

LOVE Has NO Boundaries



Don't Read in the Closet Event 2013

LIFE DRAWING

Jane Davitt

Love Has No Boundaries

An M/M Romance series

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By Jane Davitt

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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Photo Description

The man in the photograph wears black stockings and lace suspenders, and his back is to the camera. He also wears leather: gloves, a belt cinched around his arm, and a double strapped harness over his shoulder and looping around his waist. Under the ankh tattoo in the small of his back, his ass is bare, and a faint blush of pink from a spanking is barely visible...

Story Letter

Dear Author,

It took some guts to pose for this photo. But I wanted to be true to my desires at last, and yeah, impress this guy I met. In my street clothes, most people wouldn't even guess I am gay and those who know assume I am a top, but I am not. This guy, he is really cute, quite petite, and kind of flamboyant, but he has a core of steel. Perhaps he is the one who will see me as I am and complete me.

Please dear author, tell me how it works out. I wouldn't mind some BDSM, but it is not a must.

Sincerely,

Dorome

Story Info

Genre: contemporary

Tags: cross-dressing, light D/s, bondage, visual arts, underwear fetish, role-play

Word count: 15,920

LIFE DRAWING

By Jane Davitt

Walking in on the life drawing class was a genuine mistake on my part, but from the scornful glances thrown my way, no one bought my stammered excuses. The class was taking a break; the artists standing in groups admiring, or more likely criticizing, each other's work, and the model wrapped in a robe, munching an apple.

I muttered a final apology, my face burning, and groped behind me for the door handle.

"Poor guy," the model said in a voice designed to be heard by everyone in the room, though he directed his words at the group nearest him. "Probably hoping for a look at some nice perky tits and got me instead." He threw his apple core at a trash can, scoring a direct hit, then jerked his chin at me, blue eyes unfriendly. "On the plus side, if you'd barged in five minutes ago, you'd have gotten an eyeful of my cute gay dick and who knows how much therapy you'd have needed to recover from something *that* traumatic."

He got some giggles, but I didn't crack a smile. "Like I said, I made a mistake. I thought this was the home remodeling class."

Eye roll and sigh. He was wringing every drop of drama from this, the jerk. "Right. Because the sign on the door telling people there's a life drawing class in progress so keep out and keep quiet obviously turned invisible. Or can't you read?" He covered his mouth in mock horror. "Oh God, did I put my foot in it? Were you looking for the adult literacy class? Because that's Thursdays, sweetie, and today is Monday."

"Jamie, that's enough." The woman who'd spoken seemed uneasy, but I didn't know if it was because Jamie had gone too far or if she was scared of becoming his next target. She cleared her throat and drew herself up. "Break's over. Back to your easels everyone. Jamie, new position, three-minute pose,

facing the window, looking over your shoulder.” She met my gaze, a hint of apology showing in her eyes. “The class you need is next door. Please make sure the notice is in place when you leave.”

It sure as hell hadn’t been there when I arrived. I was about to point that out when Jamie dropped the robe and stood facing me, silently challenging me to blush or glance away. He was a redhead, long straight hair brushed back from a face too pretty to be described as handsome, waif-like without being skin and bones. From a cloud of red hair, his cock hung in a sweet, beckoning curl, but by the time my gaze reached it, I was already wishing we’d met differently. Not a good choice as a model, though. My mom wouldn’t have picked up her pencil, eyes gleaming, at the sight of him. Pretty didn’t equal paintable. A community college short on funds—and they all were—wouldn’t be fussy though.

I met the dare and studied him, careful to keep my desire hidden. The tongue-lashing, the bright, clear confidence he projected—I craved more, though part of me stayed indifferent to his appeal. I like being controlled, but I’ve got to respect the person giving the orders and so far Jamie wasn’t meeting my standards. Too quick to judge; too cruel. Okay, not too cruel. I could take that. Could take anything he handed out, in fact.

Didn’t look as if it was a theory I’d get to test. With a dismissive shrug, he got into position, staring back over his shoulder, not at me but through me.

I put myself on the other side of the door, found the sign a few yards away, facedown and trodden on, judging by the muddy footprint, and stuck it back in place.

Then I went next door to get told off for being late to the first class of House Remodeling 101. That scolding didn’t get me going at all.

It’s all in the delivery, I guess.

I hung around the college for the rest of the afternoon, checking out some books I’d need from the library and sharing a coffee with a few people from the class. Like me, most of them had signed up because they wanted to tackle a

job around their home. I was the only one gutting my place from attic to basement.

The food on campus was cheap and I had nothing waiting for me at home but leftover curry that had started life as Bolognese sauce, then morphed into a chili. Throw in enough curry powder and any original flavor is wiped out. I'd been eating my way through a vat of sauce since Friday, accompanying it with pasta or rice, and I was bored of glop. I treated myself to a hamburger, fries, and salad, and watched the September rain lash against windows too grimy to see out of even when the sun was shining.

I read as I ate, jotting down anything interesting or useful in the notebook I carried everywhere since I'd begun the remodeling. It held measurements, phone numbers, rough sketches, and a dozen paint chips tucked between the pages. Painting was a long way off, but I liked seeing the chips. They were a reminder that one day this would end and I'd have a home, not just a house.

After the meal, I dropped the books off at my truck and walked over to the college gym. If I was able to work out there it would be a big saving on fees and convenient too. I'm not a body builder, bulked up to the point where I look cartoonish, but I'm strong and yeah, there're plenty of muscles on display for those who like them. Ironically, when I stared in the mirror I didn't see anything I fancied. I go for long hair on a guy, and mine's buzzed short. Easier to wash the dust out.

I couldn't get Jamie out of my head. Twink is my favorite flavor. Sprinkled with slender, imperious, cute, and snarky if I can get it. Jamie had stamped hard on my buttons today. Shame he was a total jerk. Even more of a shame he wasn't bright enough to guess I was gay. From the moment I'd walked in, he'd grabbed my attention. If he thought my slack-jawed lust was straight panic, more fool him.

A helpful trainer told me as a registered student I could use the gym, small pool, and showers for a nominal monthly fee and I signed up. I had to shut the water off sometimes when I was working on the plumbing and having a place to get clean would be a real help.

Pleased with how my first day back at school in twelve years had gone, I went back to my truck. It was dark now, rain bouncing off the concrete, the wind making each drop feel ice-encased. Vermont gets chilly in the fall. I kept my head down and hurried, jeans sticking to the front of my thighs, the denim cold and clammy. God, it would take forever to dry my leather jacket out. I had a few space heaters but the forced air system was weeks away from being installed. I'd need to get it in by the time winter arrived or the pipes would freeze.

Mind occupied with plans, I vaguely registered the whine and cough of an engine trying and failing to turn over, but when I drew level with the car responsible I glanced inside.

The driver was Jamie. Face tight with frustration, he turned the key again, this time producing no sound audible over the wind.

My truck wasn't far away and I carried jumper cables with me, but I hesitated for a moment before rapping on the window to offer help. *Do as you would be done by* is a good principle to live by, and I'd needed a jump start a few times in the past, but with rain trickling down my back and my feet in a puddle, the prospect of more insults thrown my way didn't appeal.

What the hell. I knocked on the glass and he opened the door, the change in his expression from hopeful to chagrined making me smile. Karma biting his ass hard enough to bruise, I guessed.

"Yeah, it's me," I said before he spoke. "Save the chitchat for a sunny day. Battery dead?"

He hunched up a shoulder, his irritation with the situation and me plain to see. "Looks that way."

Ignoring the flat, unfriendly tone, I asked, "Want me to bring my truck over and see if we can jump start it?"

"With all those muscles, why not just drag my car over there?" he countered. "I'm sure you'd get a kick out of the caveman routine."

I was losing patience with him. Cute and hot only bought him so much goodwill. "Funny guy. Do you want help or not?"

He glanced around the deserted parking lot. Plenty of cars but no people. I was the only choice he had. “Guess I do.”

We got the cables hooked up, but it didn’t work. I revved until my pickup was shuddering, but his engine stayed resolutely silent.

“It’s too flat to take a charge,” I told him after replacing the jumper cables in my truck. “You’ll need to buy another battery.” I was getting used to the rain. I was soaked and aside from the annoyance of the water trickling down my face and into my eyes, I didn’t mind it. Jamie was shivering, the oversized purple sweater he wore hanging limp and heavy from his shoulders. No coat. Leather boots.

His teeth were chattering, but he smiled. “Going to take me to a parts store?”

“No.” I’d had enough of him. So far not a word of thanks had passed his lips. “The closest one shuts at eight and by the time we get your battery out and drive over there, it’ll be too late.”

“Then I’ll leave the car here and deal with it tomorrow. Get a ride in with a friend.” He nibbled at his lower lip, frowning as if he was working his way down a list of suckers who’d help him when he snapped his fingers.

He didn’t know my name, so if I was on that list, it’d be probably be under “muscle-bound, illiterate straight guy”, or something equally inaccurate.

“Well, see you around,” he said, snapping out of his reverie and finally remembering his manners. “Thanks for trying.”

I completed his sentence in my head: *even if you failed.*

By the time I’d gotten into my truck he’d locked up his car and was heading for the main gate on foot. I took my time getting settled, and using a towel from my gym bag to dry my head, then drove after him.

“Get in,” I called over the rising howl of the wind when I was level with him. “Unless you live miles out of town, I’ll give you a ride home.”

He clawed a hank of hair out of his mouth, making soaked to the skin and shivering work for him. "I don't take rides from strangers. Getting gay-bashed isn't my exercise of choice."

Oh for God's sake. "My name's Rob Grant, I'm gayer than a pink fucking flamingo, and you've got ten seconds to get your ass in my truck before I drive off, making sure I spray water all over you."

"My, aren't we macho," he mocked, but there was some relief there too.

Door shut, the heater blasting tepid air at us as the engine slowly warmed, I drove, Jamie a silent companion, only speaking when he gave me directions. He refused to tell me his exact address and I couldn't fault him for being careful. He also texted a friend telling him what had happened and whose truck he was in. It seemed like overkill but who knew what his past held. Maybe he'd been on the receiving end of a fist and was wary. I'd never been in that situation. People take one look at me and assume I'm straight eight times out of ten. If they guess I'm gay, they picture me in leather wielding a whip.

People see what they expect, judging on the basis of fuck all. I'm gay, and I'm kinky as shit in my own way, but in my fantasies I'm neither on my knees licking leather boots, nor wearing them, thank you very fucking much for assuming.

What gets me so hot I can't breathe I've never shared, not even with the most sympathetic partner. I've tried to speak up, but fear's always held me back. Fear of being laughed at, word spreading until no one wants me in their bed.

Jesus, I'm such a fucking coward.

As I drove, it became clear we lived in the same area. I was following the route I would've taken anyway, every turn, every shortcut. That put soaking in a hot bath, cold beer in hand, temptingly close and took the edge off my irritation with him.

"You can stop here," he said.

I pulled into a small plaza. I did my shopping at the supermarket there and bought as many tools and supplies as possible from the hardware store to keep

it in business, but there weren't any houses nearby and the rain was still torrential. "I live around here. 52 Ashbury. I can take you to your door without going out of my way and if I wanted to find out where you lived, and I don't, it'd be easy to look you up online. Stop treating me like the enemy and give me an address."

"I'm farther up," he said after giving my words some consideration. "Third house on the left after you turn down Wilton."

It was an apology of sorts and I took it, swinging the truck around and heading back into the traffic. We drove past my house and I nodded at it. "That's mine."

He craned his neck. "*You* live there?"

Why the surprise? "Yeah. I'm renovating it."

For the first time there was warmth in his voice. "It's a great house. Loads of character. Shame it was left to rot for so long. The rose shade of the bricks is incredible when the sun's on them."

After falling in love with the house from the street, I'd appreciated the potential of the interior even more. It was why I'd made an offer after a day or two sitting on my hands so I didn't appear too eager. But I'd also seen damp plaster, rotting wood and exposed wiring. Jamie wasn't exaggerating its condition. "God, tell me about it. Every job I start I find something else that needs to be done. I end up going around in circles. Like that guy in the song with a hole in his bucket."

Listen to us having a civilized conversation.

"Be honest; was I an asshole earlier?" Jamie asked.

I wasn't letting him off the hook. "Yeah. And in the parking lot. Total, complete, no room for doubt asshole."

"People do walk in," he said after a moment. "On purpose, I mean. They think they're going to see someone gorgeous and when they don't, well, their reaction's hurtful. Insulting to the model."

“I know what most life models look like,” I told him without elaborating. As a kid, I’d grown up playing in a corner, keeping quiet as my mom worked. I’d been taught to view sagging, wrinkled flesh as paintable and interesting, not gross. I didn’t have many hang-ups about nudity. Skin was skin.

“I was filling in because Sarah couldn’t make it,” Jamie said. “She became a grandmother last night and she’s with her daughter, cooing over the baby.”

“Uh-huh.” I kept the conversation going with a question. “So you’re a student there like me?”

“I was. Now I teach a night class—watercolors for beginners—and I’m a substitute teacher for the art department. It pays the bills. Well, it pays one bill. Two if you count what I spend at the coffeehouse. I’m hooked on their ginger molasses cookies.”

“Life’s not cheap,” I agreed. I’d inherited a chunk of money from my mom but it felt too soon in my life to have it. I’d expected her to die at ninety, clutching a paintbrush in arthritic fingers. Losing her before she reached fifty left me floundering. The money was a burden, not a lifeline, restricting me by giving me too much. After flailing about for a while, I’d set up some art scholarships in her name, bought a house to flip, and invested what was left in an attempt to put it out of reach for the time being. With no desire for a champagne lifestyle, I was getting by on the interest. The current house was my third project and the most challenging because I was doing it myself. The first two had required makeovers, nothing major, and I’d hired contractors where needed. I planned to live in this house, so once the remodeling was finished I’d look for work. I wasn’t sure what I wanted to do. Maybe flip another house, maybe something new.

“I sell my own stuff too,” Jamie said. “Some of us get together and take a stall at the local market in the summer. Don’t make much. If I had a dollar for every time I heard someone mutter their kid did better at the age of four, I’d be rolling in it, though.”

I didn’t tell him I’d love to see his work. Lying about how good someone’s paintings were was beyond me. He was mid-twenties, if that; too young to have anything to say through his chosen medium that was worth listening to.

Instead I gave him a grunt he was welcome to interpret as interested, indicated a turn, and pulled into a space outside his house.

A nearby streetlight allowed me to make out his features and the same held true for him because he studied me in silence instead of getting out of the truck. “You’re really gay?”

“Yep.”

“Attracted to me?”

Well, that was direct. “I like assholes,” I told him. “Not sure I like them attached to giant egos, though. Giant cocks, yes.”

Jamie grinned, clearly over any guilt at his earlier rudeness. Fine by me. I was willing to move on. “We’ve got something in common then.”

“Mmm.” I cleared my throat as a gentle hint for him to get moving. “See you around.”

Maybe it reassured him I was safe because he asked, “Want to come in for a coffee? My way of saying thanks for the ride.”

And now not so direct. “Is that code for come in, get naked, and fuck? Because if so, I’ll pass.”

He laughed, low and husky, the intimacy of the sound emphasizing the barrenness of my love life. “Just the coffee, I swear. If I’d wanted sex, I’d have said so.”

“Well...” I hesitated, sensing an opportunity but unsure whether to grab it or turn away. “I’m soaked through. I want to get changed.”

He kicked my gym bag, taking up space in the passenger foot well. “Nothing in here that would do?”

“Yeah, if you want me drinking coffee in a T-shirt and shorts.” At least they were clean. I’d planned to work out before going to the college and I’d run out of time doing some errands.

“I’d enjoy the view.” He turned to face me. “Coffee? Please?”

I gave in. Now he'd opened up and showed me his smile, he was irresistible. "Okay, but I'll be pissed if you only have instant."

He threw me an amused look. "You can grind the beans yourself if you like. By hand."

"I'll crush each one like a walnut," I promised.

His place was a top floor apartment in a converted house. The building was edging toward seedy but he didn't apologize for the scuffed walls and worn carpet on the stairs. His apartment smelled clean when I walked into it, the air redolent with the familiar scents of paint and brush cleaner. It was one large space with a bedroom and bathroom off it and the walls were crowded with artwork, some of it probably his, some not. Unframed prints overlapped each other on one wall in a collage that became an art piece in itself, a vivid splash of color. After I'd changed, relieved to find a pair of sweatpants at the bottom of the bag, I toured the art. I stopped in front of a print of my mom's most popular piece, *Pirouette*. She'd disowned it on the grounds of its popularity, an attitude I considered pretentious, but it'd never been my favorite either. Jamie joined me, holding two mugs of coffee.

"I cheated and used the capsule coffeemaker. Quicker and a step up from instant, but a step down from freshly ground."

"It's fine," I said. The first sip sent welcome warmth spreading through me, but Jamie standing close turned it to a simmering heat.

"That's by Jenna Valens," he told me.

"I know." I pointed at her signature, bold and large, but somehow part of the painting, not an intrusion. "I can read. You were wrong about that too."

"Oh God, stop reminding me! Let's pretend I was taken over by aliens or something." He ran his hand over his wet hair and shivered. "My turn to get changed."

"Do you like it?" I asked before he turned away. "The Valens, I mean." If he trashed it, I wouldn't care and she wouldn't have either, but I was interested in his take on it.

He stared at the print as if he'd never seen it before, eyes narrowed. "It's got a latent eroticism to it I love, but it's juvenile in execution. Her later work's much better. She was from around here, you know. Died a few years back in Mexico, caught in a landslide after a storm. Real loss to the art world."

"Yeah," I said under my breath when he'd gone to get changed. "And to me."

I hoped it'd been quick, but how could it have been? She'd stood there with the side of the hill coming at her, a vast wave of mud and rock, impossible to outrun or control. And along with the rest of her party, she'd been swallowed by the earth. I'd had her cremated and her ashes scattered in the ocean. The earth wasn't getting her a second time.

Jamie returned, his hair still damp, darkening the eye-catching copper to bronze. He wore skinny black jeans and a roll-neck black sweater. Earlier I'd seen him naked; now the only skin exposed was his face and hands. Still hot. I noticed a leather cuff on his left wrist when he tucked his hair behind his ear. Leather boots replaced by a cuff... I wasn't sure what to make of that. It probably meant nothing, but I'd gotten the ability to pick up on details from my mom. Shame I could barely draw a straight line, but she'd always laughed at my crap grades in Art and said one artistic temperament in the family was enough.

"How's the coffee?"

I drank some, getting more of the taste now it'd cooled a little. Too weak. "Fine."

"Want another?"

I shook my head, on edge from more than my sixth cup of coffee since breakfast. If sex wasn't what we were here for, and we'd been clear enough on that point, then what did we have to talk about?

Turned out quite a bit. He got my ass on the couch beside him and seduced me with questions and anecdotes, showing a flattering interest in me that didn't seem feigned. I let myself be lulled, part of me wary, but willing to stick around. It beat sanding walls, dust choking me even through a mask.

“So have I done enough to wipe out the bad impression?” he asked after we’d finished topping horror stories of dates from hell.

If that was all he’d been aiming for he’d hit the target in the truck, but I wagged my hand. “You’re on probation.”

He arched slender eyebrows. “Good behavior required at all times?”

Oh, I knew the moves to this game. “I didn’t say that. Good manners, yeah, but you can misbehave all you want.”

Jamie ran a finger over the leather cuff on his wrist. “I’m a fan of manners. Not so much of misbehaving. That’s why I overreacted to what I saw as you ignoring an order. I’m a control freak in some ways. You get my drift?”

It wasn’t subtle of him, and his kink wasn’t mine, but I ached from throat to balls. For a moment I wanted to slide to my knees and murmur “Please, Sir” a dozen times, thank him for any touch, gentle or harsh. I couldn’t work out why he had this effect on me but the strength of his hold was increasing with every minute I spent listening to his husky voice, getting fleeting glimpses of the man behind the snarky, bossy brat he showed the world.

“Loud and clear, but I don’t play those games or at least not seriously. I’ve gotten spanked and tied up a few times, but more out of curiosity than anything else.” I shrugged, aroused not by the memory, but the intimacy of telling Jamie about my sex life. My frankness was a measure of how comfortable I was around him. “It was hot with one guy, not so much with the others.”

“It’s part of me I’m exploring,” he said, matching my shrug. “Not a deal breaker if it’s not your thing.”

“I’m just here for the coffee,” I reminded him though I knew now we wouldn’t leave it at that. I wanted it—wanted him—but I knew the end of the story. We’d have sex, and I’d enjoy it and do my best to make it good for him, but I’d know I was holding back and if we kept seeing each other, my inability to share would sour everything after a while.

I didn’t consider sharing my kink with Jamie in a tit for tat exchange. BDSM verged on mainstream these days and it sounded as if he was

experimenting anyway, not committed to the lifestyle. It wouldn't be a fair trade.

In the end, I let it go and made my excuses, walking out into a still night, the rain ended, the sidewalks glossy with puddles. I didn't glance up at his lighted window, but the connection between us was still in place and I knew he was watching me drive away.

The bedroom I'd more or less completed so I'd have somewhere to sleep and keep my clothes free of dust felt warm after the chilly drive home. The truck's heater would need fixing before winter. Another chore to add to an endless list. I went into the en suite and showered, ignoring the scarred walls and chipped tiles because I could see what the room would look like eventually if I squinted just right.

Back in the bedroom, naked and damp, I reached for a sweatshirt and the loose jogging pants I wore around the house because they were warm and easy to work in. Didn't do more than pick up the pants before I let them fall and went to the chest of drawers in the corner instead. What I was after was in the bottom drawer, so I had to kneel to open it, an act that got my cock hardening in anticipation.

It wasn't a ritual. At least—no, it wasn't. It was a turn-on, as simple as that, saved for times like this when I jerked off with my gut roiled with frustration, and needed the extra sizzle. I wasn't sure how it'd work if it was part of sex with someone else. That was another reason I'd hesitated about telling anyone. Even if they didn't laugh or judge me, what would be the point? I got naked to have sex; I didn't dress up.

But when I jerked off at times like this, my body humming with desire that needed a voice, I did it wearing silk, satin, and lace.

They're not designed for women, these delicate, sensual scraps of clothing; they're made for men. Men like me. And, no, as a horny teenager, I never jerked off wearing my mom's panties. God, just the thought of it made my balls shrivel.

I took out a pair of panties, simple pale blue satin, just a tiny navy bow on the top edge to relieve the plainness. The satin caught against my work-roughened fingers and I made a mental note to wear gloves more often when I was sanding walls or scrubbing down surfaces.

Lying back on the bed, I slid the panties on, shivering as the cool satin raised goose bumps on my skin. I raised my ass and tugged them into place, settling them with a few unnecessary adjustments just to drag out the moment before I touched my cock through the satin.

Looking at myself wearing them was part of the thrill. I pushed the pillows up and leaned back, luxuriating in the sensation of being caressed by fabric as smooth as glass.

Then I stared down. Mmm. Yeah. I'd never seen another guy wearing lingerie in real life, only on the websites where I ordered mine, but if I did, I'd whimper. If Jamie wanted me on my knees worshipping, all he had to do was slide into a pair of these. Even knowing he was wearing them under his jeans would have me ready to drop and open my mouth.

I traced the outline of my erection with a fingertip, biting back a moan, denying myself the pleasure of voicing how good it felt. Soon I wouldn't be able to do that and I'd hear myself pant out broken phrases that whipped my arousal until it spun dizzily out of control and I came, soaking the satin with spunk, staining it dark.

Soon. I cupped my balls, warming the satin, molding it to the bulge, and let my thoughts drift to Jamie. Was he jerking off too, or had I blown it by telling him I wasn't into being his sub?

What would he want to do to me if I'd said I was? Spank me? Probably. Over his knee wouldn't work well; I was too tall, too heavy. On a bed, hands and knees, head down, my ass up... oh God, if he spanked me while I was wearing the translucent white panties, the blazing red of my ass making them look patterned in pink—

I shot hard, way before I'd expected to, hips jerking, fucking air, spunk trickling warm and wet down my cock, still held in satin. My heart was

pounding, my body tingling, skin so sensitized when I recovered enough to peel the panties away, a final spurt of come left the head of my cock slickly coated.

Jesus. What the hell was *that* all about?

It was a few days before we met again, this time in the college library. He was part of a group clustered around a table in a study room, their voices a low hum from where I sat with my laptop in the main section. I'd noticed him when I walked in and chosen a seat where I could see him without my interest being obvious.

The group session ended and he came out, talking to a few of the students who'd packed up quicker than the rest, but with his gaze locked on me as if I was a fridge and he was a magnet. *Click.*

Oh yeah. Connection. Big time.

He ditched the students and came over, taking a seat across from me with a friendly smile, picking up from where we left off. "Hey, Rob."

"Hi." I wasn't tense around him even after opening up more than I usually did. He felt like a close friend, not a stranger. On the basis of an hour spent with him that was a giant step forward. It left me wondering if that could happen more often; if the long process of getting acquainted with someone was padded with filler easily ditched, pointless diversions, and scenic routes.

I had to know if he wanted me. It wasn't the ideal location for a discussion like this, but I'd heard a group of women comparing vibrators in the cafeteria lineup and a loudspeaker announcement earlier congratulating the Gay Straight Alliance Club for reaching one hundred members. Maybe I needed to readjust my thinking, shaped by years at a high school where you'd need to be brave or stupid to tell anyone you were gay.

"Can I ask you something?"

"Sure." He leaned in, elbows on the table, chin propped in his cupped hands, and winked. "Anything but my star sign. I only share that on the third

date.” I was getting the public face of Jamie now, bright, flamboyant, engaging, and fake. It made me wonder if he was regretting what we’d shared more than I was.

“You said you were, uh, experimenting with... yeah. That. And I said I wasn’t interested, but I’m sure as hell interested in you and I wondered if...”

“I’d experiment with you?”

I didn’t need a mirror to know I was blushing. The heat under my skin took me back to the fantasy of being spanked, doing nothing to cool my face.

“Just answer my question.” My throat was tight with anxiety but that wasn’t why my words came out as a growl.

Jamie’s gaze met mine, affectations dropping away. “I don’t want you to get the wrong idea. You saw my place; no whips and chains. I just like being in charge during sex. I don’t plan scenes ahead of time, nothing organized, but with the right guy I do some role-playing now and then. Not into pain play... well, just a little. God.” He exhaled, a faint flush showing, the pink of strawberry ice cream rather than the fruit itself. “Intense stuff to be talking about to someone I just met. Kind of personal, you know?”

“We don’t have to talk about it here. We don’t have to talk about it at all.” I closed my laptop. “I guess I got my answer.”

He reached out before I stood, and grabbed my arm. “The hell? The answer’s yes, so where are you going?”

Shit. “I thought you were brushing me off. Sorry.”

Jamie rolled his eyes. “Yeah, I always turn down hot guys asking to sub for me.”

“I didn’t—” I stopped. I kind of had.

“God, I am so turned on right now,” Jamie said, blowing out a breath through pursed lips.

It was unexpected enough to surprise a laugh out of me. “Not shy about sharing, are you?”

He leaned in again and shook his head, eyes glinting. “I’m not shy about anything much. Okay, we’re on the same page. Good to know. Time to stop talking and do?”

I nodded slowly. He wasn’t the only one who’d have to stay in his seat for a while before standing and walking away was an option. My dick was a solid, eager weight against my thigh and I was focusing on every movement he made, reading him, automatically searching for cues to obey. I wanted to please him. The novelty of it was a rush, leaving me shaken, overwhelmed. What was I doing? I could’ve gotten into his bed without committing to this.

“Okay. My place at eight.” He didn’t make it a question.

With a lick of my lips to draw his gaze, I suggested, “That’s a long way off. Why don’t we find somewhere quiet and I can show you what I look like on my knees?”

If he was tempted, he didn’t let it show. He knocked his foot against mine under the table in a reprimand I accepted as earned. “I said tonight at eight, Rob. If I’d wanted a blowjob, I’d have told you to get your ass to room 320. Don’t make me repeat an order again.”

My face still burned, but with excitement, not embarrassment. This was a new game and I was learning the rules and testing him, finding his limits and mine.

So I’d moved my piece too many spaces and had to apologize. Four simple, short words came to mind. I whispered them as if they were a confession, my gaze lowered, fighting rebellion—not me, why was I doing this—“Yes, sir. I’m sorry.”

A jolt of desire rocked me. Oh God. So fucking hot to say that and watch the desire rise in him, a hunger I recognized.

“Impatient,” he said reprovably, but he tapped the side of my foot as he said it, leather on leather, and this time it felt like a caress.

Jamie's apartment was illuminated by two floor lights and a waver of candles burning in a glass bowl on the coffee table. Shadows painted the corners, making the space seem smaller. I didn't care. The focal point for me was Jamie. His hair was tied back with a strip of leather and he was wearing a plain white T-shirt and jeans so faded in places they matched it. His feet were bare. No black leather, no boots. He was doing this without the uniform. I didn't expect to stay dressed for long; I'd gone for black jeans and a T-shirt in a shade as close as my wardrobe came to lilac. Whether he'd get the hint, I wasn't sure.

I let him take my jacket and kicked off my boots, leaving them next to his by the door.

He looked me over, a slow, considering stare I met, anticipation rising.

"Still up for this? With all the trimmings?"

I nodded. All the trimmings? That was one way of putting it. "Yeah. Sure." I studied him in return. "You seem nervous for a man who likes being in charge."

He crunched up his face; an endearing grimace he must've realized made him look years younger, because he relaxed his features a moment later. "I blow this, and something tells me I won't get another chance. I compromise too much and I won't enjoy it. So, yeah, I'm nervous, but I'm going to do what feels right and if I screw up in a way that's spoiling things for you, tell me. I'd prefer that to talking it to death and ruining the mood."

"Sounds fair."

He walked over to the couch, with me following automatically. We sat next to each other, not touching and my anticipation kicked up a notch. With the willingness to jump right in I'd noticed before, Jamie said, "There's something I want to do with you. No pain, no bondage, but something more than a straightforward fuck. You'd need to give up control to me."

I envied him his ability to say what he was thinking, and ask for what he wanted. Being invited to share in his fantasy was like being offered a gift. I didn't know what was inside the box, but it was still a nice gesture. "Sure. I

said I'd give it a try and I meant it. If I don't like it, I haven't lost anything but a few hours."

He grinned. "I'll make sure you like it. Okay, before we get into that, I've been asked to take some photos and make them into paintings for a magazine. You know; the way Tom of Finland used to work. They're running an article on vintage gay porn and they thought it'd be an interesting tie-in with the theme."

I'd been taken aback by his abrupt shift to discussing work, but when what he said sank in, I realized this wasn't a pause before the game, but the opening round. I'd loved Tom's work for years as a teenager after finding a copy of *The Art of Tom of Finland* in a used bookstore. The rampant, eye-watering, impossibly huge cocks, the muscles, the leather... My reaction to it had been visceral. I'd jerked off until my cock had friction burns and my wrist was strained. I hadn't felt that way again until I'd discovered if the smell and feel of leather got me horny, so did lace and silk.

Was the article real or invented for the role-play? It didn't matter. "Yeah, I'd heard he used photographs as a basis for his stuff."

"You could've modeled for Tom and fit right in."

"If my cock was six inches longer, sure."

We shared a grin, then Jamie was all business again.

"You wouldn't need to be naked, or at least not full-frontal, but obviously we'd be talking some skin showing. I'd pay you, of course. Standard rate. Is that what you usually get?"

A model? Yeah, I could be one for him. Not something I'd ever done, but easy enough to fake. "Standard's okay and I don't mind showing some skin. My agent's fine with it if it's tasteful." I stretched my arms over my head, blatantly posing, and pretended not to see the appreciation in his eyes. "Okay, I'm all yours, dude. Want me to get out of these clothes and into something else?" I stripped off my T-shirt and tossed it over the back of the couch. "Or do you want to play first, work later?"

Appreciation hardened to steel. I'd pushed just a little too much there. "I don't like models who think for themselves," Jamie said. "In a shoot, there's one person in charge and that's me."

I dropped my gaze, giving him an abashed glance up through my lashes. "Sorry. I guess I got excited about the idea of being in a magazine."

"Let me see how excited you are. Stand up and show me."

I swallowed. We were playing, but it didn't mean my responses were fake. I was hard, aroused, and I wouldn't need to pull down my zipper for him to notice.

"You don't take direction very well," he commented when I stayed in place. "Models like you don't last. They get a reputation for being difficult, then no one will book them, no matter how much they beg. I've seen a model blow three guys one after the other for the chance to audition, sucking them until his lips were swollen and his eyes were watering. They had fun with him for hours after that, making him hold ridiculous poses, wearing slutty clothes, humiliating him for kicks before they threw him out. Is that what you want to happen to you, Rob?"

His voice was bored, cool, but when I caught his eye, he raised his eyebrows, silently asking for some input. I pursed my lips and gave a small shake of my head, letting him know he'd gone too far without breaking character. "No! No, sir. Please, I didn't mean to be difficult. See—"

I got to my feet and turned to face him, the shape of my erection visible, my chest rising and falling as I took quick, panicked breaths, as if there was a real danger of being thrown out of his apartment.

"Much better," he said, approval softening his voice. "I like a quick learner. Mmm, you really are into the idea. That's good. Get undressed and I'll find you something to wear for the shoot."

"Yes, sir."

I stripped, my hands shaking as I fumbled with the button on my jeans. What would he put me in? If I'd let him play out the harsher scenario, would I

have found myself in something that wouldn't have been a punishment, but a pleasure to wear?

He dressed me in a leather jacket and nothing else, and posed me straddling a chair. Cheesy but effective.

“Probably won't use this, but it'll let you relax and give me an idea of how you photograph.”

I heard his words through a roar in my ears, lost in arousal.

He stared at the stiffly emphatic thrust of my erection and pursed his lips. “Now should I let you keep that to juice up the photos or take care of it so you can concentrate?”

I tried for casual. It wasn't easy. “Whatever makes you happy. You're the boss.”

He smiled. “Oh, you have no idea how happy you could make me, but I don't want you to feel like I'm taking advantage of you the way some photographers do. If you want me to get behind the camera and stay there, just say the word.”

“You're paying me to make you happy,” I told him. “Just tell me what to do.”

“I might shock you.”

I answered as me, not the model. “Really fucking doubt it.”

The sincerity in my voice must've gotten through to him because he stopped sending out feelers and got down to what we both wanted to happen.

He walked away from me, confident steps, unhurried, purposeful, and picked up a brush, not a camera, choosing it from half a dozen in a jar on his easel. It was flat, about the width of my thumb, the long wooden handle rounded at the end.

I allowed myself to speculate about the possibilities of that brush, but shut my thoughts down. Let him show me. I wasn't tied in any way and he'd already proved he was willing to tailor his ideas to suit me. In some ways, I

liked that, but if we did this again, I'd tell him to push me harder. I knew my limits; I was curious about his.

He drew the brush around my nipples until they hardened for him, then along my cock slit, working the bristles in until I grunted, ass rising an inch.

“Hurt?”

“No.” The whimper I'd held back burned my throat, seeking release. “Tickles.”

“Okay, this is what I want.” Flat voice. Made me shiver with pleasure to hear it. He was such a contradiction, just like me. Cotton candy cute and behind the froth, a core of steel. “Jerk off. Come for me and catch it in your hand.” He held up the brush where I could see it, even smell the faint salty tang of my juices on the damp bristles. “I want to paint you with it.”

I didn't question it. Maybe he was braced for protests or shock, but I couldn't fake those. He was showing imagination and patience and he deserved a reward, so I gave him one.

“Yes, sir.”

He drew in a breath. “God, you said that just right. You're so fucking hot, Rob. These photos are going to be incredible.”

He watched my face as much as the quick efficiency of my hand. It made me slow down, intimacy building between us with each upward drag, each downward slide my cock received. I was doing this to myself, but at his order, and it changed it from a solitary act to a shared one.

When I came, it was Jamie who moaned, raw relief and pleasure mixing, and he brought his hand to mine, a splatter of come clinging pale and thick to his fingers.

I leaned back, wet hand held out, cupped, giving him my torso to work with. The leather jacket fell back, dragging at me. I held the increasingly painful arch, my breathing shallow, my heart thudding fast. My climax left me needing more. Satisfaction was a long way off.

He dipped the brush into the small, fast drying pool and wrote on me. A single, unambiguous word in a cursive scrawl: mine.

I felt each letter as keenly as if he'd etched it into my skin with a knife. Held the pose as he photographed me, tortured on a rack on my own making, the skin tightening as the spunk dried and flaked under the hot lights.

Then I drew his cock deep into my throat, thirsty for him, swallowed what he let me have and took the rest on my chest, obliterating the word he'd written with a new claim.

I loved giving head, but after a blowjob I was usually ready to pull back and work out the stiffness in my jaw. When Jamie eased his cock out of my mouth, I wanted to chase it for one last lick, but he was already picking up his camera.

“Got to get you like this,” he said. “Yeah, look up at me... No, don't lick your lips. I want them just like this.”

What we'd done earlier hadn't tested my ability to obey him, but this did. I'd come and so had he, but the scene was continuing and accepting it was Jamie's call when it ended was difficult. I wanted to take a shower, self-consciousness rising as my arousal dwindled, but he was intent on getting his photos. If he picked up on my growing rebellion, he didn't comment, but sooner than I'd expected, he set the camera aside and told me to clean up.

I took a quick shower, disappointed he didn't join me, but not too surprised. The shower stall was tiny; I knocked my elbow on the wall a few times soaping up my chest.

There was a beer waiting for me when I came out and the photos ready for viewing on Jamie's computer. They weren't all good; he deleted some without commenting, winnowing them down to a dozen. We stared at them in silence. I tried to see them objectively, focusing on the ones where my face wasn't visible, because it was easier that way. They were pretty fucking steamy.

“I'll delete them when you go if you're worried about it.”

“No need. But I wouldn't mind a copy.”

That pleased him, I could tell. He sent them to my account as I waited, then brought one of them up, with the light catching the word written on my chest so it was legible to my eyes at least.

“They’re stunning photos of you and you played the scene perfectly, but is this you? All of you?”

His skepticism was clear and I couldn’t decide how to answer. I went with a bluff.

“I gave you what you wanted. You knew being a sub wasn’t something I’ve done before, but I tried—”

He shook his head, dissatisfied, uneasy. “You were amazing, but it’s not *you*. That’s not all you are. I can see it in the photos. You’re holding something back.”

Fucking artists and their perception. My mom had been like that; blissfully oblivious to me for the most part, then focusing in on me and peeling back every layer until she was staring at the quivering rawness I’d have preferred to keep shielded.

“Look, it was fun. Hot. Something I’d like to do again, with or without the games. But we only just met. Don’t assume you can read me because you can’t.”

My skin was clammy, the stink of fear souring every breath I took. If I told him about my kink, it was going to be on my terms, when I chose, not because he’d forced it out of me.

“Hey.” Jamie cupped my face. It wasn’t a gentle touch but a firm one, grounding me. “I didn’t mean that and you know it, but I won’t push you.” He kissed me, ignoring the brief moment when I refused to respond, continuing the kiss until I yielded, kissing him back with a need that went beyond the physical. Jesus, I clung to him when it was over, shaky, lost.

“You don’t feel like a stranger,” Jamie murmured into my ear, stroking my back soothingly. “Don’t treat me like one, huh? Share a little or a lot or nothing at all, but don’t make what we just did count for nothing.”

There was something he'd have to know eventually and it was as good a test as any of his ability to keep his mouth shut. I pulled free of his arms. "Okay, I'll tell you something I don't tell everyone if you keep it to yourself."

"I promise."

He said it after a moment's reflection, which I liked. I didn't trust quick and easy. I waved at the section of the wall with the *Pirouette* print. "Jenna Valens was my mom."

People reacted in different ways. Some asked "Who?" some called me a liar and some assumed I was rich and just dying to spend money on them.

Jamie drew in a quick, sharp breath and said with clear sincerity, "God, I'm so sorry. I know it was a few years ago, but you don't get over losing a parent. Does it upset you seeing the print? I can take it down."

Relief flooded me, a cleansing wash of pleasure that Jamie hadn't let me down by being predictable or tacky. "I don't mind at all, though she'd agree with you it wasn't her best work."

He didn't apologize; another point in his favor. "No, but it's still pretty fucking good. The way she used color to shape an object was so..." He shook his head, frustration showing. "I suck at putting it into words. Do you paint?"

"I don't even doodle."

That got me a grin. "Then I'm not going to bore you with telling you what I think about her work, but trust me, I'm a fan."

"How about you show me something you've done?" I regretted the words as soon as I'd said them, but he shook his head.

"I'd be terrified."

"I know nothing about art except what I've picked up from being around Mom and her friends. The only thing I'll be able to tell you is if I like it, not if it's any good."

"You'll be forced into politeness and I'll know," he warned me. "The same way I could tell from the photos that—okay, not going there again. No. You can ask me again in a month if you still want to see them."

“You’re assuming I’ll still be around?”

Jamie ran his thumb over my mouth, an intimate, possessive caress, leaving me tingling. “Hoping, not assuming.”

I bit his thumb, capturing it long enough to add a lick before releasing him. He gave me an amused look and I grinned back. “I sometimes bite,” I told him.

“Next time you blow me, I’ll do my best to forget you said that.” He tilted his head. “Will there be a next time?”

“Yeah.” I rubbed my hand over my mouth, over lips he’d kissed, fucked, stroked. “I’ve got some work on the house I need to finish so maybe in a week?”

“Too long.” He shook his head. “How about I come over one night and help you with whatever it is you’re doing? I’d love to see inside.”

Me or the house? I thought it; didn’t say it.

“Come over on Saturday if you like and I’ll give you the guided tour, but whether you help or not, wear something you don’t mind getting dusty or ripped. The place is filthy.”

“Saturday morning I’m busy, but I could bring you lunch if you tell me what you want on your sandwich,” he offered.

I couldn’t remember the last time anyone had bought me lunch. Or dinner. Or breakfast. Or hell, even a drink, unless they were trying to get laid. We’d moved around a lot when I was growing up and I’d learned friends who said they’d keep in touch rarely did. I had relatives, all on my mom’s side, but not many and none close. When my mom moved back to her hometown, I’d been living in Baltimore. After her death, I’d returned here to sell her house and fallen in love with the town, vague memories from my childhood making it seem familiar until I came across a new shopping mall or a park with trees I remembered as saplings standing tall, their trunks sturdy.

My dad was an unknown quantity. He’d gotten my mom pregnant, then disappeared before marrying her or waiting to see if I arrived safely. I’d never

bothered trying to find him. Mom had painted under a name she'd chosen at random, and if it'd been her intention to hide from him, it'd worked.

“I'll eat anything but liver and seafood.”

Jamie gagged. “Now I'm picturing a sandwich with liver and lobster in it. Gross.”

I shuddered. “Don't go there.”

He arrived at one, when I was getting hungry enough that waiting for him to show was an ordeal. I'd been working since six, taking advantage of a mild fall day with brilliant sunshine and a light breeze to paint the study. It was tucked away at the back of the house and fairly self-contained so once it was done, I could shut the door on it and keep it looking good. The hallway was going to be the last room I tackled; I was forever tracking in dirt and dust.

I needed an office space, but I wanted it in keeping with the age of the house. The room was dark, though once I got around to landscaping, I'd prune the overgrown bushes outside the window, which would help. Instead of going for pale walls, I'd chosen forest green paint and chestnut wood for the desk and shelves of reference books. Lots of shelves. I read a lot and I planned a separate library for my fiction. I'd never owned many books because Mom had traveled light, but I'd joined the local library as soon as we'd gotten an address I could use. Now that I had space and a home, I was going to stock the shelves with all my favorite books. I'd fallen in love with the idea of an e-reader and mine was crammed as full of as many books as it would hold, but I wanted what part of me still thought of as “real” books too.

Jamie's knock came just as I'd finished the first coat of color and was wrapping my brushes and roller in plastic to keep them from drying out. I picked up a rag to wipe my hands and walked toward the door, my gut clenching with a different kind of hunger.

“You smell good,” Jamie told me, taking a sniff. “Paint. Mmm.”

“And hello to you too.”

“Is that all I get when I brought you the best egg salad sandwiches in town? No hug, no kiss?”

I eyed the bag. It was a plain brown one, free of logos. “You made it?”

“Yeah.” He glanced around the hallway for somewhere to put it, gave up, and shrugged. “It’s about the limit of my culinary skills, so don’t go expecting anything fancy when I invite you over for dinner.”

“Okay, for homemade, you get a blowjob.”

Jamie blinked. “You must be hungry. A kiss will do. I came over to help, not jump your bones, though we could do that later. See? I’m wearing clothes that don’t matter.”

There was a hole halfway down one leg of his jeans and a splatter of paint on the other, so I didn’t check my overalls for wet patches before I gave him the requested kiss. I hadn’t been serious about the blowjob, but if he’d wanted one, I’d have been on my knees without thinking too much about it. It should’ve worried me how easy I found it to follow his lead, but I felt safe around him.

The kiss went from a casual greeting to a slow, intense lip-lock neither of us wanted to end. When we pulled back, the rag I’d been holding was on the floor and the sandwich bag was squashed.

“You’re addictive, you know that?” Jamie patted my arm as if he didn’t want to stop touching me. “God, shove a brush in my hand before I change my mind about the sex.”

“I’m waiting for the first coat to dry,” I told him. “How about a tour if I can eat as we go? I’m starving.”

“Sounds like a plan.”

I did my best not to talk with my mouth full, but Jamie helped, enthusing over the high ceilings and original hardwood floors, scarred and dull now, but solid enough to be worth the cost to refinish. The hidden cupboards, the window seats with built-in storage space, and the huge attic, accessible by a

proper staircase, not a pull-down ladder, had him spinning around, arms wide, eyes bright as he sketched out possibilities.

“I didn’t expect anyone else to see it the way I do,” I said as we came back from a look around the garden. It was a walled in space, so neglected the shape of the flower beds was lost, a shed at the end no more than rotting planks precariously balanced, but that would have to wait until spring.

“Are you kidding? It’s perfect, or it will be. Though if you go through with stainless steel appliances in the kitchen, I might chain myself to the sink in protest.”

“I’m not recreating the way it would’ve been decorated when it was new. I want it to be functional.” I brushed a lock of hair back off his face, an idea occurring to me, sparked by its color. “Though I’ve seen copper fridges and sinks out there. Expensive, but I could swing it.”

“Copper would be incredible,” Jamie said, “but I was only joking. It’s your space and—”

“No,” I said, adjusting my ideas, a mental click telling me I was on track. “You’re right. The steel is too cold, too expected. Copper against butter yellow walls... hmm, not sure about the floor, but the cupboards could be black...”

Jamie tugged at my arm. “Hey. You’re not allowed to drift off into a creative haze. And don’t say you weren’t; I recognize the signs.”

I shook myself free of my thoughts. “Sorry.” I kissed him full on his mouth, an exuberant smack of a kiss that left us grinning. “That’s for the idea.”

“Now I’m getting some different ideas.” He rapped the side of his head with his knuckles. “Focus, Jamie. Ignore the hot guy in overalls who keeps kissing you. There’s work to be done.”

“I’ve been working since six,” I told him. “I’ve earned a break.”

“Show me the study and then your bedroom again?”

I’d skipped the study on the tour, but with the window open in there, the paint should be close to dry on most of the walls. I led the way, already

thinking ahead to what we'd do in my bedroom. Would he fuck me this time? I was sweaty and speckled with paint, but if he didn't mind, I sure as hell didn't.

I pushed open the study door and walked in. "It's easy painting with no furniture in the rooms and a floor I don't care about because it's going to get sanded down."

What happened next would've taken skill to duplicate. I turned to point up at the molding around the ceiling and Jamie, standing closer than I'd realized, jerked away to avoid my hand in his face. Before I could apologize he caught his foot in the drop cloth and staggered backward, knocking into the stepladder and sending the paint tray flying up, flipping, and landing on his arm, the remnants of the paint coating his shirt thickly.

"Shit!"

"Oh God, I'm so sorry." I took a step toward him, but he warded me off, chuckling helplessly.

"That was pure slapstick. And green's so my color. I think I'm going to need to borrow a T-shirt though."

"It'll be huge on you, but sure." I gestured at a clean paint tray in the corner. "Put your shirt in there."

"At least it missed my hair," Jamie said, peeling off his shirt and dropping it into the tray with a wet splat. He examined his arms and torso. "I'm okay."

His skin was pale, free of freckles, red hair dusting his forearms, and forming a slender line from his navel down. In the cool breeze from the open window, his nipples tightened, looking like small brown buttons on his chest.

I wanted to trace the hollow at his hip with my tongue, wet the skin and rub my cock against the groove, his body tight against mine, his breath loud in my ear as he gasped my name. Pictured myself braced against the step ladder as he drove into my ass, the metal struts cutting into my palms as I held whatever position he'd put me in.

He put his hands on his hips, looking at me as if mind reading was one of his skills. "Your bedroom," he said softly. "Now, Rob."

Naked, I let him push me onto my bed and stared up at him. “You want a quick fuck?” Jamie asked, and for a moment I was stupid enough to think I had a choice. Before I told him I’d been aching for his dick in me for days and yeah, fast and hard would suit me just fine, he shook his head. “Not gonna happen.”

I stirred restlessly against the sleeping bag I used as a quilt on a mattress ready for the dump. The bedroom was habitable but it wasn’t furnished with anything worth keeping. “Is this your way of punishing me for ruining your shirt? I’ll buy you a new one. Two. Just fuck me already.” I gestured at the bathroom. “Condoms. Lube. Help yourself.”

He patted the back pocket of his jeans. “Got my own, thanks. And this isn’t punishment. Why would I punish you for an accident?”

I ran my hands down my chest and stomach until they were framing my erection, showcasing what I had to offer without touching what I guessed he considered his property from the possessive gleam in his eyes. “So what is it?”

“A pretty fucking picture,” he said. “Show me what you’ve got, Rob. Make me drool. Make me so hot for you I fuck you with my jeans around my knees because I can’t wait long enough to kick them off.”

Uncertain, exposed, I shook my head. “I don’t know what to do.”

As if he’d expected it, he smiled. “I could tell you,” he suggested. “Is that what you’d like? Someone to tell you exactly what to do, so you know you’re doing the right thing, know you’re pleasing me?”

Was it? I didn’t like the implications, though in some ways it was tempting. I shook my head. “I’ll try, but if I fuck it up—”

“You won’t,” Jamie interrupted. “And if you did, I wouldn’t get angry. Or punish you. Not sure if you keep mentioning that because you want it or you don’t. But I know you like this. You proved it at my place. You just need to let go.”

I’d fantasized about a spanking, but it’d been his hand on me when I wore the panties that’d turned me on, not the discipline itself. I wet my lips and thought about how I’d like to see him lying naked on my bed.

After that, it was easy.

From the shower, I heard Jamie ask me something, but the rush of water made it hard to decipher. I called back to him, but got no reply. The water ran cool so I turned it off and stepped out, snagging a towel and drying off as I walked back into the bedroom.

“Did you say—”

My voice stopped working. My throat constricted, panic gripping me. Jamie was crouched down, tugging out the bottom drawer to reveal a billow of color.

“No!” The sharpness of my barked out word matched the way it felt in my mouth, glass shards, barbed wire... I was bleeding. “Don’t look.”

“Rob?” Jamie twisted his head to glance up at me, shoving at the drawer with clumsy hands, leaving it half-open. “I wasn’t being nosy. I asked where your T-shirts were and I thought you said—” He faltered, bewilderment widening his eyes. “Is this stuff... was it your mom’s?”

“What? No, of course not.” The idea was so far from the truth I was annoyed with him for being slow, my panic pushed aside for a moment. “Jesus, what kind of a freak do you think I am?”

Okay, I could’ve phrased that better.

He rose in a smooth movement, stepping toward me, not away. “I don’t think you’re anything. It’s yours then? You cross-dress?”

His voice was a shade too careful and it rasped my nerves. God, I’d rather be called a freak than be tolerated in a cozy, condescending way. “It’s not women’s underwear, if that’s what you mean. It’s designed for guys. It’s just...” Anger faded, leaving me light-headed and numb with shock. I was abruptly aware I was naked and I fastened the towel around my waist, fumbling to secure the thick fabric. “It’s...”

I couldn’t finish my sentence. Jamie nodded. “Okay. So what drawer should I have opened?”

“Second one down,” I said dully.

I watched him choose a plain white T-shirt and shrug into it as casually as if he was alone in the room.

“I’m guessing you want me to leave.” Jamie sat on the bed and pulled his boots on, still moving without haste. “So you can wallow in shame.”

“What?” I took a step forward, then stopped. I sensed a barrier between us, solid, if invisible. “I want you to leave, yeah. You invaded my privacy, you—”

“I opened a drawer by mistake.” Jamie’s voice was flat. “That’s all. And I want to leave as much as you want me to go, but not for the reason you think.”

“Right.” I nodded, pinning a smile on my face as if I believed him. “You’ve gone from planning to cook me dinner to never wanting to see me again, but it doesn’t have anything to do with finding out I like to wear silk panties and suspender belts. Of course not.” I raised my eyebrows, taking refuge in sarcasm. “Going to tell me how I managed to end things when I was twenty feet away in the shower?”

Jamie stood and pointed at the drawer. “Is anything in there stolen? Trophies from a kill? Used to belong to a child?”

“God, no!” The implications sickened me. “It’s all mine. I—you can buy them online.”

“Then why are you ashamed of what’s in there?” Jamie demanded. “It turns you on. It hurts no one. I’ve told you I get off on the idea of tying a man up and spanking him. Consensual, yeah, but let me tell you, in my head things get pretty fucking dark when I’m jerking off. I’m not ashamed of that, any of it, but what gets me hot carries a risk. Your kink? Not so much.”

“No one would laugh at you.” Why couldn’t he see the difference? “They’d laugh at me.”

“‘They?’ Who the fuck are *they*?” Jamie stabbed a finger into his chest. “If we’re seeing each other, I’m the only one who matters and I’m not laughing. Not smiling. Not judging you for having the kink, only for being ashamed to own it. I’m disappointed in you, Rob and *that’s* why I’m leaving.”

Did he expect me to beg and plead for forgiveness? “Fine. Go. Just fucking go.”

He turned in the doorway. “I would’ve loved to see you wearing something out of that drawer,” he said, regret in every word. “Seeing all of you, not just what you thought was safe to share.”

I stood in place until the front door slammed.

There was a scrap of scarlet lace caught in the bottom drawer. I went to my knees, tugged the drawer out, and pushed the panties back inside.

My lace, satin, and silk. Jamie’s leather.

They weren’t the same, no matter what he said.

I sat cross-legged on my bed, staring at every piece of lingerie I owned: the panties and suspender belts, the sheer lace-topped stockings and the camisoles. Some of the items I’d bought out of curiosity and never worn more than once; it was the panties I loved the most. Running my hands through them, the cool, slippery fabric teasingly difficult to grasp, was as erotic as caressing a lover.

This was my kink. My secret; my sensual, taboo, delicious secret.

And now it wasn’t a secret. Jamie knew.

I picked up a white camisole and brought it to my face, breathing in the light scent of the soap powder I used to hand wash the delicate items, following the care instructions to the letter.

I’m disappointed in you.

I ripped it, splitting the seams, shredding the silk.

I want to leave.

Dry sobs shook me. I grabbed another piece of silk, another wet-dream-worthy piece of clothing, panting harshly, the fabric twisting as I tugged at it, resisting me. Tears welled up and spilled down my face, impossible to stem. I cried in a way I’d only done once before, when my mom died, unrestrained, primal sounds accompanying each breath, sounds I heard vaguely,

unconnected to me because I was in a different place right then, lost in loss and anger.

My hands hurt. Silk is stronger than it looks and lace scratches. Half-healed nicks and grazes from working on the house opened and small smears of blood marred the garments. The red was stark against white and ice-blue fabric; lost against black.

I fought for control, despising myself for giving way so completely. My head ached with the dull throb of blocked sinuses from the tears. I went to the bathroom and grabbed a handful of toilet paper. Blowing my nose and washing my face relieved some of the physical aftereffects but none of the emotional fallout.

I wanted sleep. Deep and dreamless. Escape.

Instead, I dug out a garbage bag and set to clearing the bed with shaking hands. What the fuck had I been trying to prove by tearing and ripping? That once ruined, the sin of wearing them was wiped away?

Why are you ashamed?

“I’m not,” I said aloud, talking to an empty room. It was a habit of mine, springing from too many hours alone. “I’m not ashamed. It’s just... private.”

Being gay wasn’t something I hid; never had. But no one shares specifics about what gets them hot with the world; often not even their partner. And this was a solitary kink.

I would’ve loved to see you wearing something out of that drawer.

“You’re not here,” I told the echo. “You left, so shut the fuck up.”

It wasn’t easy to silence an imaginary Jamie. I carried on a conversation with him in my head at intervals during the days that followed, days when I saw him in the distance on campus once or twice, never getting close enough to be sure he’d seen me. Eloquence and victory were achievable under those circumstances but I didn’t fool myself that face-to-face, I’d come off the winner.

What he'd said remained lodged in my memory, a splinter I couldn't tease out. Drove me crazy. The shock faded and when no one at college gave me sidelong glances or smirks, I realized Jamie hadn't shared what he knew.

He hadn't laughed. I lay in bed one night, hands cupping the lax curve of my disinterested cock, and wondered why I'd assumed everyone would. Drag queens weren't funny. Striking, strident, brimful of confidence, yeah, but they weren't laughable unless someone was a total asshole and their opinion didn't count. So why did I think what I liked doing would make people snicker? I liked the sensation of silk against my skin. I loved the sensuality of the rich, pure colors, the clean lines of the lingerie. Loved seeing my junk sheathed in translucent sheer fabric or peekaboo lace, my ass showcased by skintight fire engine red satin, the seam running down the crack of my ass making my butt look ripe for a bite or slap.

I was fucking hot in it, all of it.

My cock hardened under my hands as I pictured posing for Jamie. Would his eyes gleam, a carnal twist to his smile? What would he like me in best? If I begged him, would he bend me over, pull my panties aside just enough to bare my hole, then fuck me with them on?

More importantly, would he give me a second chance?

I guessed I'd find out when I asked him, but maybe show, not tell, would work better.

I found Jamie in the room where we'd first met, setting up the chairs and easels for the class. He glanced at me, nodded, not quite meeting my gaze, then went back to work.

"You said you were disappointed in me." My voice seemed too quiet to reach him, but he paused and looked my way again, leaning on a chair he'd positioned with more care than the task merited. "By the time I'd thought it over, I was disappointed in myself too."

He didn't say anything, but he wasn't ignoring me. His gaze pinned me in place. "Jamie..."

“I’m sorry.” Jamie paused, dragging his teeth over his lower lip slowly. “Really sorry.”

Sorry? Was it a rejection or an apology? I didn’t want either.

“I was a jerk. Again.” He muttered the words so I had to strain to hear them. Impatient with the distance between us, I walked forward until I was close enough to touch him if I’d dared. “I was a jerk, Rob. Condescending, too quick to judge you... *again*. God!” He shook his head. “Who the hell am I to preach about putting it all out there when you’re the one who’d have to deal with the fallout? Why can’t I just leave people alone?”

“Jamie...” I exhaled, surprised at the way he saw our argument. “You came on strong, but I needed to hear it. I’m still not telling the world what gets me off, but from now on if I’m in a serious relationship with someone, I’m going to tell them about it. Not hide that part of me and ruin everything because I’m a coward.”

“*If you’re—*” He swallowed, grimacing as if it hurt him. A surge of relief lifted the worry from me. He thought it was over between us and it was upsetting him? I wanted to punch the air and give an exultant yell. “Oh. Yeah. Good plan.”

I didn’t let him suffer for long. Why would I? I wanted us both happy. Together. And I knew how to build a bridge between us.

“So if I’m putting that into practice...” I cleared my throat and hooked my thumb in my jeans, tugging down on the waist to expose an inch of red lace. “First time I’ve worn these out of the house. I got into my truck and I came close to running back inside, not to change, but to jerk off. So fucking turned on all day and if you still want—you said you’d like to see me—”

I couldn’t force another word out, gagged by sudden anxiety in case I’d misread the situation and hope. Jamie stared at the edge of the panties, color flooding his face, then moaned, a desperate whimper of pure need, and launched himself at me.

“God, you’re killing me. If we didn’t have class in ten minutes I’d make you show me right now,” he said between kisses, rubbing against me until I

gasped for breath, too turned on to process where we were and how likely it was we'd be interrupted at any moment. "Make you pose for me over there. I want to see you. Every angle. Jesus, how the fuck am I gonna calm down enough to take the class?"

I laughed, my arms around him, the warm, familiar smell of paint and leather I associated with him scenting each breath. "I wish I could say I'm sorry and mean it, but I can't. Fucking love the idea of you being worked up over me."

"It's more than an idea." He took my hand and brought it to his erection. "Feel that. I could use it as a hammer."

"Ouch." I rubbed my palm over it, suffering as much as Jamie and for exactly the same reason. "Can we maybe—"

Jamie's cell phone beeped, alerting him to the time, and we reluctantly stepped away from each other. Jamie threw back his head, his frustration as plain as the outline of his cock. "God!" He pointed at me. "You. My place as soon as you can make it after six. And don't think I won't have words with you about your timing."

"Bad enough to earn me a spanking?"

The glance I got made me shiver. Longing and heat wound through it until it was like a caress on skin. "Don't put ideas into my head if you're not ready to follow through. Don't joke about it. It matters too much to me."

I met his gaze squarely. "I'm ready. Maybe not for everything you want, but for that? Yeah. Not as a punishment, but because I trust you to make it hot."

He caught his breath, studying me as if sincerity left a trace. "Looks like it's going to be an interesting date."

"Looks like," I agreed.

In the end, he did punish me, but not with his hand striking my ass. Worse than that. I arrived expecting to be naked soon after walking through the door,

or at least not wearing much, and yeah, I got that at least. But he made me wait for what I needed from him.

Made us both wait.

I'd brought along a bag with a selection of lingerie lining it, a captured rainbow. He emptied it and sorted through the contents, studying each item with his lips pursed in thought.

"This," he said finally, and scooped up a white camisole and a black thong. "The contrast will look stunning."

I changed in his bedroom. I wasn't an artist and I wasn't an actor, but I knew how to make an entrance.

He was messing around with the lights when I walked back into the room and I saw him react, a moment of utter stillness as he took me in, head to toe. Then he gave an appreciative hum that broke the silence.

"God, you're so hot. But you know that, right? You can't see yourself in a mirror and not see what you look like." He came to my side, hands sketching a shape in the air without touching me. "Muscles and strength, all man... then there's this deceptive fragility over it, hiding nothing, just making you look more, well, more everything you already are."

"Gayer?" I suggested, with a flash of humor lifting the last of my concern.

He grinned at me. "Well, my cock approves, so, yeah."

His smile faded, replaced by what I'd come to think of as his professional stare. It turned me on being the focus of his attention rather than putting distance between us. I shivered as if I'd stepped into a cold shower, nipples hardening, already stiff cock getting a fraction stiffer.

Twenty minutes later, I was sweating under the lights and wearing my third outfit, black stockings and suspender belt with red lace briefs. Jamie was quiet, the camera hiding his expression. The instructions had dried up and I was winging it, moving from pose to pose at my own pace, losing myself in the thrill of being watched.

But this was foreplay and I couldn't take much more of it. The lace briefs were damp with sweat, darker where the slick head of my cock lay pressed against the scanty fabric. I'd played the angles, never giving him a full-frontal shot, but now I walked to the sheet covered wall I'd been posing against and turned to face him.

He lowered the camera, staring at me. As slowly as possible, I ran my hand down my chest and plucked at the suspender belt. My cock strained to break free, my balls drawn up, ripe and full. I teased at the wet head with a fingertip then brought my finger up, sucking at it with a moan. It was a move lifted from a dozen porn movies, but I wasn't acting.

Jamie set the camera down with exaggerated care. "I hope you're not attached to those lace panties," he said, walking toward me.

"Why?"

He stroked my thigh, then hooked his fingers into the briefs, twisting the fabric tighter still. "Because I'm going to ruin them. If you mind, tell me now."

"Do whatever the hell you like to them and to me."

"Kind of my plan."

He tore a hole across the front of the briefs and reached in, working my cock through the gap, enlarging it until the lace was a tattered frame for the thrust of my erection. We stared down at it and I caught my breath on a groan.

"I want this in me," he said, fondling my dick roughly. "Want to feel the lace against my ass."

He'd never said he didn't bottom, and I wasn't going to complain about anything that let me come, but I'd be lying if I said I wasn't surprised. "You want me to fuck you?"

"I didn't say that." He tapped my cock with two fingers, making it bounce. "I like being in control, remember?"

He tied my wrists together with a black satin belt off a short robe I'd brought along and anchored the belt to the headboard of his bed. "Don't pull on it too much," he warned me. "It'll tighten."

I couldn't help one tug. The cool, light satin wrapped around my wrists was unbearably erotic. I didn't need chains or handcuffs; this was perfect. I lay on my back, posing for him again, and let trust take the edge off an arousal verging on torment.

Jamie draped a scarf over my eyes without tying it, red like the lace briefs, translucent enough that I could still see his lithe body as he straddled me, but the outlines were blurred, the details lost. It was wide enough to cover me from forehead to lips.

"If you move, the scarf will slide down," Jamie said. "It slides, I stop."

"I won't move," I promised without knowing if it was a promise I could keep.

Jamie chuckled. "Yeah, you will. But do your best, huh?" He kissed me through the scarf, his breath and tongue leaving the dry fabric clinging to my lips by the time he'd finished, like a faint continuation of the kiss.

I didn't move when he smoothed a condom over me and slicked up my hole. The sensation of his finger in my ass was a promise of a different sort and I stopped myself from thinking too far ahead. If Jamie wanted control, I needed to give it to him. I knew he wouldn't demand it.

He rode me, slow rocks of his hips to get me deep inside him, barely moving once I was. The warmth of his flesh, the tight, but yielding constriction around my cock, made me want to stay like this for hours.

Then he rose and fell, fucking himself on me, thigh muscles taut, reaching down to brush his cock now and then, teasing touches, making him bite his lip and moan as if it were someone else torturing him who could be moved by the sounds he made.

Content was a state of mind that shattered when he quickened his pace. I'd soon found I couldn't get away with lifting my ass even an inch off the bed.

Jamie punished me for it with a pinch of a nipple, or a kiss, leaning forward so only the tip of my cock was inside him.

Coming seemed impossibly distant given Jamie's intent to prolong this, and yet close enough for me to salt its tail. Every time he ground against me, the lace scratching his ass and my thighs, a shudder of arousal shook me but it was never enough to trigger my climax. Not when it would be pleasure bought at the cost of disappointing Jamie.

He told me I was hot; ran his hands over my legs where they were sheathed in nylon and sighed at the smoothness; stroked his cock and told me it was hard because of me, just because of me.

I watched him use me and learned lying still didn't make me passive. I wasn't fucking him, no; he was fucking me as surely as if his dick was ramming into me in forceful strokes, but I was more than a dildo. He held my gaze, touched me often, and when the scarf finally slid down my face, catching for a moment on my lips where my breath had made it stick, there was as much regret in his sigh as there was in mine.

"You're not going to leave me?" The room seemed too bright without the scarf. I blinked up at him, ready to beg, but he shook his head.

"Are you kidding me? No." He eased off me, a gentle withdrawal, wincing as he knelt beside me. "You're big all over, Rob. And if you apologize..."

"Wasn't going to."

He peeled the condom off me, wrapped it in a tissue and tossed it at a wastepaper bin in the corner without following its path to see if it hit the target.

"Let's make another hole in these poor, abused panties."

He rolled me to my stomach, the belt twisting, and made me move up the bed until the strain on my wrists eased. On elbows and knees, my butt up, I waited for his cock. I got his mouth instead, teeth nipping at the lace, biting a hole in it.

I heard the fabric tear and his satisfied murmur. Then he kissed the skin he'd exposed, sliding his tongue between lace and flesh. I loved being rimmed, but I didn't get it often. Having it done to me through a pair of panties blew my fucking mind. Usually, I'm quiet during sex, holding back, but Jamie made it impossible. I cried out for him, whimpered and begged, cursed him and pleaded with him as he drove me insane. The belt left red marks on my wrists, but I was past caring, writhing as I tried to get his tongue deeper, sobbing when he pulled back and played with the elastic strips holding up my stockings.

"I'm going to fuck you again," he told me, a tremor in his voice telling me I wasn't alone in being close to the edge. "Don't you dare fucking come until I tell you. I want to see you shoot over the lace. You come too soon and I'll rip those pretty red panties off you, gag you with them, and spank you until the color I turn your ass makes them look pink."

"Jamie—" My voice broke on his name but I didn't need to talk for what came next. He pushed inside me, cool lube coating a warm, solid cock that filled me. He kissed my shoulders and the back of my neck, nuzzling fiercely into the hollow behind my ear, then straightened. I'd been fucked rough and hard before, but Jamie got me to the same state of bliss without leaving my asshole raw and swollen. He made every thrust count, and he changed the angle until I was panting, openmouthed gasps as eloquent as screaming. I couldn't speak. Breathed when I had to. Spread my legs wide and prayed to heaven he didn't reach around to stroke my cock, because if he did, it would end there for me.

He came, his final plunge inside me like an arrow's flight played back in slow motion. The hammering slams of his body against mine were distilled into that last perfect thrust and I held back my climax by biting my arm, using the pain to ground me.

When he turned me to my back and gathered the torn lace, rubbing it against my shaft, I came, spunk painting me as high as my chest. I closed my eyes reflexively, then forced them open because I didn't want to miss a second of Jamie staring at me, face flushed, eyes wild, as wrecked as I was.

My favorite photograph, the one Jamie turned into a painting that hangs in my bedroom—our bedroom now—doesn't show my face. I'm in black stockings and lace suspenders, back to the camera, and I'm wearing the leather Jamie put on me; gloves and a belt cinched around my arm with a double strapped harness over my shoulder, looping around my waist.

Under the ankh tattoo in the small of my back, my ass is bare. If you look closely at the photograph, you can see a faint blush of pink from a spanking, but you'd need to get really close for that.

My arm hides my smile, but Jamie says he can still see that I'm happy.

He's right.

THE END

Author Bio

Jane Davitt is English, and has been living in Canada with her husband, two children, and two cats, since 1997. Writing and reading are her main occupations but if she ever had any spare time she might spend it gardening, walking, or doing cross stitch. She's recently taken up yoga and loves discovering her ability to bend.

Jane has been writing since 2002 and wishes she'd started earlier. She is a huge fan of SF, fantasy, erotica, and mystery novels and has a tendency to get addicted to TV shows that get cancelled all too soon.

She owns over 3,000 books, rarely gives any away, but is happy to loan them, and is of the firm opinion that there is no such thing as 'too many books'.

Jane has sixteen books and a dozen or so novellas in print with more on the way. She's been published by Torquere, Loose Id, Total-E-Bound, and Ellora's Cave. She loves writing about hot men in love doing wonderfully wicked things to each other.

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