

Laura
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The Challenge



The one who walks away first...wins?

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By

Laura S. Fox

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M/M Erotica

Intended for Mature Audiences Only

This book contains graphic depictions of sexual intercourse, strong language, and it is not meant for readers who are less than 18 years of age.

Chapter One

Just another day at the office, Karl Thorne mused while trying to put some order in the files on his desk. He knew he was overqualified for the job, he had always known. But there was a reason why he had chosen to stay. He glanced through the glass doors across from his desk and sighed. There he was: tall, blond, inaccessible, and, of course, straight as an arrow. The fact that he was also his boss made the problem even more complicated. On the other hand, being his assistant let him stay close to him throughout each work day, and that was Karl's main reason to keep coming back to a job he did not care much for.

On the other side of the see through doors, oblivious to his assistant's turmoil, the golden god inhabiting Karl's dreams was talking on the phone, his feet in Armani shoes up on the desk. He was laughing and playing with a golf ball, stopping from time to time to wipe non-existing dirt from its surface. Dick Chamberlain had everything in life, including things he did not want, like Karl's silent adoration. Unfortunately, most of the time, whether it was just a name coincidence or not, he was indeed a dick and that was making Karl's job even more difficult. Yet, there were moments when his boss gave him opportunities to think that the situation was not that grim. At times, Karl felt almost needed. Indispensable.

"You're Dick's assistant?" Karl was woken from his reverie by a deep masculine voice. The question sounded like there was no need for confirmation. Slightly irritated by the certain haughtiness he sensed in the said voice, he raised his head. His citrine eyes fringed by long dark eyelashes clashed with a pair of greens, shining with a glint of mischief. Karl quickly recollected himself.

"Yes. How can I help you, mister ...?"

He stared at the man in front of him and almost gaped. An older, more masculine version of the blond god he was used to worship was hovering over his desk, a hand nonchalantly pressed against a stack of papers. The man was watching him intently, scanning his features, like he was looking for something to suddenly grow from Karl's head.

The overqualified assistant knew Dick had a brother, but he had never seen him, despite working for the Chamberlain family for three years. On the other hand, the brother was not in the family business, and Karl had never been introduced to any relatives.

"Mister Chamberlain", he finally recovered his voice and sat up. "I will let your brother know that you are here."

He tried to head towards the glass doors, walking around the man, but a firm hand on his waist stopped him, taking him by surprise. The smell of expensive cologne tickled his nostrils and he felt compelled to lean forward so he could smell it more. He bit his bottom lip without realizing, ignoring the man's hand on his waist, let there in a far too intimate gesture.

"There is no need to bother. Go back to your desk", the authoritarian voice commanded. "I think I know the way", the voice dropped to a whisper, while the blond slightly moved his head, so that his last

words were effectively blown over Karl's dark hair, just for him to hear.

He tried to add something, but could not find any words, the temperature in the room suddenly too hot for comfort. He stared after the man who was now pushing through the door to Dick's office. After a few seconds, he shook his head and returned to his desk, as instructed, trying to cool down the beating of his heart.

Back to his files, he tried in vain to concentrate, and quickly found himself sneaking glances towards Dick's office. The two brothers were chatting about something, and Karl was quite curious what they could talk about that they couldn't in a more informal environment.

Taking advantage of the fact that he was as good as invisible to the two, he began comparing them. Even by far, the differences were obvious. Dick was a few good inches shorter than his brother. What was the man's name? Karl scanned his memory for a second. Gordon. Yes, that was the name. Gordon was not only older, but also had a stronger constitution, and his presence had the ability to fill the room, putting even the beautiful god of Karl's dreams on an unflattering second place.

Karl shook his head again. He could not possibly think Gordon was more beautiful than Dick. He was probably more masculine, that was why he seemed to have such a powerful presence. Karl had to admit that he had felt like a really short guy few minutes earlier when the man had been looming over his desk. Dick had a delicate face, baby blue eyes, full red lips just made for kissing and his blonde hair had strawberry highlights. Gordon, on the other hand, had a square jaw, thinner lips, and his hair was a darker blonde, even if he was carrying it longer than his brother. Karl remembered with a small shudder the look in the deep green pools when he had locked eyes with him earlier. Those eyes were saying that the man was not to be taken for a fool. Not that Karl would have ever dared taking anyone for a fool.

The unaccomplished assistant started chewing the end of his pencil, continuing to observe the two perfect male specimens, his files and work completely forgotten. All of a sudden, he heard them laughing, and then he noticed they were both looking at him, as if he was the subject of their amusement. Like a deer caught in the headlights, he froze, then dropped the pencil and lowered his head, pretending to be busy with something on his computer.

The dreaded sound of the telephone almost made him jump. "Yes?" he asked in a small voice.

"Get into my office, pronto", Dick's amused voice instructed, and he stood up, not sure if he was supposed to bring anything with him or not.

Trying to regain his composure, he pushed through the door and asked on a neutral tone:

"How can I help you?"

He was sure he was supposed to bring coffee or something, but what followed was quite unexpected.

"Listen, Karl, I have something to ask. My brother here wants to borrow you for a while. He is moving into the city and he needs someone ... well, to assist him with everything for the upcoming month. Since I do not know anyone more proficient in doing that, I've recommended you right away. What do you say?"

Karl felt like he had just received a punch in the gut. Hesitantly, he asked:

"How many hours a week?"

“Oh”, Dick shrugged, turning towards his brother. “Gordon?”

“It will be a full time job”, the other arrogant brother answered, while studying Karl head to toes, assessing him.

“But ... how will I be able to ...”

“You’re exempted from working here for the duration, of course”, his boss confirmed his worst fears. “But you will have all the salary and benefits paid on time, don’t worry”, he continued, ignoring how Karl’s face had become pale within seconds. “You’re free to go, my brother will contact you with all the details”, he dismissed him, and Karl turned and walked through the door, like an inmate on death row.

He sat at his desk, not knowing what to do. For three years, he had not even taken a leave, just to see Dick every day. Even when his boss was on vacation, he had continued to come to work, just to take care of business, and have every possible reason to contact him over the phone to ask him for directions. Of course, Dick was mostly annoyed by these calls, but in the end, he seemed happy to chat with him for a while.

But right now, it was nothing like those times. No, this time Dick was simply giving him away, like he was not needed. And there he thought that he meant something, at least as a personal assistant. Apparently, he was nothing but dispensable.

Chapter Two

He spent the rest of the day making sure everything was in order for the next person to fill in the role of Dick's personal assistant. If that person was to be some tall, perfectly shaped female specimen, with large breasts exactly how Dick seemed to like, Karl promised to himself that he would quit right away. Not that he would have acted on that promise. But it was good to imagine having at least some resemblance of control.

Dick was still in his office when Karl decided there was nothing left to do. On his desk, set a piece of paper reading: "Norma's Diner, 7.30, tomorrow. Be there. PS: Use Google's maps if you do not know where it is." Karl wanted nothing more but to tear that piece of paper apart and throw it in someone's face. Preferably someone from the Chamberlain family.

His heart heavy, he headed for his boss's office.

"I left everything on the desk. If you need me for anything just give me a call. If your next assistant needs my help, I mean."

"My temporary assistant, you mean, Karl", Dick flashed his million dollar smile at him. "You will be back. There is no way you would leave me", he added, winking at him, and extending his hand.

Karl shook it, while staring into Dick's beautiful face. His heart was happy once again. Dick was not sending him away; he was just lending him for a while, nothing more. His boss needed him, and that was enough for him.

He realized a bit too late he was still holding Dick's hand, when the man coughed and smiled.

"Oh, sorry", he withdrew his hand quickly, embarrassed. "Who will be your assistant while I'm gone?" he asked.

"John from Accounting", Dick pushed his hands into his pockets.

Karl frowned. John was a jerk and a kiss-up. Yet, it was still better that he was not some buxom blonde to service Dick under the desk while Karl was gone. Especially since that was one of his favorite fantasies to entertain before bedtime, when he needed a bit of release. Somehow, he knew for sure he could not suspect John of such underhanded tactics. The guy loved to kiss ass, but not in the literal sense.

"Well, if that's all, good luck, Karl. And, don't worry, it's not like I'm helpless without you", Dick dismissed him, making it obvious that it was time for his no longer on duty assistant to go home.

Karl took another look at his beloved boss, and bid his farewell. Since he was not going to see Dick for a while, it was the last time he could look at that beautiful face.



He was at the indicated diner at 7.25. He was not exactly anxious to take over his new duties, but he was always punctual. Even more, he had had to loiter a little around the place, because he had arrived

too early.

He scanned the cozy place for his new boss, but, as expected, he was first. He took a seat, and a woman in her forties, bursting with energy, greeted him right away.

“What would be, sugar?” she asked, and Karl thought she might be Norma, from the name of the place. Or maybe she was just one of those people with a lot of energy in the morning. He was not exactly like that, but he always did what he was supposed to, even waking up in the morning, when he wanted nothing but to draw the blanket over his head and sleep some more. Some more caffeine might not hurt, he thought, so he ordered.

“Coffee, black, thank you.”

“And a croissant”, he heard the now known voice of the other Chamberlain brother. “For me, the champions’ breakfast, Norma”, the man placed a quick peck on the woman’s cheek, making her giggle like a teenager.

Karl was not so surprised to find out he had been right about the woman’s identity. He was right about many things, but there were plenty of them he preferred to keep to himself. It was not like others cared too much what he thought, anyway. Except for Dick who sometimes was asking for his opinion.

“Good morning, sir”, he got up and bowed politely, but Gordon’s heavy hand pushed him back into the seat.

“Good morning to you, too, and it’s Gordon”, he said, while taking the seat across from him. “I bet Dick insists on being called ‘sir’, but that doesn’t float my boat”, the tall man added, while trying to adjust his long legs underneath the table.

Karl felt compelled to withdraw his own legs under the bench as much as he could, but suddenly he felt his ankles trapped between two powerful calves. The man had no respect for personal space, it seemed. He was able to sense the heat radiating from the man, even through the layers of clothing. He coughed, hoping to draw the man’s attention to the ludicrous situation.

“Are you comfortable?” Gordon asked with a glint of amusement in his green eyes.

“Yes”, he answered after some hesitation. Drawing the boss’s attention on something like that did not sound well as a conversation starter, so he decided to just endure the man’s odd habit of invading his space for the time being.

“So, Karl, how long have you been with my brother?”

The assistant blushed.

“I meant, as his assistant”, the man added, scanning Karl features, now with a full fledge Cheshire cat grin on his face.

“For three years now, sir ... Gordon”, he eventually managed to say.

“And for how long have you had a crush on him?” Gordon continued his drilling, and Karl’s mouth opened and closed in sheer surprise.

“I ... I have no idea where you got that idea from, sir. Did my boss complain?” he spoke quickly, his

voice almost a whisper, not daring to look into the green mischievous eyes. “If there was anything regarding my work attitude, please, I can assure him ...”

They were interrupted by Norma bringing them the food. Karl looked lost at the appetizing croissant placed on a plate next to his coffee, and felt bile rising to his throat. No one knew about it. No one. Not even Dick.

“Dick did not complain. And stop fretting like that, or you’ll ruin your digestion. It is something I’ve just figured out.”

Karl took the napkin in front of him and clenched it in his sweaty palms. “Are you sure, sir? My boss said nothing? It is only your imagination?”

“My imagination ...”, Gordon chuckled. In the same time, Karl felt his ankles being caught in an iron like grip, stilling him. “Look at me”, the man demanded, and Karl did as he was told. “I told you to call me Gordon, is that clear?”

The assistant feebly nodded, lost in the green, almost hypnotizing gaze.

“I know there is no sugar in that coffee. Eat your croissant.”

Like an automaton, he brought the pastry to his mouth and took a bite. Was that all? The subject was closed?

For minutes, they ate in silence, Gordon suddenly more interested in attacking his plate filled with fries, eggs and bacon than in tormenting him. He still had his long legs wrapped around Karl’s ankles, like it was something normal.

Karl had no idea when he had eaten the entire croissant, so he resumed drinking his coffee. He waited patiently for the other man to finish, which eventually happened.

“So”, Gordon spoke, pushing the empty plate aside. “You piled up classes in engineering, English literature, social studies and what was that again ...” the man snapped his fingers like trying to remember, “ah, biomimetics, you fluently speak three languages, excluding, of course, our sweet mother tongue, and you are only 25 years old. I bet the normal classes were too boring for you that you needed to pursue so many things in the same time. So, why should a bright kid like you stick to a job with no future, bringing coffee to my brother? Did he promise you a better position? I doubt that’s the case.”

“Sir ...”

A small growl like sound drew his attention. “... Gordon. My choices are my own. The fact that I have not changed jobs during the last three years does not automatically make me infatuated with your brother”, he spoke quickly, for fear of not losing his determination to put the man’s suspicions at ease. After a short hesitation, he added. “And I would appreciate if you refrained from such speculations regarding my personal life.”

The grip on his ankles tightened more. Exasperated, he started to struggle to break free. “And would you stop that? It’s annoying.”

His legs were set free instantly. Gordon chuckled. “Who knew kitty had claws ...” he mused, as if he

was talking to himself. “So, what do you say? That you’re not gay?” he directed his fire once more against Karl.

The assistant threw a nervous look around. “Please, Gordon. My personal life is of no interest to you.”

“Of course you are gay. Just that you are not out at work”, the man continued matter-of-factly.

“It is none of your business”, Karl spoke underneath his breath, and leaning over the table.

“I beg to differ”, Gordon counterattacked. “You are to be my personal assistant for the next month or so. I need to know your sexual orientation.”

“Why? It is not like I am going to sexually assault you”, Karl’s voice dropped to a whisper, and bent even further on the table, as Gordon showed no sign to care whether anyone else was made privy of their conversation or not. “Even if I did, you’re like one foot taller than me, and eighty pounds heavier! What could I do to you? Put a dent on your heterosexual pride?”

“Let’s not exaggerate, I am not fat. And you’re not that short either.”

Karl slumped back into his seat and grabbed his temples, feeling a headache coming through. “That is not the point!” he continued to whisper. “Will you tell your brother? Will you get me fired? What have I ever done to you? We’ve barely met!” he continued his ramblings, while pushing his fingers against his temples.

Two strong hands grabbed his and pushed them aside. “You’re doing it wrong”, came the reply, and warm fingers started pressing against his temples. “Close your eyes and breathe. Slowly”, the man demanded, and Karl wanted nothing but to protest, but the touch felt good, and he was starting to feel his headache fading away.

“Look, kid”, Gordon’s voice was calm and balanced. “When Dick talked to me about you, I could not believe you could be that smart and still remain in the same position for three years, when you could start a promising career. I had to see you with my own eyes, and I can only say one thing. You’re lucky Dick is so blind. I’ve read you in an instant. Stay calm, your secret is safe with me, and I have no reason to get you fired from work, although that would be the only good thing happening to you right now. Better?”

Karl almost whimpered at the loss of the caring hands. He nodded and looked at Gordon with caution. “How can I help you, Gordon?” he tried to regain his professional attitude, and he was rewarded with an honest smile for his efforts.

“We have a full day ahead of us. I need to pick some stuff for home, and then we’ll get some serious work done.”

“What? Decorating?” Karl blurted out without even thinking. The pressure had been too much.

“You’re a funny guy”, Gordon laughed wholeheartedly. “No, nothing so ...”

“Gay?”

“Really, Karl. I was going to say ‘mundane’.”

Chapter 3

Karl found it hard to concentrate while Gordon was moving around, dropping things and making all kinds of noises. He had been charged with organizing the man's data about the last trip he had gone to, somewhere in Africa. The only problem was that usually, Karl had no problem concentrating; but with Gordon around, it felt like the coquette apartment was already so full, that it was hard to ignore the man's presence.

And there was again that thing with the touching ... and with Gordon telling him straight to his face what he had thought well hidden. Not to mention the fact that he was so extremely handsome. Not as much as his brother, but still exquisitely beautiful and masculine, and, of course, Karl admitted to himself with a sigh, awfully straight.

"I can tell you are thinking of something else, instead of taking your job seriously", Gordon admonished him jokingly. Bending over the desk, seemingly the only furniture in the apartment at the moment, the older Chamberlain brother was staring him squarely in the eyes.

Karl coughed embarrassed. "I am on it, sir ... Gordon."

The man laughed and ruffled his hair with his big, paw like, hand. Karl loved the touch, but he was pretty miffed while he was trying to arrange back on his head the long bangs Gordon had brought on his face with his spontaneous action. Another healthy laughter followed through.

"You are so like a cat. I bet you have your own place where no one else is allowed to stay. And no one should touch your hair or your clothes, right?"

"I am not like that", Karl murmured. "It is just ... unprofessional to have your hair or clothes unkempt."

"Of course", Gordon grinned. "Just like a cat. Milk?"

Almost feeling the need to say 'yes', the temporary assistant stopped right on time. His hesitation was not taken into consideration anyway, as Gordon was already pouring the white liquid in a clean glass on his desk.

"It is a miracle you found a glass in this mess", Karl spoke out loud, still upset over the cat remark. "We should get moving with the furniture and everything else first."

Gordon let himself fall on a luggage still unopened. "Some people will come, and they are especially hired for that. Don't fret over the little things, kitty-cat."

Karl glared over the laptop, causing Gordon yet another fit of laughter. "You have to do better than that to impress me. I've been to Africa; I've seen the big cats."

The young assistant shook his head in disbelief. "I cannot believe an easygoing guy like you went to Africa and did all these. Micro-credits? Did it work?" He had to admit that he was impressed. "Did you make any money?"

"I did ok, but it is not only about that. People there need money, and this is what I offered them", Gordon replied, suddenly serious, causing Karl to blush again, this time from embarrassment.

“Of course, I’m sorry, I’ve stepped out of line”, he admitted, his head down.

Seconds later, the now familiar warm hand was again on his head, caressing him. “You’re worrying too much about what other people think. And, for the record, I thought it was a legitimate question. I hate people who are pretending to understand, without making at least the minimal amount of effort. You’re not like that.”

Karl almost felt the need to purr, the sensation of pride threatening to burst out of his chest. But the memory of blue eyes, not green, just popped into his head, and he shook away the caress. “Anyways, I should get back to organizing. There is a lot of info to put together.”

Gordon hesitated for a second. “Why are you like this towards me? One second warm, cold the next one?” Only curiosity could be read in his voice, nothing else.

“Why are you so touchy-feely?” Karl returned the question, but without daring to look into the man’s beautiful green eyes.

“What? Am I a cock teaser?”

Karl forgot all about caution and snapped his head up. “What? How dare ... you?” he exclaimed. “Just because I’m gay, that doesn’t mean I drool over every straight man I meet!”

“Just my brother, right?”

“Right! I mean, no! I mean, yes! Gosh, you are so annoying!” Karl stood up from his chair, decided to go out for a bit of fresh air.

Strong hands caught his waist and he was pushed gently with his back against the desk. “Where do you think you’re going? And I thought you had perfect work ethic”, Gordon chided, and closed the distance between them, until Karl could swear they were just an inch away from kissing. He moved his head to one side, to put some distance; Gordon took the hint, and made a step back.

“Look, I have no idea what you really want from me. You are not sending the right signals”, Karl eventually spoke. “You are kind of my boss, so all this flirting is confusing. At least your brother doesn’t do that.”

“Do what?” Gordon crossed his arms over his chest.

“He doesn’t give false hopes.”

“I am nothing like my brother” Gordon smiled, but his smile did not reach his beautiful green eyes this time.

Karl sighed. “Look, you’re straight, I bet you got women lining up for you, just like your brother”, he emphasized the last words.

Gordon threw him a strange sideways glance. “Actually, Karl, I like to think myself as a bit of an explorer.”

“Oh, yes, of course, you’ve been to Africa”, Karl’s lips twitched, but did not smile. “But I suppose you do not mean that. Are you bisexual?” he asked, hesitantly.

“I don’t like labels”, Gordon shook his head, the warmth slowly reaching back his eyes.

“Then you’re even worse.” Karl had no idea why he felt such an urge to antagonize the man. “You cannot marry both a man and a woman. You have to choose, and that means you will always long after something you do not have.”

“So kitty-cat wants to wear a white dress and walk down the aisle?” Gordon laughed, and suddenly he closed the distance between them. He swiftly lifted Karl in his arms, and started walking through the room, humming the nuptial march.

“Put me down, put me down this instance”, Karl struggled, trying in vain to push back, with his legs comically up in the air, and his centre of gravity in terrible lack of balance. “Why do you have to be such a clown?” he tried to get some sense into his unconventional temporary boss.

“Does it mean I make you laugh?” Gordon stopped and solemnly placed his lovely burden back on his feet.

“No”, Karl threw him a glare, while trying hard to smooth down a stubborn crease on his suit. But just that second, he suddenly started to laugh. There was something about the man that was simply saying that no one in their right mind could ever stay mad at him.

With the air clear again, Karl retook his place in front of the laptop. “Do you intend to write a book?” he asked, like nothing happened.

“Kind of. But we’ll see about that. Tomorrow I am in the mood for painting.”

“Painting?” Karl threw another incredulous look in the man’s direction. “What do you intent to paint?”

“You”, Gordon flashed a gorgeous smile, and his eyes sparked with mischief.

“Really now ... There are plenty of other, more interesting things to paint”, the assistant could not help thinking it was yet another joke. “Let me know if you plan to take a trip to the great outdoors to paint nature, so I can dress properly.”

“Well, if you insist so much on your attire, I intend to paint you nude. But you can wear whatever you want on your way here, unless you want to cause a scene on the subway.”

“So funny”, the younger man made a grimace. “How will I be of assistance?”

“I’ve already told you. But, if you choose to be a non-believer, that’s your call. Tomorrow, you will be naked, here, and I will paint”, Gordon said with determination.

Karl rolled his eyes. The man was simply, incorrigible.

Chapter Four

Karl entered Gordon's apartment the next day, not without a bit of trepidation in his heart. He wanted to show no signs of nervousness, especially since there was absolutely no way that the man wanted to paint him. That had to be a joke, as Dick's brother seemed to have a natural tendency towards comedy. But that had not stopped him the previous night from entertaining the idea, just to tickle his ego for a bit. And other parts, as well, but he was not prepared to admit that. It had felt too much like cheating on his boss, the real one, and he had refrained just in time from doing something he had a clear sensation he was going to regret. He only had one golden god inhabiting his fantasies, one only.

He peeked into the large living room. All kinds of computer hardware were arranged on a large desk, different from the one he had used the previous day. The apartment was also tastefully appointed already, taking Karl by surprise. Most probably, the people Gordon had talked about were well paid to arrange an entire apartment on such short notice.

With no Gordon in sight, the assistant allowed himself a bit of exploration. The printer and the scanner were no surprises, but Karl threw a dubious look to the gigantic graphics tablet that was taking a large portion of the desk. He had seen tools like that, and how the guys at marketing were using them to create new ad concepts, but never one so large. It was clearly meant for professionals, and Karl wondered whether that was just one of Gordon's expensive toys he was probably almost never using.

"You're early", he heard the now familiar voice of the house owner.

"Good morning", he turned quickly on his heels, feeling like he had just been caught doing something particularly nasty. "I see the guys from the moving company were quite efficient. They did a wonderful job. Congratulations on a very beautiful house", he spoke rapidly, but he stopped realizing the state of undress in which his temporary boss was.

In casual clothes, Gordon had looked astonishing. Right now, though, he was wearing nothing but a small towel, barely covering his nether parts. His skin was glistening, a clear sign the man had just stepped out from the shower. For a brief second, the assistant followed a single bead of water, traveling down on a perfectly chiseled chest, soon lost in the coarse blond hair there. The man was simply built like a brick house.

Karl gulped, then quickly averted his eyes. "Please, feel free to go finish your shower. I will turn the computer on and start working. I suppose all the files are there, aren't they?" he circled the desk to reach the seat, a little bit too energetically.

"There are plenty of things to turn on later", Gordon grinned, well aware of the show he was putting on. "Go to the kitchen, there's coffee. Also, grab a bite, take anything you want to eat from there, this heroin chic look you're sporting is not exactly healthy."

Karl felt the need to protest, but he realized he had just been given the chance to run away from the scene, so he headed for the kitchen right away. He went straight to the coffee machine, then he thought better. A glass of freshly squeezed orange juice was practically winking at him. Everything was sparkling clean, and on the table, there were various breakfast foods, nicely arranged. Suddenly, he felt like Alice in Wonderland, when everything around her was whispering 'drink me' and 'eat me'.

The extra cup of coffee forgotten, he courageously grabbed a pancake with plenty of maple syrup on it. Living alone had many downsides, one of them being that he never felt like eating, so his fridge was basically a very dull affair. But here, he felt like his appetite was getting the best of him.

Just when he was about to take the first bite, he noticed a half eaten omelet on one of the countertops, the fork still on the plate. That was probably Gordon's, and Karl wondered what could have determined the man to leave his tasty breakfast just half eaten. Thinking about the man and his very healthy appetite made him forget all caution.

With great care, he picked the fork and thought to himself he was just going to take a bite. He could not hold back an exclamation of pure delight, as the food hit his taste buds. Karl could swear he had never tasted anything better in his entire life. It was too good to be left like this, and Gordon was not likely to notice, with so much food around. He would just place the empty plate in the sink and wash it quickly.

“And here I thought you were the picky type about what went in your mouth.”

With the fork between his lips, Karl raised his head to see Gordon, all dressed up this time, in t-shirt and blue jeans, right in front of him. He blushed in an instant, and almost dropped the plate. He put it down quickly, eliciting laughter from the man.

“I did not say that I mind, so go ahead.”

“No, no, no”, Karl precipitated. “It was just that ... I ... never mind. Sorry about your omelet.”

“Do I look like I suffer from hunger? Take a seat and eat properly. In the meantime, I will go to prepare everything.”

“For what?” the assistant asked in a small voice, still flabbergasted over being caught like that.

“For painting, of course.”

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Karl gingerly sat on the giant leather sofa. He had managed to eat very little afterwards, playing over and over again in his head more proper apologies for his lack of manners. Now he was watching Gordon, waiting for a good moment to say something. The man looked preoccupied, watching something on his computer.

“Well, everything is set, so why don't you take your clothes off now?” Gordon finally spoke.

That left Karl completely dumbfounded. Finally he murmured: “What?”

“C'mon, kitty-cat. The day is young, but that does not mean that I'm not impatient to begin. Off with your clothes.”

“There are no painting materials here”, Karl added, hoping that the man was finally going to say that it was all a joke.

Gordon gestured towards the graphics tablet on the desk, and looked at Karl smiling. “What does this look like to you? Do you want to check to see if I have the needed software installed?”

“But I thought ...”

“Well, I suppose you had something more romantic in mind, and I hate to disappoint you. But this is a hobby of mine, and it is easier to enjoy it, while at the computer, instead of using traditional equipment. So, for how long are you going to make me wait?”

Karl remained still. “You’re not joking”, he finally mustered to say. “That is not in my job description, I am sorry to say. If you do not need me for anything, I will just go back to my workplace.”

“Really? And disappoint my brother?” Gordon asked, with a mocking smile on his lips. “Suit yourself. Be a chicken, I don’t care.”

The assistant rose, ready to leave, but there was something so irking about the man that he suddenly stopped.

“Is this amusing to you? To torture me? Why on earth would a guy like you want to see a guy like me naked?”

“Amusing? No, I sincerely find it ... exciting”, Gordon spoke, while letting himself back on his chair, completely sure of himself, with the same smug smile on his face. “And I would very much like to see you naked. I do not waste time with things I do not want to do.”

Karl threw his coat on the sofa, with determination. “Alright then, let’s get it over with.” He pulled at his tie and started to unbutton his shirt with efficient moves. In the meantime, Gordon was almost not blinking at all. His intense stare was drinking in the young assistant’s smooth olive skin, uncovered more and more with each piece of clothing thrown on the sofa.

Once completely naked, Karl took a deep breath and finally dared looking at Gordon. He was keeping his arms on the sides, although he felt an urge to cover his manhood. The man was not moving at all. He was just continuing to stare Karl’s body up and down. “Anything else?” he mocked, feeling a bit triumphant for making the guy shut up for a change.

*He probably hoped I would not do it*, he thought to himself. Karl was curious to see how mister ‘I don’t care about labels’ was going to react at seeing another man naked.

“Your hair”, Gordon answered, completely undisturbed. “I want it tousled, like you have just wakened up.”

Taken aback, Karl raised his hands and threaded them lightly through his hair. A few rebel bangs ended on his cheeks, tickling him. With a grimace, he tried to civilize them, but to no avail.

“Wet your lips; think about the lover still sleeping in your bed.”

Karl threw a comical look in Gordon’s general direction.

“Really, kitty-cat? It’s been that long? No action between the sheets?”

The assistant blushed. “For your information, there is plenty of action in my life, as it is.”

“And what do you do, besides working, sleeping and fawning over my brother? What happens in your imagination does not count as the kind of action I’m talking about”, the man used his index finger to punctuate his words.

“I go to clubs during weekends”, Karl said with a glare. “If you don’t know, gay guys are experts in



having casual sex with complete strangers.”

He was trying to save face, but taking after the man’s facial expression, he was not doing a very good job. He knew well he was not exactly the party master whenever he went dancing in gay clubs. But he was not a saint, and he had been with plenty of men, at least in his book. On the other hand, they had not been that many.

“And no gay Prince Charming managed to snatch you away from the claws of the evil heterosexual? What clubs are those?” the man pretended to be disgusted by the lack of initiative supposedly characterizing Karl’s casual lovers.

Gordon was making fun of him, and Karl was starting to feel like boiling on the inside. Suddenly, a crazy idea crossed his mind. He knew guys like this one, all bark and no bite. Plus, he did not really believe Gordon to be the mighty explorer of sex with men, as he pretended. He had met his fair share of men looking to explore their sexuality, only to end up with a bitter taste and a lame sex experience. Especially since he was picking up only guys resembling Dick Chamberlain and as straight as possible, but with a secret wish for trying something new. That fantasy was yet to reach fruition, and Karl did not see Gordon as an exception to the rule.

“You know what, Gordon? What do you say about us leaving this travesty aside, and jump into bed right now? You and me, what do you say?” Karl crossed his arms across his chest, challenging Gordon with his eyes.

“And neglect my hobby?” Gordon’s eyes flashed, after an initial moment of surprise.

Karl started to laugh. “Of course, straight boy. We wouldn’t want that to happen. Now just let me put my clothes back on, and do something productive.”

He turned to pick his underwear, but he was grabbed from behind by two powerful hands. Gordon’s strong body was now glued to his naked back. The man’s voice dropped to a whisper, while lips were caressing his ear: “I did not say I would choose that over your offer.”

Karl felt suddenly a bit weak in his knees. It was not happening. It was not what he had expected. “Gordon, please”, he pleaded, but his voice was small.

“Don’t back down, now”, Gordon warned. “You offered.”

The assistant was wishing for something clever to say. He turned to look into the man’s eyes, and he felt lost. The green eyes were shiny with lust and he suddenly felt overpowered.

“There is nothing wrong with having a bit of fun, right, Karl?” Gordon coaxed him, and he felt himself nodding, without remembering his brain giving accordance to do that.

The hands traveled on his back, caressing it, and ended up in his hair. Alarmed, he realized what was going to happen and pushed his hands against the man’s chest, letting his head down.

“No kissing”, he spoke, and Gordon stopped.

“What’s this? Pretty woman? I won’t pay you for these services, you know?” the man joked, but Karl stubbornly kept his head down. “As you wish”, Gordon added, his voice brusquely dropping to absolute zero temperatures.

He was turned again and pushed on the sofa, efficiently arranged with his ass up in the air. His heart was thumping in his chest. He was about to have sex with the single person in the whole world who was not right for him: Dick's brother. After the rustling sounds he could hear, Gordon was probably looking for condoms. He heard a muffled curse, and he realized that there was maybe some way out.

"We're not doing anything without protection", he said, and began rising, but he was quickly pushed down again by a strong hand.

"I found them", the man said curtly.

And suddenly he was probed by fingers that were reaching inside him, impatiently trying to make the entrance larger. Karl felt angry.

"I am not one of your women. That will not become loose in an instant."

"Sorry", came the murmured reply and the probing stopped.

But Karl felt the urge to continue. "Do all straight guys do the same? Take the queer guy from behind, so they can fantasize about their women?"

His body was lifted in the air like he was a feather, and he was placed on his back, this time in the missionary position.

"You assume too many things", Gordon spoke, and he looked nothing like the funny guy from the day before. "But since you seemingly like a challenge, let's see how you're going to fantasize about my brother, with me on top of you, like this."

A container with some cream in it was dropped on his belly. "Make yourself ready. I am not going to put my hands inside you again."

He could just walk away. He could just say he did not want it. Gordon was too civilized to stop him. But he did not want to lose. Not this time. Not with this brother. So he clenched his teeth, and prepared himself as well as he could, while Gordon was watching him with dark eyes, stroking himself and putting on a condom.

Karl gulped upon seeing the man's size. He had no idea when he had undressed so fast, but there were apparently many things Gordon was doing within split seconds, dressing and undressing somewhere on top of the list.

He sighed. It was not going to be easy. The man was large in every way, including the downstairs department.

"What is it now?" Gordon snapped at him.

"Nothing, just that you're so big", Karl expressed his concern.

The man's face softened. "We'll take it easy, don't worry."

Strong, callused hands were on his chest, caressing him now, and Karl focused on relaxing his body. He closed his eyes, while Gordon was entering him very slowly, with infinite care. Every time he grimaced, the man stopped, letting him adjust and pushed only when Karl encouraged him to do so.

"Look at me", Gordon demanded, once he was almost fully sheathed inside the slender body. "Don't

think of my brother.”

Karl felt tears threatening to spill, and it was not only from the earlier exertion. He did not let them fall. “I won’t”, he promised, and then Gordon moved, making him take a deep breath and moan in pure pleasure for the very first time in a very long time.

He felt so full, up to the brim, while Gordon was pumping inside him in a slow, pleasant rhythm that was making him a quivering mass on the inside. He absently noted the man’s perfect technique. He had been wrong; there was no way he could have done it so well, without having fucked men before. Dick’s brother was way too practiced.

“Harder”, he heard himself saying, and Gordon adjusted his angle to make sure to hit his prostate, while going a bit faster, a bit deeper, a bit harder.

Karl arched his back and let out a loud mewl. He felt an exquisite tongue licking the salty sweat on his neck, while he was being ridden like never in his life. He grabbed Gordon’s tree trunk like arms to steady himself, while he was squirming under the man’s weight in pure delight. White stars exploding beneath his eyelids, he came in long, white spurts, hitting his chest and Gordon’s.

Spent, he let go of the supportive arms, and breathed deeply. He opened his eyes, and was about to express his gratitude, but just then Gordon bent for a kiss. Karl instinctively averted his lips. His reaction was met with low growl. The hungry mouth landed on his neck again, biting hard this time.

Karl dug his short nails as far as he could into the man’s back, to draw his attention. “Just finish already”, he asked, and Gordon suddenly increased his rhythm, this time less caring and less attentive than before.

He straightened and grabbed Karl’s hips to adjust him, and starting thrusting. He was not looking at Karl’s face at all, his face all a frown, beads of sweat amassing on his forehead. Despite the now rough fucking, Karl felt aroused again, his spent organ quickly reacting to the hard taking. He tried in vain to adjust his position, so that the man could hit him in his secret pleasure spot again.

Soon, it was over, Gordon steadying himself, while letting out an animalistic growl and throwing his head back. He released Karl’s hips and slumped on the sofa, next to his sex partner, a large hand covering his face.

Karl was frustrated. He had been so close to coming for the second time. He pushed himself up, but soon regretted it. His lower body felt like on fire. He fought the sensation, so he could get up. He was going to walk funny for a while. Limping, he was just about to head for the bathroom, when he heard Gordon calling from behind. The used condom, all tied up, was thrown at him.

“Drop this in the trashcan, while you’re there”, Gordon commanded, and there was no trace of warmth in his voice this time.

He was about to throw the condom back, but he was in too much discomfort to fight at the moment. It had been a mistake. One that was not going to happen again.

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He felt wasted and terribly tired, once out of the shower. He had willed down his erection, while staying under the cold spray, wishing for a landslide to appear underneath his feet and swallow him

whole. From all the things he had done wrong all his life, this had to make it at least to a dishonorable top five.

With his head down, he started looking for his clothes that were nowhere in sight, when Gordon's deep voice interrupted his trail of gloomy thoughts.

"Dress in these and take a nap. You need it."

He took the clothes from the man's hands. They felt fluffy and comfortable.

"Where are my clothes?" Karl half-heartedly asked.

"I made sure they do not wrinkle. That's the only thing you need to know right now. I hope you don't mind sleeping on the couch."

Only then Karl realized that a pillow and a blanket were placed neatly on the sofa where they had previously ... well, he was not prepared to go back there, so he just turned to Gordon: "I do not really need to sleep. I just want to go home."

"Stop pouting like a child. You'll sleep here, where I can keep an eye on you."

Lacking energy to respond to that, he let the towel wrapped around the hips drop at his feet, and quickly put the offered clothes on, although they looked like they belonged to a giant. Slipping under the blanket, he dragged the fabric over his head, wanting to disappear for a while, even if he knew Gordon would be watching. A warm hand caressed his shoulder through the blanket.

"Sleep tight. And sorry about earlier. I guess you really know how to drive a man crazy. I was not prepared for that."

Karl closed his eyelids tightly. "What were you prepared for?" he mumbled.

"I was expecting you to purr like a cat and open up. But there is enough time for that."

"Stop it with the cat jokes. It's not funny", Karl added, trying hard not to sound like a petulant child, but failing.

"Yes, it is. And about your hissy fit from earlier, just let me tell you this: it's only sex, and sex is supposed to be fun. A man's tongue in your mouth is not different from a man's cock up your ass. Actually, it should be seen as less intimate, but I guess that's just a matter of perspective. Am I right?"

"You're not. Kissing is about love, it is about doing it with the one you really care for, not with random strangers."

"So, you're never kissing anyone?" Gordon sounded serious.

"Not anymore."

"Well, you're missing on it. I am a great kisser."

"You don't need to advertise yourself. Have you no sense of modesty?"

Gordon chuckled. "I challenge you."

Dramatic silence followed.

“To what?” eventually Karl asked, visibly irritated.

“To resisting me. If by the end of the month, I do not kiss you, at least once, you are free to ask whatever you want. But, if I win ...”

Karl could sense the man’s evil grin, without even looking. “Then what?” he demanded.

“You will quit your position as Dick’s PA.”

“What?! Am I supposed to remain without a job because of your strange idea for a bet? Are you out of your mind?”

“No. You will come and work for me instead. I have no intention to leave you jobless. What do you say? It’s a deal?”

Karl seemed to ponder. “And I can ask whatever I want? Anything I want?”

“Yes.”

“You’ll never talk to Dick about this. About what happened between us. Never.”

“That’s a given. I don’t kiss and tell. Err... I mean I don’t fuck and tell. Ask for something else.”

Karl bit his bottom lip hard. Was it a mistake what he was thinking of asking? Eventually, hesitantly, he spoke: “You will leave me alone. You will never bother me again. No more than a hello if it happens to see each other on the street.”

Gordon drew a deep breath and sighed. “Wow, that’s harsh, Karl. Are you doing this to all your sex partners?”

The silence that followed was enough for a response. Gordon spoke again, and this time, Karl could bet that he was a bit upset and sad. “You’re afraid of being intimate. There is just this much a human being can go on without love.”

“Don’t preach me”, Karl interrupted him, hoping that Gordon would not sense the trembling in his voice. His walls were there for good measure, and for a good reason. He was not going to wreck them for a good fuck.

“Well, we have one month. I plan on fucking your brains out until you yield.”

“Is this a fight?” Karl asked feebly.

“Love is a battlefield”, Gordon hummed the 80s tune and laughed. “And I don’t plan to lose.”

“So cheesy”, the younger man murmured, and earned himself a playful slap on his hard tried bottom, which made him yelp in surprise.

“Don’t take my music tastes in vain”, Gordon proclaimed, this time with humor in his voice. “Now sleep, I will wake you up at lunchtime, and then we can work on the book.”

“No more painting?” Karl felt the need to press his luck.

The man laughed wholeheartedly this time. “I give you points, Karl, for shrewdness. I wanted to paint you nude just to get you into my bed. It worked, so there is no need for that. At least, not right now. In a short time, I am quite confident I will be able to draw you from memory, without torturing you to sit

around naked, doing nothing at all.”

“So much lack of modesty. It hurts.”

“Where? In your well fucked behind?” Gordon’s large paw caressed the aforementioned body part affectionately.

Karl said nothing. The man was right.

Gordon seemed to ponder for a while on his own. “You’re accepting it because you think you’ll win easily, aren’t you?”

“Yes”, Karl said in a small voice. Wanting nothing but to show his determination, he added, although not with as much conviction as he thought he had: “Because I don’t plan on getting fucked by you again. It was just this one time.”

The older Chamberlain brother laughed. “You’re such a funny guy, Karl. I bet it’s enough to take you in my arms and you will do it again in a heartbeat.”

“No, I won’t”, Karl was trying hard to avoid sounding like a miffed kid.

A large hand crept on his shoulders, easily reaching his nape, caressing him there. Without even thinking, he yielded to the touch. The hand stopped.

“You’re lucky your ass can’t take another round. And that I am much more considerate about it than you are.”

The assistant pulled the blanket over his head. There was just this much humiliation he could endure in one day. Especially from a guy that was so carefree about everything.

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Some pleasant smell was tickling his nostrils. He fought his eyelids; they were so heavy, and sleeping in the middle of the day was so good. Middle of the day? Karl’s eyes snapped wide open. The smell was coming from some delicious food Gordon was making in the kitchen, and he was sleeping when he was supposed to be working hard. Quickly getting out of the bed, he rushed to the kitchen, only to witness the surprising image of Gordon in an apron, getting busy with what looked like complicated kitchen utensils Karl could swear he had never seen in his entire life.

“Great. You woke up on your own.”

“Why didn’t you wake me up?” Karl asked alarmed. “What time is it? Is it past noon?”

Gordon let his cooking interests aside for a bit, to stare at the other man, visibly amused. “Since your boss is cooking your lunch for you, you shouldn’t be so panicked. Come, take a seat. Oh, and please have a cushion”, he handed Karl a small pillow with a smug smile on his face.

Karl grabbed it, mumbling something that was supposed to sound like an apology, but came out wrong, and sat a little bit too energetically on the indicated chair. He must have had a comical look on his face, as he rose for a bit, to adjust the cushion and then sit again, because he could hear Gordon laughing to himself.

A plate full with food was ceremoniously placed in front of him, minutes later. In the meantime, he

had preferred to brood over his own attitude, and his lack of resistance to the older Chamberlain brother's charms, so he had failed to notice the sideway glances Gordon had been throwing in his direction.

"Why are you so skinny? Are you dieting?" the ad-hoc cook asked, while taking a seat across from him.

"No. I ... I just do not feel like eating when I'm alone."

"Which is all the time, right? Interesting diet. It works, too."

"Are you always picking on the weaker kids?" Karl asked, while playing with his fork, and wanting nothing but the conversation to be over, so he could eat. He had not realized how starved he really felt, until the food was in front of his eyes.

"No. Just you. You're a real treat. From all points of view. But I am going to make it up to you. First, let's eat."

There was no need for special invitation as Karl started to dig into his plate, and immediately emit sounds of pure delight. "You are a really great cook. I thought someone else came to cook for you."

"Sometimes, but not always. I am pretty fond of my privacy, I do not like strangers lurking around my place, even if they're on the payroll and they have the best intentions."

"I am a stranger. And you gave me a key."

"Of course", Gordon admitted, without even blinking. "Since I am on a quest of conquering you, you are allowed."

Karl stopped, fork in mid air. "You're on a what? Since when I am some damsel in distress in some video game?"

Gordon stared at him wide eyed, his large smug Cheshire cat smile spreading across his face. "I must admit you represent a very interesting quest. I think I'll level up with you."

"Ha, ha. And buy the latest shiny weapon that you'll never get to use because you have already beaten all your opponents to the ground."

"Looks who's a nerdy gamer now."

Karl did not want the conversation to stray too far away from what he wanted to find out. "Really, Gordon, you are rich, beautiful, in mid 30s ... and you intend to waste your time with me ... Why?"

"Because you're a skinny kitty-cat, hungry for affection, who needs saving. Much better than a damsel in distress. And thanks for the compliment."

"You have such a low opinion of me", Karl commented, with a tinge of bitterness in his voice.

"You are beating yourself to be like this. Don't worry, I will not ask you why directly, but I will find out. Until the month is up, you will become mine."

"Hey, I thought this was about an innocent kiss! When did I sign to hand myself over?" the assistant asked, visibly alarmed.

“I can assure you there is nothing innocent about my kisses. I am quite convinced that once your walls come crumbling down, you will never regret for a second that you’ve met me.”

Karl frowned. “Don’t assume you know everything about me”, he said, his eyes cast down.

“I don’t. But I am very much interested in finding out, and this is all that counts.”

“About the kiss ...” Karl trailed, without raising his eyes from his lap, “you will not try anything underhanded, like kissing me when I’m asleep, or when I’m not aware of your intentions, ok?”

“Kitty-cat, when I am done with you, you will be begging to be kissed.”

“I can’t believe how much confidence you have!”

“Do you doubt my skills as a lover? I thought the sample from earlier was proof enough”, Gordon winked at him.

“Yes, my ass remembers it well”, Karl mumbled, most to himself.

A dark cloud passed over Gordon’s face for a split second. “That was partially your fault”, he finally said, his voice suddenly serious.

Karl finally raised his head. “I warned you. No kisses.”

“Yes, we’ll see about that”, Gordon said with a shrug, and with that, he seemingly shook away his seriousness, as well.



## *Chapter Five*

At night, in his own bedroom, Karl had a hard time sleeping. Gordon Chamberlain was just too much. In every way. And too incredibly sexy. Karl could barely remember feeling this hot for someone. He no longer knew what to think of the man. Gordon seemed really convinced to hit it off with Karl, but for what reason? What purpose? He twisted and turned the entire night, and when the light of day started showing through his curtains, he suddenly realized he had not slept for a bit. Cursing his obsession with the other Chamberlain brother, he eventually got out of bed. Not even Dick had managed to give him sleepless nights. The older brother seemingly could.

He took a quick shower, and then a sip from the yesterday coffee left on one of the countertops. His belly was growling loudly, and he took a sad look inside his refrigerator. He decided against trying out the carton of milk sitting lonely on one of the shelves as it was clearly too old to even remember its own expiration date. Eventually, he just cursed Gordon for getting him used to good food and eating in such a short time. Apparently, the man had a serious effect on both his sleeping and eating patterns.

His cell phone beeped like on cue. He read the message and could not repress a smile. ‘Don’t ruin your appetite with coffee. Come quickly. I’m making waffles.’

Waffles? Apparently, Gordon knew how to conquer Karl, after all, and he didn’t need an epic item for it, but a kitchen apron. He turned his back on his old fridge with no regrets and went out the door, feeling like there was something good waiting for him out there, unlike the dull, repetitive mornings he was so used to.



Comfortably installed with a laptop in front of him, at his own, smaller desk, Karl was finally doing some work. He had to admit that Gordon was very diligent about his work himself, and that now he finally got to play his real role, that of an assistant. There had been no mentioning of their little wager, and Gordon did not press the matter either. Actually, besides a little bit of friendly banter during breakfast, which Karl had enjoyed tremendously, Gordon had been nothing but professional for the entire day.

Karl enjoyed this part of the guy, too. He was very pleasant as a boss. Even when he was correcting his assistant, he did it in a very constructive manner, and Karl had to admit to himself that he had never felt so at ease around Dick who was demanding and mercurial in everything he did. Besides the physical resemblance, of which he tended to see less and less, the two brothers were anything but alike.

He stretched and yawned. Being finally over with the first chapter of the book given in his care, he was thinking of taking a little break.

“My kitty-cat is done with work?” Gordon smiled, looking at Karl from his desk. Only then the assistant realized his lack of manners.

“So sorry about that. I forgot for a second there was someone else around.”

“I’m glad to see that you’re so comfortable around me. I believe we worked enough for today.”

“Really? It is still early. I only thought about taking a break.”

“And a break we shall take”, Gordon responded somewhat theatrically, “but first, I need to finish my work, too. Care to assist me?”

“Yes, of course. What can I do?”

Gordon looked preoccupied at something on his screen, and he spoke to Karl in an even tone: “Since you are asking, you can come here ...”

For some reason, his voice dropped to a seductive whisper, and Karl had to bend over his desk to hear what followed.

“... get under the desk, unzip my pants, and delight me with your oral skills. What do you say, my dear personal assistant?” He finally unglued his eyes from the computer screen and stared shamelessly at the other man.

Karl’s mouth opened and shut a few times, no sound coming out. “You! You are so ... I can’t believe you went to Africa and helped those people there! How can you be so ... I don’t have words to say it!”

Gordon bore through Karl’s tirade, without even flinching. When the younger man stopped to catch his breath, he intervened quickly. “C’mon, Karl. Don’t say you’ve never thought about it ... Dick working out late, you offering to help, one thing leading to another ... I am offering you the chance to live your fantasy. Be a sport, don’t say no. After all, I’ve been a good boy all morning, and I did not bother you.”

“I am going outside for a walk. When I get back, you better have some work – real work – for me to do, or I’ll call it a day, and go back home early”, Karl said triumphantly, satisfied with how he was putting Gordon to his place right now, trying hard to ignore just how much the offer was tempting him. The last thing he needed was to feed his oral fixation with new fantasies, this time featuring Gordon as the main actor.

“As you wish”, his temporary boss shrugged. “Obviously, you do not like to play by the rules. If you want to go back to Dick right now, I won’t stop you.”

“And the challenge? The bet? The month you were supposed to use to ‘conquer’ me?” Karl mustered all the irony he had in him, hoping to faze Gordon, at least a bit.

“We can call it off. If you are really decided you don’t want to give me a fair chance, I am not the type to force people to do what I want. I am confident in my skills as a lover, but if I cannot be your lover, I cannot show you anything.”

“You’re not forcing people. You’re just a manipulative bastard”, Karl said through his teeth.

“Well, the door is there. Don’t let me keep you”, Gordon gestured towards the door, without a hint of anger in his voice.

He always seemed so leveled, it was driving Karl crazy.

“Do you really think you can win this bet?”

“As long as you’re game, yes”, Gordon spoke. “No, if you don’t want to play. Name just one game, where the one who walks away wins, without giving it a shot.”

“Well, they do say that in any negotiation, the one who walks away first ...” Karl challenged Gordon with his eyes.

“I don’t intend to negotiate” the man interrupted him. “There will be no compromises from my part.”

The assistant was standing in the middle of the room, not knowing what to do. *Walk away, Karl*, a tiny voice was saying, *walk away, and you’ll be fine. Stay and see what happens*, another one whispered in his ear, and he finally decided to turn around.

He licked his lips nervously. He could sense that his cheeks were ablaze. He was grateful for his dark complexion right now. How could Gordon guess his little fantasy?

“Alright, Gordon”, he cleared his throat, in an effort to sound as casual as possible. “We do it your way. Far from me to avoid playing by the rules. We’ll see who wins, after all.”

He pulled at his tie with a nervous gesture. There was another problem on his mind. Besides guessing his fantasy about sucking his boss off under the desk, Gordon was a major issue for yet another reason; just the previous night, Karl had played in his mind with the possibility to taste the man’s gorgeous cock. He could not say he had ever had a thing for overly endowed men, but, after briefly seeing Gordon naked, a new crave was eating him from the inside.

The blunt way Gordon had put fellatio on the menu had ticked Karl off. Now, he just had to pretend to be not so enthusiastic, or he would give the man a too large boost of confidence, especially since he was never short of it, to begin with.

“What are you doing?” Gordon stopped his trail of thoughts.

“I am taking off my shirt, what does it look like?” Karl snapped at him.

“Easy, kitty-cat, I don’t want you to bite me. I may look strong, but I’m delicate down there. Straighten your tie. I want you here, prim and proper, exactly how you always are.”

“Why?” the assistant asked, puzzled by the request.

“Just a fetish I have. Now come and show me what you’re made of. Who knows? Maybe you’re so good that I will be the one longing after you once the month is up. From the yesterday sample, which I remember very well, unlike you, I can say that you’re pretty good.”

“Pretty good at what? Staying on my back?”

“Even taking it up the ass can be an art, Karl. Stop underestimating yourself or sex in general, and show me what that sweet mouth of yours, which I’m not allowed to taste, can do.”

With that, Gordon pushed himself and his chair away from the desk, and invited Karl to take his place. With a sigh, the assistant eventually did what he was told and squeezed himself underneath the desk, thankful that there was enough room for him to stand on his knees with ease. Since Gordon was so tall, the desk was custom made, and Karl suddenly realized why the man insisted that the assistant would get his own desk.

Gordon pushed himself back, and Karl was face to face with the man’s groin. By the looks of it, his temporary boss was already aroused, the bulge in the front being the only proof Karl needed.

“You do take your sweet time”, he heard Gordon complaining, so he finally proceeded with unzipping the man’s tight denims, to let the huge organ rear his angry head.

With something akin to reverence and tentative fingers, Karl touched the silky skin. An appreciative moan encouraged him. A warm hand descended on his head, caressing his hair, and stopping for a brief second on his nape.

“You’re killing me here, Karl, please”, the hand pushed his head forward gently but firmly, and Karl could not hide a smile. The man whose ‘I don’t care’ attitude was constantly trampling his nerves was not that tough after all. Exploiting little weaknesses was something new to the young assistant, but he was willing to try it out.

He gave the engorged head a tentative lick. Gordon smelled clean and fresh, and yet distinctively manly, a combination that instantly made Karl’s head spin with desire. He engulfed the head in his mouth, almost choking. He withdrew for a brief second, then attacked his goal again. There was no way he could take this too much into his mouth. Depththroating was out of the question, not that Karl was good at it to begin with. But now, he wished he had more practice under his belt.

He sucked the cock head in earnest, eliciting pleasure moans from the owner. Guided mostly by lust, he was using his tongue frantically, unsure if he was doing anything right. In the meantime, the front of his own pants was threatening to rip into pieces. Karl seriously doubted he had ever been hornier in his entire life.

Something must have been wrong, because Gordon pushed him away with a grunt. He was about to ask what was wrong, when he heard the warning. “Close your eyes.”

He barely had the time to do so, as white ropes of creamy substance hit his face, landing on both his cheeks. Karl squeezed his own dick through his pants and bit hard on his bottom lip. It felt so good to have a gorgeous man unload his precious material on his face like that. The little voice always telling him he should feel humiliated was silent.

He tentatively licked his upper lip, tasting the salty cream. If it was ever for Karl to live his fantasy to the end, he would have drunk everything, right from the gorgeous cock the substance was originating from. But he had to refrain and keep this as yet another fantasy to live in the dark.

Something damp, but pleasantly smelling, was touching his face. He realized, his eyes still closed, that Gordon was carefully wiping his face with a tissue.

He wanted to protest. The touch was too intimate. But he was slowly pulled from underneath the desk and pushed into the chair. He opened his eyes, only to see Gordon looking at him with so much gratitude, that Karl felt his chest tighten.

“My turn, kitty-cat”, the man said, and Karl moaned his pleasure, as strong, calloused fingers reached inside his pants, liberating the tortured captive.

Unlike Karl who had only passed a little over the head with his lips, Gordon had no problem swallowing the assistant’s cock in one motion. Myriads of sensations passed through Karl’s spine, like electricity. His organ was assaulted skillfully, by mouth, and tongue, and sometimes teeth, for brief teasing, like they wanted to draw Karl’s attention and make him last longer.

But he couldn't. He tried to warn Gordon, but the sound he made was strange to him; Karl didn't know if it was him. Yet it could be no one else. Eyes rolling in his head, toes curling in his shoes, he came inside the man's mouth, his hands clenching powerful shoulders. Gordon kept him in place like he was nothing but a doll, and drank his load without a single protest.

His eyes were glassy, his hair was a mess. Karl languidly turned his head to watch Gordon lick his lips with an enormous smile on his face. How much he wanted to do the same! Maybe the month with Gordon was going to be a good thing, after all.

Gordon lifted him in his arms, making sure Karl's head rested well against his shoulder.

"We are taking this to bed, now", the man explained, and Karl just nodded. "Don't worry, we'll sleep a little first", Gordon put his mind at ease, while planting a chaste kiss on his sweaty forehead.

"But, my shoes ..." Karl wanted to protest.

"It will be my pleasure to undress you", Gordon gave assurance, and Karl simply dozed off.

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It was late in the afternoon, when he finally woke up. Gordon was sleeping soundly next to him. Karl took advantage that the man was still asleep, to study the perfect profile. Short stubble made him look even more masculine, and Karl slowly touched a cheek, to enjoy the ruggedness there. Slowly, his hand traveled down, caressing the man's neck, contouring Adam's apple, then further south, on the chest, where Karl tangled his fingers in coarse blond hair. He had no hair on his body, as he was always carefully waxing everything. The gay guys he had been with were smooth like that, and he had taken up the habit as soon as he had left home. With straight guys, there was a total different thing. He secretly enjoyed touching their chest hair, but since none of the ones he had been with wanted to expand their experiments besides short so called relationships, he had no actual chance to explore his fetish.

This was where Gordon was different. He was very much into gay sex, even for a bisexual guy. Since he looked so much like a perfectly straight guy, he was like a fantasy come true for Karl. He hoped their little experiment was going to last for the one month they had promised to spend together. He had very low expectations, but, for now, it was nothing short of amazing, and he was willing to make it count.

Uninvited thoughts of Dick suddenly came to his mind. It felt like cheating, although Dick, unlike his brother, was definitely straight. His hand stopped from playing with Gordon's chest hair; what if all was a bad joke? He could see himself losing to the man; right this moment, he wanted nothing but to bend over him and kiss him on the lips. But what would happen after that? Would Gordon make fun of him?

Karl had had too many unpleasant experiments to count; Gordon was eventually going to stray off, looking for something else. For someone else. Most probably female, like it had happened so many times before. Karl could not allow it; loving Dick was a certainty, even if it was not going anywhere. He could play it safe with his boss; Gordon was a luxury he could not afford.

He sighed. But the sex was amazing. So far, it had been the dirtiest, most satisfying sex he had ever

had in his, admittedly, short life. Gay guys of the same age were not looking for a relationship, and most times, they all settled for a little romp between the sheets. No one was interested to stick around long enough to learn about the other, about his pleasures and fantasies. Straight guys in experimenting phases were even worse. Most of the time, Karl had to do everything. Not once, he had preferred to go home from his rendez-vous and masturbate alone. Too few were the pleasant experiences he had had with the random guys he had slept with.

With Gordon, things were exactly the opposite. He had clicked with Karl right from the start. Even when he had made the man angry, and Gordon had taken the young assistant hard, it had still been good. Karl felt ashamed to admit, even if only to himself, that he had been aroused beyond belief, when Gordon had been rough. But there was no way in hell he would let the man know such a thing. Especially since he had showed he was regretting that specific action.

Another crazy thing was that Gordon seemed to have an ability to guess some of Karl's hidden fantasies, like the one from earlier.

He had no idea he had ended up staring at Gordon's face, while pondering over the latest events in his, otherwise, uneventful, life. So he was pretty surprised, when the man suddenly grabbed his hand and opened his eyes.

"Are you going to stay there like that, without continuing?" Gordon teased, smiling.

"I wasn't doing anything", Karl got defensive right away.

"Yes, you were, and I patiently waited, but you just stopped. Why?"

"None of your business", the assistant pouted.

"Yes, it is."

"No, it's not."

He fought in vain to extract his hand from Gordon's paw, but to no avail. Instead of releasing him, the man dragged Karl closer to his chest, and used his other hand to lift the younger man's body and place it comfortably on top of him.

Karl was pressed against Gordon's large body frame, and he could feel the man's erection through the sheet. He eventually gave up fighting, and rested his head on the guy's hairy chest. Gordon rewarded him with a slow caress on his long, dark hair.

"There, there, kitty-cat, no need to fight me. Now, slowly, ride me."

Karl wanted to protest at the sweet command, but something inside him urged him to comply. By now, he was pretty sure there was some perverted little person inside him who wanted nothing but to yield to Gordon in every way. For now, he decided the pervert should be fed.

He rose with his partner's help, enough so he could position his legs on the sides of Gordon's body. He was staying on the man's hard abdomen; he waited patiently for Gordon to release the lower part of his body from the sheets. Now he could feel the long, hard organ poking him right at the end of his butt crack. Suddenly, he felt alarmed.

"Gordon, I don't think I can do it."

The other man frowned. "Why?"

"I still ..." Karl blushed. "I still feel a bit too used after yesterday", he eventually said in a heartbeat. A low, masculine chuckle was the only answer.

"Really, I do", he insisted, a bit miffed.

"Well, if that is the case, maybe we should try something different", Gordon's eyes gleamed.

Suddenly, Karl was on his back again, and he could sense the man's erection resting against his own. He bit his bottom lip, trying hard to stifle a moan at the new sensation.

"I suppose you do not have anything against a bit of old school frottage, then", his lover for the month commented, while pushing his hips suggestively, and making Karl raise his hips to meet his thrust.

"Should we do it in French, then?", the younger man murmured, but he was already pushing against Gordon's cock, wanting more of the pleasant rubbing.

"No need", was the answer, and Karl was embraced by strong hands, sustaining him for a better contact angle.

The friction was delicious, and Karl did all he could to make it better. His cock was shorter and thinner, so he felt like he was receiving a full length massage from Gordon's large organ. From tip to the root, and back again, it was like the best masturbation he had ever had the chance to experience.

"The no kissing rule applies only to your lips, right?" Karl heard through the mist of his lust the other man asking.

He dug his short nails into the man's strong shoulders. He wanted to be kissed everywhere. He did not want to say it. But, as a response, he captured a patch of sweaty skin between his lips, at the junction between the shoulder and the neck, eliciting a low growl from the perfect male specimen riding him.

A hand traveled on his spine to reach the hair at the base of his skull, and pulled a bit too hard. Karl yelped, and released the skin he was sucking at. Gordon angled his head, so he could taste his smaller lover's neck, as well.

Karl could only imagine what Gordon's kisses must have tasted like. The man was obviously skilled with driving anyone crazy, man or woman. He licked and sucked alternately, and Karl realized he was hooked. The pressure in his sack grew, as the gentle sucking transformed into something vicious and almost painful. It was just the right amount of pain and pleasure Karl had been seeking for a long time, the same type he had felt while being taken roughly the first time by the older Chamberlain brother. So he had no chance, no alternative, but to come, with strangled cries, shivering with his own release, wanting more, more, more of the man, regretting he could not feel him inside.

Slowly, carefully, Gordon let him go, and Karl turned his face so he could bury it in the pillow next to him.

"Are you ashamed of this?" came the hesitant question, after a few seconds, during which just their uneven breathing could be heard.

"No", the answer followed, but Karl's voice was shaken, and his cheeks were saying a different story.

“Then look at me.”

With what seemed to be great pain, Karl turned to face Gordon. He could not sustain the look in the green eyes. Was the man pitying him?

“For a gay guy who goes to clubs and has casual sex with random strangers, you’re acting like you’ve never seen another man’s cock in your life, sometimes”, the man joked, smiling.

Karl pushed him away angrily, making the larger man lose balance for a brief second. He tried to escape, but strong hands grabbed him from behind.

“I still have a small problem to solve, Karl. Aren’t you forgetting something?”

Karl cast a sideway glance at the man’s, still strong, erection. “That is far from being small”, he commented, and Gordon unceremoniously grabbed his right hand and placed it directly on his cock.

“Should I show you how it’s done?” he mocked, and Karl threw him a murderous look.

He started rubbing vigorously, focusing on making it good for the annoying male who could make him come like never in his life.

“You’re good at this”, Gordon praised him, while breathing heavily.

For better grip, Karl positioned himself next to his sex partner, so Gordon affectionately circled his shoulders, supporting part of his weight this way. Although the man was a bit heavy, Karl didn’t waver. He teased the head, rubbing the skin over it a few times, until Gordon’s breath turned into moaning, and then prolonged the pleasure, by moving his hand down to the root and then back again.

“I take back everything I’ve said about your lack of experience, just let me come”, the man pleaded, and Karl was happy to oblige.

Gordon squeezed his shoulders tight when he came, burying his face into Karl’s hair, and whispering words of praise.

Both satisfied now, they stood in comfortable silence for a while.

“You’re pretty amazing, Karl”, Gordon spoke first. “You’re pushing all the right buttons. I don’t know how you do it.”

This should be my line, Karl thought, but kept it to himself. “I thought I was annoying you.”

“Did I say that? Sorry for giving you the wrong impression. You’re just the right combination of pervert and innocent for me. I have no idea how you can be both.”

“I’m not ... either.”

“Yes, you are”, Gordon dragged him beside his large body, placing the sheet over them again.

“We should take a shower.”

“Later. Just let me feel you for a while.”

“Why?”

“Because.”

“Because?”

“Yes. And shut up now, you are getting a bit annoying, when you put your mind to it.”

Karl rested his head on a powerful shoulder.

“Have you thought about it?” Gordon broke the silence again.

“About what?” came the slightly irritated reply. Karl enjoyed staying like that too much, to be disturbed with conversation.

“About when it would be a good time to yield and let me kiss you?”

“You’re asking my permission?” Karl laughed. “I thought you were all cock and balls.”

“Hey, you’re hurting my feelings here!” Gordon joked. “Take your time, kitty-cat, I’m here for the entire month.”

And after that? The question echoed in Karl’s mind.

Chapter Six

Friday came too fast for Karl's taste. The week spent by Gordon's side had been a crazy wild ride, but he had enjoyed every second of it. Now, it was time to go home, and it had been a busy day, too. He had not had time to indulge in any of Gordon's extra activities, since both of them had been buried in work. Despite his generally playful attitude, the man seemed to be a stickler for deadlines. Karl could only blame the time they had spent doing anything else but work, mainly sex. That must have pushed the entire work load on Friday.

And there was another thing making the assistant a bit miffed. Although they had been playing with each other each day of the week, they hadn't fucked again; they had resumed to oral play and reciprocating masturbation, plus Karl had yet to taste the man properly, since Gordon had preferred each time to withdraw and ejaculate on various parts of his lover's body, but never in his mouth. All in all, Karl was getting a bit frustrated and impatient, despite enjoying the greatest sex in his life.

With a sigh, he closed his computer and sneaked a peek in Gordon's direction. The man still looked buried in work.

"Sorry to bother you, Gordon, but I am finished here."

The man barely spared him a glance. "You are free to go and enjoy your weekend, then. I still need to finish these."

Karl wanted nothing but to be asked to assist, like before, but, seemingly, the man was no longer in the mood to play. Was he lame to crave for something like that?

"See you on Monday, then."

"Have a nice weekend, Karl", Gordon responded, but still did not look at him.

With a heavy heart, Karl sneaked through the door, making as little noise as possible. Most probably, it was all over, as it had always happened with guys before.



After a night and almost an entire day moping in bed, on Saturday evening, Karl eventually decided to go grocery shopping. He could only blame Gordon's gorgeous cooking for his new found inability to go without proper food like before. The bag of pretzels and the cup of coffee he had had for breakfast had not been enough. Now, he felt so starved he could hardly walk.

As he was walking down the fresh meat isle in the neighborhood supermarket, he heard his cell phone beeping. A bit surprised, he checked it and a bright smile lit his face when he saw the message.

'Have you eaten anything today?'

He decided to reply right away. 'Not really. I am shopping right now.'

The beep came faster than light. 'Are you insane? I am coming over right now.'

Karl felt so happy that he almost took a few dance steps on the floor. Although he knew he was in for a lecture, he took the decision to call.

“Hi, Gordon”, he greeted cheerfully. “Let me know what to buy. Something simple, so I can cook it.”

“Don’t ‘hi’ me like this. And just get out of that store. I am not coming over to get food poisoning. I’ll bring everything. Am I clear?”

“Hey, my cooking is not that bad!” Karl felt the need to protest.

“What cooking?” Gordon sounded a bit aggressive. “Do as I say. I wonder how they have not already picked you off the street and put you all over the news with the headline: ‘Starved to death, in the 21st century, in the richest country in the world’. You’d make a sensation!”

“I survived this long!”

“Which is a wonder to be studied by science. Now get off the phone, so I can get faster to you and feed you. Go straight home and don’t go anywhere.”

“Yes, dad”, Karl mocked. “Wait, do you have the address?”

“Of course, I have your file. I am your boss, remember?”

“Then see you soon.”

“Bye, now, take care.”

When the phone silenced, Karl remained still for a few seconds, looking at the device. Gordon was coming over. Gordon was coming over?! He had to rush home.



He had no idea why he was so nervous. His small apartment was tidy and clean, since things never got used. Once he made the bed and put the few articles of clothes lying around in the closet, there was nothing else to do.

His cell phone beeped again. ‘I hope you do have at least a microwave, don’t you?’

He messaged back. ‘Of course, I am not that poor. Your brother pays well.’

There was no reply, and Karl remained staring at his cell phone. Had he said anything wrong? He slapped his forehead; apparently, Gordon hated any mentioning of his brother. Was he not coming anymore? Now he was both starving and frustrated.

The knock on the door woke him up from his musings. He hurried to the door, like a child to the Christmas tree.

Opening his door, he found Gordon with a stern look on his face and a large bag in his right hand. Karl almost felt like jumping into the man’s arms and kissing him. But they had a bet underway, and Karl still wasn’t sure he wanted to lose.

“Thanks for coming”, he eventually spoke, making space for Gordon to enter.

His apartment looked even smaller, once the man filled it with his presence. “The kitchen?” Gordon asked, and Karl showed him the way.

“Let me help you”, he offered, but a low, grumpy sound put him in his place.

His small kitchen table was soon covered with all kinds of stainless steel recipients. Gordon was moving efficiently, taking some of the food containers and stuffing them in the fridge. “These should keep you away from dying a horrible death, for the next couple of days. Now, bring some plates. These on the table are still warm.”

Karl was happy to oblige, and followed Gordon’s efficient moves, as he loaded both plates with freshly cooked lasagna. The sauce looked terrific, too, and the young assistant could barely wait to experiment everything with his tongue and taste buds.

“Glasses”, Gordon ordered, and Karl obeyed again. Wine was included, as it seemed.

“Eat”, came the next command, and, so used to executing by now, Karl started. “Easy, or your stomach will hurt like hell”, Gordon added, and, with great pain, he slowed down.

Everything tasted heavenly, as he thought it would. They ate in silence, and Karl had no idea when they drank the entire wine bottle. He was not the one to hold his liquor well, so he found himself giggling and saying the darndest things.

“You know, Gordon, you have amazing chest hair”, he suddenly said, while letting his head on the table.

The man threw him a strange look. “Already drunk, Karl? You barely had two glasses.”

“That’s two too many”, Karl giggled again. “Why do you have such a hairy chest? Do you grow it on purpose? Do you groom it, like horses?”

Gordon drew an amused sigh. “Time for you to get to bed.”

“Yay, bed!” Karl showed his excitement, but his eyelids were heavier and heavier. “I want to feel your chest hair.”

Gordon picked him up from the table like he was a feather, and pushed through the doors to reach the bedroom, which proved easy. He carefully placed Karl on the bed, and started to undress him, which in turn was more difficult since the young man seemed to go through fits of laughter, while accusing Gordon of tickling him.

When Karl was completely naked, Gordon was a bit sweaty. “Karl, you’re quite the crazy cat when you get tipsy.”

All shame aside, Karl crawled by the edge of the bed and circled Gordon’s midsection with his long arms. He raised his head, his eyes all shiny. He slowly pushed himself up, climbing on Gordon’s strong body, just like a small kitten. Reaching the man’s shoulders, he supported his weight on them. Up on the bed, he was standing a bit taller than the other man. He stared into Gordon’s eyes, and started caressing the short stubble he loved so much.

“Kiss me, Gordon”, he pleaded, and the man frowned.

Steadying Karl with his strong grip, he forced him down on the mattress. “No”, he said through clenched teeth.

“Why not?” Karl struggled feebly in his arms. “I’m dying to kiss you right now. You’re so beautiful and you fuck me like a sex god”, he pleaded, but Gordon’s stern look made its way through his foggy

mind, so he eventually stopped.

“You’re drunk. I don’t want to take advantage of you. And I won’t break the rules so you can cry ‘foul’ upon waking up.”

“I won’t, I promise ...” Karl tried, but even drunk, he suddenly felt lost.

Gordon shook his head. “No matter how tempting the offer, I won’t follow through. Now, get into bed.”

Karl eventually let himself tucked in by strong, caring hands. “You’re not like the other guys”, he murmured, his eyes half closed.

“What other guys?” Gordon’s hearing got sharper in an instant. Taking advantage of the situation to kiss Karl was one thing; learning a few interesting things about him was another.

“The straight guys I slept with.”

“Have you slept with many straight guys?”

Karl pondered for while. “Five or six. I don’t remember now.”

“Really? And how many gay guys?” Gordon pressed the matter, sensing he was on to something.

“About the same, I guess. Most of them only stuck around for a few days. How do blowjobs count?”

Karl had such a serious look on his face, so Gordon barely refrained from laughing. But it was a strange thing for a gay guy to almost have more experience with so called straight men than with those open about their sexual orientation.

“What on earth do you do when you go to those gay clubs if you do not hook up?”

“I dance, let a guy or two grope me a little, and I go back home.” Karl’s voice dropped to a whisper, like a child wanting to share a secret. “I do not always jerk off, after that.”

“What about the straight guys? You know, if they fuck both men and women, they are actually bisexual.”

“No, they’re not”, Karl insisted stubbornly. “They’re just ... curious.”

“Bi-curious, perhaps?” Gordon attempted a joke, but Karl didn’t laugh. Actually, he suddenly turned and buried his face in the pillow.

Gordon looked at his temporary assistant’s back for a few seconds confused. But, soon enough, by the trembling in his shoulders, he realized that the young man was crying. Hesitantly, he touched him and caressed him slowly. “Look, Karl, there’s no need to cry. They’re not worthy of your tears.”

“I am the one who is not worthy”, Karl mumbled, and Gordon frowned. He had expected Karl to have self esteem problems and he now had the confirmation that they were rooted in his sexuality.

“Who told you that?”

Karl didn’t reply, but stopped his crying and shivering.

“Your parents?”

Gordon almost missed the silent nod. He sighed. For someone as intelligent as Karl, conflict over such matters was to be expected. It explained a few things, too. But the older Chamberlain brother was now interested in learning how deep the rabbit hole went. Only that it was not the right time. Karl's even breathing let him know he was asleep, a consequence both of the wine and the short emotional burst he had just been through.

Gordon turned off the light and closed the door. Saving kitty-cat could be a hard thing after all. But still doable.



He woke up in the middle of the night with an atrocious headache. He blindly walked through the apartment, to reach the bathroom and drank some water right from the tap. He stood on the toilet, relieving his bladder, his mind still fuzzy.

He turned the knob on hot water and stepped into the shower, letting the spray soothe his aching muscles. He could recall eating with Gordon ... His eyes snapped open. He hurriedly stepped out of the shower, drying quickly with a towel, and threw a robe on his body.

He searched the small apartment for signs of Gordon, but in vain. Even the kitchen was spotless, sign that the man had cleaned everything before taking off.

Karl tried to remember what happened after dinner. His memories coming back to him, he suddenly felt ill in his stomach. Gordon must have been disgusted with Karl's behavior. He had refused Karl's advances, on the grounds of 'no rule breaking'. And Karl ... he had just spilled a bunch of idiotic things, most probably scaring the guy off.

With a groan, Karl let himself fall on a kitchen chair. Of course, there was no reason for Gordon to stay; what to do with a pathetic excuse for a human being that he was? Except for that gay guy he had hooked up with for one month, when he had just moved in the city, that must have been his longest relationship. Counting straight guys only, it was the single relationship he had ever had. Not that Gordon was exactly straight. But he wasn't gay, either, and, for Karl, there were only two categories he dealt with.

Feeling miserable, Karl decided to go to bed. At least, he had food, and there was absolutely no reason for him to go out on Sunday.



Sunday went quickly, as Karl just spent it in bed, watching stupid shows on TV, and trying hard not to think of Gordon. He was going to be the perfect professional, and go about his business, for the remainder of the month. He would politely ask Gordon to forget about everything and, since he seemed like a totally reasonable guy, things would just end this way. Yes, it was the best course of action he could take.

Chapter Seven

On Monday morning, as presentable as ever, Karl went to his temporary workplace, hoping for nothing but to tie things up nicely and clean. Although he could use the key, he preferred to knock, after a short hesitation. Gordon was at the door within seconds, and seemed pretty angry.

“You have a key. Why don’t you use it?” he snapped, without even a formal greeting.

“I thought ...”, Karl trailed, taken aback by the man’s reaction.

Entering the apartment, Karl remained standing, unsure whether he should take his place at the desk or not. Probably Gordon wanted to send him packing right now.

“Why on earth are you standing there, like a statue?” his temporary boss asked, visibly exasperated.

“Alright, let’s calm down and talk this through like adults”, Karl finally spoke, after collecting his thoughts. “If you do not want me to continue to work for you, that’s fine, but please, don’t yell, that makes for an unfriendly work environment.”

“Where do you get these ideas from?” Gordon stared at him, dumbfounded. “Did I say anything of the kind?”

“You are angry.”

“Of course I am. Where the hell is your damned phone, Karl?”

The assistant slipped his hand in his pocket, where he always kept his cell phone, and looked at the other man in confusion. He checked the other pocket, then his suitcase. “I ... don’t seem to have it”, he eventually admitted, with a frown.

“I texted and called dozens of times. I could not come to you, because I had no idea whether you wanted to be disturbed or not. And, in the meantime, while I was fretting over you, what were you doing? Watching soap operas?”

“You texted?” Karl tried to keep back a smile that wanted to creep on his lips.

Gordon covered his eyes with a large hand. “I swear to God, Karl, for someone who is supposed to organize other people’s lives, you are quite the lunatic.”

“I am so sorry about that, really. The battery must have gone off, and when I left, I didn’t think about the phone ...” Karl’s words fell like an avalanche, until the other man caught him in his arms, and shook him gently.

“Stop it. What are you doing?”

“I am trying to apologize”, Karl pleaded, as he felt like melting in the big, strong arms.

“There are much easier ways to apologize, Karl”, Gordon’s eyes were shining, while looking down with tenderness at the smaller man.

It felt like his arms were moving on his own as he circled Gordon’s neck with them. Perched on his toes, he closed the distance between them. His eyes were still wide open, waiting for Gordon to laugh

or joke or do something to make him feel bad. The man was doing nothing of the kind. On the contrary, he was bending his head, cautiously, like he was trying to approach a scared wild animal. His eyes were glued to Karl's as their lips drew near, closing the distance, as well.

Then the phone rang.

"Damn it!" the curse rolled on Gordon's tongue. He squeezed Karl in his arms, but the moment was gone. The scared cat was withdrawing again. Gordon chose to not let him go.

"Aren't you going to answer?" Karl's strained voice intervened, as the silence in the room was continuing to get hammered by the annoying sound.

Finally, Gordon released him and answered his phone, doing nothing to cover his annoyance.

"Yeah", he snapped at the other person on the line. "He's here. No. Ask him, not me."

Karl was watching worriedly at Gordon's frowning face.

"It's for you", the man handed him the phone. The look in his eyes was almost scary.

"Yes?" Karl spoke, already guessing who it was. "Good morning to you, too, sir. Yes, I will be there. I leave right away. Of course, goodbye."

Handing back the phone to Gordon, Karl spoke without daring to look at the man's face. "That was my boss."

"Your boss, of course", the man commented, his voice dipped in irony. "My brother, among other things, and I answered the phone so I did not need to get that info from you."

Backing away from Gordon's fit of anger, Karl spoke cautiously.

"I have to go to the office and help him with some things. I hope it's not too much of a bother."

"Well, it is, but since you've already said yes, there is nothing I can do", Gordon sharply cut off Karl's words. "How long will you be gone?" he asked, his arms crossed over his chest.

"I don't know, Dick didn't say."

"And you didn't ask", Gordon's irritation was visibly growing.

"I'm really sorry about this, Gordon, but he needs me", Karl tried to touch his other boss in apology. The man shook the touch away.

"You're not making things better, Karl. Just go." The last words were barely audible, but the assistant got the message. Quietly, he turned and left, making sure to open and close the door with almost no sound at all.

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"Thank heavens you're here", Dick started from the moment he set foot in the familiar office. "John is such a dimwit, he missed the deadline on the real estate project, he doesn't know where the files for the Johnson account are, and he is simply driving me crazy! Honestly, if I knew he would be such a useless piece of shit, I would have not let you go. Now, please, put some order in this office, or I'll fire his sorry ass!"



Karl nodded, placing his suitcase on his old desk. "I will start with the people from the real estate project. I will send a formal apology, along with all the needed papers. Then I will search for the Johnson files. The legal department should have them. Why didn't John call, if he needed help?"

"Because he's a dumbass, that's why!" Dick's voice gained a higher pitch, that Karl almost felt his face hurting from trying to keep back a grimace. There was no need to antagonize his boss right now. It would have just made things worse. "Please do take care of everything, Karl, like you always do."

Karl set at his desk, ready to do exactly so. He hesitated for a second, then asked. "How long do you need me?"

Dick stared at him like he didn't understand the question, so the assistant hurried to explain. "I need to call Gordon and tell him."

His boss frowned. "A couple of days. I'll have Jennifer replace you afterwards. At least, she is capable of answering the phone."

Karl nodded. "Thank you, sir."

He was about to go about his business, when Dick spoke again. "Gordon? Are you two on first name basis?"

The assistant felt blood rising to his cheeks and coughed. He should have bitten his tongue. Eventually, he spoke: "He insisted, sir. I could not tell him otherwise, since he is my boss."

"Humph", was Dick's first reaction. "I am your boss, if I remember correctly, Karl. I don't care what you two do when you are alone, but in polite society, please address him properly, as 'Mister Chamberlain', alright?"

"Of course, sir. My apologies."

"Apologies accepted, now get back to work." A bit stiffly, Dick walked away, leaving Karl to wonder what that was all about. He knew Dick was a stickler for formalities, but this was a bit different. It looked like something personal between the two brothers. Karl had a sudden vision of himself as a simple pawn on a chessboard.

He began working, completing the apology letter, and attaching all the needed information, then phoning the legal department to follow the trace of the other papers that had to be found. He was about to call Gordon, but realized he only had the number in the cell phone, and that was someplace, at home, probably waiting to be recharged.

Hesitantly, he decided to ask Dick directly.

"May I come in?" he shyly asked, as always.

"What do you need, Karl?" the blue eyes rose from the computer screen with infinite boredom.

"All has been taken care of. But I need to call Go ... Mister Chamberlain, your brother, and I do not have his number.

"You worked for him for a week and you do not have his number?"

"Well, I do have it, but only on the cell phone, and I forgot it at home."

“Oh, yes, that is why you didn’t answer when I called”, Dick commented.

Awkward silence followed, while Dick was staring at him. His boss was studying him like he was seeing his assistant for the first time in his life. Karl felt his palms getting all sweaty.

“Can I have the number, sir?” he eventually decided to ask.

Dick had a strange smile when he spoke again. He flipped through his desk, and handed Karl a card with Gordon’s name and number. When he tried to take it, Dick didn’t let it go from the first time, taking him by surprise.

“Tell me, Karl”, Dick’s voice became a bit conspirative. “Did Gordon hit on you?”

Karl felt like the ceiling suddenly fell on his head. “What?! No! Wait, why?”

He had no idea what to say. Gordon said he would never tell his brother about their little affair. On the other hand, Dick seemed to be privy of his brother’s idea of being an explorer in the realm of sexual adventures.

Dick shrugged and finally let Karl take the card. “I don’t know, you seem like his type.”

Karl felt his chest constricting. “Is your brother ...?” he forced a question out of his mouth that had suddenly got dry like paper.

“A homo? A butt pirate?” Dick joked, showing his teeth, and, for a second, he did not look as beautiful as Karl had always thought him to be. He just looked like a hyena, ready to strike. “There are no such people in the Chamberlain family”, Dick spoke on a haughty tone, while examining his manicure. Looking sharply into Karl’s eyes, he continued: “Just that one time, after he broke up with his first fiancée, he caused quite a scandal, when he got involved with a guy. My family was outraged. I supposed it was just his way of trying to vex everyone.”

Karl gulped. If Dick was to find out ... “Did he eventually marry after that?”

“He was engaged two more times, but it didn’t work. I was just checking to see if he strayed from the right path again.”

“Can I ask one more question, sir?”

“Go ahead, since I am still chatting with you about family business”, Dick said with a sigh.

“Why are you telling me all these?”

“Because I thought you should be warned. When he came here, last week, his first words were ‘Your assistant is really cute’.”

Karl dug his short nails in his palms, hoping that he would live through this. Dick did not seem concerned with his discomfort, since he was already back at his desk, suddenly more interested in something happening on his computer screen. He continued: “I supposed he was just trying to annoy me. Instead he just made me laugh. On the other hand, I must give it to him, you do look kind of gay, Karl.”

The assistant struggled to keep standing up, although he now felt cold sweat pouring down his back. “Sir, I can assure you ...” he started, but Dick laughed.

“Relax, Karl, I’m just pulling your leg. Now, go and arrange all my meetings for today. And do not forget that you have to come tomorrow, as well, to teach Jennifer the ropes. I hope she’s not as retarded as John.”

Trying hard to hold back the shivers threatening to shake his entire body, Karl turned and left, hoping Dick was, indeed, too blind, as Gordon had pointed out.

Back at his desk, with shaky hands, he finally grabbed the phone to call Gordon.

“Hi, Gordon”, he spoke quickly. “I am calling from the office, so I am going to be short. I need to be here tomorrow, too, but on Wednesday, I will be back.”

“Ok”, was the curt reply, and then silence followed to let Karl know the conversation was over and that Gordon was still angry like hell.



Upon returning home from work, Karl felt exhausted. He took a shower, trying to clear his mind. Gordon had caused quite a scandal in the family for being with a man, and Dick was, as suspected, a huge homophobe. It was like a bullet had just been shot in his direction, but missed. He started to think that it was not such a bad idea, after all, to do as Gordon had said: to quit and leave Dick behind. Only that he did not see himself doing something so radical. He was not prepared, even if he was in love with a jerk who could not care less about him.

What would happen if Dick was to find out about him? About his sexual orientation? He would probably get fired on the spot. Karl felt cold chills coursing through his entire body. He had always known he had no chance with Dick, but having this type of certainty was harsh and hard to deal with.

On the other hand, Gordon did not seem to have such a happy life after all. Apparently shunned by his parents, as Dick had pointed out, he had chosen to live on his own, and do things as he wanted. Dick was in the family business, Gordon was anything but.

Then a sudden realization hit Karl. Gordon was not going to stay. Even if he was in the city for the time being, he had absolutely no reason to stay for a long time. He was clearly not getting along well with his family, and he was the freelancer type, taking projects as they came. Under the circumstances, his promise to Karl that he would hire him looked a bit too stretched.

Karl buried his face in his palms. He was not going to let Gordon win; he had no chance to see this work. He just had to continue as before. Because, if he was going to fall for Gordon, and let him have his heart, the man would just leave one day to maybe never come back.

What was Karl going to offer him anyway? What could he offer to make Gordon settle in one place? Where the man was planning to go – he seemed to be in love with the whole universe, as he talked about his travels, past or future ones – he had no need for Karl.

Why was he even considering such a scenario in the first place? He was still in love with Dick. Was he really? With a groan, Karl buried his face in the pillow. Why was he so confused right now? It was all Gordon’s fault, with his amazing body and the things he had done to Karl during the last week.

But the young assistant was determined to enjoy what the man had to offer for the remaining time. As a male, he had to be practical, he tried saying to himself. Since hot sex was not something easy to find

for a guy like him, he was going to get deep into the man's pants and take what he wanted.

Karl blushed, despite being alone, with no one to see him or hear his thoughts. Since Gordon had no intention to let Dick know about it, and Karl had all the motivation in the world to keep things under wraps, there was nothing to worry about.

With a sigh, Karl stretched on his bed. Even he had a rebellious streak once in a while. So what if Dick was a homophobe? Karl was just going to get banged by his brother and enjoy it behind Dick's back. After that, he would just go back to worshipping the guy, and fantasizing about him when alone. Things were quite clear, after all. No point in thinking more about Gordon after the month was gone, as the older Chamberlain brother was going to walk out of his life sooner rather than later. Dick would remain the untouchable ideal, and that would be it. The best safe play he could possibly imagine.

Satisfied with his conclusions, Karl decided it was a good time to take a nap. But his stomach started rumbling, and he remembered about the great food Gordon had left for him. And that was not the only thing he had forgotten.

Jumping from the bed, he began searching for his phone. In the end, he found it on the floor, next to the bed. Karl promised he would never drink again in his entire life. That was never happening to him. He connected the charger, and waited for the screen to light up. 23 messages and 40 missed calls!

Karl stared at the screen, not knowing what to say. Two calls were from Dick, but those were unimportant. Hesitantly, he sat on the bed and decided to open the messages from Gordon.

'I hope you slept well. We'll talk on Monday.'

'You are probably still sleeping. I expected at least one message back. :)'

'Alright, Karl, I'm sorry I didn't kiss you, but it would have been wrong, ok?'

'You really want to keep me boiled like an egg, don't you?'

'Karl, I called, you are not answering. What the hell?'

Karl flipped through Gordon's worried messages and could not help smiling. Letting the phone to charge, he went to the kitchen to eat.

All satisfied and well fed, he returned to the bedroom and picked up the phone. He fiddled with it for a while, then biting his bottom lip, he started typing.

'I just ate your food. It's amazing.'

He waited for while, hoping for a message. Apparently, Gordon was still pretty mad, or he did not have the phone around. It could happen. He flipped through the channels on TV, but decided there was nothing on. He sent another text message.

'Apologies. You are the one who's amazing. As a cook.'

No response this time either. Karl decided to not feel discouraged.

'And not only as a cook. :)'

Playing with the phone, he wondered how mad Gordon really was. Damn it, he was not going to lose enjoying the man's skills in the kitchen and in bed. It was his month, after all, and he wanted to enjoy it

to the max. After that, well, he had just decided there was nothing interesting after that and he already knew it.

‘I cannot wait to get back to you’, he wrote and hit ‘send’ after a moment of hesitation.

Finally, his phone beeped.

‘When are you coming back?’

Karl felt like he could scream from joy. ‘As I told you, the day after tomorrow.’ He quickly typed.

Another beep let him know of incoming message.

‘Until then, stop pestering me.’

Wow, that was harsh. Could it be that Gordon was already having fun with someone else? Karl felt his heart sinking. And why shouldn’t he? After all, he could have almost anybody he wanted, man or woman. A pang of jealousy stabbed through his chest.

Thoughts of Gordon bathing in a sea of naked bodies went through his mind. Karl thought he was beyond any aggressive behavior, but, for a split second, he saw red before his eyes. He shook his head. What was he thinking? The man could sleep with anyone he wanted, why was this important to him? It was not like they had decided to go exclusive for the month.

Unsatisfied, Karl sat at the computer. There was, as always, Internet porn to rely on. He flipped through some profiles of guys pretending to be straight, but in search of ‘gay adventures’, and decided against each and every one. He could tell they were gay and just trying to fulfill some fantasies, theirs and others’.

He searched for some streaming websites for something different. The old straight on gay fantasy did not seem to work tonight. Browsing through the available videos, he noticed a huge blond bent over a smaller male, in a very enticing position. Drawn by the screenshot, he decided to give it a try. The man was no Gordon, but he had to do, especially since he was really buff out, and his partner was delicate and much smaller.

Karl could not believe he could come so fast. He did not even manage through the first sex position. Just thinking of Gordon taking him hard had been enough to make him explode.

*Time for another shower.* He rose from the chair and headed for the bathroom. Just another day to go without Gordon, then he would be able to enjoy the real thing, again.

## *Chapter Eight*

Thankfully, Tuesday went uneventful. Karl could only think about Gordon and what was going to happen once they would meet again. In the meantime, he took care of instructing Jennifer of everything she had to do, while he was gone.

He saw little of Dick for the entire day. But, as he was about to leave, his boss summoned him to his office.

“Great work there, Karl”, Dick flashed his best smile at him, and, for the first time in three years, Karl’s heart did not leap with joy.

“Thank you, sir”, the assistant bowed politely. “Whenever you need assistance, please call.”

Dick rose from his chair and stood in front of the huge window for several seconds, while pondering over something. Karl remained standing up, waiting for his boss to dismiss him, like usual.

“Do you like it here, Karl?” Dick eventually asked.

“Yes, sir”, Karl answered, after a short moment of hesitation.

“Do you plan on leaving?”

“No, sir”, the assistant replied, with surprise in his voice.

“I wouldn’t blame you, if you did. You’re far from reaching your potential in this position. But I plan on doing something about it. Next month, there will be an opening in our R&D department. I want you there.”

Karl opened his mouth and closed it a few times, weighing his words. “I don’t know what to say.”

“Just say ‘yes’, Karl. You have outstanding academic achievements, now it is time to put them to good use. I really believe you could progress better and help the company from there. You have by the end of the month to think about it. You can go now”, Dick dismissed him.

“Have a nice day, sir, and thank you for considering me.”

He was about to leave, and Dick spoke again. “Don’t let Gordon chew you and spit you out like a chicken bone. A sweet guy like you is easy prey for him.”

Karl’s breath hitched in his chest. Sweet? Now that was a strange choice of words. How much was Dick suspecting, anyway?



After partially spending the night, weighing Dick’s offer and strange words, Karl was decided. His suspicion that he was a pawn in some kind of game the two brothers were playing was growing stronger. Dick had never offered a promotion before. Gordon, on the other hand, could not stand hearing his brother’s name. He was just going to ask Gordon about it, and maybe he could find out more.

In the morning, refreshed and feeling anxious to meet Gordon again, Karl stepped into the man’s

coquette apartment, using his key this time around. He found a miffed Gordon, fiddling with his mouse in front of the computer.

“The return of the prodigal son”, was the first comment slipping from Gordon’s mouth.

Karl smiled. “I suppose you are referring to your coming back to the city where your family lives.”

Gordon’s head snapped so hard, the assistant could bet he could hear bones cracking. “What do you mean?”

Karl sat on the sofa, so he could see Gordon better. “What is really going on, Gordon? I may be a lot of things, but I’m not stupid.”

Gordon took a more comfortable position in his chair and motioned it so he could stare directly at Karl. “Enlighten me, kid. I do not quite follow you.”

“Out of the blue, Dick offered me a promotion.”

The short flash of anger in Gordon’s eyes confirmed his suspicions. “So what are you going to offer next?” he continued, after letting his words sink in.

“Me?” Gordon smiled thinly. “Nothing more than I’ve already offered you. Going back to Dick now, I assume?”

Karl shook his head. “Just tell me what the deal is. Since I’m involved, whether I like it or not, I am at least entitled to know.”

“Why didn’t you ask your boss?” Gordon let his signature Cheshire grin spread on his handsome face.

“You know very well why. He would not give me an honest answer. You, on the other hand ... I bet on you for this”, Karl crossed his legs, smiling sweetly.

Gordon stretched on his chair, chuckling and crossing his hands over his head. “There, there, kitty-cat, do you think you can play the big boys’ game?”

“Why not?” Karl demanded, a bit miffed by Gordon’s arrogance.

“You may just end up eaten up alive”, Gordon whispered seductively, eyes at half mast.

“Funny, your brother said something similar ... and that you will be the only one who’ll do the eating part.”

Gordon smiled, but this time, he was showing teeth. It was a bit scary, Karl had to admit.

“So, smarty pants, what did you figure out so far?” Gordon asked, bending forward and placing his elbows on his knees, while parting his legs.

From his vantage point, Karl could see the man’s huge package contouring through his jeans and gulped. But he shook his head and started speaking.

“Dick told me some things, so please do not get offended that I know them”, he warned first.

“There is nothing he can say or do to offend me”, Gordon shrugged.

“Alright, then. You and Dick are in a competition for your parents’ attention. He’s the white sheep,

you're the black one. He is doing everything they say, and is in charge of the family business, while you are doing whatever you want, whether they like it or not. On top of everything, he is the regular male chasing skirts, which is nothing frowned upon, while you ... ", Karl coughed, a bit embarrassed. "... well, you were involved with a man. Please do stop me if I'm wrong. Because of this competition between you two, you are always trying to put him down and vice versa."

Gordon clapped a few times, ironically. "Very good, Karl, very good. So, if you have everything figured out, why are you still here? Dick is waiting for you to lick his shoes, like a good lap dog you are."

Karl grimaced and decided against following through with the suggestion that he should leave. "You're being an ass, Gordon. I want to know: what am I doing here? Whoever gets Karl to do what he says wins?"

"Something like that", Gordon admitted.

"In Dick's case, I understand. He only needs to make me stay. But you? What's your game? And how much Dick knows of what we do together?"

"Don't worry, I don't intend to put your private life at risk", Gordon answered. "I only need to make you quit your job as Dick's assistant."

"And leave me jobless?" Karl did not hide his hurt. "Rich boys and their games", he added, with a tinge of disgust in his voice.

Gordon's expression hardened. "My offer is real. If you quit working as Dick's PA, I will hire you. I don't do bullshit like that."

Karl sighed. "And what about the sex? Is that part of the deal, too? Is this all about who has the biggest cock?"

"In love and war, all is allowed. Dick is not required to know how I did it, if I win. Since he does not think you're gay, he is probably not even considering this option."

"I beg to differ. Your brother asked me if you had hit on me."

Gordon looked amused. "He was just trying to throw you a red herring. Or he probably thinks that I am just too charming for you to resist, gay or not."

"I don't think this is funny. And the kiss?" Karl finally decided to ask.

"That's just between you and me, it's our little bet. Dick has nothing to do with this."

Karl stared with Gordon's eyes, looking for signs that the man was lying. "Alright, Gordon, since everything is clear now, I think we should start working."

The look on the man's face was priceless. Karl wished to have had a camera, to get it on picture.

"You're not leaving?" Gordon asked, looking as incredulous as he could.

"Why?" Karl smiled at him. "And give up on a month – alright three weeks or what's left – of awesome food and sex?"

Gordon's smile was so bright, it looked like the room was lit up all of a sudden. He still asked.



“Why are you doing this, Karl?”

The assistant shrugged. “You told me that I must give you a fair chance so you could win. This is what I am doing. So, what is the first thing we should do? How is the book coming along?”

In a heartbeat, Gordon was next to him, lifting him in his arms and holding him close.

“I think we should start with this” and he tried to capture Karl’s lips in a kiss.

The assistant averted his face right away.

“What the hell, Karl?” Gordon murmured in the man’s hair, visibly frustrated.

The younger man explained. “As far as your competition with Dick is concerned, I will help you out and give you all the chances you want. But”, he raised his head and stared the man in the eyes, “about the challenge between you and me ... I have all the right to do everything I can to win.”

“But ...” Gordon wanted to protest. Karl hushed him with a delicate finger on his lips.

“You, Gordon Chamberlain, wanted to play. Let’s play.”

The man started laughing. “That’s my kitty-cat.” He squeezed Karl again in his arms. “A tough little one, aren’t you? Let’s see how you melt when I fuck you.”

He placed Karl back on the sofa, so he could undress. Karl did the same, without losing eye contact with him for the single moment.

With Gordon installed comfortably between his legs, he grabbed the man’s hair and pulled hard.

“Ouch!” the man protested.

“Aren’t you forgetting anything?”

Gordon looked at him confused.

“Condoms and lube”, Karl said very slowly, like he was speaking to a child.

The man’s face lit up. He jumped back on his feet and went searching for their sex supplies. When he returned, he found Karl positioned on his fours, undulating his body and exposing his ass, while throwing him sultry looks.

Gordon’s mouth went dry.

“Take me like this”, Karl threw his head back and licked his lips. “I know you won’t be thinking about anyone else while we do it.”

“What about you?” Gordon asked, while closing in the distance and rubbing a perfect buttock.

“You’re kidding? You’re the best fuck I’ve ever had.”

“Wow, Karl, you really have a dirty mouth. Don’t you want to put that to good use?”

“Later, now fuck me hard”, Karl demanded, and Gordon quickly prepared him, and put a condom on.

The younger man pushed back, as Gordon tried to adjust his considerable size in the smaller body. He grunted. “Gosh, Karl, you’re driving me nuts. This will hurt if you don’t stop.”

“Let it hurt. Fuck me deep”, Karl said through moans, and Gordon could not restrain himself any longer. With a hard push, he was inside, and Karl moaned louder.

“Does it hurt?” Gordon asked, worried.

“It hurts just right”, Karl whispered. “Move now.”

Gordon shook his head with a smile. “You pervert”, and started pumping Karl’s sexy ass like there was no tomorrow.

Karl left all shame aside. Feeling his body stretched to the limit by the man’s considerable size was awakening something in him, something he had only experienced by accident before Gordon. His body moved to meet the guy’s powerful thrusts and he could tell his actions were making quite an impression on the other.

Gordon’s hands traveled on his sweaty back, reaching his nape, grabbing the longish strands of hair there. Karl could not get any harder. He threw his head back, loving the sensation, relishing in it, and the larger man rode him in earnest, giving him exactly what he wanted.

He came without touching himself, something that again, before Gordon, he could not believe possible. His ass contractions drew his lover to his completion, as well, and the man released himself with a grunt. Grabbing Karl’s hips and dragging him towards his hard body, he slumped on the sofa, without withdrawing.

He licked a salty shoulder, then carefully put Karl besides him, while letting his organ slip from the enticing hole. He stood like that, his eyes closed, breathing deeply. Karl’s voice woke him up.

“I think I ruined your sofa.”

“Well, I’ll put you face to face with the cleaning lady, and you’ll explain.”

“What?!” Karl almost yelled. “I’d better do the cleaning myself.”

“Don’t you dare, kitty-cat. Cleaning is not for your delicate hands.”

“Please don’t call me delicate. I’m a man, you know. And did you really tell your brother I was cute?”

“What’s wrong with that? You are cute. With those strange eyes ... what color are they anyway?”

“Some brown, I don’t know.”

“No, they’re not, they’re like a cat’s. That’s why I called you that the first time.”

“I remember you said you did that because I didn’t like anyone ruffling my hair.”

“That, too. I think a lot of things I do not say out loud.”

“What are you thinking right now?” Karl asked, straightening himself, and letting his head rest on a muscular shoulder.

“That I don’t remember enjoying fucking anybody like I do you.”

“Really?” Karl stretched, rubbing his torso onto the man’s arm. “Gordon”, his voice turned serious, “have you been with a lot of men?”

“Depends. What do you mean by a lot?”

“C’mon. You know what I mean. I told you about mine, even though I was smashed at that time”, Karl complained, while continuing to rub his body against the man’s arm.

“Are you trying to get me to smell of you, kitty-cat? It may work”, Gordon commented with a smile.

“Don’t change the subject, and I was doing the opposite. I want to smell of you.”

“Kinky Karl ... I like that. Well, there were a few good men in my life. But no one lasted for a long time.”

“Why? Because you’re bisexual, and you have to marry a woman?” Karl asked, blushing a little.

“A few, because I was stupid and didn’t know what I really wanted. Others ... well, I guess it was not meant to be.”

“And women?”

“What about them?” Gordon’s voice was getting icy all of a sudden.

“Why didn’t you stay with any?”

“Complicated stuff”, was the only curt reply, and Karl decided to drop the matter for the time being.

“And you want to tell me that after you had so many men and women ...”

“I said ‘a few’, not ‘many’, stop twisting my words”, Gordon chided.

“... you want to tell me that I’m your bestest?”

“There is no such word as bestest, mister English lit graduate.”

“I can point out a few cartoon characters who beg to differ.”

“Aren’t you a little too old for cartoons?”

“Aren’t you a little too young to be this grumpy?” Karl teased and placed a quick kiss on the man’s cheek.

He had no idea how he could act like that, now knowing his role in the two brothers’ game. But knowing the truth felt liberating, and it was like he could do anything he wanted. After all, it was up to him to decide who would win.

Gordon dragged him in his arms. “Let me get the condom off, and let’s go shower.”

“Alright, we have a lot of work after that.”

“Yes, we do.”

Gordon pondered for a second, his nose breathing Karl’s scent from his hair. “I really do appreciate you staying, Karl. I really do.”

Karl turned to stare into green eyes and said with all seriousness: “Thank you for having me, Gordon.”

Gordon grinned happily. “Now that’s a nice choice of words.”

A laugh was the only response. Gordon stared at Karl, drinking in the image of a happy young man. “You look great when you laugh, Karl. I’m glad I make you laugh.”

Karl was almost ready to kiss the man. But he had a bet and a challenge to consider. He had to give it to him. The man was good; not only a sex god in bed, but a player all the way. Gordon always knew exactly what to say.



“What are these?” he asked, while looking at the tickets on Gordon’s desk. “Are you going somewhere?”

Karl hoped for a negative answer, but the proof was pretty clear. Gordon walked into the room, completely naked. The assistant licked his lips unconsciously. Seemingly, the man had no problem flaunting his nudity all over the place.

“Yes, a resort, this weekend.”

“Why didn’t you ask me to handle the details? I could have gotten you a better price”, Karl commented, fighting hard against a pang of jealousy. He tried sounding casual: “Who will you go with?”

Gordon laughed. “What a funny guy you are, Karl. Are you sure you never wanted to do standup comedy?”

“How am I being funny?” Karl frowned. He wasn’t in the mood for any jokes. “I am just asking you a simple question.”

Gordon caressed his cheek with one hand, and grabbed his ass with the other. “You’re cute when you’re jealous. I plan to take a certain PA on an exclusive trip to Cancun for the weekend.”

Karl’s mouth dropped. “To Cancun? Are you serious? And you are taking me?”

“Well, Dick stole you for two days, so I need to recuperate.”

“You’re not playing fair, aren’t you?” Karl smiled, and mirrored Gordon’s gesture, by grabbing a handful of nicely shaped naked buttock in his right hand.

“Prepare yourself for a weekend full of debauchery. I’ll pack condoms and lube. You ... just bring your exquisite body.”

“You said I was skinny. You like my body now?”

“You could use some fattening. I am taking care of that”, Gordon said with a wink.

“And then I will have to go on a diet. What games are you playing, boss?”

Gordon blinked a few times. “You just called me boss? Isn’t that like cheating on your current employer?” He emphasized the last two words, like he was talking of some reptile.

“He’s not fucking me, so for now, you’re the best boss on the planet”, Karl touched the man’s nose with the tickets. “Now, get dressed. If we leave”, he searched the tickets with his eyes for a second, “so early on Friday, we need to get everything done, until then.”

“And you intend to keep me unsatisfied until then?”

“It could be a nice punishment for not telling me ahead of time. What if I had plans?”

The derisive sound that escaped from Gordon’s lips made Karl slap him with the tickets.

“That didn’t even hurt”, the naked man commented and took Karl in his arms, making sure his erection was no lost on the other.

“Alright, I’ll blow you, is that ok?”

Gordon happily nodded, and let Karl descend on his knees in front of him, all dressed up in his office suit, exactly how his new boss liked it.

The citrine eyes flashed at Gordon, before dark eyelashes covered them as a hot mouth was engulfing his organ. Day after day, Karl was getting more daring, more practiced.

“I am spoiling you rotten, am I not?” Karl took a small break from sucking.

“You can do whatever you want with me”, Gordon whispered, while caressing the young man’s dark strands.

Karl was relishing the sensations of sucking Gordon’s cock. In such a short time, he had gone from mediocre to decent as far as blowjobs were concerned. Not that the man minded how much Karl wanted to use him for practice. Just yesterday, he had done it thrice. Now the day was starting really well.

“Let’s do a sixty-nine”, Gordon begged, although Karl would have wanted to spend more time on his knees in front of his sex god.

Gordon just lifted him in his arms, placing him on the sofa that had already been so abused by their proclivities. Taking Karl’s organ out in a quick experienced move, he swallowed the dark cock, making it impossibly hard in a second. He pumped slowly his own cock into the assistant’s sweet mouth, letting him adjust and take just what he could.

Just as the times before, Karl came first, filling Gordon’s mouth with his precious liquid. The man withdrew and Karl rose to take in the beautiful image of his lover, as he was licking his lips.

“I want it in my mouth, too”, he blurted out, while watching the man squeezing his giant cock and preparing to shoot.

“Karl”, Gordon whispered, “you pervert. You cannot take my tongue in your mouth, but you want my jizz? Dirty little cat, come here, lemme give you some milk.”

Karl was certain he could have just come on the spot, if he hadn’t just done that, upon hearing Gordon’s dirty talk.

Carefully resting the tip of his penis against the willing mouth, Gordon started shooting, enjoying how Karl’s pink tip of the tongue was darting outside to take all the cream inside. He could tell by Karl’s unconscious grimace that the man hadn’t swallowed much in his life.

Spent, he withdrew and caressed the beautiful moist lips with his thumb. “Karl, how many times have you swallowed in your life?”

Karl blushed. “Well, sorry if I’m not so practiced as you, mister deepthroat.”

“How many?” Gordon lifted his chin and stared into his eyes. The citrine pools were soon covered by those long eyelashes.

“A few ... when I was with the straight guys I dated. They wanted it.”

“And you ...?”

“Not really. But I tried.”

“Then why force yourself with me?”

“It’s not like that”, Karl responded energetically, while raising his eyes to look at Gordon. “You’re ... you’re great. And yours tastes great.”

“Don’t lie, kitty-cat”, Gordon warned.

“Alright, it’s not as bad as others”, Karl said exasperated.

“If you don’t like it, don’t do it. I will not ask it of you. You don’t have to reciprocate.”

“But I do, I do like it”, Karl insisted stubbornly. “It’s not the taste, it’s the kink, damn it”, he rose and stuffed his own spent organ into his pants.

Gordon laughed wholeheartedly. “Yes, I should not forget how kinky you are.”

Karl seemed to have trouble with adjusting his own pants. With his eyes cast down, he spoke: “Only with you.”

Gordon dragged him into his arms. “Are you trying to seduce me, Karl? ‘Cause if you do, it’s fucking working.”

Karl let the man embrace him and caress him. Gordon was too damn good; if he didn’t know it was all a game, he could fall for the man right there.

## *Chapter Nine*

Holding hands on the plane with Gordon had been unexpected for Karl, and that had made him feel like floating on cloud number nine literally. For Gordon, it had been a casual gesture, as he had intertwined his fingers with Karl like it had been the most natural thing in the world. There were things like that which made Karl's chest constrict at times. If it had not been a game ... it would have been like a fairytale. And the young PA had made a promise to himself to not forget that. Gordon was obviously the better brother, and he had already chosen who would win between the two. But he would not give his heart like that. He had decided to treat everything like he was on a well deserved vacation from his own life.

At the hotel, there were even more surprises in store for him. They were greeted by a very friendly concierge, and a handsome bell boy came to take the luggage. He understood Spanish perfectly, and he caught some whispers in the wind. He blushed and Gordon embraced him in front of the personnel without a care in the world.

"How come everyone here is so ...?" he whispered into his partner's ear.

"Sexy? Or gay? Or both?" Gordon returned the whisper, while nibbling at Karl's ear playfully.

"I meant direct", Karl tried to save his ear from the assault, and keep Gordon far enough so he could glare at him.

The man laughed. "You will see, I will not tell you anything."

The hotel seemed to be swarming with attractive males, both personnel and clientele. Not few were the appreciative glances or shameless stares the couple received all the way to the room. Karl was amazed, for lack of a better word.

"Gordon, is this one of those gay friendly resorts?" he asked, when they were finally alone in the room.

"You got it, kitty-cat. Is that a problem?"

"No, not really. I am just a bit surprised. I wasn't sure they existed. I mean everybody around us is really gay!" he exclaimed, expressing his wonder.

"Well, I'm sorry you won't get to feed your straight on gay fantasies this weekend", Gordon threw him a strange glance.

Karl turned serious all of a sudden. "Have you been with anyone else here before?"

"Here, no. But I've been to similar places. Does it matter?"

"No, not really", Karl turned his head, to hide his disappointment.

Gordon looked after him pensively, but decided to let the matter drop for now. "I hope you don't mind Speedos. They are quite the rage around here."

"I didn't pack anything of the kind", Karl responded with a shrug.

"Doesn't matter. I bought a few pairs for you."

Karl's head turned so fast Gordon burst into laughter. "You should see your face right now. It's priceless."

"Gordon, please, just let me wear my trunks. I can't walk around naked like that!"

"Trust me, Karl, you would stand up more in your swimming trunks around here."

Something about that sounded off, and Karl frowned. His expression must have been funny for Gordon, who added: "I was this close to buy a g-string for you, but I thought that everybody would drool over you. Lucky you I was not willing to fight off the competition this weekend. C'mon, just give them a try", he encouraged Karl, while handing him a neon green piece of clothing that looked too little to cover anything in a decent manner.

Glaring at Gordon, Karl snatched the object and went directly to the bathroom to change.

"Where do you think you're doing?" the man asked amused.

"I am not going to make a fool out of myself in front of you. I will change here", Karl yelled through the door.

When he eventually emerged from the bathroom, he was welcomed by Gordon's hot stare. His perfect dark skin was contrasting with the bright color of the swimming outfit which covered enough to let some things to the viewer's imagination.

"It's stupid", he complained.

"No, you're absolutely gorgeous", Gordon was eating him up with his eyes. "On a second thought, I still may have to fight off the competition."

"So it's better if I take them off, right?" Karl asked with hope in his voice.

"No, stay like this", the man stopped him by leaping from his chair and taking him in his arms. "I will be your valiant hero."

"And I will be ... what? Your princess?" Karl pouted.

"No, my prince. My lovely, sweet prince", Gordon nuzzled his neck. "I will change, too, and then we will go down to the pool. What do you say?"

"I am going to die of shame", Karl concluded, but let the man caress his back and buttocks.

Gordon left him watching TV while he went to change. When he turned back, the expression in Karl's eyes was speaking volumes.

"What the hell, Gordon? You're wearing trunks! Didn't you find a larger number? It's like you're wearing pants! And I'll have to walk around looking like a glowing stick!" Despite his angry words, Karl was drinking in the image of a Gordon in loose swimming trunks, hanging on sexy hips. They made Gordon's perfect six pack stand out even more. Karl's eyes followed the treasure trail with visible longing.

Gordon's grin was the only answer. He took Karl by the hand and placed a silky robe on his shoulders.

"Here. So you won't have to walk to the pool feeling naked."



The fabric felt nice. The trip felt nice. Gordon felt ... Karl closed his eyes, and wished for a second it was all true.

“What are you thinking?” the man asked, a bit worried by Karl’s sad demeanor.

“Nothing”, the assistant shook his head and his sadness along with it. He was here to have fun, after all.



Down by the pool, Gordon had to struggle with Karl for a bit to convince him to give up on the robe. Eventually, he entered the water, with Gordon by his side. Karl felt too terrorized to look around, so he was mostly staring down. His temporary boss and lover pushed him into a corner and lift his sexy ass on the edge, placing himself comfortably between the long, smooth legs, letting Karl play with his feet in the water.

“It’s not fair”, Karl murmured, still a bit miffed. “You took your trunks.”

“And how do you think I could hide the monster in Speedos? Since I’m with you, I am a walking hard on. I don’t want to scare off the clientele. They may never let us come here again”, Gordon whispered into his ear, playing with a delicate lobe, sinking his teeth just a little into the tender flesh.

“Really? I think all the guys here would be grateful for the free show” Karl had to admit he felt a bit proud to be the man’s main cause of discomfort right now.

“Do you feel it?” Gordon pushed against him, enough for Karl to feel the length of his hardened organ through his minuscule swimwear.

“We should have taken care of it in the room”, the assistant chided his boss. “But yes, you’re lucky you have your large trunks on. What am I going to do?” he pointed out at his own growing erection.

They were interrupted from their happy banter, by a discreet cough. Gordon turned to find two attractive guys in their 20s staring at them.

“Yes?” he asked, a bit annoyed, and showing his teeth just enough to make the unwanted guests disappear.

“There, there, tiger”, the smaller one spoke first. “My boyfriend and I saw you two from the moment you checked in, and we think you are both hot as hell.”

Karl felt his cheeks were on fire. Not even his experience with gay clubs had ever been so direct, so open. The other man spoke, interrupting his trail of thoughts. “I’m Mike and this is Chad”, he offered his hand to Gordon, and then to Karl. “We’re throwing a party tonight, and we want to invite you. What do you boys say? There will be plenty of ... well, you know, everything”, he winked at Karl.

Gordon was about to turn down the invitation when his partner spoke.

“Thank you for your invitation. Let us know the details and we will be there”, Karl smiled at Mike who was shamelessly checking him over. He had no idea what had gotten into him so suddenly, but he wanted to go to a party with Gordon and have fun without fear of anyone judging them.

After the men offered the needed directions, they waved goodbye and let the two continue to enjoy

the conversation. Karl felt quite good about himself. It looked like it was easy to make friends. Gordon was not as delighted as him.

“What is it?” he asked, sensing the other man’s tension. “Did I do anything wrong?”

“You do understand what type of party that is going to be, don’t you, Karl?” came the stern reply.

“Um ... what do you mean?”

Gordon sighed. “How can you be so bright and so innocent in the same time? That Mike guy is totally into you. I can bet my right arm that by midnight, he and his snappy little boyfriend will come to us with a proposal that, given the circumstances, we will have a hard time to turn down.”

“Nonsense”, Karl dismissed the idea. He was not the kind to make an impression on guys from the first time. He had always had to work hard to hold anyone’s attention. Anyone he had been interested in, at least. It would have been a lie to say that he didn’t feel flattered this time around. In the same time, he felt the need to irk Gordon a bit more. “Even if they do that, which I doubt, why is it a problem? I thought you were an explorer.”

Gordon’s expression hardened. “Are you telling me you’re game, if they want to play swingers with us?”

Karl knew he was walking on mines, but he wanted to get back at Gordon at least a bit for his and his brother’s games, in which he had been involved unwillingly.

“Why not? We’re not exclusive, are we?” he said, staring into Gordon’s eyes, but digging his nails into his palms, to refrain from running away under the man’s cold stare. “And we’re here to have fun...”

From how tense the man’s jaw looked like, Karl began to wonder if it wasn’t a good idea to run, after all. He was waking up a beast he had no idea how to handle. However, the man talked, and his tone seemed leveled, as usual.

“Alright, Karl. Let’s see how this works out. Forgive me, though, if I will feel the need to laugh when that guy’s going to fuck you into the mattress.”

The cold smile Karl had seen so few times was back on the man’s lips. He was hurt by his words, but he chose to not let it show. “Well, until then, there is enough time. What do you want to do?”

“We go to our room to sleep, then we’ll eat and go out”, Gordon was curt. He took Karl’s hand and dragged the assistant after him. Not few were the men steering away from their path. The man looked like a vengeful god on a rampage.

Karl did not dare talking anymore. He was regretting his actions now, but it was too late, and the game had to continue. Of course, he had to think about what he was going to do when Mike would want to do what Gordon had said. His heart sank when he realized he was in for a bad night and a bad experience. How was he going to get out of the situation without losing face?



Chad was the first to greet them upon arriving at the bungalow, by offering them colorful cocktails that Karl decided they tasted too divine to be non-alcoholic.

“Mike is so dying to see you”, he told Karl, taking him by both hands and dragging him inside, with Gordon right behind them.

It was easy for Karl to feel a bit lightheaded, because of his low alcohol intolerance. Gordon hadn't stopped him, and he had drunken everything Chad had given him, without protesting.

Inside the bungalow, gay couples were chatting, having fun and dancing on tropical rhythms. Karl turned to Gordon, when Chad eventually let him be, in search of his next victim. “Do you want to dance?” he asked shyly. The man hadn't talked since they had left the pool earlier, except for some grunts at each one of his questions. The situation was getting weary.

Instead of responding, the man started dancing, moving his hips and turning Karl to his back to him, making sure to rub against the smaller man's ass suggestively. He whispered menacingly into his hair: “You do realize, Karl, that you're having me get you hot for another man.”

Karl felt the need to protest, to just say to Gordon that he wanted to leave, and that he didn't want anyone else, but the man was holding him tight, breathing hotly into his ear, and touching him slowly, slipping his hands beneath the loose fitting shirt he was wearing, to touch his nipples and twist them. Karl wanted to be touched so badly he was almost shivering with desire; he wanted Gordon to flip him over and have him right there, in front of everybody, and claim his ownership despite all the games they were playing.

“Well, look who is starting the party without us”, Chad's voice intervened.

Karl turned to find himself face to face with Mike. The man was slightly taller than Karl, and he had the same dark complexion. He was manlier than his boyfriend, obviously the top in their relationship, but, by far, not as manly as Gordon. He was smiling at Karl and raised a hand to caress a hot cheek.

“You look great tonight, Karl.”

The compliment was genuine, but Karl couldn't help thinking that the man had no right to tell him anything of the kind, since they had just met, and he had no term of comparison with how Karl usually looked.

He murmured a polite thank you, and he felt Gordon slowly getting away from him. He turned to see Chad practically gluing himself to his man. His Gordon. Karl felt the pang of jealousy coursing through him in full force, and he was about to just grab his partner's arm and snatch him away from that bitch. He was stopped by Mike who embraced him and whispered into his ear: “Let's go somewhere more private.”

They fell behind Gordon and Chad, since the latter was seemingly leading the way. Out on the beach, they reached a cozy beach house. It did not look too large, and inside, there were only one room and something that looked like a kitchen. The place was probably used only for such adventures, and no one really stayed there.

In the meantime, Mike was continuing to compliment him and touch him everywhere, filling his heart with dread. The man was not bad looking at all, but Karl felt like he wanted nothing but to crawl out of his skin when touched by the stranger's hands.

Inside the small beach house, now protected against indiscreet eyes, the two couples could start to

enjoy what they were there for. Laughing, Chad dragged Gordon on one of the beds, sitting between his legs and playing with the man's organ through his loose pants. Karl heard him comment.

"Oh, my, I think it's a rattle snake ... Is it poisonous, Gordon?"

"Not the last time I checked, sweetie", Gordon's voice chimed in.

Karl could not stop thinking that the situation was not new for Gordon. He seemed to have a great time while Chad was struggling to undress him and release his huge cock from his pants. If Karl's thoughts could be daggers, Chad should have been in a pool of blood by now.

He turned towards Mike who was licking his neck and slowly unbuttoning his shirt, to reach the beautiful smooth skin beneath. There was nothing wrong with the man's technique, but Karl was regretting that he hadn't drunken enough. His pulse was not quickening; Chad's boyfriend simply left him cold as ice.

Sensing his lack of responsiveness, Mike climbed on top of him and started kissing his jaw. Karl froze when he realized what his partner for the night intended to do. He tried to push him back, but the man was clearly mistaking his actions for something else, as he captured Karl's hands in one of his and pushed them over his head, sinking them into the pillow. He went straight for Karl's mouth, and the assistant barely had the time to dodge the move.

"Mike, please, let me go!" he whispered.

"What's wrong, gorgeous?" Mike eventually stopped, although he was clearly getting annoyed. "Is it hard for you to do it in front of your man? That could be hot, you know? But we could go outside, on the beach, if you don't want him to see you fucked by another."

"No ... I ... I do not kiss ..."

Mike laughed. "What kind of joke is that? C'mon, give it to me." He tried to force his mouth on Karl's again.

Karl could not really say what happened next. For a moment, he was struggling with all his might against Mike's unwanted advances, and the next one, Mike was dragged from above him, like he was nothing but a doll, and he could hear Gordon's voice speaking loud and clear.

"He said 'no'. Now, let him go or I'll break your arm."

Chad's pitched voice was yelling something, and Karl was lifted from the bed by familiar strong hands. He wanted to say something, to apologize, but his tongue was glued to his teeth, and he could not do anything, but let himself carried away.

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Back in their hotel room, placed slowly on the large bed, Karl curled in a fetal position and started shivering. A large hand caressed his hair slowly.

"Really, Karl, sometimes ..." Gordon's voice sounded tired. Disappointed. Karl's shivering intensified.

"Please don't beat yourself over it, kitty-cat", the voice gained back some of its usual warmth. "It's

my fault, too. I knew you didn't want it. But for some reason, you wanted to make me mad. For the record, you succeeded. You made me lose my temper. And that's not an easy thing to do for most people. I don't usually get mad. I get even. And that is something I cannot do with you."

He slowly lifted Karl from the bed to place him in his arms. He covered them both with a sheet. "Now speak to me."

"I ..." Karl trailed off. "I ... couldn't do it. I thought I could."

"And why couldn't you?"

"Because ... I cannot let anyone ... do that."

"I know", Gordon kissed his damp forehead.

"And because ..."

Gordon waited patiently.

"... because I do not want to have sex with anyone else. But you", Karl finally admitted.

"You put me through hell tonight. I wanted to tear that guy Mike apart."

"I wanted to strangle Chad and pull his eyes out."

Gordon seemed surprised. "Really? Were you jealous, kitty-cat?"

"I suppose ... yes. I've never felt this. Maybe ... it doesn't matter", he stopped right in time.

Gordon knew when to take a hint and he didn't insist.

"So, are we better now? No more hitting on strangers from now on? Just you and me?"

"It was all your fault", Karl murmured.

"Really?! How so?"

"You flaunted me in front of everybody and the poor guy thought I was some kind of Swedish buffet", the assistant pushed an accusatory finger against Gordon's chest.

"I guess I did. Sorry about that. I should have known better. These guys are insatiable."

"I hope they're not mad at us."

"Well, I'm sorry to break it to you, but I think we are this close to being reported to the police."

"You maybe, I didn't break anyone's bones."

"I didn't either!" Gordon protested, but they were now both laughing.

That night, they slept holding each other, without doing anything else. Karl could not think it possible to just sleep next to that handsome man, but Gordon was, as usual, full of surprises.

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In the morning, the first rays of sun woke him up. He saw Gordon sleeping soundly next to him, completely naked. He had no idea when that happened.

Moving with care, to avoid waking up the man, he drank in the image of the gorgeous male specimen

he was having the pleasure to enjoy for the time being. His eyes followed the muscular back, down to the alluring crack.

Karl could restrain himself no longer. He touched the perfect buttocks, enjoying the sensation. Cupping the globes, he slowly kneaded them, sneaking a peek to the man's hidden entrance. A tentative finger forced its way slowly into the puckered hole. With the other hand, Karl started to masturbate. Gordon was making him dependent on food, on sex, on everything. But mostly on Gordon.

The larger man moved in his sleep and Karl froze. He withdrew his hand. What would Gordon think if he knew what Karl secretly fantasized about him? Eventually, he decided to head to the bathroom and take care of business there. He had never had another male; he had always been the bottom in all his so called relationships. But after last night, he had realized he wanted to possess Gordon and not leave him to anyone else. A new desire had awakened in him. The fantasy had stirred him up from the bed, in the same measure as the first rays of sun.

He was about to place his feet down, when a strong hand caught him. "Where are you going?" a sleepy voice asked.

"I'm just going to the bathroom. Go back to sleep."

"I cannot go back to sleep. There was a finger in my ass just earlier."

Karl froze. "It's not what you think", he hurried to say.

"And what do I think?" Gordon dragged him back to bed.

"I don't know", Karl tried to avert the green gaze directed at him.

"Then how can you tell that it's not what I think?" Gordon teased, and grabbed Karl's chin, forcing him to look into his eyes.

Karl was blushing again.

"Tell me what you want", Gordon's voice dropped to a seductive whisper.

"You won't be mad?" the barely audible question eventually came.

"I won't."

"I ... dreamed about you and me ... and I was on top", Karl said quickly. "But it was just a dream, so please, don't get mad."

Gordon laughed. "Karl, have you ever topped?"

"No", came the shy reply. "And I won't, I mean, you do not have to worry. It's not what I want. It was ... just something stupid from my part."

Gordon embraced his temporary assistant and lover and dragged him closer. "It's not stupid to desire another human being, Karl. And, I must let you in a little secret of mine: in all my relationships, I was versatile."

Karl, who had his head buried in Gordon's chest hair, relishing in the now familiar smell, raised his head in surprise. "Are you serious?"

“Yes, I am. And there is nothing I’d like more but have you top me. You showed no sign of wanting such a thing until now. The truth is you’re such a great bottom, that it slipped my mind that I sometimes have to ask you directly if you want to do or not a certain thing.”

“And ... will you let me?”

Gordon stretched and parted his legs in a suggestive gesture. “Do you need a special invitation?”

Karl jumped from the bed. “I need a condom.” He started rummaging through their luggage, with trembling hands. From time to time, he sneaked a peek in Gordon’s direction, the man watching him, visibly amused.

Eventually, he got what he was searching for and the lube they had packed for the trip. His hands were shaking so badly that he could not put the condom on, and Gordon grabbed his arms.

“Let me help you.”

“I’m sorry”, Karl whispered, visibly shaken. “I ... have no idea how to do it.”

“Well, that is why you have me here. To guide you. Trust me, Karl, it is no rocket science.”

“But ... I do not want to hurt you”, Karl’s breathe hitched in his chest, as Gordon hunched forward and brought the smaller man’s body closer to engulf his organ in his hot mouth and bring back to life his waning erection. Anxiety fought for a bit with desire, but, fortunately for him, his lust for Gordon was greater.

Slowly, Gordon released his cock, then helped him between his legs and lifted his hips to allow Karl easy entrance.

“Place the tip there, and it will easily slide in. Just add a bit of lube on my hole and on your cock, too”, Gordon calmly instructed, and Karl did exactly as he was told.

He pushed slowly inside, watching Gordon’s handsome face for any sign of discomfort. But the man looked relaxed, happy even, and he was smiling not only with his lips, but with his eyes, as well. Karl found so much tenderness there, that he felt like he was drowning in dark honey. He pushed inside, his male instincts taking over, and Gordon’s expression changed, as well, from tenderness to lust.

The young assistant grabbed the man’s growing erection and started moving in the same time. It was amazing to realize how he could control Gordon’s manhood, while slowly pushing his hips in the man’s ass and rubbing his cock with his hands. He was feeling connected with another human being like never in his life.

The man’s tight channel of muscles was squeezing him deliciously. He wanted the experience to last more, but he couldn’t. His eyes rolling in his head, his toes curling, he came and fell on the man’s strong chest with a loud cry.

“Thank you, Gordon. It was the best thing ever”, he murmured, completely spent, after a while. “Sorry for coming so fast. I just couldn’t. You’re too good.”

Gordon chuckled and kissed his forehead. “Trust me, I need a lot of practiced restraint to make it last long enough when I bury my cock inside you. Now, let me bask in the realization that I was your first.”

“My first ...” Karl closed his eyes and kissed the hairy chest in reverence.

He withdrew slowly and threw away the condom. While turning back to bed, he saw the man’s still glorious erection poking through the sheet. Without a word, he climbed into bed, released the organ and took him as deep as he could into his mouth. He stopped just to say: “Please, Gordon, let it flow in my mouth when it comes.”

His words had an electrifying effect on Gordon, who pushed his cock through moist lips with clear intent. Karl adjusted his position to help the man move and enjoy the sensation of having the young hot mouth on him.

The whole experience apparently had an impact on the other man as well, because it did not take him long to come into Karl’s mouth and let his partner drink his essence, like it was the best thing in the world.

Karl raised his head, his lips moist, and buried his eyes into Gordon’s. There was a sudden realization there, something that made even the air and time stand still. Without a word, Gordon grabbed his neck and dragged him towards him, tasting his own essence from the assistant’s lips. Karl’s sweet aroma mingled with his own manly seed and Gordon kissed his lover for the very first time.

Much to his surprise, Karl didn’t fight back. He climbed on Gordon’s lap, prolonging the kiss. Clumsy at first, his tongue learned its way inside the hot moist cavern, and he tasted Gordon, trying to get deeper, to express his feelings, to put everything he wanted to say and couldn’t into that one kiss. Hungry for his lover, Gordon turned the tables, and quickly switched places to have Karl on his back, without ungluing their lips, not even for one second.

It was like making love. It was better. Eyes at half mast, Karl was relishing into the other man’s taste, treading his long fingers through blonde strands. They were the right color; not strawberry blonde, but darker.

Biting sweetly on a swollen bottom lip, Gordon withdrew with reluctance. They had to breathe, unfortunately. Caressing Karl’s cheeks with infinite tenderness, he locked eyes with his lover.

“Karl”, he whispered, not really knowing what to say.

Smooth, delicate hands touched his lips, marking their contour, to fix them in memory. Karl smiled.

“You were right. You are an amazing kisser, Gordon”, he whispered, and kissed the said lips again, this time satiated.

Reality was around the corner. But it could wait, Karl thought to himself. For now, he was in the arms of the most beautiful man he had ever had the chance to know, and he was happy.



The day flew away fast. Karl had no idea there were so many things they could do as a couple, without having people stare. Going to the beach, eating at restaurants, getting a massage, visiting shops, everything was perfect. When the night fell, they had done everything, except for talking about what happened or making love again.

Walking hand in hand on the beach had been Gordon’s idea, and Karl had no problem with that. At



that hour, in the area they had chosen, there was no one around, and they had all the privacy they needed.

“I still cannot believe it”, Gordon spoke first, while embracing Karl and keeping him close to his body. It made walking awkward, but this was not what Gordon had in mind, anyway. “You gave in.”

Karl laughed. “Yes, you win. Couldn’t hurt your pride, could I?”

Gordon was too happy to notice the little sadness in Karl’s voice. “Can I ask you something, Karl? Something more ... private?”

Karl seemed to ponder for a bit. “Under one condition. I get to ask you something, too ... and I get to ask first.”

“Alright”, Gordon shrugged.

“You sure?”

“Yes, go ahead.”

“Your fiancées.”

Gordon’s released Karl slowly from his arms. Grateful for the dark, he eventually asked. “What about them?”

“Three fiancées, you left each and every one. Why?”

“I thought you realized by now”, Gordon’s terse voice followed.

Karl’s silence was as good an answer as any. With a sigh, Gordon added. “I’m gay, Karl. Not straight, not bisexual, but gay.”

Letting the words sink in, he slowly released Karl’s hand, but the assistant grabbed him and intertwined his fingers with his with clear intent. “Alright. I dared not suspecting that. Although I thought you were too practiced to have had sex with men just casually.”

“Aren’t you disappointed?”

“Why should I be?” Karl asked a little puzzled.

“Your fantasy about being with straight guys? Does it ring a bell?” Gordon laughed, a bit more relaxed, after Karl’s natural acceptance.

“Oh, that”, Karl seemed pensive for a few seconds. “I guess sometimes you have to do the wrong thing to do the right thing.”

“I do not dare asking what you mean.”

“It’s just ...” Karl trailed off, but he stopped. “Hey, I was the one asking questions. So, what happened with those women?”

Gordon drew a long sigh. “Alright, what’s fair is fair. The first one, Emily, she was the one to open my eyes. We got along just fine, we were best friends and everything, but in the bedroom ... well, things were far from being as fine and dandy. She noticed.”

“Were you sleeping with guys while you were with her?” Karl interrupted, curiosity besting him.

“What kind of a cheating bastard do you think I am?” Gordon expressed his surprise. “No, actually, at that time, I was so deep in the closet, that I had not slept with any guy.”

“Really?! How old were you?”

“Around 22. The family was pressing me to get married. I guess I pulled a number on them, so Dick is having it easy now, too, because of that. You have to understand, Karl, I was the one, during that time, who wanted to do everything my parents said.”

“But ... 22? And you weren't suspecting anything?”

“I kept my fantasies well under wraps. I did masturbate to gay porn and stuff like that, if that is what you mean, but I hadn't approached a guy to have sex with until Emily talked to me.”

“That must have been a pretty tough conversation”, Karl murmured.

“You can bet your sweet ass it was. She was a very straightforward woman. I mean, she still is. She told me that she found me lacking in the sex department, and I have to say that I was quite devastated. I tried to convince her that it would get better with time, but she just wouldn't have it. So she asked me, directly if I was into men. You can imagine my shock. I panicked really badly. I was quite an ass, I insulted her, saying that she was maybe not enough to make me hot and bothered in bed. Luckily for me, she was too much of a great person to pay heed to my stupid words. Apparently, during the time we were friends, she got to know me better than I knew myself. She told me how she noticed me looking after attractive men on the streets, how I never once commented on my favorite female celebrity, and stuff like that.”

Karl was listening in awe. He could not imagine the composed, leveled and carefree Gordon scared of the idea of being gay. That was his territory. Although he had never tried anything with girls, because he had thought the battle lost from the start.

Gordon continued. “She suggested that I should meet someone, a friend of hers. I flatly refused, but she insisted. The more she insisted, the more her words made sense to me, but I was still afraid. In the end, she told me that she would leave my sorry ass anyway. At least, I could try to see what would happen.”

For a while, Gordon seemed lost in thought. Karl shook his hand, to wake him up from his reverie, so he started speaking again.

“So I went to see that man. I won't go too much into details. We spoke a lot, and he was like a mentor to me. We ended up sleeping together.”

“Was he the man Dick told me your family found out about?”

“Yes. That shit storm ruined our friendship, unfortunately. And I was too young and weak to do anything. So we broke it off, and my family thought it had only been an accident. Well, except for mom. She has always seen right through me. At this moment, she is the only one who knows the whole truth. I count on her to maintain peace in that part of the universe, and I probably do not do enough for her. She is the only reason why I keep coming back here.”

“So, the other two engagements ...”

“They were my idiotic tries to tell myself that I could do what they wanted. You know, build a family, take over the family business, be normal. At least what they see as normal.”

“When you say ‘they’ ... you mean your father and Dick?”

“My family is quite numerous. My grandfather is a tough one, too. I still think to this day that he said to me the most insulting words when they found out about my male lover. But, it’s water under the bridge ... and I am not dying to see him too much. Mom says he keeps asking about me.”

Karl felt overwhelmed. “I ... don’t know what to say, Gordon.” He caressed his lover’s cheek.

“Well, that was my little story. Now it’s your turn. What’s the deal with kissing? Why is it such a big deal to you?”

It was Karl’s turn to take a deep breath. “It’s complicated.”

“I didn’t expect it to be easy”, Gordon encouraged him to talk with a hug.

“Unlike you, I ... realized from very early I was not going to meet a girl, settle down and build a family. I was still in high school when I was with a guy for the first time. He was older.”

“He initiated you.”

“He was more than that.” Karl hesitated for a bit, wondering whether Gordon would judge him or not.

“It’s alright”, Gordon squeezed his hand, sensing his tension.

“It may sound dirty to you, but he was ... much older than me. As old as my father.”

“I don’t find it dirty”, the other man assured him. “Were you ... in love with him?”

“I thought so. He was showing me a world I was dying to know. It was amazing. While it lasted. My parents eventually found out, just like your family. I was forbidden to go see him. I tried to fight them. They took me to a shrink, and kept telling me I was not normal. My father, especially, ... he was the worst. But I did not have my mother’s support, like you did from yours. She had always been cold towards me, and she managed to sever all ties with me, while I was still living under the same roof with them. She was pretending I wasn’t there. She was ignoring me. Most probably, she preferred to let the insults and humiliation to my father. From the day they found out about me, she has not spoken a word to me.”

“Not one?” Gordon was shocked.

“None whatsoever”, Karl shook his head. “It may sound harsh, but I preferred her silence. My father chose his moments. Especially when we were gathered around the table, at dinner, he was starting to lecture me. He was accusing me of doing all kinds of things. As a teenager, I was shocked to hear all that dirty stuff. I think I wasn’t doing even five percent of what he was imagining about me. Eventually, I just lost my appetite.”

“That explains some things”, Gordon murmured.

“But this was not the worst part”, Karl continued.

“No?” the other man could not hide his surprise.

“My lover ... it turned up he was married. He even had kids. Apparently, he was leading the perfect straight life, and when I finally managed to go see him, he accused me that I had ruined his life. He had everything figured out, and all I had to do what to keep my little mouth shut. I tried to convince him that I had not said anything about us, that my parents had not found out about us from me. He ... kicked me at the curb. From that moment, I think I changed.”

“That was some tough experience you had there, Karl”, Gordon spoke, visibly marked by the other man’s story.

“But I think it does not answer your question, so let me explain.”

“You don’t have to ...”Gordon could sense Karl was reliving all the pain again.

“I do”, Karl’s reply cut his words short. “When I was kissing him ... I was on cloud number nine. Whenever I tried to kiss another man, I felt nothing. Actually, it always made things worse. Sex has always been sex. Not too much, not too good, but a necessity. I am not crazy to believe people can go without it forever, gay or straight. And ... I guess I am trying to regain what I lost chasing after straight guys.”

“Wow, you’re not cutting yourself any slack”, Gordon was impressed, but he was feeling a pang in his chest upon hearing the man’s confession.

“I tried to get away from home, as fast as I could”, Karl continued. “After high school, I went to the university. I started studying hard, and I always told my father I was too busy with school to go back home. Right after I finished my education, I got hired at your brother’s company. And, from there, I think you know the rest.”

Gordon was mute. He was especially taken aback by how clinical Karl could be about analyzing his own emotions. There was so much ice hidden in that heart, and he wanted to melt it all.

“Well, I guess I managed to ruin the mood for our vacation”, Karl spoke and he started running, dragging Gordon after him into the water.

The man followed and captured Karl into his strong arms. “Will you let me kiss you again, Karl?” he whispered into the younger man’s ear, fearing the answer, but wanting to know the truth.

Instead of responding, Karl turned and kissed him on the lips. Gordon was not the one to say no, so he gave his lover another great sample of his kissing skills. What mattered most was that Karl seemed to be insatiable, giving as good as taking, battling for dominance, pushing, gently biting and pulling with his lips at the other man’s tongue. If Karl had little experience in this department, he was a fast learner. Doubt was still nagging him, nonetheless. Through the kisses and small lip bites, he asked:

“Why do you let me?”

Karl laughed. “Gordon, you do not seem to be the type to be unsure about this. Do you really have to ask?”

“Yes”, Gordon pulled him back a little to take some distance from the attractive male.

“Well, if I really have to answer ...” Karl pondered for a while, a bit embarrassed. “It’s because you

are special”, he said in a heartbeat, praying that Gordon would not insist.

“Special? Like I’m a special kind of idiot?” Gordon joked, realizing that he was already pushing too much for a single day.

Karl’s happy laughter agreed with him. “Let’s not discuss your place on the evolution scale”, the assistant drew his breath with difficulty. “Although you were like a wild beast when you pulled Mike away from me.”

Gordon let his head back and howled, making Karl jump in his arms, trying to silence him with both his palms.

“What are you doing? Are you crazy?” he chided him, but he was laughing, and he felt refreshed and new, like he had just started living again.

“I am a beast and I am going to devour you”, Gordon mimicked a low growl like voice from a B rated movie. He sank his teeth into Karl’s neck, and the man’s surprised moan woke the instinct of possession in him.

Letting go of Karl’s neck, he kissed the man again. “Let’s go to the room, Karl. I must have you now”, he whispered with obvious discomfort.

“What if it is I who must have you?” Karl emphasized his words, while probing Gordon’s huge arm with a finger.

“I called dibs”, Gordon said amused, and he could almost bet, even through the darkness that Karl was pouting. “You can have me after that”, he promised, while biting Karl’s ear quickly, just to annoy him.

“And after that?” the assistant sounded like a spoilt kid.

“Well, after that I think we should make a schedule if we still want to be able to sit down on our way back home.”

A punch in the ribs took him by surprise. Karl ran away fast. “Whoever gets to the hotel first, gets to top”, he yelled, and Gordon started running after him. He was not the one to ever turn down a challenge.

## Chapter Ten

*All good things must come to an end*, Karl thought to himself while the plane took off. He threw an anxious look towards Gordon who looked relaxed and happy. Where was this going? Karl realized with dread that they would have to sit down and talk seriously about everything. Gordon squeezed his hand in assurance, like he was sensing Karl was troubled.

“Tired?” he asked, but Karl shook his head.

“It was a great vacation, Gordon. Thank you.”

Gordon quickly placed a peck on his cheek, leaving Karl no time to react. “Gordon!” he hissed. “People may see us.”

“So what? Get used to it”, Gordon shrugged and adjusted his seat. “I think I’ll take a nap till we get back home.”

Karl used the complimentary blanket to cover him and whispered in his ear: “Sleep tight.” Gordon smiled with his eyes closed, having no idea of what was now eating his dear assistant on the inside.

Looking out the small window, Karl let his thoughts wander. So much had happened over the span of just two weeks. Was he falling for Gordon? Did he still have feelings for Dick? With much surprise, he realized he could not recall the exact features of his boss’s face. No matter how much he tried, blue eyes melted into emerald greens, and he could only see Gordon’s face in his mind.

*I’m so easy*, he chided himself. He should have resisted. He should have ... but Gordon had offered himself, and that was something that no one had ever done for Karl. If Gordon was still playing to get what he wanted, Karl had to admit that the man was an outstanding player. What if Gordon didn’t really want him?

Karl sighed in frustration. He still had two weeks to enjoy the man’s company, but now that the chicken was in the coop, what was the point for Gordon to continue? Of course, he might want to wait for Karl to go and hit Dick in the face with the news that he no longer wanted to work as his PA. Karl covered his face with his hands. Was he really doing this? Was he throwing his life away for a good fuck? Alright, not good, amazing. Under the Mexican sun, it had all been perfect, but right now, Karl had serious doubts. He was going to have the ‘talk’ with Gordon as soon as possible.



Karl refused Gordon’s invitation to sleep over under the pretext that he really needed to catch some sleep, and the man reluctantly let him. At night, in his own bed that now seemed cold and uninviting, he tossed and turned, thinking of a good way to place the cards on the table with Gordon. In the end, he caught no sleep at all. Looking in the mirror, he saw dark circles under his eyes and cursed. He had no intention to look so lame when he was going to get dumped, because that was exactly what was going to happen.

He felt like a convict sneaking into Gordon’s apartment on Monday morning.

“Hey, kitty-cat”, Gordon welcomed him, taking him in his arms and kissing him on the lips. Sensing

the other man's lack of reaction, he put him down and asked. "What's wrong?"

Tired eyes rose slowly to look at him. "Could we talk, Gordon?"

"Of course. What's the matter? Are you ill?" the man asked, visibly concerned.

Sitting on the sofa, Karl started speaking, while looking at his hands, instead of looking at Gordon. "I ... I need to know if the game is over", he whispered.

"What game?" Gordon was taken aback.

"Between you and your brother ... between you and me ... should I go now to tell him I'm quitting? Do you need to come with me to laugh in his face? Where the fuck am I supposed to go after that?" Karl's tone was getting from hesitant to cold and bitter as he spoke.

"What are you talking about?" Gordon's voice dropped to absolute zero, as well, as he started pacing the room. "Do you think I was just playing with you? Just how blind can you be? You don't want to quit your lousy job? Fine! Don't do it! I don't give a fuck! How about you grow a pair and do what you really want?"

Karl was becoming pale with anger. "Alright, Gordon" he said in a chilly tone, then stood up and headed for the door. After all, it was what he expected.

A strong hand pressed against the door just as he touched on the handle. "Don't go, Karl. I'm sorry. You took me by surprise and I blew over. You just have that effect on me. You don't have to quit your job, I don't care about my brother and whether I win or not. But, please, just stay."

Karl felt his knuckles getting numb from how hard he was squeezing the door handle. Gordon took him in his arms slowly. "I like you a lot, kitty-cat. Don't you want to see where this is going?"

Karl nodded. He wanted it. He feared it.

"Look, I am asking you just this. Stay for the next two weeks. See what you really want. I won't pressure you, and I will respect your decision. Just don't leave now", Gordon pleaded.

He felt like melting in the large, strong arms. He cuddled to Gordon's chest, enjoying the man's heat. He murmured, without raising his head: "I swear to God, Gordon, if you leave me ..." he left the threat hanging. His determination was met with Gordon's low chuckle.

"What will you do?" the man challenged him while forcing his chin up and kissing him softly on the lips.

"I'll have your balls, is that enough to scare you?" Karl interrupted the kiss, to stare into the man's eyes and show that he meant what he said.

Gordon seemed to ponder for a while, his lips twitching to break into a grin again. "Fair enough, Karl, fair enough. You are scary."

The assistant could tell from his lover's tone that he wasn't scared at all. He grabbed Gordon's neck and kissed him hard, for the sake of making a point. Strong hands descended on his back, to grab his perfectly shaped buttocks. They were basically dry humping, but Gordon broke the kiss with a sigh.

"You have such a fine ass, Karl, such a fine ass. How can you be so skinny and have such a perfect

ass?”

Karl groaned. He didn't want any conversation, he wanted to get into the man's pants and devour him. But Gordon was clearly putting a stop to things. Misty citrine eyes rose with caution and need to meet their green counterparts.

“Don't give me that look, young man”, Gordon joked. “You really had me there.”

“Let's just fuck”, Karl demanded, grabbing the man's cock through his jeans. He wanted to get over all the unpleasantness. What better way than by enjoying the man's skills as a lover?

“Karl”, Gordon warned, but he was squeezing the young man's ass, clearly wanting nothing else, as well. He tried to fight his own lust. “We should sit down and talk about this. About us.”

“Later”, Karl pleaded and tried to kiss Gordon again. Realizing the man was now gently pushing him back, he sighed and withdrew as well.

Gordon took his hand and guided him back into the living room. They sat in silence on the sofa. Karl's fears were back in full swing. Gordon was obviously trying to start, but he had no clear idea how.

“I want to clear the air, alright? I don't want to make love to you and the next day to hear you how you want to leave.”

Karl nodded. Gordon had a point, and they could not hide everything behind sex.

“Look, Karl, about the little wager between my brother and I ... he talked to me about you.”

“But you said ...” Karl started, visibly alarmed, but a finger on his lips silenced him.

“Hear me out before drawing any wrong conclusions”, Gordon continued. “He told me he had a brilliant kid at work, who was doing everything he wanted. I was intrigued and I asked him how much all that ass kissing had cost him.”

Karl grimaced, but decided not to protest. For anyone looking from the outside, the way he was fawning over Dick was most probably looking like that.

“When he told me that you'd never asked for anything, he had me thinking. So I started questioning him about you. He is a blind fool, as I told you before, so he's never suspected anything. For him, you're just some kind of weird workaholic who happens to work for him. However, he did seem very arrogant about how he manages to make such a strong impression on his employees that no one wants anything more but the privilege to work for him. I wanted to bring him down a notch or two. So I asked him to make a little wager, having his number one employee as the prize.”

Gordon stopped for a second, to check Karl's features for any sign that he wanted to bolt towards the door again. Satisfied with the assistant's silence, he continued. “I told him that I only need one month to make his devoted employee leave a job with no future for greener pastures.”

“Wait, tell me one thing: you hadn't even seen me and you thought I was gay?” Karl asked, with disbelief in his voice.

“Not from the start, I'm not Sherlock Holmes. But I asked Dick about your habits, if you had any



friends, how old were you and stuff like that. And that Karl Thorne he was describing sounded very suspicious to me.”

“So you just assumed that I was gay?” Karl insisted.

“No, not even then. But then I saw you. That day, at your workplace. And it all made sense to me.”

“Even Dick said that I looked kind of gay. I suppose it’s obvious for anyone”, the assistant pouted.

Gordon just had to laugh. “Nothing like that. You are cute, and you are always prim and proper, like many gay guys are, but that was not my point. I do not judge people like that. That moment ... when our eyes met ... do you remember?”

Karl blushed. “Yes, I remember”, he whispered.

“We clicked in that very moment. I saw through you.”

“I ... I don’t think ...”, Karl tried to protest.

“You leaned forward to sniff me. I had my hand on your waist for far long than socially accepted, and you bit on your bottom lip in an instant. If that happened in a club, the two of us stumbling upon each other like that, my next line would have been: ‘How about I buy you a drink?’ And the next stop would have been my apartment, you in my bed, on your back, crying out how amazing I am.”

Karl burst into laughter. “You’re so ... the total opposite of modest!”

“Don’t tell me you don’t know any antonyms of modest”, Gordon joked.

“There are no words in the dictionary to cover your attitude”, Karl glared, but he had to admit that he was getting hot under the collar just remembering that first encounter.

“From that point forward, I wanted nothing but to get to know you better, and get you away from that asshole of a brother I have. So the bet became more than a bet.”

“Wow”, Karl had to admit. “You’re not the type to have second thoughts. You really cornered me.”

“C’mon, kitty-cat”, Gordon nudged him playfully in the ribs. “You wanted nothing but to give in. And you did so fast I did not even bother taking out the heavy artillery.”

“What?” Karl blushed profusely this time. “You say I’m easy?”

“In less than 48 hours, you were on my couch, coming just by getting fucked in the ass”, Gordon whispered seductively in his ear, and closing the distance between them. Karl tried to push him away. He was beyond embarrassed. On the other hand, he had been easy and he knew it. But Gordon added. “That didn’t make you easy, it just confirmed me you had the hots for me like I had for you.”

“But why didn’t you tell me you were gay?” Karl asked, trying hard to resist the urge to kiss the man and drag him into the bedroom for that confession.

“From the start, I felt like I was walking on egg shells with you. You see, I got everything right about you, but I could have been terribly wrong. That would have been quite a show, I think. In the end, everything I did was just right, even the fact that I kept you hanging about my sexual identity”, Gordon smiled, and backed away a little from Karl, to give him time to take all the new info in.

“And when I come to think of it, all I thought I did was just an endless string of errors”, Karl spoke out loud.

“So that’s what you meant!” Gordon said triumphantly. “Two nights ago, on the beach, when you said that sometimes you need to do the wrong thing to get to do the right thing. Am I right?” he stopped, waiting for Karl to confirm.

“Yes, something like that”, came the confirmation, and Gordon hugged him just for that. “But, now, Karl, why all the worries? Why were you so devastated this morning?”

“I thought ... it was all a game. Once won, it’s over”, Karl whispered, embarrassed to talk about it.

“I see”, Gordon spoke, suddenly serious. “Well, I guess I need to prove it to you, and not just by fucking.”

“Fucking is good”, Karl murmured.

“But not enough. Don’t you get it, Karl? I want to be in a relationship with you. I will hate seeing you going back to Dick, but if this is what you want, I promise I won’t stop you. I am very serious about having you work with me.”

“With you? Not for you?” Karl asked, sensing the difference.

“As much as I love having you between me and the mattress, when it comes to work, I think you would make a perfect partner.”

Partner? Karl stood there, like struck by lightning. He felt dizzy. “What will I do? As your ... partner?” he hesitantly asked.

“I didn’t work out all the details yet, but I’ll think of something.”

That deflated Karl’s hopes in an instant, but he tried to hide his disappointment. After all, he still had two weeks of staying with Gordon to think about it.

“Now”, Gordon slowly climbed on top of him, hovering with his lips just above Karl’s. “How about that morning sex we have already postponed too much?”

The sound of Gordon’s phone put them abruptly on hold. With a sigh, Gordon backed down and answered the damned device.

“Yeah”, he said instead of greeting the person on the other end. “Sorry, David. No, don’t worry. I told you to call whenever you need me.”

David? Karl tried hard to punch his jealousy and send it back to its room. But who the hell had the right to call Gordon anytime?

“I’ll be there. We’ll think of something together. Plus, I’m bringing an expert. Bye.”

Karl waited for Gordon to speak. He looked quite worried, so he slapped himself mentally for feeling jealous like a prick. “What’s wrong?”

“The guys at the lab where we make the prototype for a new leg prosthesis are in kind of deep shit”, Gordon put it bluntly.

“Prototype? What prototype? Prosthesis?” Karl felt a bit of information overload.

“It’s for my new project. I am in touch with an NGO, to make some prosthesis for people with no money for such treatment in India. They have the needed funds from the investors, I have the lab. But now, it’s all going to be tricky, since the prosthesis breaks when it shouldn’t.”

“Is the used material to blame?”

“How should I know? That’s why I’m getting the expert there.”

“Where will we find an expert in such short notice? I’ll go look up the Internet, see what I can do”, Karl rose from the sofa, determined to help.

“No time for that. You’re the expert. Now, let’s go.”

“I’m the expert?!” Karl stood there, dumbstruck. “Are you insane, Gordon? I’m a PA, nothing more!”

“You have a diploma in engineering and you wrote a book on applications of composite and ceramic materials in medicine”, Gordon shrugged.

“It wasn’t a book! It was a research paper! And wait, how do you know about that?”

“I checked up on you. What do you think? That I sleep with just anybody?”

“Really, Gordon. You’re giving those guys false hopes. What do I know about their project? I am not going to tell them some idiotic mumbo jumbo so that you could feel good about bringing along an ‘expert’!”

Karl looked pretty mad.

“Look, Karl, we go there, you take a look, it’s ok if you have no idea about how to help them. It won’t hurt you. Stop being such a wishy washy about your abilities. If we don’t reach any conclusions, we will try something different. Just get involved, damn it, and stop pestering me with useless hesitations! Let’s go! Now!”

“I am not immodest, like you”, Karl warned. “I know my place.”

“Like hell you do. Are we out yet?” he gestured with the phone towards the door, making Karl draw an exasperated sigh and finally move his feet.



The lab did not look like much on the outside, but on the inside, Karl felt like he had just landed in some kind of a small heaven for scientists. It had all kinds of gadgets and machineries around, even a small robot simulating walking patterns on a desk. He had no time to wonder about everything, as he was quickly introduced to David, a short guy in his 40s, with thick glasses, dressed in a white coat. Karl instantly felt like a fool about being jealous.

“David, this is Karl Thorne”, Gordon made quick introductions. “He will help you figure out the problem.”

Karl was about to protest, but the man in white did not even blink and started showing him a simulation on a large computer screen. He was about to open his mouth and say that he was way out of his league, when he noticed something. He asked the man to show him how to manipulate the software

so he could bring the image closer. The material used had all the needed characteristics, so it should not have faltered. The problem had to be someplace else, but he needed more information, so he started asking David about previous tests.

Lost to the world around him, he began reading the results. David was helping him with answers when he needed them. There was an error there and he had to find it.

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“The little joint there”, he showed David triumphantly. “It must be made of titanium, not steel. Will it cost too much?”

“No, no, we are still within budget, and anyways, without a working prototype, we would have no project at all. I cannot believe we’ve missed it. Thanks a lot, mister Thorne, we really were under water. Now, we only need to operate the changes. Are you by any chance that Karl Thorne who wrote a paper on applications of composite and ceramic materials in medicine a few years back?”

Karl felt too amazed for words. Apparently, the obscure research paper he had published while still studying was quite popular among guys in lab coats. And Gordon.

“Yes”, he admitted.

“Amazing!” the man shook his hand energetically. “So glad to meet you. Where do you work now? Some big company, I guess. Well, we were lucky mister Chamberlain could bring you over for this. A small lab, like ours, does not get this kind of celebrities around.”

Karl felt a pang in his chest. He didn’t work anywhere worth mentioning. And a celebrity in the field? There was no other more obscure engineer to have ever graduated in all history than him.

Gordon showed his head through the door. Karl had been so absorbed with the prosthesis problem he had not realized the man had left the lab.

“How are you guys doing?” he asked.

“Excellent!” David clapped his fat small hands in delight. “Mister Thorne helped me solve the mystery. Wait until the guys hear about this.”

“So, it’s all fine now?” Gordon asked nonchalantly. “Then I’m taking Karl out for lunch now.”

“Lunch?” was Karl’s exclamation. He hadn’t realized how the hours had flown by.

“Here is some take out for you”, Gordon handed the man in lab coat a bag.

“Mister Chamberlain! You shouldn’t have. Even my wife tells me you’re the one getting me fat.”

Gordon laughed wholeheartedly. Placing a protective arm over his assistant’s shoulders, he dragged him out of the lab, while they were saying goodbye to David.

They were almost out, when David called for them. “Mister Thorne, will you help us out if we need you again? Since you’re close friends with Mister Chamberlain?”

“Of course”, Karl said energetically, feeling quite hyped with his unexpected success.

“David”, Gordon’s stern voice intervened, and the other two men almost froze. “Karl is not close

friends with me.”

Karl felt a knife slowly slicing through his chest. He wasn't expecting that kind of public rebuttal. The following words fell like a hammer.

“He is my boyfriend.”

“Oh!” David reacted. “Great choice, Mister Chamberlain! I expected nothing less of you!”

Karl was lost for words and he let himself guided out the door by his ‘boyfriend’. They were outside the building and inside the car, when he finally found his voice.

“Boyfriend?”

“Yes. How do you call someone you fuck like a mad man, you talk to about your deepest secrets and you want to spend every waking and non-waking moment with?”

Karl was mute. That was too much to take in one single day. He just whispered mostly to himself.

“Boyfriend ...”

Chapter Eleven

Karl had no idea when the week flew by. Gordon encouraged him to work closely with the guys at the lab and offer his assistance, and he was now spending part of his working hours there. His lover had been quite lenient towards his absence, but he had never felt happier going to work in his entire life. He was finally involved in something he loved doing and it was nothing short of amazing.

The other part of his life that was also nothing short of amazing was Gordon. He basically moved over, since Gordon clearly stated that he still needed Karl around for himself, and that had included some work on Gordon's book, but mainly just spending time together talking, having fun, and of course, having a lot of sex. Karl had no idea how he could still stand after Gordon's arduous proofs of affection. He idly thought it was a good thing the man was versatile in bed, because they could take turns and rest their much loved behinds for enough time to recover. That was also working wonders on Karl's appetite who was now eating all meals of the day without protesting. He was starting to get worried about getting fat, but Gordon had solemnly sworn that they will hit the gym as soon as the weight scale in the bathroom was starting to go wild.

"What do you want to do this weekend?" Karl asked, while stretching and yawning after a well deserved sleep in the afternoon.

"This weekend, my dear", Gordon spoke on a funny tone, like he was imitating some character from *The AristoCats*, "we are invited to the Chamberlains."

Karl waited for a second for Gordon to laugh it off. "The Chamberlains? Is this some kind of a joke? And what do you mean we're invited?"

"Well, we'll have to go to my parents' estate. I hate to go, but I promised mom. And I hope you do not intend letting me there to go out of my mind with boredom, while you stay home, jerking off at the computer."

"I do not do stuff like that!" Karl said with a glare.

"Of course, as long as you have me to torture with your perversions. But I bet that as soon as I go through that door ..." Gordon pointed a finger at him. "Stop pouting, I like porn, too. Well, when you're not around to fuck."

Shaking off Gordon's jokes, Karl tried to veer the conversation towards the unexpected invitation again. "How long have you known about it? Why are you talking about it now? What will I wear? But, most importantly, what will Dick say when he sees me there?"

Gordon's face was clouded for a second. "Do you still care what he says?" His tone was a bit bitter.

"Well, he is technically still my boss. Of course I care!" Karl said exasperatedly. "Do you really want us to cause a scene at your parents' party?"

"I won't hold hands in public or kiss you, if that's what you're afraid of", Gordon spoke through his teeth, visibly irritated. "And you will come", he continued on a tone that clearly warned against any protests from Karl's part.

“Why?” Karl ignored the warning on purpose.

“Because.”

“Because? What am I? Your little doll to drag after you?”

Karl hated fighting. And he hated fighting Gordon, especially since things were so great now.

“Alright, stop getting your little pants in a twist. I ... I want my mom to meet you”, Gordon said in a heartbeat, and Karl opened and closed his mouth a few times, not knowing what to say. He felt like a jerk now.

“Isn’t it a bit dangerous? The others ...”

“Fuck the others!” Gordon snapped.

“I hope not!” Karl responded in kind, and both started laughing.

Gordon jumped on him and pushed him into the bed with a hungry kiss. “I want to flaunt you around. I know, don’t fret, we will go just as boss and employee, and we won’t cause a scene. But leave me the secret pleasure to steal you a kiss while at my parents’ home, when no one is around.”

“You really like this, don’t you? To piss on their prejudices?” Karl asked, while caressing dark blonde strands of hair.

“You have no idea. But I won’t do it. For your sake.”

“Alright. I don’t think I’m ready. It’s embarrassing enough that David told everyone at the lab that we are boyfriends. They are now all coming to me for romantic advice, can you believe it? Like I’m some kind of Oprah!”

“Don’t be hard on them”, Gordon laughed. “They just think gay guys are more sensitive.”

“Obviously they do not know you well enough”, Karl joked in turn, challenging his boyfriend with his eyes.

“Oh, kitty-cat, does your bum still hurt?” the man took Karl in his arms and made a quick verification of the said body part.

The assistant’s eyes were shiny. He was happy. He kissed his man on the lips, reaching inside, wanting him whole. “Not enough”, he whispered, his desire burning again in his loins. “Take me hard, make me feel”, he pleaded, and Gordon carefully pushed him on his back to undress him.

Between his legs, the man took his time to prepare him, while Karl was muffling his anguished cries of lust into a pillow.

“Why do you keep me waiting?” he complained, but Gordon hushed him.

“I need to, or you’ll not be able to walk after that. Let there be noted that it goes well beyond my need to protect you to fuck you like this.”

“But I like it”, Karl said with a blush, and he was rewarded with a smile full of tenderness.

Gordon pressed his small frame with his body and pushed at one fell swoop, making Karl cry out in ecstasy. With calculated moves, he imposed the rhythm Karl loved so much, while kissing his lover like

a mad man. He had no idea how a delicate male like Karl could like it so deep and remain as elastic as ever. For him, it was a maddening sensation, and for a guy used to restrain himself because of his considerable size, it was beyond his wildest dreams. With strangled cries, they came in the same time, something that again, they had come to learn and practice with much enthusiasm.

Breathing hard, on his back, Gordon whispered: “You give me the best orgasms ever, Karl. I’ve never been so deep in anyone. After this month is over, I want something.”

“What?” Karl asked, visibly drowsy.

“We should get tested.”

“Why?” Karl asked again, his eyes snapping open.

“Just to be sure. I want to do it without the rubber. I want to come inside you, kitty-cat”, Gordon turned to look in the misty citrine eyes of his lover.

Karl’s eyes widened. He was obviously already picturing the possibilities and a wicked smile was slowly making an appearance on his beautiful lips. Faking seriousness, he spoke:

“I don’t know, Gordon ...”

“What? You don’t want it?” the man asked, visibly alarmed.

“What if you knock me up?” Karl giggled, no longer managing to keep it inside.

“You!” Gordon’s eyes thinned into slits. “That would be the coolest punishment for your dirty mind. For this, I’ll make sure to pour my love into you until you cannot bear it anymore.”

“Your love ... Gay guys and their euphemisms ...” Karl continued to giggle.

“You’re gay, too!”

“And proud”, Karl added and kissed his boyfriend quickly on his lips. “Proud to be yours”, he whispered, and Gordon returned the kiss, feeling like never in his life.

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Karl was amazed with how many people were present at the party. He had eventually let Gordon buy a more expensive suit for him, so that he would not feel out of place, but he was feeling like that, anyway. Those people were all rich and they did not mind flaunting their status all over the place. He felt like there was a silent competition, hidden behind formalities and fake flatteries, which he witnessed without really wanting to.

Unlike him, Gordon was taking in the surroundings with vague disgust. He obviously did not want to be there, but he was willing to play his part.

Nonchalantly walking towards them, accompanied by a beautiful blonde, Dick came to shake hands with his brother. He looked quite surprised upon seeing Karl, and the assistant tried to make himself little. His boss’s disdain was the last thing he wanted to experience after an awesome week spent partially working on an exciting project, and partially in Gordon’s bed. This serving of reality was causing the cloud he had walked on for the entire week to come down pretty fast.

“Did Gordon take you out for a walk?” Dick asked, faking a smile, and Karl dug his nails into his



palms, casting his eyes down. “Really, Gordon, mixing in this manner with personnel ... it’s a faux pas ... even coming from you.”

“I’ve never been a stickler for etiquette, brother”, Gordon picked up the glove. “So why start now?”

“Why, really?” Dick mocked, and Karl could not refrain thinking that the guy looked kind of funny trying to look down on his brother who was obviously taller and not at all affected by their little chat.

“Why don’t you introduce us to the little lady?” Gordon smiled and turned everyone’s attention on Dick’s companion.

“This is Diane. Diane, this is my brother”, Dick purposely excluded Karl from the presentation. His date was obviously not interested in knowing Karl’s whereabouts, either.

The assistant took a small step back. Things were getting awkward, even more awkward than he expected.

“A pleasure to meet you”, Gordon took the woman’s hand and kissed it, while staring her in the eyes. Diane was clearly enthralled with the attention she was receiving. She fluttered her eyelashes, while giving Gordon a good once over.

*Look all you like, sister, this one’s taken*, Karl engaged in a bit of mental verbalization with the woman who was basically turning her back to him, making him feel completely excluded. Sensing he was the odd man out, Karl took a few steps away from the trio. It was not like they were going to notice him anyway. And it was terribly unpleasant to witness the woman’s attempts to flirt with Gordon, as well as the fact that Gordon seemed to be responding quite well.

“I’ll go mingle”, he mumbled, making eye contact for a brief second with Gordon who obviously wanted to say something. Not waiting for the man to talk, he turned on his heels and left.

With a sigh, he strolled towards the bar. Maybe he could just grab a drink and have a reason to sit down somewhere further away, where he could think in peace about how out of his league he really was at this fancy party.

He was about to order something strong, hoping to get a bit smashed and get on Gordon’s nerves later, when he felt a featherlike touch on his elbow.

“You must be Karl”, he heard a warm voice, and he turned to see who could identify him in this sea of people, where he knew no one.

He was face to face with a woman in her late 50s, her classy outfit and grey hair, nicely raised in a bun making her stand out even among all the good looking men and women at the party. What drew him in right away however, were her green eyes, filled with kindness and curiosity, which reminded him of someone he now knew well.

“Good evening, Mrs. Chamberlain”, he bowed politely.

“Smart and cute”, was the lady’s comment. “But please just call me Ava. I am not one to stick to formalities, especially since you’re so close to my son. And if you’re wondering how I knew you, Gordon sent me some photos of you.”

Karl was pretty sure his cheeks were now in flames and tensed. How much of it was Gordon telling

his mother? And what kind of photos were those? Hopefully, Gordon was considerate of his mother's feelings.

"Relax, my dear", Ava caressed his arm in a motherly gesture. "Now please let's go some place where we can find a bit of peace from this maddening crowd so we can talk."

Karl offered his arm, and guided by Gordon's mother, headed towards the backyard garden. He helped Ava sit down on a wooden bench, and sat down only after she was comfortably seated. He felt needles and pins all over his body; Gordon was supposed to introduce him to his mother, but here he was, in a tête-à-tête situation that he wasn't sure how was going to be played out.

"My son speaks fondly of you", Ava eventually started talking. "I wanted to personally see the young man who managed to impress my Gordon to such an extent, that he cannot speak of anything else but Karl when talking to his old mother."

"I am sorry for being a bother", Karl murmured an apology, although he felt proud hearing how Gordon was talking about him.

Ava laughed. "You're the right kind of bother, Karl, and I must say that I approve with my son's choice. I can see why he is so enthralled with you. You are very beautiful. And smart, too. Don't worry, I won't keep you long. I guess he is already looking for you right now. Forgive a mother for wanting to see who is about to steal her son for good."

"I can assure you I won't steal him."

Karl could not say he was a people person. But with Ava Chamberlain, he was soon feeling quite at ease, talking about the lab and his studies, and listening to some of the things Gordon had used to do as a kid. It felt comfortable beyond belief, especially since the relationship he had with his parents was almost non-existent.

He had no idea how much time passed in the woman's pleasant company. In the end, she was the one who decided to send him on his way, although with a bit of reluctance.

"Go look for him now or he will be the one blaming me for stealing you. I know we will have plenty of time to talk again. If you'll excuse me, I will sit here for a while. I have to admit that I also needed a pretext to stay a bit away from all those pretentious bastards."

Apparently, Gordon's mother had the same 'appreciation' for the honorable guests as her son. With a bow, he said his goodbyes, and with his heart filled with pride, he went to look for his boyfriend. Her words made him feel like he was walking on clouds. Gordon really cared about him, and that was the most amazing thing that had ever happened in his life.



It took him a while to find Gordon. He noticed the two silhouettes in the gazebo from afar and he walked towards the Chamberlain brothers, decided to wait in silence until their conversation was over. He wanted nothing but to hold Gordon in his arms and kiss him; he just could not do that with Dick still around. He was getting closer, when he heard the two raising their voices; they were obviously fighting for some reason.

Although he was not the one to eavesdrop, he unconsciously hid behind a large bush modeled in the

form of an elephant. The English garden was empty, since all the other guests preferred percolating on the front lawn. He stood still, waiting to see what the brothers' fight was all about.

"So, how will it be when Karl is going to come back to me and you will, once again, be a loser?" he heard Dick's obnoxious voice.

"He is not going back to you; take that idea out of your head."

"Really? Is he willing to throw away the chance of making a career for what? Work with those scruffy guys you call researchers at that stupid startup of yours? I seriously doubt it."

"Karl made his choice, and he prefers the scruffy guys instead of a boss who never appreciates him."

"And why is that? There is nothing waiting for him there."

"Or is it?" Gordon's voice was dipped in irony. "The scruffy guys are not the only ones he chooses over you."

"Who else?"

"Me, of course."

Dick started laughing, but Karl could say it was a forced laugh.

"That idiot is worshipping the dirt I step on."

"He didn't know any better. Now he knows."

"Why? Did you turn him into a homo, like you?" Dick's derisive tone was getting more and more obnoxious by the second.

"A homo? Really, is that the best you can do, dear brother? Are you afraid that I can fuck anyone right from underneath your nose?" Gordon's tone was getting more and more menacing.

"Please, we both know you can only use your cock with loser guys like you, who cannot get any pussy. I guess Karl fits the bill, if you put it this way."

"Dick, I can fuck your blondie girl before this party is over, if I want", Gordon chuckled. "When you put your small cock into her tonight, thank me, she's wet because I just told her a few words to make her feel good. Well, that was enough for her peanut brain, I guess."

Behind the bush, Karl was feeling his chest constricting and he fought to breathe. What was Gordon talking about? Why was he threatening his brother that he would sleep with Diane? All the high he had been on before hearing the two brothers was gone. He felt deserted. How many lies had the man told him? Was he really gay, after all?

"In your dreams", Dick answered, but Karl could tell that the man's confidence was starting to shake.

"It's not like she is the first girl I take away from you", Gordon continued, digging a new hole in Karl's heart with each word. "Apparently, you've always fallen short when it came to women, and competing with me."

"You're a fag!" Dick started yelling, clearly ticked off by Gordon's words. "You stole my girlfriends for nothing, you fucking faggot!"

Karl heard some rustling sounds, and he could imagine the two at each other's throats right now.

"Easy, brother", he heard Gordon talking in a tone that made him feel a cold chill down his spine. "If I mess up your pretty face, there will only be money that will get you the precious pussy you are after."

The assistant could not take it anymore. Both Chamberlain brothers were huge assholes. And Gordon was the bigger one, with his lies, and fake confessions and all. He withdrew in silence, making sure his presence would not be noticed.



His phone was ringing incessantly. He looked at the screen. He had to cut Gordon loose. Prolonging the situation was a mistake. Taking a deep breath, he finally answered.

"Where the hell are you, Karl?" he felt the man's aggressiveness through the phone. "I've looked everywhere for you!"

"Home", he curtly answered.

"Ok, stay there; I will come home right away."

"No. I am at my home, the only one I have. And I strongly suggest you to stay and enjoy the party."

"Enjoy the party? What did you drink, Karl?"

"I don't know, but it sure didn't have any pussy in it, as apparently you like having", Karl snapped, angered by Gordon's attitude.

A pause confirmed Karl's suspicions.

"It's not what you think", Gordon's tone was low and serious.

"How it's not what I think? You want to fuck your brother's girlfriend? Go ahead! Don't let me stop you!"

"Karl, baby, let me explain."

"Don't 'baby' me, Gordon! How stupid do you think I am? No, don't answer that! I suppose the 'very stupid' option is the one you would like choosing!"

"You're blowing this out of proportions!" Gordon sounded exasperated.

"Am I really? You know what, Gordon? I don't even know anymore who's worse! You or Dick! At least, he's treated me like shit in my face! You had to make it a show! You had to make me ..." Karl swallowed his words. Not a good time for a confession.

"What the hell has gotten into you? I thought we were on the same page!"

"Not if what you want is to fuck Dick's girlfriend!"

"What did you hear? How? I don't want to fuck anyone but you!"

"Does it matter? You and Dick were not exactly hush-hush about your little conversation! And what is all about stealing Dick's girlfriends? That's how gay you are? I can't believe I trusted you and all your bullshit! Was it fun, Gordon? Did you keep you going between two vaginas?"

Gordon remained silent, as Karl's harsh words flowed through the phone speaker. Eventually he spoke, and his voice was cold as ice.

"I thought you knew me better than that."

"Oh, great! And that saves you from any explanation!"

"You don't want to hear any explanations", Gordon started to heat up, as well. "You just want the same confirmation over and over again that you are right to feel like shit, and that everybody else is shit, and that the whole world is shit. Guess what, Karl? You're right, this is how everything really is. But sometimes we get a chance to make things work, and if we don't grab it, it flies away."

"Yeah, right, now you're a godsend and I'm the one screwing things up!" Karl did nothing to control his anger.

"We are both doing it!" Gordon yelled into the phone. "You know what this proves? It proves that we don't deserve it!"

"Good to know you assume responsibility for at least part of the blame. Why didn't you tell me the truth, Gordon? You like women; it isn't the end of the world."

"I'm not going to lie just so you can feel miserable and a righteous bastard about it."

"Big news, Gordon, big news ... you've already lied. Too many fucking times. I assume I don't have to waste any more words with you. I think you understand."

"And what is that?" Gordon's anger blew over.

"It's over, we're through", Karl said and cut the connection.

He threw himself on the bed, finding it hard to breathe. He could not even cry. The phone remained dead silent, and Karl curled on his bed, wishing nothing more but to think of nothing at all.



He used the next week to stay in bed and sleep. He had to admit that the best part of his post-Gordon depression was that he got to sleep a lot. He didn't go to his official workplace either. Hearing what Dick really thought about him, straight from the horse's mouth, had been enough to determine him to take a decision. Gordon was right after all. He had to quit, and start anew. Just that his new life was not going to include the gorgeous man and that made his heart ache like crazy.

The phone rang and rang and rang. Loud knocking on his door woke him up from his on and off sleep then ceased. He just chose to ignore it all, and it all suddenly stopped towards mid week. They had no more words to say to one another.

He spent long hours trying to purge his soul of Gordon, but found it impossible to do. During sleep, he only dreamed of him. When awake, the pain in his chest made him want to just go back to sleep again. There could not be another way. Under the cold spray of the shower, he tried to remember if he had ever felt this way. All past pains seemed far, far away. In the end, he realized that his soul scar would never heal, and that he had to deal with it as it was until it would eventually grow into a phantom pain. He just needed closure; Gordon probably needed it, too, and that was why he had called and come knocking on his door.

He waited until Sunday. It was fair to end things properly, as it was supposed to happen in the first place. Ignoring the weight on his heart, he climbed the stairs to Gordon's apartment and entered using the key. A part of him was hoping that the man was already gone, on one of his trips who knows where. The stronger part, though, wanted to see Gordon for one last time.

"Hey", he heard the familiar voice greeting him, and he turned.

He probably looked like crap, but Gordon was not looking any better either. Under the natural tan, there was a paleness that had never been there before. The Gordon he knew or he thought he knew was bursting with life. The man before him looked lost and distant, like he was already embarked on a journey from which to never come back.

"Hey", he answered. "I came to leave the key."

Gordon nodded. Karl came to him, and placed a soft, featherlike kiss on the thin lips. But when the man tried to embrace him, his clouded eyes suddenly gleaming with hope, Karl withdrew.

"I just want you to know one thing, Gordon", he spoke again. "You are still the better brother. Tomorrow, I will quit my job and start a new life."

"Too many words", Gordon said in an absentminded voice, his arms falling down, inert.

"What?" Karl asked.

"We should only say 'hi' to one another and nothing else", Gordon continued, and Karl remembered.

"You won, there is no need for that", he said with a heavy heart.

"No. I lost. You won. You walked away first."

There was nothing more Karl wanted more but to kiss that sad expression away from Gordon's eyes. But he knew he couldn't. He wouldn't.

"It is goodbye then", he tried to hide his anxiety by keeping an even tone. "I'll never forget you, Gordon. You turned my life around, and even if it means nothing to you, I want to thank you. I'll never forget the good times; you gave me great memories. I regret that it ends like this."

As he was turning, Gordon was all over him, squeezing him in his arms, his emotions poured into his shaking voice. "It doesn't have to end, Karl. Not if you don't want to."

Karl squeezed his eyes shut, trying to keep his overflowing emotions under the lid of his heart. "But it must end, Gordon. Please stop breaking my heart."

His words unlocked the powerful grip of Gordon's hands. Slowly, he let go, and Karl went through the door, trying with all his might to not look back. Once he was out the stairs, into the street, he started running, uncaring of how people looked at him.

*Breaking up is hard to do, that must be the understatement of a lifetime*, he thought, tears in his eyes, while putting as much distance as he could between himself and the man he was hopelessly in love with.

## *Chapter Twelve*

He walked into the office where he had spent the last three years, and felt nothing. The place already looked strange, unfamiliar. He was experiencing troubles trying to remember what had kept him there for so much time. It had been Dick and the hollow infatuation he had felt for the guy; nothing more pointless. What he had come to feel for Gordon in just a few weeks had burned 100 degrees higher and had been real. Even the pain. Now, he only had to cut loose all the ties with the complicated Chamberlain brothers. He had gone through with the breakup. Quitting his job was the easy part.

He went directly to Dick's office, ignoring the fact that the man was on the phone. His boss stared at him strangely and, in the end, he put the phone down, after cutting his conversation short.

"What is it, Karl, that you need to burst into my office on Monday morning like this?"

"Good morning, sir. I apologize, but it is something that cannot wait."

With precise moves, he took a paper from his suitcase and placed it on Dick's desk.

"What's this?" Dick asked, puzzled, but didn't bother to take the paper and look at it.

"It is my letter of resignation. I am sorry I didn't give you the formal two weeks' notice, but I must leave immediately."

The look of surprise on Dick's face was priceless. Soon, however, the surprise turned into a sneer.

"I'll be damned ... What did he promise you?"

"Who, sir?" Karl maintained a neutral demeanor.

"Gordon, of course", Dick snorted.

"My collaboration with Mister Chamberlain ceased last week, according to the agreement."

Dick's eye grew as large as saucepans.

"So where are you leaving?"

"I have a few prospects. I trust there is no problem with obtaining references", Karl continued on the same equal tone.

"Of course not", Dick regained his composure. "I just wish you told me something."

"I deeply regret doing so. I hope you can forgive me."

Dick was staring at him, shaking his head. "You changed, Karl. This is so unlike you. Did he manage to turn you into a homo, just like him?"

Karl coughed discreetly, to signal his soon to be ex boss he was stepping out of line, and asked like he didn't really understand the question: "What do you mean, sir?"

"Ah, forget it. Just ask Jennifer to complete the reference letter, and I'll have it signed. Far from me to keep you more than you wish to stay."

Karl extended his hand. "Thank you, sir. It's been a pleasure working for you." He didn't even blink

while saying that huge fat lie.

Dick shook his hand briefly. “Good luck, Karl”, he flashed his fake smile at his former employee.

How come he hadn’t seen the man for who he was? Karl wondered, but simply chose not to care. He was walking away from a chapter in his life, and he did not feel even the expected nostalgia.



He had no idea what he was going to do. He had enough savings in the bank to move away. Preferably to another city. With good references and plenty of cash in his pockets, he could make it for an exit. Maybe a change of scenery was exactly what he needed. Absentmindedly, he touched his chest. He hadn’t expected to hurt physically, but it did. Getting over Gordon was going to take a lot of time.

He was woken from his reverie by the phone. He looked at the number, dumbfounded; who could call him from an unknown number? Gordon could not have turned to such underhanded tactics; the man had too much common sense to know that. He let the phone ring a few times, then decided to just answer. He could deal with anything now. What he wasn’t expecting, though, was the warm, feminine voice at the other end.

“Hello. Is this Karl Thorne?”

“Yes, this is he”, Karl hesitantly answered, wondering whether he should recognize the voice or not.

“I’m Ava, Gordon’s mother.”

Karl felt his chest constricting. Had something bad happened to the man? He felt he could barely breathe, and started heaving, as Ava was asking him, a bit alarmed, if he was alright.

“I’m fine ...”

“We need to talk. There is a coffee shop, close to your place. Meet me there in half an hour?”

Karl didn’t stop to think how on earth Mrs. Chamberlain knew his phone number and address. More and more alarmed, he asked.

“Is Gordon alright? Has anything happened to him?”

“Besides the fact that you broke up with him? No”, the woman seemed quite upset, while saying so. “Come meet me, Karl. This is a mother asking you for a small favor.”

The weight on his chest a little less heavy, he agreed to the invitation. Apparently, he had to break up with the mother, too, and that seemed quite complicated, as it was. He could not say no, though. It would have been rude and Karl had no reason to refuse Ava. She was too nice a lady. Maybe it would make things easier for Gordon, too. Karl couldn’t forget the devastated look on the man’s face the last time he had seen him.



Ava was already there, when he set foot in the coffee shop. She waved at him discreetly and he hurried to her table. It felt like a burden to know that he had managed to hurt Gordon’s mother, too.

After formal greetings, she started talking.



“What happened between you two, Karl? One moment, my son is the happiest he has ever been and one moment, he looks so broken and he does not even want to talk about it. What kind of lovers’ quarrel did you two have that it cannot be solved?”

Karl felt blood rising to his cheeks. It was incredibly embarrassing to talk about such things. He coughed to regain his voice and he eventually spoke.

“It is complicated.”

“I have time”, Ava intertwined her bony white fingers, while staring at Karl with determination.

“Well, first things first”, Karl nervously fiddled with his napkin, “we don’t seem to be ... the same.”

Gordon’s mother looked at him, visibly puzzled. “Of course, you are two different persons.”

“This ... is not what I mean”, his voice dropped to a whisper. “Gordon is not gay and this complicates things”, he said quickly, his eyes darting in all directions, like everyone could hear their conversation.

Ava frowned in thought. “Well, this is something new. My son is gay as far as I know him. And I hope you do not doubt the fact that I know him for a long time”, she said with a fond smile.

Karl barely held back a smile, too. It was clear from where Gordon had inherited his sense of humor.

“I ... don’t want to contradict you, Ava. But he ...”, Karl felt completely lost for words.

“Look, Karl”, the woman placed her warm hands over his, stopping their fiddling with the napkin. “I know very well how closeted he was as a teenager. But I was the one taking care of hiding his magazines better when he forgot them under the bed.”

“Didn’t you have a maid?” Karl felt a bit stupid, but he had to ask.

“I could not allow my family’s privacy to be invaded by a stranger. I used to take care of that part of home chores myself, until my sons left home.”

“But ... he said he hadn’t even thought about being gay until he was 22”, Karl spoke, more and more confused.

“I waited for him to realize it himself. I knew he would not be able to live a lie. But this is not what we are talking about here. So, how is Gordon not gay? I don’t quite follow you.”

“At the party ...”, Karl hesitated, the pain in his heart still fresh.

“Yes ...”, Ava encouraged him.

“I heard him and his brother talk, and Gordon ... well, he threatened Dick that he could ...” Karl felt more and more embarrassed, “well ... steal his date ...” He cast his eyes down. It felt downright awkward to talk to Ava about such things, but in a way, it felt good. Like some of the weight on his heart was starting to dissipate.

Ava drew a sigh. “These two boys of mine ... they have always been at each other’s throats, even from a young age. Their grandfather encouraged their competition, although I strongly believed it was wrong. My husband ... unfortunately, he prefers to let his father hold the reins in the family, but I love him as he is, so I will not go there. Gordon used to be the favorite. He was the first born, and Dick always felt the need to compensate, by being more ambitious, and even by trying to put his brother in a

bad light.”

“So, they were stealing each other’s girlfriends?” Karl could no longer keep his curiosity in check.

“Not really. It was not like that, although maybe most people would think that way. It probably took a mother’s eyes and understanding to realize what was going on there. Let me tell you something about my sons. They are both the light of my life, but the way they have been going at each other for so long is wearing me out.”

She took a small break and smiled. Karl smiled back, compelled by the kind look in the woman’s eyes. She continued.

“When they were really young, Gordon tried to win his brother’s heart. He always gave him his best toys and tried to be good to him, but it was in vain. Dick had his mind set that he had to beat his older brother at everything, if he was to earn his grandfather’s attention. He took the toys and broke them. Do you know what Gordon did? Each and every time?”

Karl shook his head slowly.

“He tried to repair them. He had the smarts and the creativity in the family. Dick had the ambition. Something that is true to this day. Gordon ... he was never mad back then, but when they became teenagers, the battlefield moved on, as well. Are you asking me if they fought for girls? Yes, they did. But, in Gordon’s case, it was the same thing as during childhood. When Dick was breaking some poor girl’s heart, Gordon tried to mend things and make them right. I suppose that seemed like fighting over the same girls, to those looking from the outside. But it was not like that. I am the one who can vouch for it.”

Karl was starting to feel a bit sick. Had he been wrong?

“But Gordon ... he was very crude about his intentions ... when he talked to his brother, at the party”, he spoke, less convinced than before.

Ava shook her head. “That was stupid of him. I am not going to defend him. But I know, and you must trust me, Karl, that there were no other intentions from his part than trying to get even by teasing his brother verbally. They have become more civilized as they became adults, but I see that they are still seeing red when they get in a confrontation with one another. Gordon has his flaws, Karl. But if it is one thing I know is that he really cares about you. And that you really broke his heart, just the same as he broke yours. Am I right?” she squeezed Karl’s hands and shook them gently.

Karl felt his throat getting dry all of a sudden. He had no reason to doubt Ava. In the daylight, sitting at the table with Gordon’s mother, it all looked like a mistake. All the drama, all the suffering, the decision ... At least, he could have just listened.

“I spoke to him and tried to encourage him that you and he would eventually work things out. But it seems to me like you two are in need of a motherly intervention.”

“I ... I don’t know what to say, what to do.”

“Well, you better realize soon what the right thing to do is, young man. Because you two are running out of time.”

Karl stared at Ava in confusion.

“Gordon is leaving today, Karl. I don’t know when he is coming back. If you care about him, don’t let him leave broken hearted like that. Give him another chance. Give yourself another chance. You seem like a nice person. Don’t let a stupid mistake get between you two.”

“Where is he leaving? When today?” Karl felt a sensation of urgency taking over him. He wasn’t sure about his feelings anymore. The only thing he knew was that Gordon was leaving and he felt in his guts, like a sudden, cruel reality, that he was never going to see him again. Ava was right. He had never given anyone a second chance. Maybe Gordon was worth the risk. Even the pain.

“He’s leaving for India. Here are the details of his flight.” The woman handed him a piece of paper on which some numbers had been scribbled down, visibly in a hurry. “He only told me this morning about his departure, so I knew I had to find you fast. Forgive me for the intrusion, but I felt – call it a mother’s intuition – that it was just a misunderstanding between you two, nothing more. Are you willing to let him leave, Karl, for the sake of a few stupid words he said to his brother in anger? The brother he fought all his life? Are you going to let him go away without telling him how you really feel about him?”

“No!” he jumped to his feet. He froze seeing how people from other tables were staring at him disapprovingly. He must have yelled. But Ava’s only response was a warm smile. “I’m sorry, Ava, I guess I have to leave now.”

The woman nodded and got up from the table to come to him and hug him shortly. Karl relished in her embrace. That was something new to him, too.



He climbed the stairs to Gordon’s apartment two by two. After the enlightening conversation with Ava, he only had one thing on his mind. He had forgotten caution, fear, everything holding him back. He felt like he was at a turning point in his life when he had to do that. Even if Gordon wouldn’t have him back. He just had to say what he needed to say, because it was something he had only said to one person, and had no hopes of saying again.

He did not stop to catch his breath. He banged loudly on the door and listened. There was no sound coming from the other side. Could it be that Gordon had left so early? Panic rose in his chest. What if he had found another, earlier flight? He descended the stairs and waved for a cab. The clock was ticking.



He was pacing back and forth, thinking of ways to tell Gordon how he felt. The good news was that there had been no earlier flight, so Karl only had to stay and wait. It meant spending three hours at the airport, but what if he missed Gordon, just because he was someplace else?

He scanned the crowds, until his eyes hurt and started to tear. There was only one way Gordon could go, so he just had to focus there. He could not believe he was behaving so stupidly, but he now knew why. He just had to meet the man and tell it to his face.

He let his head in his palms, trying to fight all negative thoughts. What if something had happened?

What if there had been some accident and Gordon was hurt? What if he had met a gorgeous guy on his way to the airport and he was now at that guy's house, fucking and forgetting all about Karl?

He knew he was absurd, but he just could not help it. The wait was making him crazy. He took out his phone and fiddled with it, then put it back. Some things could not be said over the phone. He just had to wait and start having a bit of faith.



He must have dozed off for a brief second, because the announcer's voice made him jump from the chair. What kind of idiot was falling asleep in such a situation? He searched the line of people waiting for their luggage to be scanned with his eyes. Suddenly, he saw him. His tall, golden god, named Gordon. He was walking with his eyes cast down, seemingly lost in thought. Karl rushed to it, praying that his feet would not give up on him.

He caught the man's arm just when Gordon was searching for something in his hand bag. The man brusquely shook off his arm, visibly ready to fight. He stopped as quickly upon seeing Karl, his eyes wide and filled with apprehension.

"Gordon", Karl spoke first, but stopped to catch his breath.

The man didn't say anything, just stared him down. Karl could not care less. There was no turning back, even if Gordon hated him.

Oblivious to the hurried people around, he threw his hands around the man's neck and kissed him hard on the lips. "I love you", he spoke again upon releasing his lover from his sudden embrace. His eyes were shiny and true, and they sank in Gordon's green pools. The man was standing there, like struck by lightning, Karl's hands still resting on his arms.

"What the hell? Move already!" a disgruntled passenger was pushing Gordon from behind.

Like wakened from a dream, Gordon picked up his bags that he had dropped when Karl had kissed him. "I need to go", he said shortly, while still looking at his lover like he was seeing him for the first time.

"I know. I will wait for you", Karl spoke happily. "No matter how long", he intertwined his fingers briefly with Gordon's.

He stared after the man as the sea of people was pushing him forward. Gordon was stopping from time to time, to look at him, still confused. Karl stood there, unmoved. He had to look after Gordon until he could not see him anymore. He felt happy. He felt strong, like never in his life. When the man finally arrived at the checking point, he turned to leave. Then he heard Gordon's booming voice.

"Karl!"

He turned again, searching for the man again with his eyes.

"Catch!" came the warning, and something was thrown at him. Karl managed to catch the object with a dexterity he had no idea he had.

"Wait for me at home", Gordon shouted, and Karl stared at the key in his hand and smiled.

“I will”, he yelled and waved the hand with the key, ignoring the looks the people around threw in his direction.

Yes, he was crazy. Crazy in love.



There was no point for him to go home, so he went straight to Gordon’s apartment. He turned on the lights and took in the coquette apartment. If only walls could talk. Karl smiled inwardly. There were more memories to build from that point on.

He caressed the objects in his path briefly. “I’m home”, he spoke out loud and started laughing. Gordon still wanted to have him and that was the most important thing. Right now, he was exhausted and he needed to sleep. Since Gordon could not speak on the phone while in flight, there were many hours before he could call.

He opened the door to the bedroom and started undressing. He stretched on the bed, gathering the sheets and blankets around him, smelling deeply. They were clean, but they still smelled of Gordon. Or that was probably only his imagination. He took in the surroundings. He was just realizing he was too excited to go to sleep. He rose and stretched again, and then his eyes fell on a painting on the wall, just above the bed.

His mouth agape, he stared. Like an automaton, he went to turn on the ceiling lights. He could not believe his eyes. There on the wall, it was ... him? He went closer, touching the glass under which the painting was kept safe. The Karl in the painting seemed soundly asleep, but he was smiling. Gold rays of sun were playing a game of reflections on his tousled hair. His right cheek was resting on his forearms, while the white sheet was barely covering half of his ass, leaving completely exposed the curve of his back. The scene was simple, but it almost brought tears to his eyes. Another proof that Gordon was not speaking in vain. He really was talented.

He stood on the bed and laughed to himself. Such a fool he had been! When Gordon was coming back, he was going to lock him up and throw away the key.



He was a bit confused upon waking up in Gordon’s king size bed. He blindly reached for the phone.

“Yes?” he answered, while yawning.

“Are you still sleeping? I cannot believe it!” he heard Gordon’s happy voice.

“When, since I’m unemployed, I guess I can sleep for as long as I want”, Karl drawled the words on purpose.

“You really did it”, Gordon added. “You did quit.”

“I told you so. And I did.”

There was a small pause, so Karl took a guess. “Aren’t you going to ask me about how Dick reacted?”

“No”, came the short reply. “I won’t let him or the idea of him ever come between us again.”

Karl smiled, although he knew Gordon could not see him. That was the best answer ever.

“So”, Gordon cleared his voice, seemingly a bit embarrassed. “Could you repeat what you said to me to the airport? I think I had my earplugs on.”

Karl giggled. “What a clown ... I saw no earplugs.”

“What if I say ‘please’?”

Karl’s voice turned a bit serious. “There is no need for that. I love you, Gordon, and I was stupid for not realizing it.”

“But ... you left me”, Gordon was now serious, too. “What made you change your mind?”

“Well, I owe it all to a motherly intervention”, Karl admitted.

“A what?”

“Your mother ... we talked. She made me realize the truth.”

“So it didn’t come from you”, Gordon sounded disappointed.

“Yes, it did, Gordon”, Karl decided to stand up for himself. “She just opened my eyes. All my life, I have waited for the other shoe to drop. It always did ... so, with you, I just fell back into my old ways. I needed protection, you see?”

“I guess ... wait, you needed? You don’t need it anymore?”

“No, I don’t.”

“But I hurt you.”

“I don’t care. You will probably do it again. But I’m not afraid anymore. Because this is mine. It is the feeling I have for you, and even if we only spend two more weeks, or months, or years together, it doesn’t change anything. I love you and that’s all that matters to me”, Karl spoke determinedly.

“Wow”, Gordon whispered. “When did kitty-cat get so bold?”

“When he realized that love is about winning, even when you lose.”

“Wise, too”, Gordon mused.

There was a short silence, so Karl spoke first. “I saw the painting.”

“Oh”, was the only answer.

“When did you ...”

“After you broke up with me. That week”, Gordon spoke quickly, like it was an uncomfortable subject for him.

“Only from memory?” Karl sounded incredulous.

Gordon laughed. “Don’t believe everything I say. I drew the sketch when we were in Cancun, while you were sleeping. I guess I had enough time to finish it.”

Another pause followed. Karl hated right now that they were so far away from one another.

“I’m ... I’m really sorry, Gordon”, he whispered.

“Hush now”, the authoritarian voice commanded, but Karl could tell that the man was affected as well. The painting must have been Gordon’s try to let go of Karl, just like he had tried to let go of Gordon during that week.

“I’ll call each day”, Gordon spoke again, clearing his voice, trying to chase emotions away. “I must spend at least two weeks here. In the meantime, don’t become a lazy bum. Go to the lab. The guys are missing you. We’ll take care of formalities when I get back. I must make you partner to my business, remember? And I won’t have a sleepy head as a partner, got it?”

“Gordon”, Karl tried to stop him. “Let’s take things slow. Give me an entry level position at the lab, but only if there’s an opening.”

“Damn, Karl, you’re talking about taking things slow? You dropped the big L on me, for crying out loud!”

Karl felt the familiar pang in his chest. Has that been a mistake, too? He would not have it!

“Now listen here, mister, and listen well! We will do it how I say! Since the moment we met, I’ve played to your tune, like a puppet on a string ...”

“Not really ...”

“Don’t interrupt me! And if you have to stay in India for one month, or more, do not botch things for those people by hurrying back! I told you I would wait!”

“Is that all, master?” Gordon joked.

“No!” Karl yelled some more, just to feel a little bit more satisfaction for putting the man in his place. “Keep it in your pants!”

“Roger that”, Gordon joked some more, than his voice turned into a seductive whisper. “That means that I get phone sex, every day, right?”

“You know we can see each other online”, Karl chided.

“Even better. The sexy shows I will have you put on for me ...” Gordon trailed, obviously thinking about some perverted stuff. “I’ll make a list with what you should buy from the sex shop.”

“Damn, you are such a big perv ... I should have let you with the phone sex offer”, Karl giggled into the phone.

“Well, long live the technology!”

“Indeed”, Karl added, happy and warm on the inside. “Now go about your business. Or sleep. Or whatever you need doing. Go!”

“Wait!” Gordon spoke, suddenly alarmed. “There is still something I have to say.”

The pause that followed was enough of a hint for Karl to understand. “Don’t, Gordon.”

“What?! Hey, you don’t know what I wanted to say!”

“Yes, I do know. Don’t make it sound like you do it because you feel obliged to. That’s not the most important thing right now.”

“But it is!” Gordon’s voice was growing anxious.

“Do it properly then”, Karl suggested, with a kinky smile on his face he so regretted Gordon couldn’t see.

“What’s that supposed to mean? Alright, I’ll send flowers”, the man mumbled, very unsure on his words.

“No, darling, that’s not what I meant by ‘properly’”, Karl teased.

“Then what?” Gordon was growing impatient.

“What I meant was with your cock up my ass”, Karl dropped the bomb and bit his hand to stop himself from laughing.

“You!” Gordon hissed like in pain. “Karl, baby, please, I really cannot afford a hard on right now!” he pleaded. “I have to meet some important people.”

“Just take a cold shower. I cannot help you from here”, Karl felt a bit guilty. After all, Gordon had important obligations where he was.

“Yes, you can”, the man’s voice grew hot. “Just ... talk dirty to me.”

Karl remained silent for a bit. He had never done this. “Um ... what should I say?”

“C’mon, you have a dirty imagination, just come up with something. I have half an hour to shower and leave, so do your best.”

Karl felt his own pulse quickening. Gordon sounded really horny.

“Alright ...” he started. “While you are gone ... I will practice deepthroating ...”

“What?!” Gordon was alarmed.

“With a dildo ...” Karl hurried, and he could hear the man taking a deep breath. “I will make sure to go deeper and deeper each day”, his voice turned into a whisper, and he sneaked a hand between his legs to grab his own erection. “I will buy one of those realistic models, a really big one, to prepare for the real thing ... and when you come home, I will welcome you with a blowjob deluxe ... I will put on a suit, and serve you on my knees ... I will take your gorgeous cock in my mouth ... I may gag a little ... but I will get over it, and I will bob my head up and down, feeling all your length with my mouth and my throat ... and when you come, you will fill me up with your jizz ... oh, Gordon”, Karl’s breathing became erratic.

Seemingly, the dirty talk was getting the best of him. He whispered “I’m coming”, and heard the other man grunting and breathing heavily.

He took a disapproving look at the droplets of sperm all over his belly and chest. Good thing he had decided to sleep naked.

“That was great, baby”, he heard the man talking, while still trying to catch his breath. “Now I really need that shower.”

“Enjoy it, and ... good luck, Gordon.”



“Thanks, kitty-cat. And you know what? You should find a cute nickname for me, too.”

“Cute doesn’t become you. How does ‘sex god’ sound?” Karl teased.

“Nope, too formal”, came the fast reply, and Karl laughed.

“Alright, teddy bear, I’ll think about it.”

“Teddy bear? I wanna be your teddy bear”, Gordon hummed a poor Elvis’ impersonation, drawing another fit of laughter from his lover.

## *Epilogue*

Karl looked at the papers in his hand apprehensively. It was going to be a surprise for when Gordon got back, but he still felt anxious about it. He had always played safe, but there was a tiny little voice inside him playing with unlikely scenarios that was making him feel odd while he was pulling out his blood test results from the envelope. He drew a deep sigh; it was alright, he was clean. He let the papers on the table and went to take a shower. Having just gotten back from the lab, he really needed one.

He did not hear the door to the bathroom opening, his head under the warm spray.

“Hey, kitty-cat”, he heard the familiar voice, deep and sensual and he almost jumped.

He pushed the wet bangs from his forehead and stared at the man, not capable of saying a word. There, in the bathroom door stood the man he was in love with. The one he really was in love with, not a figment of his imagination. He licked his lips unconsciously.

“You’re back”, he managed to say. “Early.”

Gordon’s smile was wide. “So, should I look for hidden lovers under the bed? You know I don’t like sharing.”

Karl’s only response was to grab the shower and point it directly at Gordon. He could not stop laughing. His hair and clothes now partially wet, Gordon was looking menacingly at his lover. With practiced ease, the man pulled the wet t-shirt hanging on his body with a single motion. He unzipped and dropped his jeans, while Karl’s laughter was ebbing away, his eyes now glued to the muscular body he had been enjoying having on top of him, crushing him. He felt his pulse quickening as his lover’s erect cock was released from sexy underwear.

Gordon stepped into the shower, grabbing a fistful of black hair and forcing Karl’s head back, to have his shorter lover look at him.

“You know what I like most about you, Karl?”

Karl shook his head lazily, as the proximity of that hot body was making him dizzy with desire.

“How you always jump head first into a challenge you know you cannot win”, Gordon closed the distance between them, and kissed his lover hard on the lips. Their teeth almost clashed, and Karl could feel his lips being bitten to the point of drawing blood. Not that he minded. He wanted that man to crush him and to hold him and to put back the pieces, making a new person, happy and in love, out of him.

He was lifted by strong arms and pushed with his back into the slippery tiles. Circling the strong body with his lean legs, he felt the pressure of the man’s large erection and thanked inwardly for the daily acrobatics he had had to do with various dildos to entertain Gordon’s appetite during their video chat sessions. This time, Gordon was not going to take it slow. And Karl was more than grateful for that.

Gordon stopped for a second. He whispered into his lover’s ear. “I saw your test results, Karl. I brought mine home, too. I couldn’t wait. Glad you couldn’t either.” With that confirmation, he pushed

the tip of his engorged organ against his lover's puckered hole.

He grunted at the resistance there. Reluctantly, he brought one hand to Karl's mouth, while sustaining the smaller body with just one arm.

"Get my fingers wet. Saliva is as good as any lubricant at this point. You can be mad at me afterwards. Just do as I say now."

"I won't be mad", Karl whispered, and greedily engulfed two of Gordon's fingers in his mouth, happy to provide what was needed.

He felt the fingers stretching him wide and squeezed Gordon's shoulders. "Hurry, put it in", he urged, and the man pushed in again, this time having the needed help to slid through the tight channel of muscles. Deep inside his smaller lover, he let out a groan of pure pleasure.

"Still so fucking tight", and he captured Karl's lips into another maddening kiss. He pushed inside his lover in a quick, sustained rhythm, making Karl squirm in pure delight.

Karl felt his prostate hammered and assaulted by a myriad of sensations. No sex toy could replace the real thing, he idly thought, as his release was approaching with fast steps.

"I'm close, Gordon. Together?" he asked, hoping for a positive reply.

But Gordon stopped, making him groan in frustration. He opened his eyes to look at his lover.

"What?" he almost snapped.

"I promised you something. Is it properly enough?" Gordon teased, and quickened the pace again, letting Karl no time to react. "I love you, Karl. Let's come together", they clashed their mouths in another kiss, and Karl could feel that if he was to die that very instant, he could not blame the heavens for living a too short life.

He felt his beloved's precious liquid pouring into him. It was a warm, foreign sensation, as Gordon's cock pulsed and stilled inside him, but he could not think about it, as his own insides were shouting for release, his sack rising and constricting to prepare one of the most intense climaxes he had ever lived through.

He was placed down with care and kissed slowly on the forehead and on the eyebrows. "Wow, Gordon, that was ..."

"I know", Gordon whispered in his wet hair. "It's because it's with you."

"Same here", Karl confirmed and embraced his lover, to keep him close for a little while.

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All dried, they were sitting in the giant bed, completely naked, and glued to one another, sharing small, satiated kisses.

"You have a huge bed, Gordon Chamberlain. I almost got lost in it a few times. But you fill it up quite nicely."

"Glad to be of service."

Gordon pushed his lover on his back, to stare into his eyes. “And I’m glad that you’re here.”

Karl could sense a little tension in the man’s eyes and how he was holding him, like he was about to break.

“Is something wrong?” he asked, caressing his lover blonde strands.

“I want you here.”

“I am.”

“But will you continue to be?”

“I don’t see why not. Wait ... I hope you’re not leaving tomorrow, are you?” Karl asked, a bit alarmed.

“No, not for two good solid months. But I will have to”, Gordon spoke, and Karl understood what was eating his lover on the inside.

“You’re doing what you love. I won’t have you choose, Gordon. Let’s just make the best of the time we have together. And I know that you will always be coming back to me.”

“I won’t be coming and going all my life”, Gordon promised.

“Do it for as long as you’re happy. Don’t worry about me. I have the guys at the lab ... wait, what do you mean by all your life?”

Gordon caught one of Karl’s hands in his large hand and kissed it. “I intend to make an honest man out of you, Karl Thorne. So much fornication out of wedlock will have people talking.”

Karl burst into laughter. “Are you proposing, Mister Chamberlain?”

“Yes, I am. So, would you be my husband?”

“Yes, I would. Only because you’ll be the wife. Since you like cooking and stuff.”

Gordon squeezed his hand tightly, but by the way the bed was shaking, it was clear that he could not hold back from laughing, either.

“Hey, I’m serious here!” he chided Karl, as they laughter was slowly subduing.

“Well, my answer is ‘yes’, and I hope it’s not a surprise. Just that ... let’s just test our living together for one year, what do you say? And if you still feel the same ...”

“You are so killing me with your caution and baby steps. But, since you’re my better half ... I will wait. For the record, you make me suffer.”

“Oh please, I will keep your little friend here”, Karl squeezed one hand between them to reach for his lover’s beautiful cock, “very happy in the meantime. I hope that will ease your suffering.”

“One year, Karl. Not one day over.”

“I solemnly swear.”

“Wait ... counting from when? From the moment we met?”

“Cheater! From today.”

Gordon groaned. "There's no winning with you."

"You have been warned."

"I will buy a ring and do all that cheesy stuff, you know."

"And I'll do the same. Do you want to see who's cheesier?" Karl entangled his legs with Gordon's and stubbornly tried to flip over the man. Gordon laughed, and with his assistance, Karl finally made it on top. He was staring into his lover's beautiful eyes with love and admiration.

"You helped me become more, Gordon. More than I've ever thought possible. I would be crazy to turn you down. Being married to you will make me the happiest man alive. And that's a lot, because I already feel like that."

He placed his head on the beautiful hairy chest and sighed. "What do you think your family will say about it? About us getting married?"

"Well", Gordon spoke without hesitation, "I think it will be something like this: my father will shrug it off, and will go to his study to enjoy his pipe, my grandfather will threaten me that he will cast me asunder ..."

"Asunder? Who speaks like that?" Karl could bet Gordon was being too theatrical about it.

"Well, he does, but don't worry, I've seen his worst, and I'm no longer scared of him. He's a bitter old man, and it's not like I need any inheritance to begin with. Shall I continue with my family's reactions?"

"Please do. It's starting to be entertaining. No, it's not. It's actually scary", Karl mumbled into Gordon's chest.

"Well, Dick will find a stupid nickname for us, something idiotic like 'fag and faggot' and he will try to insult you each time he sees you ... when that happens, just tell me and I will take care of his sorry ass."

Karl groaned. "Gosh, I have no idea what I saw in that brother of yours. He's so full of it."

"Well, I don't care. But I'm glad you did, because I wouldn't have met you otherwise."

Gordon stopped for a second, and Karl raised his head, frowning. "You're not pouting because of him, I hope", he warned, pushing into Gordon's cheek with his index finger.

"I'm still jealous", he murmured, his jaw clenched a bit too tight. Karl caressed him.

"You're stupid. That wasn't love I felt, it felt like a safe dead end, but it was really a trap I had consciously built for myself. If that makes you feel better, I find your brother absolutely disgusting."

"Don't lie to me, Karl. Even I know my brother is handsome."

"Not like you. You're better in every way. Plus, he's a homophobe and I'm no longer a self deprecating little bitch."

A little slap upside the head took Karl by surprise. "What the hell?!" he yelped.

"No one can call you names. Not even you, got it?" Gordon warned, and Karl flashed his best smile at

his man.

“So glad nobody got his hands on you until now. I’m so lucky”, he placed small kisses on the man’s chest.

“You’re making me blush ... not. Please continue”, Gordon challenged him, smiling back at his smaller lover.

A nipple twist made him yelp, as well, mirroring Karl’s reaction from earlier. “Got it, I will go all modest from now on. Anyways, to continue, I have plenty of obnoxious relatives that will not be invited, and ... of course, there’s mom, who will take hold of everything, telling us we know shit about weddings, and organizing everything to our despair. I hope that covers your question. What about your parents?”

A moment of silence followed. “I ... they don’t care, so let’s just let them be, ok?”

“Ok, baby. It’s your call. We have mom on our side, and she’s gonna be your mom, too. What do you say?”

“I love Ava! Not as much as I love you, but still. I am speaking to her over the phone at least twice a week. You know, when she came to talk to me, before your departure ... it felt like I was breaking up with her, too. You two really have a special connection, don’t you?”

“I guess we do”, Gordon caressed Karl’s hair. “I’m glad she intervened. We were both too stupid to see things clearly.”

“Especially me”, Karl added, and stopped Gordon’s protests with a quick kiss. “I won’t do that again, Gordon. I will listen to what you have to say, before jumping to conclusions.”

“Don’t ever pull another number like that on me again, Karl. At least, for one year.”

“Why for one year?” Karl asked, visibly puzzled.

“Because after that, you will be mine legally, and going through a divorce takes too much legal lingo for your pretty head to deal with”, Gordon laughed, being rewarded with small punches to his sides from Karl. “So, you see, you will have to live with me forever.”

“Forever”, Karl echoed, stopping from punching and pushing himself forward, to catch Gordon’s lips.

“One year, got it?” Gordon interrupted the kiss.

“Yes, one year”, Karl whispered, already too preoccupied to getting lost in Gordon’s warm embrace.

The End