just like you did in high school.”

“I know what I said!” Chris’s face was beet red. “I made the damn thing!”

“I know... I know...” Lionel hung his head. “In the second one, you talked about me and I realized that I did help you back then, just like I hoped I could.” Lionel’s voice softened. “And I realized that you needed me to be that kind of friend to you again. You didn’t need even more change and you didn’t need me complicating your life with my issues.”

Lionel reached out for Chris again.

“I tried, Chris, I really tried. All summer I did my best to act the same as I did in high school. To keep my crazy mixed-up feelings to myself.” Lionel’s voice dropped even lower. “I just lost it that night. I couldn’t stop thinking about your lips. I couldn’t resist pulling you into my arms and kissing that smile I had been working so hard to keep on your face. I know I should have warned you... Shoulda given you some indication of how I was feeling before I did that to you. You were right to push me away.”

The noise of the coffee shop lingered between them as Lionel stared at his solitary hand on the table.

“You only watched the first two?” Christopher’s voice was a whisper.

“I felt so guilty from just those two that I didn’t watch the rest. You used fake names. I knew you didn’t want anyone to know. I admit that I did go back to the vlog, repeatedly even. But I just read the titles, I didn’t watch the new ones. Which was its own punishment I guess, ’cause I nearly died from curiosity.”

Christopher stood up, taking both cups with him, and walked to the counter. Lionel watched him as he stood in line, the rigidity of his back betraying his anger. Chris didn’t look at him even once. Lionel gazed back down at his hands.

*Jesus, you really fucked that up, dumb ass. What the hell were you thinking? You should never have told him. No, you should have told him way back when you found the vlog. For that matter, you should have told him back in high-school that you had the hots for him. Maybe he would have stayed and never got on that shit in the first place. OR maybe he wouldn’t have cared like he doesn’t seem to care now.*

A cup of coffee slid in front of him.

“I got you cream with no sugar. I hope you don’t mind my joke.” Christopher sat back across from him. The tension was gone from his shoulders. “*Ahem...* Speaking of curiosity, let’s talk about that kiss.” Lionel felt the flush climb his face again. “Did it answer any questions you had?”

“What do you mean?”

“I mean— have you decided if your feelings are real? Are you ready to ‘drag me into your mess’ as your mother put it?”

“God Chris, you couldn’t tell? I couldn’t get you close enough to me. I couldn’t hold you tight enough. And I never wanted it to end. If you hadn’t have pushed me away I would still be kissing you.”

“That’s just the physical, Lionel!” Chris leaned across the table. “I don’t want to be just your one-time-gay-fling in college. Your mother is right. I’ve got too much of my own shit to risk getting hurt. I’m gay Lionel. Do you know what that means? If we do this, it won’t just be physical for me. I don’t want to be *dating* you while you are just *fucking* me.” Lionel flinched at the word. “I don’t want to be your ‘friend with benefits’.”

“I don’t want that either.” Lionel slapped his hand down on the table. “Maybe I’m gay and maybe not. Maybe you’re the only guy I’ll ever feel this way about. I don’t know. All I know is that I want *you*. I want to take you to the movies. I want to take you home to meet my momma. I wanna see your face when she makes you eat neck bones and greens ’cause she thinks you’re too skinny. I want the whole deal!”

Christopher swallowed. “Really?”

“Yeah, really.”

A grin bright enough to light the sun eased across Christopher’s face. “*Neck bones?*”

Lionel laughed. “If you’re lucky! Momma makes some damn fine neck bones and greens.”

“I am sure she does.” Christopher agreed. “Far be it from me to doubt your momma.” Lionel chuckled.

“There is one more thing I have to tell you.” Lionel raised his eyebrows at this. “And I have talked more today than I have my whole life.” Christopher sighed.

“Don’t I know it.”

“Don’t mock me. I’m working on it.” At this, Lionel tilted his head in apology. “I am going to let my vlog get you ‘caught up on current affairs.’ Can I hold your phone?” Lionel unlocked his iPhone and passed it to Chris. Chris quickly pulled up a video and passed it back to him. Lionel looked down to see the words *Maybe, You’re Gonna Be The One That Saves Me* over a still photo of Chris’s earnest face.



“This is the most recent. I recorded it a week ago... the night you kissed me.” Chris stood up, kissed Lionel’s forehead, and darted out of the door into the rain. Lionel watched him through the glass wall until he vanished around the corner. Looking down, he gently traced Chris’s image before hitting play.

*Hello, hello, hello, all you out there in the vlog-o-sphere. Welcome again to another episode of ‘As the World Spins on Its Ear’. I’d like to thank you for joining me and I would really like to put a special thank you out there to those seventeen people who are following me. Most of the things I talk about here are painful and just seeing that you guys have subscribed to my channel makes me feel not so all alone.*

*I named the first entry ‘Open Arms and Open Eyes’ because that phrase is so important to me. Those of you who tune in regularly know that it reminds me that if I want to survive... and by survive, boys and girls, I mean stay clean... ’cause do not doubt... that shit’ll kill ya... If I want to survive I have to be willing to ‘accept the things I cannot change’ ... i.e., open arms... and not hide from the truth, i.e.,... have the ‘courage to change the things I can and wisdom to know the difference’... In other words, I have to be able to see things as they really are and deal with them... i.e., open eyes. It makes sense to me that’s what’s important... Man, am I rambling today or what? I am! I am! I know I am! But I have good reason to be. Do you remember the Lion? Of course you do. Who could forget the mighty Lion? Whose roar drives away all my tormenting demons? Whose smile shines like the sun?*

*Aesop had it backwards. It is the Lion who brings laughter, and the mouse who is trapped by the snare.*

*So now I’m rambling and waxing poetic. No surprise, really. The Lion does these things to me.*

*Okay boys and girls, girls and boys, and boys who want to be girls and girls who want to be boys, tonight... drumroll please... tonight... the Lion kissed me. Sweet Mary, Mother of God. I repeat... The LION kissed me.*

*Those of you who follow me, know how supremely amazing this is. Those of you in my inner circle, as it were, realize that this was perhaps the most*

*significant moment of my life!... So tell me? How do you think I reacted? Do you think I took the golden bull by the horns? Do you think I laid the sexiest, most passionate lip lock on him? Do you think I used every last, however few, gayboy skills I had to seduce him into believing he couldn't live without me? Do you? I know you can't answer, that is what makes this so fun.... I mean freeing... And the answer is....*

*NO! I didn't! I pushed him away like a frightened maiden and I RAN. That's right. You heard it here first. I PUSHED HIM AWAY... Facepalm!... I can't wait to talk to my therapist about this one. This time she will agree with me when I tell her I am crazy... Or at least self-destructive... I mean really... could I have done anything more counterproductive? I don't think so.*

*So now, I have no idea what to say to him. I know what I wish I could say. I would say, "Lion, I am so sorry I reacted that way. The truth is, I have been dreaming of you doing exactly that since our junior year in high school. I have never felt about anyone the way I feel about you. If you would just give me another chance, I will make it up to you."*

Chris's sincere face broke into a grin as his hand pulled his bangs back, baring his forehead. The letter *I*, a drawn heart, and the letter *U* were printed there.

*I love you Lion. I am in love with you. And if you will just take me into your arms again, I will do everything I can to make sure you never regret that decision.*

The grinning face remained as the video ended.

Lionel took a deep breath with his hand over his mouth, blinking back tears. *You're damn right I will.* He jumped up and ran out of the cafe, fighting to get his keys out of his back pocket. The rain had diminished to a drizzle.

As he rounded the corner, he saw Christopher sitting on a park bench across the street. Lionel skidded to a halt before crossing the street to him. Christopher stood as he approached. They faced each other silently as the sprinkle of rain slowed and finally stopped.

"Well?" Christopher said.

Lionel hesitated a second and then snatched Chris into his arms. He pressed himself tightly against Chris's chest, oblivious to the fact that they were both now soaked to the bone.

"My God, Chris. I love you too. You don't have to seduce me into anything. I already can't live without you. I can't believe..."

Chris silenced him with a kiss.

Chris's lips were tender, tentative. When Lionel bit gently on his upper lip, Chris slid his hands behind Lionel's head, delving into Lionel with his tongue. Lionel's moan vibrated in Chris's mouth and his hands slid down Chris's back, pressing their hips together. Lionel felt the heat of Chris's excitement through the thickness of both sets of cold, wet jeans. Lionel's body stirred in response, trapped painfully in the leg of his pants.

This time, it was Lionel who broke the kiss. He grinned at Chris. "This is going to sound like a come on, but we really need to get out of these clothes."

The sun broke through the clouds and Chris laughed. "I think that *is* a come on."

"You do?"

"I do." Chris licked his lips. "And really, it's okay if it's a come on and it's okay if it isn't. But I think there is one more thing I should confess to you."

"Good God man! Surely you jest! Haven't there been enough confessions for one day?" Lionel attempted his best British impersonation.

"How about just one more and then I'm done?" Chris smiled.

"Just one? Are you sure?"

"I'm sure."

"Well, if you're sure you're sure, go ahead."

"Um... I've never gone all the way with a guy." This time it was Christopher who blushed. Lionel watched the red slowly creep up his neck to his face as he spoke.

"Never?"

“Never.”

“Nothing about this is going to be easy is it?” Lionel asked, suddenly serious.

“No.” Chris laughed. “Nothing.” Lionel wrapped his arm around Chris’s waist and led him across the street to his car.

“In that case, I too have a confession to make,” Lionel said.

“Okay.” Chris turned serious as well.

“I’ve never gone all the way with a guy either.”

## **THE END**

### **Author Bio**

*Michelle K Grant is a knitting, hiking, kayaking, guitar-playing, song-writing, singing, tarot-card-reading, video-game-playing, book-reading, coffee-drinking, movie-watching, fire-dancing, drum-playing, nature-worshiping, firefighting, dungeons-and-dragons playing, paramedic medicine giving, incest-surviving, pet-hoarding, yarn-shopping, squirrel-raising, Bob-Ross-painting, grandkid-spoiling, snake-keeping, bad-spelling, constantly-forgetting, sexually-deviant, fiber freak. In between all of these hobbies, Michelle is working on her first novel which she hopes to complete this year.*

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