



Laura S Fox

COLLATERAL

Collateral

By

Laura S. Fox

AKNOWLEDGMENTS

I dedicate this book to all my patrons who supported me throughout this journey. May you never lose your way, as you helped me not to lose mine while writing this work of fiction.

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This book is for you.

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M/M Erotica

Intended for Mature Audiences Only

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

Chapter One

Jake had never been the type to fear anything for too long. It was either that way or his way. It was how he had been taught to think from an early age. His brother was in charge now, and that meant more responsibilities for the 21-year-old who was supposed to find a way in life, away from his family. Well, Diaz was his only family, if he were to be honest.

But the gang was like a family. And they were not just punks. They were The Outsiders. A name many feared. A name Jake and his brother took pride in. But Jake knew he could not stay, no matter how much he wanted to. The last thing he needed was to let anyone know about his ... weirdness.

He snorted, mostly in self-deprecation. He was a strange one all right. He had never been like the others. This was a little something he only knew. When his brother and the others talked about some girl's boobs and ass, he could only think of strong arms pinning him down, sinewy legs forcing his own wide open and ...

He shook his head. Now wasn't a good time to play with the fantasies in his mind. He feared what the others would think. Hell, he could picture them yelling at him, "Fag!" and most probably many other names that he did not want to conjure in his mind at the moment. And the yelling would not be the worst thing. Probably he was going to get a real beating to the death on top of everything else.

So, since it could not be his way, it had to be that way, which meant he had to go away and find something to do on his own, outside his brother's protection. Away from the gang and everything that meant.

He had to think of a reason, though. He could not flee, just like that. Diaz would not understand. He was bound to say something, at least.

Kicking a rock with his foot, he watched it roll on the humid sidewalk, glowing faintly in the dim street lights.

"Well, well, well, what do we have here? A mutt straying too far away from home?" he heard a mocking voice, and he froze for a moment.

"What? Ain't no one allowed to take a piss in no man's land no more?" he shrugged, watching the owner of that voice coming out of the dark. If it was just one guy, it wasn't going to be a problem. Even two or three. After that, he didn't really know.

He felt his stomach clenching as five guys all dressed in white jumpsuits appeared in front of him. Maybe he could throw a punch and run away. He was known to be a good sprinter.

"No longer no man's land," one of them spoke, with an ugly smile on his face. "It's ours."

"All right," he raised his hands in defeat. There was no point in playing the hero. "Sorry, didn't get the memo," he joked.

"The what?" another asked, earning a slap upside the head from the one who seemed to be their leader.

"Nothing, stupid mutt here thinks he owns the place and he's smart about it, too."

"I don't think that, really," Jake moved backward, his eyes darting in all directions for a fast exit. He was not one to play the hero. He liked himself with all his teeth.

The move almost took him by surprise. The first to talk swung a chain with the clear intention to wipe out his feet. He jumped just in time.

Damn, he was fucked. If he was going to get out of there with just a few broken bones, he was going to be lucky. Cold sweat was pooling on the small of his back. He took a defensive stance, scanning his opponents, searching for an opening. His eyes darted to the left. The man on the extreme right was short, and he was nervously clasping a baseball bat.

He swung fast in that direction, pushing the little man against the one next to him and making both stumble and fall to the ground like two crash test dummies. He started running, with the other three after him, while the two were scrambling to get back on their feet. When the chain connected with his shoulder, he groaned. Apparently, he was not that great a sprinter.

He continued to run, ignoring the pain in his shoulder or at least trying to. He was not going to make it far, running like this. This was not a neighborhood he knew too well.

He took a wrong turn and reached a dead end. The walls right and left were too tall to climb. Yeah, fucking hell. He was fucking doomed.

He turned with his hands above his head.

"All right, no need to get freaky about it. If my brother finds out you beat me up ..."

"He will kick your ass for not being able to fend for yourself," the man who seemed the leader got closer, swinging his chain.

Jake did not deny it. Yes, that could be a possibility. The new head of The Outsiders was not known to be kind to losers, even if one of those losers was his baby brother. Diaz could be mean when he wanted to.

He danced to the right when the man tried to hit him. He could not postpone the inevitable. But he wasn't going to let them win without breaking a sweat, at least.

He dodged every time the man tried to hit him. The others were growing anxious, and soon enough, he was pushed with his back against the wall. One man pulled him by the hoodie and threw him to the ground. He tensed and got up in one single graceful move. He could have been a gymnast; his PE teacher used to say that. At least, his agility was serving a purpose now. Not that it mattered. He was brought down again, and he fought against his assailants, but without yelling or begging. Diaz was not going to forgive him if he went down crying like a bitch.

"What is going on here?" a voice with a strange sharp accent made everyone stop.

Jake's assailants turned to look at the intruder. "None of your goddamn business, Fritz," the leader hissed.

From the ground, Jake could not see the newcomer too well, the street light throwing a strange aura on his silhouette. The man looked much better dressed than the punks on the streets at that hour, and his blond hair was impeccable. At least, Jake thought it was blond, seeing how the light glowed and danced on it. There was not enough light to see the man's face, but he had fair hair, that was sure.

The man tsked in displeasure at the comment. "I believe you scumbags should address me more respectfully," he said in a bored tone. "My name is Klaus Metzger, and you should better remember it."

"That so?" the man with the chain ignored Jake to face the blond man.

Jake felt almost like laughing, as he watched how his attacker's arm was easily twisted to his back, making him drop the chain that fell on the pavement with a loud thump.

"I strongly suggest all of you take a hike," the man who said his name was Klaus continued in the same bored tone. "Unless you want me to entertain myself all night long breaking your bones. All of them."

"Get him! Get him!" the man with his arm twisted at his back bellowed, and the others approached, although hesitantly.

The man twisted the other's arm tighter.

"Are you sure? Your friends don't seem that pleased to see me how I'm going to rip your arm off," he said calmly.

The man started to howl, as more pressure was applied to his shoulder.

"Maybe you could all be a match against me," the blond continued in the same even tone as if he was not making any effort to keep the man in his grip like that. "But he will lose his arm," he added matter-of-factly.

He pushed the man down, at his feet, and kicked him once in the ribs for good measure. The others made a move forward, but the guy moved so fast and punched one of the assailants so hard in the face that Jake had to wince as he heard the bones cracking. That was going to be one ugly nose, after months of painful healing.

The other three rushed to hit the man and Jake witnessed a rare demonstration of martial arts like he had never seen in his entire life. In less than three minutes, all the five guys were on the ground, whining like a bunch of dogs.

Apprehensively, Jake got to his feet, limping a little. He grimaced at the pain in his shoulder.

"Please, don't beat me up," he spoke, as he gingerly found his way through the men crushed on the ground and raised his hands in surrender.

The man seemed unmoved like a statue, in the faint light. "You are coming with me," he gestured towards Jake with two fingers.

"Hell no," Jake protested faintly. He had too little energy left to fight.

"Do you want me to beat you up?" the man inquired, mimicking Jake's words from earlier.

Maybe he was having a hearing problem, or the pain in his arm was playing tricks on him. He could swear he could hear a tinge of amusement in the man's voice.

Jake shook his head. He was in no position to fight. He followed the other, and only then he noticed the guy was wearing an impeccable suit. Jake thought it would be wise just to do what the man said for the time being. No point in angering a guy who moved like Bruce Lee, while wearing Armani or shit like that.

He saw a dark silhouette holding the door to a black limousine as he walked behind the man. Jake's eyes grew as big as saucers. What was a big shot like this Klaus guy doing in a seedy neighborhood?

"All is well, sir?" the man holding the car door inquired politely.

"Everything is perfect, Thompson. No need to worry. You, get inside," he half turned to gesture at Jake to climb in the back.

Jake did as told and tried to assume a relaxed posture. Whatever the guy wanted, it was not going to involve force, or he would be on the ground, screaming with the rest by now.

The man sat across from him, and the car door was closed carefully by the chauffeur. They scrutinized each other, as the car started moving.

Jake had to bite back a small curse. The man was fucking gorgeous. The light inside the limo was pleasant and bright enough for the two to inspect each other without a problem.

Jake understood why his attackers had called the man Fritz. He did look like a German guy. He could have been poster boy for Germany, actually. Perfectly shaved, his blond hair neatly combed over his head, almost white, like platinum, and deep blue eyes that were seemingly asking Jake to dive in. His face was a bit harsh but harmonious, and the dark blue suit was complementing his perfect features. Although Jake could swear, the guy would have looked fantastic in about anything he wanted to wear, even crocs or something stupid like that.

He was gawking, most probably, because a small all-knowing smile danced on the man's lips. Jake felt like he wanted to bite his fist all of a sudden. The man had such beautiful lips, soft and inviting, nothing like the rest of his face or figure. They were making him even more attractive. When he smiled, perfect rows of pearly white teeth showed. The man looked as if he had been made in a lab and not born from the coupling of two human beings.

"So ..." the man started, and Jake could swear he looked a bit amused.

"I'm Jake," Jake offered his hand quickly, and the man shook it shortly.

"So Jake, how do you plan on repaying me?"

"For what?"

The man chuckled softly, making Jake squirm a little in his place. "Saving you back there?"

Something in the way Klaus said the last word made Jake grow hot a little. What the hell? He thought. The man's eyes were measuring him up and down as if they could see through clothes. Jake felt self-conscious all of a sudden.

"What do you want? Info on those guys?" Jake nervously clasped his knees with his palms.

Klaus shook his head slowly.

"Want me to run some errands for you, then? I'm good around the city, and I know people," Jake offered.

Again, his offer was met with denial.

"What then? I don't have too much money on me, and you don't look like you need some change anyway," Jake said warily.

"You were on my territory tonight," Klaus said almost accusatory.

"Shit," Jake murmured. "When did that change? I don't know anything."

"It is mine now. Whoever trespasses at this hour has to pay what's due."

"Due? But those guys ...?"

"They got what was coming to them. You, on the other hand," the man looked at Jake, his eyes at half-mast, "you look like you are a different breed."

Somehow this man was making him feel like he was on display when he spoke like that.

"So, do you still plan on beating me up?" Jake looked the other in the eyes. He wasn't going to cower if that was the case.

The man shook his head. Slowly, with studied gestures, he took out a cigarillo case and lit up one with a golden lighter that disappeared into his pocket as fast as it was produced from there.

"How old are you, Jake?" Klaus inquired.

"21," he said curtly.

"What experience do you have with men?"

Jake's mouth fell agape. Was the man saying what he thought he was saying?

"None," he said slowly.

Fuck, fuckity, fuck, he thought. Was the guy some homophobe who beat up people who he believed to be gay or something? Technically, Jake wasn't...well he wasn't an active gay guy because he had never done anything with another man. His fantasies could not count, could they?

"I want to see you naked," Klaus demanded.

"What?! No way!" Jake protested.

"There are worse things than getting naked in a car with only one person as an audience."

"Why do you want to see me naked? Are you a homo?"

The man's beautiful eyes narrowed. Talking about wrong things to say.

"Watch your mouth. What I am is none of your business. I interrupted my evening to save your sorry ass from the clutches of your enemies, while you were wandering through my territory. The least you could offer is to do as I asked," Klaus's voice sounded hard and cold as ice.

"All right, fine," Jake pulled at the sleeves of his hoodie. He was thankful for his dark complexion as he was pretty sure he was blushing like crazy by now. He was about to get naked for a guy. One who looked like he had descended on to Jake's streets from the cover of a magazine.

He took off his t-shirt next, allowing the man to see his naked torso. At least he had nothing to be ashamed about. He waited, unsure if he should continue.

"What part of naked you do not understand?" Klaus inquired, no trace of emotion in his voice.

Cursing under his breath, Jake pushed down his tracksuit pants and his underwear along with his socks and snickers. He sat like that, his legs parted, waiting.

"Nice cock," the man smiled, and Jake felt the familiar stir in his loins. The kind he got when looking at skin magazines showing naked guys. "Obviously, it is standing up to attention," Klaus's voice grew a bit thick.

Overly conscious of his state of undress, Jake placed his hands over his manhood, to hide it from prying eyes. Klaus took a long drag from his cigarillo, blowing smoke through his mouth, and Jake thought stupidly how he wanted to be something the man would like to take into his mouth. He shook his head at the thought, making the man's smile widen.

The window was lowered a couple of inches, and the man tossed out the half-smoked cigarillo. Then he turned his attention to Jake. Klaus was taking his time watching Jake's naked body, and Jake could swear he could feel the man's eyes following every edge, every

nook and cranny visible. It felt invasive like he was touched from head to toes, as if the man wanted to get inside him from all sides and spill Jake's secrets through all his pores.

"What?" he asked, and for some reason, his voice sounded hoarse.

Klaus said nothing and just continued to stare. Even more, he leaned in, as if he was curious about something. The last thing Jake wanted was to look into those deep blue eyes from up close. He noticed how the man's eyes were fringed by long eyelashes, darker than his hair. He took in the aristocratic nose, the high cheekbones, and those frigging kissable lips. Unconsciously, he drew a deep breath.

"Do you like what you see?" Klaus asked, amusement sparkling in his eyes and dancing on his lips.

"I should be the one asking that," Jake said, feeling a bit insulted for being caught staring.

A strong, determined hand batted his hands off his man meat, and his cock was suddenly grabbed in a strong grip. Klaus continued to look at him while starting to rub his cock up and down.

"Are you always this hard when a man touches you?" Klaus's voice was deep and husky.

Fuck, he was hard. He hadn't even registered he was getting a boner while being watched like that by eyes blue like the summer sky. He hissed and closed his eyes. He was sure he was sweating so badly, that the seat beneath him was going to get soaked through. Klaus didn't seem to joke about it; his hand continued the steady pumping, and Jake wanted nothing but for the man to stop. Or increase his rhythm; he no longer knew what he wanted.

"Hey," Klaus cooed gently. "Open your eyes."

Like a petulant child, Jake shook his head and squeezed his eyes closed even more.

"If you don't, I won't finish," the gorgeous man issued the casual blackmail with a small chuckle.

Surprised, Jake opened his eyes and blinked in confusion.

"Don't, please," he begged, although he no longer had the slightest idea what he was asking for. It was for the first time in his life that another man was touching his cock, and it felt too unbelievable to think straight anymore.

A hand smelling of expensive cologne and tobacco closed over his mouth, hushing him. The other started to pump him harder, and he could no longer protest, even if he wanted to. His hands grabbed helplessly at the seat fabric, as he tensed and came, his eyes locked with sapphire blues staring at him with a mix of mockery and interest he could not make any sense of. The hand over his mouth moved away, letting him express his pleasure by moaning loudly.

He closed his eyes again, his lips parted, breathing heavily. Deft fingers were pushed through his lips.

“Lick,” came the short command, and he did as told, too spent to fight such a simple order.

He tasted himself on the man’s hand, along with a scent he was certain he was forever to associate with having an orgasm facilitated by another guy. At least it was not the first time he had eaten his cum, so he was familiar with the taste. The fingers moved against his tongue, erotically, and it felt like sex. Too bad he could not get it up again so soon after the best climax in his young life.

“You can get dressed,” the man eventually withdrew, and Jake quickly grabbed his clothes.

Shame and humiliation washed over him, as he was back to reality. He was quickly done while keeping his eyes cast down. He heard the man knocking softly against the screen separating them from the chauffeur, and he could tell the car was slowing down. That was his cue.

“See you around, Jake,” Klaus spoke to him, as Jake hurriedly opened the door to get out.

He said nothing as he almost ran away. He had no idea what that meant. But he could feel fear, coiling deep in his gut. Someone, living in the same city as he and his brother, now knew his secret. The last thing he wanted was to meet the man again.

Chapter Two

“How did you get that?” Diaz examined his bruised shoulder.

“I got into a fight with some Wanderers,” Jake mumbled while trying hard not to wince as his brother poked his arm.

“No shit. I bet the others look worse,” his brother’s face lit up with a smile.

Jake fell silent. He wasn’t going to tell Diaz he got saved by a gorgeous man named Klaus who had jerked him off and made him see heaven for the first time in his 21 years of life.

“So,” Diaz insisted. “Did you beat them up?”

“No,” Jake said softly while pulling his t-shirt over his head. “I ran away.”

“You did what?” his brother’s voice sounded flat and dangerous. “An Outsider does not fucking run away!”

Diaz slammed his palm against the table, making even the old china in the single cabinet in the kitchen rattle.

“They were five; I was one. What the hell could I have done?” Jake yelled back, his hands curled into fists.

“I don’t care how fucking many they were! We stand our ground! How about we all run away, huh? How about we all leave the city and go live in the woods, like monkeys? How would you like that?” his brother pushed him back into the chair while looking him square in the eye.

Of course, his brother was right. And even if he wasn’t right, and Jake had been entitled to save his ass, there was no way he could tell Diaz otherwise.

“Sorry, Diaz,” he murmured while looking down.

He had never been tough like his brother. He could not take five guys and live to tell the story.

“I taught you how to fight, didn’t I? You finally put on some muscles, use them for fuck’s sake!”

Jake let his brother scold him, casting his eyes down like a kid. What was he to do? Diaz moved and fiddled with something outside his field of view. Jake didn’t dare to look up. A plate filled with food was soon slammed on the table in front of him. A smack upside the head followed. Ah, well, that was to be expected, but Jake felt relieved. It meant the scolding was over.

“Eat up, puss,” his brother spoke with something between affection and disappointment in his voice.

Jake knew that. He knew he wasn't how Diaz wanted him to be. And his older brother didn't even know the half of it.

"We're going to meet someone later," Diaz added, and Jake didn't question the decision. His brother knew best when it came to business. Jake had to be present, just because he was family, and family was one of the values Diaz always said he held in high esteem.

The old building downtown had been renovated to accommodate new offices. Jake was pretty sure that he hadn't seen that happening, but he hadn't been downtown for a while. He feared he and his brother looked like total punks dressed in their regular t-shirts, jeans, and sneakers. As they stopped on the third floor and walked inside a large entranceway, his feeling of inadequacy only deepened. He stole a glance in Diaz's direction. His brother didn't seem to care, although the tension in his shoulders told him that Diaz was apprehensive of the surroundings as well.

A woman in her late 20s with perfect hair, wearing thin-rimmed glasses looked at them as they stopped by her desk. Jake felt ready for the floor to open up, swallow him and his brother, although the woman did not seem to judge them, but just observe them. She rose gracefully from her desk and greeted them.

"I will let my boss know you are here," she spoke and walked away after Diaz told her his name.

The woman was attired in a white blouse and a black pencil skirt, cut right above the knee. Her heels were just the right height to be both sexy and business-like, without going over the top in either direction.

Diaz stared after her.

"Do you see that, Jake?" he whispered. "That's a golden pussy for you, right there. If you score with someone like her, you can just die and go to heaven," he added. "Not that you would notice. I sometimes doubt you have a dick, although I saw it. You just don't know how to use it, do you?"

Jake knew he was now expected to comment on the secretary's charms. "I do know how to use it," he said in his defense. "And yeah, she is very ..."

As the woman walked back with a tall man in tow, Jake felt his breath hitching in his chest. "... beautiful," he eventually finished his sentence, as his eyes met amused sapphire blues.

Again, he was fucked. What was with this guy appearing in all the places he happened to be?

"Hello, I am Klaus Metzger," the man shook Diaz's hand, then Jake's. "Please, gentlemen, follow me to the meeting room. Martha, would you be so kind to bring some coffee and pastries? Just to sweeten our deal."

"Yes, sir," Jake heard the woman's musical voice.

He threaded behind Klaus and his brother, feeling like he was walking the plank in a bad pirates' movie. Klaus didn't show any other sign that he recognized Jake, which was good. For now, at least.

They were invited to take a seat at a lacquered table.

"So, what's this all about?" Diaz questioned.

"Mr. Lopez, I believe that you agree with me that gang wars are not a good thing for the town," Klaus began, as Martha moved in and about gracefully while placing cups of coffee in front of them and a plate filled with something that looked delicious.

Jake took one cookie in his mouth and had to hold back a sound of pure delight. He was so nervous that he was sure he could eat the entire plate then puke at home.

"You want us out?" Diaz asked aggressively.

"Not at all. What I really want is for us to work as partners. Your town is located in an area favorable to trade and tourism, and it is quite a shame that street crime is taking such a toll on its inhabitants."

Klaus stood up and went to take something from a drawer. He unfolded a map in front of Diaz and started to explain. Not that Jake could pay much attention to the conversation. He was too engrossed in looking at Klaus, taking in the man's moves. Even Diaz seemed to be taken with the guy. Of course, not for the same reasons, Jake thought. Klaus was apparently offering Diaz an opportunity.

"This smells fishy to me," Diaz laid back in his chair. "Are you willing to help us with money? Money you don't want back with interest?"

"Exactly. It is in my best interest to have peace of the streets. Of course, some of my supervisors will be sent to see if you all follow up with the plan. What do you say?"

"What makes you think that we are not just going to take the money and throw a big party plus piss on your plans?" Diaz said with a sneer.

Don't be an idiot, don't anger him, Jake thought, staring at his brother, in pure fear. Diaz had no idea who the man was. He was wearing a suit, but he knew more about street wars than Diaz could imagine.

"Well, I am asking everyone for collateral," Klaus explained with a small smile.

"Collateral?" Diaz frowned, not knowing what to make of the word.

"Guarantees," Klaus added.

"All right, that's more like it," Diaz shifted in his chair. "What kind of collateral do you want?"

"Is he your only brother?" Klaus gestured in Jake's direction.

Jake froze in place.

“Yeah, my only family,” Diaz glanced at Jake, fortunately not aware of how scared his brother was.

“I want him,” Klaus said like it was the most normal thing to say in a business conversation.

“What?! He’s not a dog!” Diaz showed his surprise at the man’s demand.

“He will come live at my house, and I will teach him how to help you run a real, legitimate business,” Klaus continued his explanation.

“I don’t see how that is supposed to squeeze my balls,” Diaz said gruffly.

“Let me put it this way, then,” Klaus spoke. “If it ever crosses your mind not to follow up with the plan, be aware that I have your brother.”

The man didn’t have to spell the threat for Diaz to understand.

“Like a hostage?” he seemed to ponder.

“Not a term I would like to use. I can assure you Jake will receive the best education and his well-being will be cared for.”

Jake felt breathless. His eyes were darting quickly from Klaus to Diaz and back to Klaus again.

“But he will be a hostage,” Diaz insisted, tapping his fingers against the table. “I don’t know, man. He’s my little brother. My only family.”

“That’s why he’s so precious,” Klaus smiled, but there was no warmth in that smile.

Jake had seen the man smile before, and it had not been like that. Cold, heartless. Unconsciously, he touched his chest.

“You have to admit my offer is rather generous. If you don’t agree ...”

“No, no. I see no problem here,” Diaz cut him short. “Jake will be in good hands, right?”

No, Diaz, you have no idea ... Jake wanted to yell at his brother.

“What do you say, Jake?” Diaz looked at him, with a look in his eyes that told Jake not to mess this one up. “How about going to live with Mister Metzger here and learn chemistry or something?”

“Not chemistry,” Klaus chuckled. “I doubt that discipline would ever convince anyone to go back to school.”

“I don’t fucking want to,” Jake eventually articulated the words he wanted to say.

He was well aware he sounded like a petulant child, but he could not help it.

“Jake, you’re fucking 21. You cannot live with me forever. Now you can do something for us. Don’t fuck it up,” Diaz warned, and Jake crossed his arms over his chest.

“I can let you two sort this out,” Klaus offered. “I can wait,” he consulted his expensive watch with a small frown, “for a little while.”

“No, he’ll do it,” Diaz concluded and stood up.

Jake could not believe it. He got up, too, ready to leave.

“Stop by Martha, and she’ll give you everything you need,” Klaus told Diaz.

Diaz nodded, turned to look at Jake, then back at Klaus.

“Do you want him to come to your house from like right now?”

“Yes, that would be great. I don’t want to run all over town chasing after him since he doesn’t seem so happy with your choice,” Klaus admitted.

“Diaz,” Jake called after his brother.

Diaz grabbed his nape and shook him gently while looking him in the eyes. “You heard the man. Stay here. I’ll stop by later to bring you everything you need from home. I’ll make sure nothing bad happens to you. I’ll keep my word, and Mr. Metzger is going to keep his.”

Jake didn’t dare to beg. He wasn’t going to make a fool of himself, more than he was doing it already.

“See you, kiddo,” Diaz ruffled his hair a bit too harsh, and Jake took the hint.

As the door closed after his brother, he felt strong arms embracing him from behind.

“Don’t fucking touch me, you freak,” he squirmed against the man. “If I tell my brother what you are up to ...”

“You had your chance. You said nothing,” Klaus squeezed him harder while dragging Jake closer and breathing in his scent. “No harm will come your way.”

“Like hell, no harm will come my way, you fag,” Jake tried to break free to no avail.

“Do you not want to be a man? Stand on your own feet? Not live in your brother’s shadow all the time?”

Jake was miffed for not being able to break free from Klaus’s tight embrace. “What are you going to do with me?”

“First, I should wash that potty mouth of yours with soap,” Klaus spoke, rather amused with Jake’s attempts to free himself.

“I am not a child,” Jake warned.

“No, you are all grown up,” Klaus kept him close with one hand, letting the other travel on Jake’s taut abdomen and rest atop his crotch. “I think I remember that very well.”

“Are you going to do something dirty?” Jake asked, his breath becoming faster for some reason.

Gently his head was turned enough to stare into Klaus’s blue eyes. “Dirty? Like this?” the man asked and brought their lips together.

Jake felt dizzy, as minty smell and taste invaded his nostrils and tongue. He was being kissed, and it felt more amazing than anything he had ever felt. He had kissed girls, but they had been soft and yielding, while Klaus was hard and demanding and his tongue moved in Jake’s mouth, making him feel like he was being fucked. He moaned into the kiss, without realizing it.

“I think we’ll have to redefine what ‘dirty’ means in your vocabulary,” Klaus chuckled while interrupting the kiss. “For instance, last night, I would have very much liked to lick all that remaining cum spread all over your chest.”

Jake felt his knees turning to melted butter. He had come quite a lot the night before, and he could remember his t-shirt getting all sticky from it. The idea of having that gorgeous man do the cleaning for him was making him impossibly hard.

Klaus’s hand moved again to squeeze him through his jeans. “Are you really a virgin, Jake?”

“I’m not a fucking virgin,” he breathed out. “I’ve fucked plenty of girls,” he tried to fake bravado.

“You know exactly what I mean,” Klaus squeezed him harder. “Have you ever had a cock up your ass?”

“No, I’m not a fucking fag, you asshole,” he tried to fight against the man’s embrace.

“What are you afraid of? That your brother is going to find out?”

“There’s nothing to find out,” Jake said stubbornly.

“Really? You are seconds away from coming in your jeans, and I’m merely stimulating you,” Klaus pointed out the obvious.

“Let me go,” Jake squirmed against the touch.

“As you wish,” Klaus suddenly released him and took a step back. “I have a lot of work to do today, and it is usually against my principles to mix business with pleasure. I suppose you can get through the day with a small ... unresolved issue,” he added, laughing softly.

Jake swallowed with difficulty. Stopping his racing heart was not easy either.

Chapter Three

The day went by with Klaus seeing about his work, and Jake just observing from the corner he had been placed. Well, it was not exactly a corner, but it definitely felt like it. On the other hand, he was free to stare at the man, and that made up for everything.

He had to admit he was pretty impressed. He heard Klaus talking on the phone in a language that he was almost sure it was French. The man seemed capable of switching between foreign languages without a problem, as he was talking to his business partners. Still, he wasn't letting go of his accent, and he did not seem to make an effort to hide it. What Jake could tell was that every word was pronounced as correctly as possible. The man had no intention to come across as a phony.

Long conversations had taken most of the day, but Jake didn't feel particularly bored. His mind had a way of running away on its own; Diaz used to say he was daydreaming too much. Only his brother had noticed such weaknesses in him. To the outside world, he had always tried to look tougher than he was, something much encouraged by Diaz.

His daydreams were hovering, however, on forbidden territory, as he could distinctly remember the kiss from earlier, as well as the late-night encounter that had him growing instantly hot. The moment he was starting to picture the entire scene and replay it in his mind over and over again, it felt like he was sliding down a toboggan, not one for kids, but for grown-ups, at the end of which lay a dark hot pool of secrets.

However, there was nothing else to do, and his mind was simply taking over any determination he might have had to resist. The man moving and talking in front of him was the root of his delight and misery. He was the same man who had kissed him, jerked him off, and rocked his world in the short span of less than 24 hours.

"Are you ready to go home?" Klaus eventually asked him with a smile.

"Am I free to go?" Jake woke up from his stupor. He had to admit he felt a bit disappointed. Maybe Klaus had just changed his mind.

"I deeply apologize. What I meant was: are you ready to go home with me?"

Klaus's home. The place where he was going to stay so he could help Diaz and the rest of the guys if what Klaus had said was true. The place where he was supposed to learn about how to run a business, although he had a distinct impression that he was going to learn something totally different. And that was making his stomach flutter with dread and excitement.

"What if I just say 'no'?" he felt the need to at least show some opposition to the idea of being dragged around like a mindless doll.

"And risk disappointing your brother?" the man quirked an eyebrow.

"He'll get over it," Jake shrugged, although he knew that wasn't true. His brother was going to go ballistic if he dared even mentioning he had no intention to help the gang.

“Stop being a kid. What do you think? That I’m going to drag you to my cave and devour you?” Klaus came closer and crouched so he could be on the same level with Jake who was sitting on a chair.

That was exactly how adults addressed children as if they were making a big, but endearing effort to be on the same level with a kid. He stood up, a bit briskly, almost knocking Klaus over in the process.

“No, I stopped believing in fairy tales when I was nine,” he said with a sullen look on his face.

“What happened when you were nine?” Klaus questioned.

A brief sensation of deep hurt punctured his heart. He pushed it away.

“None of your fucking business. Let’s go. I hope you have food,” he added.

“Do not worry about that. Since I have every intention to devour you, maybe you could use some fattening up,” Klaus joked, making him stop and stare at the other.

“I thought that was just sarcasm.”

“Maybe just half ... sarcasm,” Klaus grabbed his arm firmly and guided him out of the room.

“What is that supposed to mean?” Jake mumbled, trying to shake away the man’s hand. Klaus didn’t seem to be bothered by his lame attempts, though.

“It means that the word ‘devour’ can be used as a euphemism for something else. And do not ask something stupid like ‘what else’ because I am not in the mood to hear you insulting your own intelligence.”

“Intelligence?” Jake snorted. “If you really plan on teaching me stuff, you’re going to have a bad day. I’m dumb as a brick.”

He had no idea why he was saying things like that. It just seemed important to him to contradict the man in everything he was saying.

“I rarely misjudge people. But I have to admit that since I have known you for so little time, you are like a book to me.”

“An open book, you mean to say,” Jake entered the elevator with the man in tow.

“A book I am planning to open and read very, very thoroughly,” Klaus whispered in his ear, making his hair stand on end.

The elevator doors opened too soon, for Jake to linger too long thinking how terribly annoying was to have the man invading his personal space like that.

He knew Klaus’s limo and the chauffeur who was waiting like a statue, with the door opened.

“We are going straight to home, Thompson,” Klaus said after greeting the man. “After that, you are free for the rest of the evening.”

“Thank you, sir,” the man said laconically, and Jake wondered if Thompson was happy to go home and not have to stick around and put up with his boss and his whims. The chauffeur showed no emotion, so that was hard to say.

Was Thompson even guessing what had happened the other night? Jake felt sick to his stomach. Inside the car, he huddled himself in a corner to look out the window, as the limo began to move.

Klaus seemed keen on leaving him alone for the time being. When Jake turned to stare a little at the man, he was surprised to see him with his eyes closed, his head on the comfortable headrest, with an expression of unexpected vulnerability on his face. Jake thought he had to be angry at the man.

But, at that very moment, he only wondered how it would feel to press his mouth against the man’s soft lips and see if there was any magic there, something in the simple connection of skin on skin that could not be explained by laws of men or gods. It had definitely felt like that, a thing beyond any comprehension at the time it happened. Jake could still feel the man’s taste in his mouth, and he began to wonder how it would be to explore and taste Klaus everywhere.

“If you are just going to stare, how about coming closer?” Klaus spoke huskily, without opening his eyes and Jake turned back to his window with a huff, making the other laugh softly. “Do not feel neglected, Jake. I need just a bit of time off to cleanse my head of all the problems at work.”

“I didn’t feel neglected,” Jake mumbled. “And what problems? You handled everything today with no sign of worry or anything.”

“There is no such thing as work without trouble. You will learn, Jake. I will teach you,” Klaus offered and placed a warm hand on the younger man’s shoulder.

“Is that ... your house?” Jake felt his jaw-dropping with the speed of light, as the limo took a turn to enter the driveway to what looked pretty much like a mansion.

“My home is my castle,” Klaus said, and Jake snorted.

“In your case, the right order of words is ‘This castle is my home’ or something like that.”

“You are overreacting. This is not by far a castle. I will show you real castles.”

“When?” Jake asked, feeling, for some reason, like a little kid promised a trip to Disneyland.

“When we will travel to France, of course,” Klaus said casually.

“France? Like in Europe?” Jake asked in disbelief.

“That is where France is, last time I checked,” Klaus, answered with a smile.

“Why would you take a piece of street trash like me there?”

“On vacation,” Klaus explained, as the car was slowly stopping. “And I really have to wash that dirty mouth of yours. I think I will have you swallow an entire bar of soap.”

“Make me,” Jake challenged, earning a meaningful look from the blond.

“Do not think I will hesitate to do so. Although I have a mind to make you ... swallow other things,” Klaus winked at him.

Damn the man! He always had to have the last word, Jake thought with growing annoyance, as the door opened and Klaus got out, moving with the same grace as always.

Behind him, Jake hurried to get out quickly, too. He looked at the man holding the door, trying to gauge some reaction. Thompson looked calmly straight ahead, without even gracing Jake with a glance. It hit Jake like a ton of bricks how out of place he had to look, walking side by side with Klaus. The chauffeur obviously knew it, and he was probably thinking that it was just one of his boss’s whims to take a poor guy like Jake from the street, and flaunt his palace in his face, just to make him feel pathetic and useless.

He wanted to hate the man. He truly did. But, as Klaus moved in front of him, the only thing he found himself capable of doing was to stare at the man’s back and admire his perfect figure.

An old lady who seemed to be head of the staff greeted them. Jake didn’t dare to look around too much and ended up just staring at his sneakers.

Cool fingers tilted his chin up. “No need to look down all the time. The house will not break if you take a look around.” After that, Klaus just turned towards the old woman. “Agnes, this is Jake, our new guest. Make sure to prepare the room on the second floor next to mine.”

The woman nodded and disappeared without a word.

“I’ll try to break free, you know,” Jake murmured.

“What?” Klaus pretended to have a sudden loss of hearing.

“I will try to escape,” Jake said more energetically this time.

“Oh,” was the man’s only reply, as he started to climb the majestic stairs leading to the upper floor.

Jake stood stubbornly exactly where he was.

“Are you not coming?” Klaus threw over his shoulders. “Or do you plan to escape this very moment?”

Somehow, the idea seemed ludicrous, so Jake decided to move his legs and climb the stairs to follow Klaus.

They reached the second floor in silence, and Jake began to feel more and more apprehensive. The man stopped in front of a door and pushed it open. He then gestured for Jake to go inside.

Despite his better judgment and all his senses screaming at him that it was not a good idea to step into the guy's lair on his own accord, he entered the room.

He stopped dead in his tracks upon seeing the master bed in the middle of the room. He expected something more clinical from a bedroom belonging to a man like Klaus. Everything was sparkling clean, but the tones of golden, beige and brown, made the room feel warm and comfortable.

“Do you want to try the bed?” Klaus joked, and Jake shifted from one foot to another.

Suddenly an idea hit him. “This is what you do with everybody?”

“What do you mean by everybody?”

“You know, the other people you are asking for as collateral, how you asked me from my brother.”

“Collateral does not have to be a person. There are many other things people hold dear, besides relatives. In your case, it only seemed appropriate.”

“Appropriate? How can it be appropriate to ask for another human being to become your slave or something?”

A rough hand grabbed his chin and made him turn his head a bit too harshly.

“Where do you get such ideas? How are you a slave here?”

“I have no freedom. I will have to do what you ask. How would you name that?”

Klaus let him be and walked towards the bed, plopping himself on the comfortable pillows with a sigh.

“First of all, if you are unhappy with our arrangement, you are free to go. Of course, that will make things difficult between you and your brother, but that is none of my business. Secondly, you will do whatever you want to do. I will do my part to try convincing you, but I can assure you, there will be nothing forced upon you.”

“You ...” Jake felt the need to revolt, to protest. “You ... forced me last night.”

“Is that so? Please do entertain me with an explanation.”

“You made me undress for you. You touched my dick,” Jake said miffed.

“Yes, all right, and ...? Let me guess. You hated it,” Klaus stared at him, with mockery in his beautiful blue eyes.

“Yes, I did,” Jake lied, and began biting his bottom lip.

“And, with all the hatred and disgust you felt,” Klaus straightened up a little and angled his head, “you came all over your chest and my hand. Should I remind you that you are pretty strong yourself? You were not chained and anything remotely similar. I only had my hand on your cock.”

Jake began to feel restless.

“Did it not feel good?” Klaus pressed, and his voice began to coil around Jake’s mind like a graceful snake.

“N-no,” Jake mustered the courage to deny.

“All right,” Klaus shrugged. “I will go take a shower,” he said all of a sudden. “You can relax here, while Agnes prepares your room.”

With that, Klaus began to undress with efficient moves, placing his suit on a hanger and putting it back into a large closet. He let the shirt on the back of a chair, and then the white t-shirt he wore underneath. Jake stared at the man’s naked back, watching the smooth muscles dancing under the skin. A sudden urge to just go there and embrace Klaus from behind, placing his lips between the man’s shoulder blades, invaded his mind. This time, the man seemed oblivious to the inquisitive looks he was getting from his guest. He took off his underwear and left it on the chair, after folding it with the same care.

Everything about the man screamed efficiency and Jake felt his breath hitching in his chest as he drank in the sight. The man was perfect in every way, his ass an absolute marvel, inviting Jake to touch and feel and part the round mounds, to sneak a peek at the secret hiding they were guarding. He had never had the chance to stare so openly at another naked male in flesh and blood, and it didn’t help at all that Klaus was perfection in every way.

The man turned, allowing him to see the front, too. Jake licked his lips unconsciously. The man was well endowed, his pubic hair the same color as the one on his head. Otherwise, the guy seemed perfectly shaved; Jake’s eyes traveled on the man’s chest. He wondered how it would be to place his palms over those perfect pecs. He could only imagine how it would feel to map all the ridges of that ripped abdomen, only to sink his hands into the guy’s pubic hair and pull at it.

Even flaccid, the man’s cock looked quite impressive. At least, by Jake’s standards, as he was confident he was average, and even that was a bit of a stretch. The sleepy organ rested on a nice pair of balls. Klaus grabbed his own cock and flaunted it a bit.

“What do you say, Jake? Are you not willing to try? Since you are looking so intently, why not act on your desire and come closer?”

There was no mockery in the man's voice as he spoke.

"I wasn't looking ... like you said," he averted his eyes.

Klaus moved gracefully and stopped by the bed. He leaned a little to hover over Jake. He took one of Jake's hands and placed it quickly on his own sex. Jake's fingers curled around the meaty shaft for a split second. Then he withdrew as if he had been burned.

"It is not like you are thinking," Jake pleaded.

The offensive hand sank between his legs, grabbing him roughly. Jake yelped. He was so hard he was confident he could explode from a simple touch, let alone a bit of squeezing.

"You are so hard you could drive a nail through a wall with this," Klaus joked. "It is amazing how much denial you have in you. However, I am an understanding man. Within limits, of course."

"What is that supposed to mean?" Jake mumbled, his eyes half closed, enjoying the hand moving against his cock through his jeans.

"That I will make you mine, regardless of what you are saying. That I will not deny you the pleasure, you are so badly seeking, just because you are too stubborn to admit it."

"If you're gay, don't you have like a lover or something to get your rocks off?" Jake inquired, unconsciously parting his legs, to allow the man's touch.

"A lover?" Klaus chuckled.

The offensive hand stopped.

"Are you fishing for info, Jake? Do you want to know if I am taken?"

"No! I am just asking so you could leave me alone!" Jake protested.

"As you wish," Klaus straightened up and walked away. "As for your question, since you are dishonest about the motivation behind it, I will not deem it worthy of an answer. Now, I will enjoy my shower. In case you change your mind, the door is not locked. Join me if you please. I promise I will wash your back," he added with a wink, as he disappeared through the bathroom door.

Jake remained alone. Damn, he felt frustrated. After all, what was the harm if he played along? He shook his head. What was he thinking? With his secret out in the open, his brother would have his balls. Or his head. Or both. No, if he was going to give in to his urges, he had to be somewhere else. Somewhere very far away, where Diaz and the others would not be known by anyone.

On the other hand, he was too damn horny. Klaus's touch was enough to drive him crazy. He wished for the man to finish what he had started. But, that was not possible. Jake could not

give in to that invitation, even if it meant the end of his torment. He could not trust a stranger on such a delicate subject.

He took out his cock. He could hear the water running. There was no harm in taking care of things when there was no one watching. He closed his eyes and imagined Klaus's beautiful eyes staring into his, while rough, skilled hands were pumping his cock.

An idea came to him, as desire took over. He rose from the bed and grabbed the t-shirt Klaus had been wearing until earlier. He hoped for a more overpowering smell, but apparently, the man didn't even sweat like a normal human being. Only a fading whiff could be felt that he could identify as the man's smell, besides the hint of expensive perfume. He inhaled deeply and came with a small grunt.

When he opened his eyes, he saw Klaus standing there, a bathroom robe hiding his naked body this time. He looked amused. Jake realized in shock that he could no longer hear the water running. What the hell had he been thinking?

"I will not have you masturbate at my expense," Klaus warned. "This time, I will let it slide, but soon, I will have a little small device brought over. Something you will probably find ... interesting."

Jake could only wonder what that would be.

"That being said, you can go to your room. Agnes must have finished. It is the next door on the left. By tonight, I will see to restraining you against such offending acts," Klaus added with a playful smirk.

Totally defeated, Jake turned on his heels and left the room. He really had to catch some sleep; the day had proved much too eventful for his nerves.

Chapter Four

It was almost dinnertime when he finally woke up. He had to remember to say an honest 'thank you' to that Agnes lady. His room was comfortable, and sleep had taken him fast, once he had hit the pillows. The bedroom was a tad smaller than Klaus's, but it was warm and cozy. As opposed to the golden tones in the other's bedroom, different hues of blue seemed to be dominant in this one.

It was strange how he had always thought of blue to be a cold color, and now he was thinking exactly the opposite. It had to do with how a particular pair of baby blues could burn with inner fire when looking at him. He shook his head. It was not healthy for him to fantasize about Klaus. He had no intention to lose his brother's trust, and his reputation along with it, just for a fleeting moment of passion. Although he was sure it was not going to be just a moment, and it was not going to be fleeting if it was going to happen.

Klaus had simply said that he was not going to force himself on Jake. Nonetheless, that was something he secretly desired. If it was going to be against his will, he was not going to be considered guilty, right? With a groan, he pushed himself up from the bed. What was he thinking? Just a word that he was taking it up the ass and everyone he knew was going to despise him. Even worse. Even if he could say in his defense that he hadn't wanted it.

His stomach grumbled loudly, and he remembered he had eaten nothing for hours now. The idea that Klaus had sent him to sleep on an empty stomach like he was a child hit him. Damn, was the man's intention to starve him?

He washed his face and brushed his teeth. His bathroom had everything he needed. He combed his hair and took a critical look at himself in the mirror. The problem was that he didn't seem man enough. Diaz was right. He was still soft around the edges, regardless of how many muscles he had put on lately, under his brother's close supervision. The problem was that he didn't fuck, as Diaz had put it plainly.

After a few failed attempts with girls that had only led to lame sex, he had just given up. He had tried to defend himself, saying that "the girls didn't want him." His brother had just stared at him in contempt. "You're handsome enough," Diaz had pointed out, grabbing his neck and squeezing hard. "Only that you're behaving too much like a pussy around women. Women want men, not boys." That was what Diaz had said on more than one occasion.

However, he had stubbornly kept everything to himself. He hated getting involved with some random girl just to please his older brother. Plus, the girls had no fault he was how he was; making them feel bad didn't have to be on his plate.

Hesitantly, he opened the door to the bedroom and went out. The house seemed to be quite lively at that hour if the noises coming from downstairs were any indication. He took the stairs down and looked around. Agnes came around the corner and patted his shoulder gently.

"Mr. Metzger is in the dining room. He expects you to join him," the old lady gestured towards the room in question and then went about her business.

Her German accent was even stronger, Jake thought. On Klaus's tongue, English sounded just a bit rough. Agnes's voice sounded like a machine, although the woman's eyes were warm.

He eventually dared enter the room indicated by the old lady. Apparently, Klaus had company, another blond man who looked to be of the same descent as the owner of the house. The couple looked engaged in conversation, and Jake took advantage that they had not yet noticed him.

The guest was strong and tall, and even sitting, he looked like he was taller and stronger than Klaus. He had darker blond hair, and Jake could not see his eyes from where he was standing. He was not the embodiment of elegance like Klaus was. Rough short stubble made him look masculine, and his hair was a bit longer, as well, tied at the back in a fashionable man bun. The opened shirt showed how relaxed the man was. Klaus himself no longer wore a suit, but he still looked as if taken straight out of the box.

He coughed a little to draw attention. After all, he needed something to eat, and fast. Two pairs of blue eyes turned to stare at him.

“Well,” the guest spoke, visibly amused, “is this your new toy?”

Klaus, on the other hand, kept his eyes glued to Jake, without saying anything for a couple of seconds.

“Jake, this is Hans, a friend of mine,” he eventually spoke. “Come in, please, and take a seat.”

Toy! He was a fucking toy! He knew he was rude for not saying anything and for pulling a chair far away from the two, but did it anyway.

“Closer,” Klaus said calmly, and he rose with a huff, only to move two chairs closer, but still not next to the two other men at the table.

“Closer,” Klaus beckoned him again, without changing his tone or looking even a tiny bit annoyed with Jake's resistance to complying.

Eventually, he sat next to Klaus. The man looked at him for a few seconds, with an unreadable expression in his beautiful blue eyes.

“Are you hungry?” he asked politely.

“Of course I am,” Jake snapped, wanting badly to avoid sounding like a child. Nonetheless, it was clear from Hans's amused expression that he was failing to do so.

“You were sleeping so soundly that I decided to let you be. We were just waiting for you to wake up.”

“I woke up on my own. What were you going to do? Starve until tomorrow if I didn't?” Jake mumbled.

“I would have sent Agnes to wake you up,” Klaus explained in the same even tone. “Or I would have come, but that could have meant waking you up in more ways than one.”

There was no smile, no emotion on Klaus’s face as he spoke like that. Jake wished he would not feel pins and needles everywhere as the man continued to stare at him.

“He’s a feisty one,” Hans commented.

“I am right here,” Jake hissed. He decided that very instant he hated this Hans guy. Not only because he was so annoying, but also because he was too gorgeous and sat too close to Klaus for Jake to like it. Maybe Hans was Klaus’s lover or something. Anyway, it was not his business if they were intimate or not.

“So?” Hans challenged him with his eyes.

“So maybe it’s rude to talk about somebody who is just inches away from you like he’s not present,” Jake answered in kind.

Hans laughed and turned towards Klaus.

“I think I get the appeal now. He’s not that much on the outside, but he does look to have a mind of his own. Are you sure this is what you want?”

Jake felt his cheeks getting warmer. The guest was simply continuing to ignore him. Plus, what the hell was he talking about? What had Klaus told him? Couldn’t he keep a secret? Especially one that was not his own?

“One thing I am certain of, Hans, is that you should stop bothering Jake. He is new here, and he still needs plenty of time to adjust,” Klaus came to his defense.

The conversation stopped there, as a young maid came through the door, pushing a tray of food. Enticing smells hit Jake’s nostrils, making him forget for a moment, about Klaus’s annoying friend. He was ready to dig in.

The other two did him a service and ate in complete silence. Jake chose to stare stubbornly at his plate and did not care about making eye contact with either of the two.

When the meal was over, Klaus invited his guests to follow him on the balcony just outside the room to relax.

Jake sat on a reclining chair, again feeling acutely out of place. The two men wore casual clothes, but everything about them spelled wealth. Jake was pretty sure he was sticking out like a sore thumb, in his 5-dollar t-shirt and washed out jeans.

“Do you want to spend the night?” Klaus offered, and Hans stared at his host a bit surprised. Then he stole a quick glance in Jake’s direction.

“Oh, don’t tell me ... He’s not broken in yet?” Hans asked with a small chuckle, and Jake crossed his arms over his chest. “If you needed a hand, it would be my pleasure to help you get him ... adjusted.”

“There is no need for you to bother. And I was asking only if you cared about sleeping here, seeing that you must be pretty tired from your trip,” Klaus spoke, and Jake noticed with satisfaction how the other’s face fell upon hearing the not so well veiled refusal.

“I am not that tired,” Hans cooed, leaning towards Klaus and touching his arm.

Jake rose from his chair.

“I’ll go to my room,” he said determinedly.

“Sit,” Klaus said curtly, and Jake sat down quickly.

He immediately cursed under his breath. What the fuck? Was he a dog now or something? But he could not just take it back and stand up again.

Klaus seemed a bit tense, which was odd. Jake noticed how Klaus was staring at Hans’s hand, still resting on his forearm, with a small frown. Eventually, Hans seemed to take the hint and withdrew his hand.

“As you wish,” Hans waved his hand as if he didn’t care that much about Klaus’s whims. “I will take on your offer then, and sleep under your roof. Is the blue room free, as always?”

“I’ll have Agnes prepare another room for you. That is where Jake stays right now.”

Jake could barely stop a bout of satisfaction swelling his chest when he saw Hans’s jaw tensing as if the man was about to take a bite of something, or preferably someone. Apparently, the guest was not so high in Klaus’s good graces. On the other hand, Jake seemed to be, and that was something the young man could not comprehend. He had nothing on this Hans dude.

The guy was tall, beautiful, and perfect, just like Klaus. But, maybe Klaus was not enjoying so much fucking another version of himself. Maybe he was just getting tired of vanilla cake and wanted a bit of milk and chocolate, Jake smirked at the thought.

“Why are you smiling?” Hans stared at him, narrowing his eyes as if he could read Jake’s mind.

“None of your business,” Jake shrugged and relaxed in his chair. It was not like him to get into verbal confrontations, as he had no idea how to deal with them. But he felt as if he was at war with Hans, for no other reason than Klaus. Wait, did he want Klaus? Of course, he wanted Klaus; but he couldn’t have him because it was too dangerous for him to come forward and say so.

“I think it’s been a long day for all of us,” Klaus concluded. “Hans, come with me, and I will let Agnes know you are spending the night. Jake, wait for me in your room. Don’t wander around the place.”

Jake rose and walked away. It was not as if he WANTED to take orders from the haughty man, but, for the moment, he had nothing better to do anyway. As the door to the balcony closed behind him, he missed the tense conversation held in German between the other two.

“It is not like you to act so jealously,” Klaus said with a frown.

“I was hoping to get together with you again. I would not have bothered to make this detour otherwise. And I’m not jealous. I’m just annoyed that you are willing to play with a new toy, while I’m here. Especially since this new toy does not seem to behave.”

“Hans,” Klaus’s voice grew a bit colder. “You are making my situation difficult by telling him to his face he is nothing but a toy.”

“Isn’t it the truth?” Hans asked with a shrug. “And he is not your usual type.”

“My usual type? What is that supposed to mean? Please enlighten me,” Klaus fiddled with his glass of wine.

“You know, high class, sophisticated. What are you doing with a piece of street trash like this one?”

“I’m tired of high class and sophisticated. They’re nothing but a bore,” Klaus spoke while slowly sipping his drink. “Plus, I’ve never had a virgin,” he added matter-of-factly.

“A virgin? This one? Please,” Hans snorted. “He has probably had more butt sex than you and me together. You should seriously take him to the vet and have him checked,” the guest said sourly.

“And what exactly makes you say that? Except for the fact that he didn’t look impressed with your attempts to put him down.”

Hans took the offense well. “He has a mouth on him, apparently.”

“So? He’s from a poor neighborhood; I don’t expect him to have been born with a silver spoon in his mouth, hence the language.”

“Then tell me what makes you think he’s a virgin,” Hans said in response.

“Let’s just say I had the pleasure to enjoy a solo performance from his part ... to one point, when I had to take over and experience firsthand how affected he was to be touched by another man.”

“Don’t force him if he’s not gay,” Hans said with a small frown. “It’s not like you to do that. I know very well you have never been crazy about bi guys, either.”

Klaus seemed to ponder for a bit. “Then what do you call a guy you catch masturbating while smelling your t-shirt?”

Hans laughed softly. “For real? He’s just in denial, that’s all?”

“I do understand him, you know. I met his brother.”

“Older brother, I assume,” Hans spoke.

“Yes. He’s leading one of the gangs I’m trying to appease to get things done around here. He’s the embodiment of all things macho. Jake seems very shy around him. I bet he cannot just go tell his brother something like that.”

“I suppose that would not go down well.”

“Plus, doing something forbidden like hooking up with a guy, in a neighborhood where everyone knows everyone ... well, I think you get the picture now. Unless he sodomized himself with whatever he thought he could use as a dildo, I venture to say those are uncharted territories,” Klaus allowed himself a joke.

“You know, the offer is still standing,” Hans looked at his friend, his eyes at half-mast.

“And I still have to decline. I’m afraid I’m not that much of a hypocrite to use you as a substitute when I desire another.”

“True that,” Hans admitted. “You’re the type that always gets involved body and soul in everything you do. Although I’ve always pegged you for the restrained type in your relationships.”

“Really? In what sense?” Klaus pursed his lips.

“In the sense that you don’t get attached, even if you focus on a single person. I must admit that after we hooked up the first time, I was surprised to feel flattered and insulted at the same time by your interest.”

“Hans, I can assure you ...”

“Don’t bother, Klaus. It is just how you are. You are ... cold, I think. Not between the sheets. I used to have the bruises to prove it,” Hans chuckled softly. “But there is a wall between you and your lovers, always. In the beginning, I thought it was just me, but I have seen you treating everyone with the same passion and indifference at the same time.”

Klaus remained silent, seemingly examining the contents of his glass.

“So, after you break him in, what’s next?” Hans asked.

Klaus just shrugged. “I will not stay here forever.”

“Of course, there is always some new business somewhere that needs your skilled hand to get going. I think you’re addicted to beginnings, nothing more.”

“I frankly think I’m too young to settle down if this is what you are asking me.”

“You’re doing this for what, 10-12 years?”

“11, to be precise,” Klaus admitted.

“Aren’t you growing tired?”

“Aren’t you?” the host answered with another question. “You’re traveling a lot.”

“I would have settled down for you. And let’s face it, Klaus, I am not going through lovers with the speed of light, the way you do it. At least, whenever I meet someone new, I am thinking whether or not they are worth the trouble to be considered ‘the one’.”

“The one?” a superior smile crept on Klaus’s well-defined lips. “There is no such thing. When the time comes, I will settle for someone. If I choose so, I will shape him up into becoming this ideal you are talking about.”

Hans shook his head. “That is not how it works, Klaus.”

“I’ve never thought you would be the romantic type, my friend,” Klaus laughed.

“Me neither. It must be the wine talking,” Hans took another sip from his glass. “Well, I will let you play and go looking for Agnes.”

“I’d like to accompany you,” Klaus rose from his chair.

“There is no need. I will just ask Agnes for directions,” Hans refused. “Good night, Klaus, and I mean it,” he added with a small smile.

For a couple of minutes, Klaus remained unmoving, staring over the perfect landscape, without actually seeing anything.

Chapter Five

Jake was getting restless. There was no TV or other means of entertainment he could use while waiting for that annoying bastard. He had a mind to get out of the house, but he didn't want Klaus to chase him down from the first day. There was enough time to observe his surroundings later. For now, he had to admit he was very curious about this insanely rich guy, and his unusual interest in someone like him.

The door finally opened, Klaus coming in with a small box in his hand and a mysterious smile painted on his face.

“Don't you know how to knock?” Jake said defensively.

“And ruin my chances of catching you masturbating?” Klaus twisted his lips as if he could barely keep from laughing out loud. “Come now, pants down.”

“What? You said you wouldn't force me!” Jake complained instantly.

“And you will not be,” Klaus closed the door behind him and came closer. “You will have to trust me.”

“Yeah, right,” Jake snorted, while still sitting on the bed with his arms wrapped around his knees. “You took me away from my brother ...”

Klaus raised one finger to stop him. “I believe the correct way of describing the situation is that your brother gave you away. How do you feel about that, by the way? He has not come to bring your stuff, either, although he promised.”

“He will,” Jake said with a small huff. Yes, it was annoying that Diaz hadn't bothered to come around.

Klaus waited by the bed, looking very much amused. “Take your jeans off. I promise I will not touch you ... any more than necessary. Do not tell me you are frightened?”

Jake eventually moved. He was curious about what the man wanted and was anticipating being touched by the gorgeous man. And he had to prove that he was not scared.

With quick moves, he flipped open his jeans and stepped out of them. He liked going commando; there was no underwear to bother him. He stood up straight, his hands in front, his legs slightly parted.

“So?” he challenged Klaus with his eyes.

The man caressed Jake's cheek briefly, and turning, picked up the box he had placed on the table earlier. Jake's eyes spoke volumes as he saw the object.

“The fuck is that?”

“This is ... let us call it a little more sophisticated model of a chastity belt,” Klaus presented the small transparent case in his hand.

“No way,” Jake took a step back, but his calves hit the bed.

“Yes way,” Klaus said with a small laugh. “I told you I would not have you masturbate at my expense. If you are the stoic you claim you are, although your actions speak otherwise, then what is the problem? Plus, it is not like I will have you running around and mess around with my staff, either. Agnes is particularly off limits,” Klaus joked while climbing on the bed and pushing Jake down with a firm hand.

“She could be my grandma, what the hell, dude?”

“Now, Jake, be a good boy,” Klaus cooed and reached between Jake’s legs to fondle his balls a little. “No harm will be brought to you.”

“Like hell it won’t,” Jake said defensively, although he could feel his eyes rolling in his head, as Klaus’s hand was moving. “How am I going to piss? Or wash?”

“I will show you. The belt is designed to prevent you from getting it up, not stop you from relieving yourself. It will be a bit uncomfortable, but doable. You will be able to take showers, do not worry. I will help you should you need help.”

“Fucking pervert,” Jake tried to push Klaus away, but the man didn’t budge.

“Look, Jake, it is this or you running back to your brother. What is it going to be?” Klaus asked a bit annoyed.

That was enough to make Jake back down. “Whatever. Put the damn thing on me. It’s not like I’ll get hard around you anyway.”

“Should we test that theory?” Klaus bent more and placed a small peck on Jake’s left cheek.

The hand moved on his cock, and Jake let go of a small moan.

“I should get you off before putting the chastity belt on,” Klaus said mostly to himself.

“Don’t,” Jake whispered, but his mouth was captured in a kiss, and he let go. It was just a hand job, right?

He could feel the tight grip on his cock down right into every fiber of his being. It was like there was nothing else but the hand moving maddeningly slow, gathering liquid in the small slit. A thumb teased the head, spreading the moisture around.

“Please,” he begged, moving his head away from the kiss. He could not think with Klaus’s tongue in his mouth.

“Jake, you are so hot right now, you should see yourself,” Klaus murmured into his ear.

He was made to get up from the bed, as Klaus moved away. Confused, he stood up. Klaus dragged him in front of the large mirror he had noticed earlier in one corner.

Klaus stood behind him and gently seized his jaw.

“Look,” he beckoned Jake to look in the mirror. “What do you see, Jake?”

“A pervert all over me,” Jake said softly.

He could not believe that was him. His eyes were moist, his lips looked a bit swollen, and there was a stranger’s hand moving on his cock steadily, unhurriedly.

“You are beautiful, Jake,” Klaus whispered against his cheek, placing small kisses all over it.

He could feel his toes curling against the plush carpet on the floor. He could not bear it, so he closed his eyes.

“Let go, Jake,” Klaus spoke seductively in his ear. “There is no one here but you and me.”

He came so hard Klaus’s strong arms were the only thing that kept him from falling. His breath was ragged as he slowly came to his senses. He barely registered how his soft organ was pushed into the small transparent case, and thin leather straps were locked behind his back and right under his buttocks.

“Don’t you think I will be able to take this out whenever I feel like it?” he said breathily, his eyes still locked on his own image in the mirror.

“No, I do not,” Klaus answered, his words followed by a playful smack on Jake’s buttocks. “You see, this is an item that comes with a small feature ... a cipher. Of course, if the situation becomes unbearable, you should just come to me,” he placed a quick peck on Jake’s lips. “Now, get dressed. We are going out for a walk.”

“At this hour?”

“Do not tell me you want to be in bed by nine? You basically slept for hours before dinner.”

Without a word, Jake grabbed his jeans.

“At least, can I ask where are we going?” Jake eventually spoke, seeing that Klaus was doing nothing else but stare at him while he was getting dressed.

“You need a new wardrobe.”

“I don’t think there are many stores open at this hour. Plus, I don’t have any money on me. Wait, I hope you don’t want to put me in a suit? I won’t pay for it, and I won’t wear it,” Jake said defensively.

“We will go slowly, at first. I still think you could use some new t-shirts and jeans. The ones you are wearing are just too ...” Klaus struggled to find the word.

“Cheap,” Jake obliged with a small frown. “I told you, I don’t have any money. I dress the way I dress because I cannot afford much else, and damn if I’m going to feel bad about it, only because you’re a bastard coming from money.”

He had said all that in one breath. Now that he was down from the high of his release from earlier, he had to face the harsh reality. Klaus was out of his league, even if, through some miracle, he could try his luck with the guy.

“You are my responsibility now, Jake,” Klaus said gently. “This means that I will take care of all your expenses. As long as you live in my house, and obey my rules, no harm will come to you, and you will be treated well. That includes me buying you some clothes.”

“So, I’m like a whore or something,” Jake mumbled, crossing his arms over his chest.

Klaus seemed amused by his attitude. “To be a whore, you would have to offer certain services. So far, while I must admit that I find you enthralling, I had to coax everything out of you. Due to your reluctance, I am quite certain ‘whore’ would not be an appropriate term. Plus, each time I have put your pleasure above my own, have I not?”

Jake bit his bottom lip. He couldn’t understand what Klaus got from their strange trysts. It was true that the man showed no interest other than making Jake come. Maybe he was suffering from some impotence? That could not be. The man exuded sex through all his pores; yet, Jake had been the only one naked, and the only one getting something from both the times Klaus had touched him. That was strange all right.

“Can’t you get it up or something?” Jake blurted out without thinking.

“What makes you think that?” Klaus seemed a bit taken aback.

“You didn’t jump me; you’re just ... talking,” Jake said a bit embarrassed. If the man had a problem, chances were that he had no intention to talk about such a delicate thing with a stranger.

“Do you want me to jump you?”

“No, of course not,” Jake pushed his hands into his pockets.

Klaus caressed his forearm and made him take the hand out of his pocket. He entangled his fingers with Jake.

“Right now, we have shopping to do, and later I will show you there is nothing wrong with my ... equipment,” he gently rubbed his lips against Jake’s earlobe.

Jake felt his blood getting hot again; the man’s proximity seemed to cause summersaults in his stomach. An unpleasant sensation made him wince. Then he realized. His cock was trying to get up, but it was pressing against the case closed over it.

“Is there a problem?” Klaus questioned, feeling the youngster’s distress.

There was an odd exchange of looks between the two men until realization dawned on Klaus.

“Oh, I see you are starting to see how the belt works. Good, at least we both know for sure that you are not having any erectile issues,” he joked, and Jake cast his eyes down quickly.

The man was right. The damn thing wasn't comfortable at all when the wearer wanted to get an erection.

"What if ..." he expressed his worry. "What if this thing causes some damage and shit?"

"I doubt a four-letter word has anything to do with what you are getting worried about. You should learn to speak without the excessive use of cuss words. You said it yourself that you will not get hard around me. So, what is the problem?"

"Maybe I will get hard for other reasons. Like imagining a girl going down on me or something," he tried to act brave.

"Are you sure it will not be because you will imagine me going down on you instead of some random girl?" Klaus almost whispered the words.

Jake's face was a parody of emotions. Klaus felt compelled to laugh.

"Are you picturing it?" he hovered closely, without touching Jake with more than his fingers wrapped around the other's hand. "I must say that I am getting anxious to taste you again. Oh, by the way, we will go see a doctor."

"A doctor?" Jake's mind was muddled with images of a blond head burying between his legs and tasting him fully.

"Yes, we need to know that you are clean."

"I'm not an animal," Jake tried to move away.

"Do not be difficult. I like to experience my lovers to the fullest, and if a piece of paper saying that they are healthy stands between me and my desire, then do not see why a small medical test should be a problem."

"I'm not your lover," Jake said fiercely.

"Not yet."

"I don't intend to be."

"What? Are you scared of needles now? The good doctor will only take a tiny drop of blood," Klaus spoke to him like he was a hard-headed child.

"I'm not scared, I just ..."

"We are going, and that is final. A medical test is required for all my employees, so, even if you have no intention to be my lover," Klaus said with a small smile, "you will still be on my payroll, and solid health is expected from you."

"There is no winning with you," Jake said morosely.

“Of course there is. You are just fighting with the wrong weapons, Jake. You just need to be honest about your desires, nothing more.”

“All right, we’ll do whatever you want,” Jake admitted. “Maybe the doctor will discover I have cooties and you’ll send me back, washing your hands off me.”

Klaus laughed wholeheartedly. “You look fine to me. And, if you have cooties,” he ruffled Jake’s hair, “send you back? No, I will just have you treated for them. I will definitely enjoy bathing you using my own hands.”

Jake rolled his eyes.

“Really, does the pervert in you ever sleep?”

“No, not really. Not when the one I desire is right in front of me.”

“You were all business-like at work,” Jake pointed out.

“Yes, but it was a bit difficult for me to be like that, with you in the same room. So, for the sake of business, maybe you will perhaps agree to give in and give me what I want.”

“I don’t give a shit about your business,” Jake said with something akin to satisfaction in his voice. “What, you’re afraid you won’t be able to eat caviar or something if your business goes bad?”

A cool finger pressed against his lips.

“Language, Jake, language. And actually, I am perfectly able to set my business apart from my pleasure. Since you are here, in my house, I have no issue with seeing about my work at the office and playing with you at home.”

It was a bit unnerving for Jake to sit across from Klaus, in the limo, and let those deep blue eyes scrutinize him. He held his hands between his legs, linking his fingers and playing with his thumbs. To say he was a bit nervous was an understatement. That strange device over his sex was not uncomfortable when he wasn’t hard, but keeping the sensation at bay seemed difficult while having the object of his desire right in front of his eyes.

“What?” he eventually snapped to break the silence and make Klaus look away from him.

“I just like looking at you, is that a problem?” Klaus showed his perfect white teeth. “Does it bother you?”

“You know me already, you won’t learn anything new about me, if you just keep staring,” Jake mumbled.

“You are cute when you pout like this,” Klaus crossed his legs and looked at Jake with half-hooded eyes.

Jake could bet those insanely blue eyes could look a lot of ways, especially when their owner was taken by desire. But that was something he could only picture. He winced. His cock apparently had its own agenda these days.

Klaus bent slightly and placed a hand on Jake's knee.

"Why are you fighting so hard? What do you have to lose?" he asked patiently.

"Everything," Jake said somewhat fiercely.

That seemed to surprise Klaus a bit.

"Really?"

"Yes, really. Plus, I don't want it," Jake suddenly realized he had forgotten to deny it.

"You do want it," Klaus said simply while lying back in his seat. "I can understand your fear."

"So, will you leave me alone?" Jake stared straight into Klaus's eyes when asking the question. He could feel a claw gnawing on his chest while waiting for the answer.

Klaus slowly shook his head.

"No. I am not giving up on you just yet. There is ... potential," his voice dropped a note or two. "I think you would be happy. This is not just about me and my desire to be all over you, getting inside you and making you scream my name."

Jake's heart skipped a beat while hearing Klaus speaking so casually about what the man wanted from him.

"This is about you. You feel lost right now."

Lost? Jake frowned.

"You're wrong," his jaw tightened.

"What do you plan to do, Jake? Live a lie your entire life? Feel miserable just because your brother and the others do not condone homosexuality?"

"I told you I'm not ..." Jake couldn't bring himself to say it.

"You keep telling that to yourself. Although," Klaus pondered for a moment, "you may, perhaps, have a plan?" he quirked an eyebrow.

"What plan?" Jake looked pretty much like the notorious cat with his whiskers soaked in stolen milk.

"I don't know. Find yourself a new way, leave everything behind ..." Klaus fished for information, his curiosity spiked.

“Maybe,” Jake murmured, staring stubbornly at his fingers again.

“I can help you with that. I can help you stand on your own.”

“Out of the goodness of your heart?” Jake showed his disbelief, cocking his head to one side and staring at Klaus.

“Nothing is free in the world, Jake. I told you what I want. And, since you react so well to me, where is the harm? It would be enjoyable for both of us. Plus, before stepping out in the big world out there, a bit of experience wouldn’t hurt, right?”

The car stopped right that moment.

“Here we are,” Klaus said, and Jake felt like he had missed his chance to say something meaningful.

Thompson hurried to open the door, and Klaus got out, followed by Jake.

“We should not be too long, Thompson,” Klaus said courteously, and the chauffeur nodded.

Jake murmured a small ‘thank you’. For some reason, he found the towering man a bit scary.

“You’re welcome,” he heard the chauffeur say, and, for a short moment, he looked at Thompson and saw a bit of understanding in his eyes.

It looked like there were the only visitors in the large store at this hour. Jake knew they were in some posh place, but he could not remember if he had ever seen it before.

“We are not in your hometown, in case you are wondering,” Klaus spoke, as if he could read his mind.

“I thought so,” he responded curtly.

A woman in her 50s approached with open arms.

“Mr. Metzger, what a pleasure,” she chanted, and Jake felt the need to make himself little.

Everything about the woman spelled class and elegance, at least if he was to take in her clothes. The woman placed imaginary pecks on both Klaus’s cheeks, while he did the same.

“Anna, I have a young man here who needs a new wardrobe,” Klaus presented Jake, who felt compelled to take an awkward step forward.

“I see,” the woman placed her small white fist under her chin and looked critically at Jake.

Now he was really feeling out of place. All that was missing was for the woman to say that he was a cheap piece of shit.

“I know what size he needs,” she concluded.

What? Could she tell just by looking?

“What will it be, Mr. Metzger? Should we start with a nice suit, maybe?” she turned to Klaus with a questioning look in her grey eyes.

“Some jeans and t-shirts would be just fine. And whatever sports shoes you find to complete that,” Klaus answered.

If the woman was surprised, she didn’t show it.

“Please, take a seat, I will be right back,” she spoke, and she disappeared.

Jake sat gingerly on the red leather sofa.

“Why are you so stiff?” Klaus questioned. “I know for certain that I did not put a butt plug in you to make you this uncomfortable.”

Jake’s eyes spoke volumes and Klaus had to laugh.

“No need to be disappointed, we will get there,” the man joked.

“What am I doing here?” Jake said defensively. “I have my own jeans and t-shirts.”

“Should we take Anna on her offer for a suit then?”

“No,” Jake said with a scowl.

“Now, now, be a good boy, Jake. You will try everything she brings over and whatever you like, we’ll buy.”

“You mean you’ll buy.”

“Technicalities,” Klaus waved his hand.

“I don’t want to be a good boy,” he tried to revolt, just realizing what the man had said just earlier.

“Do you want to be a bad boy, then?” Klaus’s eyes twinkled with amusement. “If you want, I could put you across my lap for a bit of spanking. I really would not mind.”

“Who would want such a thing?” Jake asked, completely mortified.

“There is pleasure in a bit of pain if done right,” Klaus’s lips twitched, and he winked at Jake, making the younger man avert his eyes.

“You really are a total pervert,” Jake mused out loud.

“I believe you do not know what that word means,” Klaus spoke.

Before he could come up with another snarky remark, Anna was back, with her arms full of clothes. He offered to help right away, to avoid sitting next to Klaus for a while. The woman guided him to a changing room and left him to try out his clothes.

He fiddled with one pair of jeans, cursing under his breath. Jeans were jeans; it didn't matter if they were signed by some fancy designer or not. He pulled over a t-shirt and turned to look in the mirror. He felt a sudden need to frown. He was still himself, but now he looked a bit different. The clothes fit him just right, but there was something in the way the new jeans were hugging his hips that felt better. Looked better. Damn, even the kicks she picked out for him were his size. How did she do that? With a shrug, he exited the changing room and went straight at Klaus.

“Well?” he gestured, opening his arms so the man could take a good look at him.

He noticed how Klaus took advantage of the little break to light up another one of those cigarillos he smoked. Jake had to chase those thoughts from his mind of how wonderful Klaus smelled, or he'd be more uncomfortable with that crazy thing Klaus put on him. Now, Klaus was staring at Jake through the curtain of smoke.

“That will do. Next,” the man said clearly, and Jake huffed.

“They are all the same, just jeans and t-shirts. I want these, nothing more.”

“Turn,” Klaus gestured with the hand holding the cigarette, and Jake rolled his eyes, but obeyed.

He had no idea when the man got up so fast from his place. A hand was appreciatively touching his ass.

“They look good on you. Try on some more.”

“I don't want to. This is enough, and I'll pay you for them,” Jake said stubbornly.

Probably hearing their bickering, Anna made her appearance.

“Is there something wrong?” she questioned, with a genuine look of concern on her face.

“Not at all, Anna,” Klaus spoke, without tearing his eyes off Jake's face. “Please, pack all of them, and put everything on my tab.”

“Thank you, Mr. Metzger,” the woman hurried to take all the clothes left by Jake in the changing room.

“Let's go,” Klaus took Jake's hand. “The clothes and footwear will be delivered at home. Now I can only think of the promise I made to you.”

“What promise?” Jake mumbled although he knew fairly well what Klaus was talking about.

On the way back, Klaus's continuous stare became one notch less bearable. Or his restlessness had something to do with the fluttering he felt in his stomach. Jake tried to convince himself, that he was probably coming down with something, but he knew the truth.

Chapter Six

They went straight to Klaus's room once they were back. Jake didn't even question why he was not yet allowed to go to his room. Actually, he was unnerved by his ability to obey the man without putting too much of a fight. He wasn't scared enough, apparently, and that was something Jake thought he was going to regret sooner or later.

This time, Jake tried to play the stoic and not look at the man, as he undressed. Klaus left Jake to his thoughts, while he took a short shower. It took all of Jake's willpower, but he managed.

When the man came back, completely naked, though, the only thing he could think of was to stare. It wasn't fair for men like Klaus to be born in the world and give poor fellows like Jake erotic dreams. Conscious of the attention he was getting, Klaus let his hands wander slowly over his perfect abdomen and grab his half-sleeping cock to wake it to life.

It appeared as if Klaus didn't need much of an incentive, either, as he attentively watched Jake follow his every move.

"Are you enjoying it?" Klaus asked, eyeing Jake with a sparkle of amusement in his icy blue eyes.

Jake shook his head as if awakening from a dream.

"What?" he snapped.

"The show I am putting on. All for you," Klaus drawled out the words and moved to climb on the bed, next to Jake who was sitting on his knees, as if he was ready to jump off the bed. "Since you had such big concerns about my ability to get it up, as you put it, I want you to experience it firsthand."

With that, Klaus literally took things in his own hands, as he seized one of Jake's wrists to make the other man palm his manhood.

Jake almost had to bite back a moan. The snake Klaus had between his legs was silky to the touch, yet there was a hardness of steel right under the skin, and Jake could only picture how it would have been like to have that impressive thing penetrate him. He had never dared even experimenting with something in that area, let alone something this big. It made him feel fearful and excited at the same time. Engrossed with the unique sensation of gliding his fingers over Klaus's beautiful cock, he missed the look of desire on the man's face.

"Jake," Klaus whispered, bending slightly to touch their foreheads together. "Do you realize this is as tormenting for me as it is for you?"

He had tried to fight the unfamiliar sensation of having his erection restrained so painfully. He became even more aware of his own cock struggling to get up to no avail.

Klaus's hands cupped his face gently and forced him to look up. Blue eyes searched dark ones, on a quest for an answer. Jake let go of the organ he had been caressing so tenderly until then.

“I wanted this to be about seduction,” Klaus spoke softly. “I wanted to be all about me breaching your defenses. Yet, I do not think I have ever wanted someone the way I want you.”

“Maybe because I'm not going to give in,” Jake mumbled, although he felt as if he only had to cross the invisible few inches separating them, to collect the reward for his so long and fruitless resistance. At that moment, a sudden realization hit him; he was lying, he was going to give in, and he was going to love it so much that it would hurt him never to have it again. Standing there, at the precipice of desire, all bets were off.

He crossed the line. His lips touched Klaus's mouth feather-like, and the man just stood there, letting him explore without making a move as if to avoid scaring him off. The kiss was chaste, slow, just lips pressing against lips. Klaus's hands descended on his shoulders, caressing his arms in their wake until he reached Jake's hands. He intertwined their fingers together, and held them gently, as if Jake was something precious and everything about him was precious, too. It made the younger male feel as if the world was finally giving in, letting him live the way he truly wanted, to touch, feel and get close to another without anyone standing on some moral high ground, judging him for it.

Jake gave Klaus's lips a small, tentative lick. The man's mouth parted ever so slightly, granting access. Jake grew bold and pushed his tongue inside. He tasted Klaus to the fullest; he was encouraged to move forward by small strokes against his tongue made by its skillful counterpart. He could swear his eyes were rolling in his head like a slot machine on a lucky Vegas trip. Nothing even remotely similar to what he was feeling now had ever felt this way. From his very few and in between times with girls, he could remember feeling something moist and warm against his mouth. It had been nothing like the scorching heat he felt radiating from Klaus, the strong tongue battling his own, the firm lips catching his and nibbling at them as if the man was driven by some terrible hunger.

He could stay like this forever. He could just get lost in the sensation and care for nothing in the world. Klaus shifted a little, making Jake move along, and pushed him on his back as he got on top, deepening the kiss.

Suddenly, Jake felt panicky. He was not supposed to let the man do that; if Diaz was to find out ... He pushed against the man, and Klaus stopped.

“Jake,” Klaus called, but the young man kept his eyes shut. “Jake, listen to me. You are not a kid anymore. You can do whatever you want, do you understand?”

No matter how gently Klaus was speaking, Jake couldn't shake off the feeling of dread he was experiencing under the man's weight. Seeing his stubbornness, Klaus let go and moved away from him. His cheeks ablaze, he rose, but a firm hand caught his.

“I think you should at least show me the courtesy I showed you,” Klaus spoke, and this time, the warmth was partially gone from his voice.

“What do you want?” Jake looked sideways.

“A handjob, obviously,” Klaus sounded a bit annoyed.

Jake grabbed the man’s cock a bit too forcefully. If the man had any intention to make him look bad, he was wrong. Jake could give him a handjob, no strings attached.

“Easy,” Klaus guided his hand and dragged him onto the bed. “Play with the balls a little, too.”

Jake kept his eyes down, on the task at hand. He frowned, trying to chase away the sudden urge to bend and take the man’s organ in his mouth, to see how it tasted like.

“Do it how you would do it to yourself,” Klaus cooed, and Jake’s moves became gentler but firmer. He increased the speed slowly, building up the tension, making Klaus’s hips rise a tiny bit from the bed.

“You are good, Jake,” Klaus encouraged him. “Yes, like this.”

When the organ grew harder and harder in his hand, Jake could barely refrain a sensation of complete and utter satisfaction. Klaus sat there, at his disposal, his eyes at half-mast, his lips still moist from the kiss from earlier, his tiny nipples erect, and his entire body taut, strung and waiting for the anticipated release.

A small moan escaped perfect rosy lips, and Jake watched in fascination how the man was coming in long, powerful waves, ropes of white liquid hitting his chest and abdomen. He milked Klaus for all it was worth and gathered the last drops with his fingers. Unconsciously, he brought them to his mouth and tasted.

Klaus’s eyes grew wide, and Jake jumped from the bed, embarrassed.

“You little pervert,” Klaus laughed, still trying to regain his breath after coming down from his high. “You actually put it in your mouth! I cannot believe you are still playing the virginal role with me! Are you sure you have never been with a guy?”

“Never,” Jake shook his head while heading for the door and trying in vain to open it.

“You will have to ask me for the key,” Klaus stretched on the bed lazily, like a satisfied cat.

“All right, you had your fun, now let me out,” Jake demanded. “And just for the record, it’s something I do when I jerk off, so I wasn’t really thinking,” he blurted out.

Klaus laughed wholeheartedly. “Do not worry. I will taste yours, too. Soon,” he promised.

“Let me out already,” Jake shook the door, and eventually Klaus rose from the bed.

He waited impatiently for the man to produce the key and open the door. Klaus grabbed his ass and kissed him roughly and quickly on the neck.

“Good night, Jake. I hope you will sleep well, too. But if you cannot, please do come knocking at my door. I would love a teddy bear to keep me warm at night.”

Jake stormed out of the room, without a glance back. He was afraid he was just going to take the man up on his offer and send everything he worried about to the depths of hell.

Klaus was quite something as he paced his office all business like while talking on his cell phone. He had been like that all morning, and Jake was beginning to grow bored. Not even on their way to Klaus's office there had been any words exchanged between them. It looked as if Klaus was a bit preoccupied with something, and Jake was starting to question whether it had all been a dream and he had not really seen how the ice man in front of him truly looked in the throes of desire just the night before.

He rose from the chair, determined to move around a bit. It didn't seem as if Klaus was paying any attention to him anyway, as he walked away and started wandering the hallways. It looked like everyone was busy, so Jake decided to start conducting some exploring on his own.

As he pushed through a door and turned on the light, he found himself in front of a city in miniature displayed on a large table with buildings, car parking slots, parks, and everything. Fascinated, he got closer. A few flags with names on them let him know that he was basically looking at a new and much-improved version of his town. Maybe that was why Klaus was so preoccupied. He really had his work cut out for him if he wanted to turn the entire place around.

Hesitantly, he grabbed one tall building. It seemed it was not in the right place next to the park. Frowning, he started studying the panoramic view. Eventually, he saw where the building was going to look better. Satisfied, he placed it there. The park needed more trees, he decided next.

It felt better than any game he had ever played. His brother had often told him he could be a good construction worker. There was no DIY project inside their small home he did not take on with enthusiasm. But, his natural inclination had found little fertile ground to manifest though.

Taking a step back, he looked with satisfaction at his handy work. The tiny town no longer seemed straight-laced and conformist. The contrast of various shapes, the messy greenery he chose to spread around, created the illusion that the small cardboard toy town was bustling with life.

"Oh, no, what have you done?" he heard a feminine voice almost shrieking.

He turned to see Martha, her high cheeks ablaze, clutching a leather case in her hands, with an expression of disbelief and anger painted all over her face.

"How am I going to repair this?" the woman continued as she frantically moved towards the table, taking in the proportions of the disaster.

Jake opened his mouth to apologize, but he realized he had no idea what to say. Why was she so upset, anyway?

“I’m sorry,” he murmured, seeing her so disturbed over his little play.

“Sorry? Really?” she almost yelled at him.

It was clear that she could barely maintain a resemblance of control. Jake could bet she was one breath away from digging her long perfectly manicured nails into his throat.

“What is going on?” Jake heard Klaus, who apparently was now joining the party.

“This happened,” Martha made a theatrical gesture towards the table. “I had no idea he was going to wander around the place and ...” she started her tirade, but a small gesture from Klaus made her stop.

“Martha, please hurry back to the front desk. The investors should be here any minute now.”

She opened her mouth to add something, but Klaus had already moved to watch the display on the table with a deep frown on his forehead. Most probably she knew better as she walked quickly out of the room.

Jake could cut the tension in the room with a knife.

“I’m sorry, I just thought it was a ... I don’t know, something that didn’t matter,” he spoke slowly as if he was afraid Klaus was going to explode just like Martha had done earlier.

The only response from Klaus was a small grunt. His fingers moved over the table, caressed a few toy buildings in passing, but didn’t move anything.

“Could you put it back as it was?” Jake asked, feeling more and more out of place.

“I suppose I could, but the people interested in seeing the project will be here soon,” Klaus spoke, while straightening up and looking Jake in the eyes.

“Damn,” the young man cast his eyes down. “I screwed up big time, didn’t I?”

“That is something we will see. Now, because you almost made Martha have a heart attack, you will be my assistant throughout the meeting.”

“Me? But ...” Jake gestured towards his t-shirt and jeans.

“Yes, but ...” Klaus let a ghostly smile hover over his lips for a brief second. “There are no actions without consequences, and sometimes you have to play the hand you are dealt. “Don’t you agree?”

Jake didn’t have the chance to say anything as the door opened and Martha’s musical voice was heard, inviting the guests in. Too nervous to look at the newcomers, he stubbornly kept his eyes down.

A few pleasantries were exchanged, and soon everyone was seated. Jake felt even more out of place, sitting away from everyone else, and also inappropriately dressed for the occasion.

“I must admit, Mr. Metzger, that I was expecting something else from you,” one of the older men seated at the table spoke. “I thought your style was ... let’s say, more rigorous.”

“I decided to try something a bit different this time around,” Klaus let a secretive smile dance on his lips.

Jake felt like he was suddenly back in school, and he was about to be asked about homework. Maybe Klaus was just kidding about using him as an assistant. He had never felt more intimidated in his entire life. He preferred having to deal with a pack of dogs or a street gang, rather than speaking as much as a word in front of all those people dressed in impeccable suits that probably didn’t even know people like Jake breathed on the face of the planet.

“My assistant here will explain to you all about this new face of the project. I am known as a man who is not afraid to take chances, and I think that, in this case, my intuition serves well. Please, Jake,” he gestured towards the young man.

Jake dug his short nails into his palms. Klaus wasn’t joking; he was going to force him to make a fool of himself. There was no way back. Something in the way blue eyes stared at him, challenging him, made him uneasy. There was no place for him in a nice conference room like this one. If that was what Klaus wanted to demonstrate, be it.

His voice sounded unsure at first. He got closer to the table and started explaining, about playgrounds for children, about the necessity to have a supermarket closer to the city, about more greenery that had to be added to compensate for the eternal pollution from cars. When he was finished, everyone was silent. He bit the inside of his cheek. Every moment now, they were going to start laughing.

The older man who had talked to Klaus first spoke. “A more community driven project?” he scrunched his nose. “I see some extra expenses being involved this way, and I would have preferred the initial plan where everything was the perfect expression of efficiency. I usually like to calculate my return on investment to the penny.”

“Some benefits are hardly calculated this way,” a woman in her 50s sitting next to the man talked. “I think this new perspective is quite interesting, and it is worth taking into consideration. Will there be extra expenses? Without a doubt, but keeping the community happy will create a friendlier atmosphere for tourists, as well. I personally think this would be good for business.”

Jake felt his chest expanding for some reason. He had not thought it that way, but the lady was right; people would be happier if something was done for them, too.

The discussion around the table became animated, with everyone expressing their opinions. Jake withdrew, and eventually, Klaus started to speak. The entire audience fell silent.

“I think there are plenty of ideas to move around. I would like to hear all your suggestions and then have a second meeting, to see where we can agree to disagree,” he said with a smile.

His offer was considered reasonable enough, as murmurs of agreement could be heard throughout the room. Klaus thanked them and guided them out.

Once the door was closed, Jake could sense something was different. The affable businessman was gone as Klaus turned. A small click let Jake know that the door was now locked with a key.

The man moved around the table, with the look of a big predatory cat written all over his face.

“So, my dear assistant, you managed to get everyone from what I had as a total consensus to the point where they all think they have the right to an opinion,” he said thinly.

Was Klaus angry? Jake could not really tell. Anger didn’t seem to be an emotion the man could develop or show. Even when he had beaten Jake’s attackers that night, he hadn’t lost his cool for a second. He could be passionate, as Jake had seen, but now he was staring at a different face of the man, and it made him feel apprehensive and uneasy deeply into his gut.

“Sorry about that,” he eventually managed. “You could always turn back to the initial plan, right? This,” he gestured towards the table, “doesn’t matter.”

Klaus was now dangerously close. Jake knew it would be wise to take a step back, but he remained where he was. He had no reason to let Klaus put him down.

“Really?” Klaus crossed his arms over his chest. “Do you have the slightest idea what a setback could do for this project? Money, real money will be lost.”

Jake shrugged. “Then that’s too bad,” he said stubbornly. “I guess everyone is going to search for another fish to fry.”

Klaus frowned and Jake gulped. “And leave this town, right?” the man asked. “Leave everyone as poor and hopeless as before?”

“Don’t sell me that crap,” Jake spoke passionately. “You only care about making money. Why am I supposed to care?”

“Maybe because me making money means your brother and the rest making money and getting a better life, too,” Klaus reminded him, and Jake’s resolve faltered a little.

He hated to admit, but he knew Klaus was right. Even if the man only cared about lining his pockets, that didn’t mean that there were many people with money interested in their shitty town. In a way, this was a premiere, and it looked like Jake had screwed big time. He bit his bottom lip in anger. This time, though, he was angry at himself.

Cool fingers tilted his chin. “Come on, do not look down. It was not that bad,” Klaus spoke softly, his earlier severity suddenly gone.

It was as if the man could read Jake's mind and that was hard to bear.

"Yes, it was," he spoke, while avoiding Klaus's touch, who was trying to caress his cheek. "If this blows up, it's all my fault."

"Good," Klaus said. "You understand. Now, drop your pants and bend over there," Klaus gestured towards the end of the table where there was some empty space.

Jake's eyes widened. Looking at Klaus, he could tell the man wasn't joking.

"What? Are you going to fuck me now?" he demanded.

The aggressive stance he took didn't seem able to impress Klaus.

"Fuck you?" the man chuckled. "That would be a reward, and I have no reward in store for doing something bad. No, Jake, what I need you to do right now is to do as you're told, and receive your punishment like a big boy."

Punishment? Jake's heart grew smaller. Klaus's blue eyes were glued to him.

"Disappointed that I said I would not fuck you?" the man teased. "That will come later, at the right time. Now, I want your lovely ass up in the air."

"If I don't do it, I won't see the end of it, right?" he asked.

Jake knew he was not supposed to listen to some guy just because he said so. But the imperious look in Klaus's eyes, and a little voice inside telling him that he was going to spend the entire day locked in there if he wasn't going to do what he was told, eventually made him move.

He dropped his pants and bent over the table.

"Hurry up and do whatever you want to do. But no fucking," he warned, although the idea of being taken by the man like that was making his cock strain against the contraption device he was wearing.

The first slap across his buttocks came without warning. He yelped, too surprised to keep it inside.

"That will teach you to do whatever crosses your mind," Klaus spoke tenderly, in contrast with the viciousness of his slaps.

Jake bit his bottom lip. He wasn't going to give the guy the satisfaction to know about the strange sensation coursing through his veins, pooling into his groin, with each slap.

Klaus caressed the reddened butt cheeks and chuckled softly. "Enough?" he asked, and Jake shuddered.

"You're one fucked up dude," Jake eventually spoke. "You should know whether you got your rocks off or not."

He felt his pants hiked up and pushed against the table to get on his feet. It was like he was only a child as Klaus was helping him get dressed. He turned, overly conscious his cheeks were on fire. He didn't have the nerve to look Klaus in the eyes. The man tilted his chin, making him look up.

"You took a gamble earlier. You proved yourself worthy of my interest once more. And the best thing is that they liked what you told them."

"I messed up, that's what I did," Jake said stubbornly, trying to look down.

Klaus's hand moved and touched his lips, a curious thumb pressing against his bottom lip.

"You are too young to play this self-defeating act," the man scolded him affectionately.

"It's no act."

"Really?" Klaus seemed unconvinced. "Tonight I am throwing a party at my house," he suddenly changed the subject. "I bought some new clothes for you."

Jake opened his mouth to protest, but the man silenced him. "Hush, I will have none of it. You will like them. They are nothing fancy."

The young man straightened up.

"Now, I hope you learned your lesson, and you will avoid touching anything you are not allowed to."

"I am bored out of my head," Jake murmured.

"Seeing that you are so anxious to do something, I'll have something for you to do."

"I don't want to play secretary," Jake complained right away.

"I have nothing of the kind in store for you. I will take you to work at one of the construction sites. This way, I will make sure you will spend your energy on something productive."

"All right," Jake nodded.

"But tonight," Klaus caressed his cheeks slowly, "I want you to look your best. I would like to show you off a little."

A small flutter in his stomach encouraged him to keep his mouth shut. But he spoke nonetheless. "Why don't you show off your friend? He's much better looking, and he's into you, unlike me."

"Jake, Jake," Klaus cooed, "why are you so stubborn? Do you realize you are making me aroused beyond measure? I am already fighting myself not to touch you more," Klaus's voice dropped to a whisper, as his lips hovered close to Jake's ear.

“That’s your problem,” Jake retorted, although he could tell his breathing was growing shallow, as he waited for the man to get closer and kiss him.

Klaus seemed to be the master of restraint, though; he let go of Jake and took a step back.

“After you,” he smiled and pointed to the door.

Jake could hardly hide his disappointment as he moved to exit the room. If it hadn’t have been for his fear of consequences, he would have been in Klaus’s open arms in no time. But that was a luxury he could not afford.

Chapter Seven

He should have felt like he didn't belong, but Jake was a bit proud if only inwardly, of how good he looked. The casual clothes he was wearing were not a suit, but they weren't his usual jeans and t-shirt either. Klaus had great taste in clothing and Jake was not regretting a bit, seeing the vaguely surprised look in Hans's eyes, when he made his entrance. Maybe he was not just a mutt, after all. Plus, the visit to the doctor, earlier that day, had not been so bad. It looked like he didn't have cooties, at least.

The light blue shirt had the last two buttons open. Jake had just taken a shower, and his hair was just a tiny bit damp. He had little idea what his casual gesture of running his fingers through his raven strands caused. Both Hans and Klaus watched him hawkeyed like he was prey worth hunting down.

Jake caught them staring, but didn't linger. He looked over the large room filled with guests and wondered, for the umpteenth time, why Klaus needed him there. Soon, Klaus, as patron of the party, was stolen away by a couple in their 50's, apparently very interested in the businessman's latest project. Jake didn't manage to exchange even a few words with Klaus before he found himself close to Hans.

That was awkward, he thought. Hans was observing him, without even pretending he was not doing it. With everyone around too preoccupied to care, Jake started thinking about an exit strategy. Hans moved closer to him.

"So, Jake, do you think a bit of fresh air would be nice?"

He nodded. He had already made a promise to himself that he would not show any sign of weakness towards the guy, so there was no harm in chatting him up a little. Plus, he was curious about Klaus and wanted to know more. Maybe Hans was the talkative kind.

They stepped out on the balcony and stood in silence for a few minutes, Hans fiddling with his glass, and Jake leaning against the railing. Inside, the party looked pretty animated but too formal for Jake's taste.

"Klaus will not give up," Hans spoke all of a sudden.

Jake remained silent.

"He will eventually get you between the sheets and have his way with you."

"I assume you're talking from experience," Jake could no longer keep it inside.

Hans chuckled softly. "I am not your rival if that is what you are afraid of. That ship sailed some time ago," the man admitted, although a bit regretful.

"Then why ..."

"Why am I talking to you? You are young and naïve, Jake. Klaus always has the best intentions, but he is too self-centered to care for a guy longer than a few months."

“Why are you telling me this? There’s nothing between him and me,” Jake shrugged a bit too energetically.

“You will get burned, kid. If you are in this just for fun, that is fine. But do not get your hopes up. Klaus will not stay here for your sake. He will move on and so should you when the time comes.”

“I am not a ...” Jake was about to use the word ‘fag’, but he refrained. “I am not gay. I have no problem with you two being that, but I’m not. So all this conversation ...”

Hans interrupted him with another chuckle. “Who knows? Maybe Klaus will get so engrossed into convincing you to jump in bed with him, that he will stick around a while longer. Maybe you are the one he needs to get down from his high horse.”

“I don’t understand a word you’re saying.”

“Klaus is all ice, and, by the looks of it,” Hans looked him up and down, “you are all fire. Do not fall for him; is all I am saying.”

Jake took a deep breath. He could not chase away the unpleasant sensation Hans’s foreboding words caused somewhere, right into the pit of his stomach.

“You don’t have anything to worry about,” he spoke slowly.

Hans touched his arm featherlike. “Is this your poker face? If it is, then I wonder how your brother has not suspected anything by now.”

Jake frowned. “My brother? What do you know about my brother?”

“Only that he is your guardian and he would not take well the fact that his baby brother prefers having sex with guys.”

“How many times do I have to tell you I’m not gay?” Jake said defensively.

Hans laughed. “For experienced guys like Klaus and me, it is as clear as day that you are batting for our team.”

The man winked at him, and Jake blinked a few times, nervously.

“Now, seeing that you have no big plans to fall for Klaus, how about you and me have some fun together?”

Suddenly, Jake’s stance became guarded. The other bit his lips, trying hard not to laugh.

“You are so easy; it is too funny. What I meant was that I know where Klaus’s game room is, and, although I am a little rusty, I am pretty sure I can still kick your ass in any PvP game you want.”

“Are you sure?” Jake stared back, this time relieved. “Cause I’m pretty sure old guys like you should have retired a long time ago.”

“Let’s go, and we will see who will go crying in a corner after that,” Hans smiled broadly.

Jake threw another look inside. Klaus seemed to be as engrossed in conversation with his guests as he had been for the last half hour. What was the harm in ditching a dull party and going to unwind a little?

“I cannot believe you did that!” Hans laughed and gave him a friendly slap on the shoulder. “I did not see that coming!”

“So, ready to give up, old man?” Jake teased.

“What is going on here?”

They both turned to look at Klaus, who stood in the door, his hands in his pockets, with an unreadable expression on his face.

Was he mad or something? Jake thought. Hans quickly pressed the exit button, and the war sounds died away.

“I thought Jake needed a bit of entertainment more appropriate for his age.”

“He is not a kid,” Klaus cut Hans’s words. “Jake, I need to introduce you to some people. Come.”

Jake cast his eyes down and stood up.

“If he is not a kid, why do you treat him like one?” Hans intervened again.

Jake stopped and looked at Klaus, curious about the man’s answer.

“And how exactly am I doing that?” Klaus inquired, working his jaw just a little bit in annoyance.

“You are telling him what to do, all the time. How are you different from his brother? There is no wonder he does not trust you. He is not looking for a new owner.”

“And you are speaking in his name like he cannot do it for himself.”

Jake could feel the tension growing thick in the air-conditioned room.

“What the fuck, guys? Don’t fight,” he said the first thing that came to his mind. “Klaus, you were too busy with your guests, and Hans told me you have games. And Klaus, having a room in your house, completely dedicated to gaming, makes you a kid, too.”

Both men stopped their quarrel and looked at Jake like he was suddenly growing horns out of his head.

“So you are taking Hans’s side now?” Klaus spoke thinly.

Jake could barely stop a small laugh. Klaus always seemed so cool and confident that his question just came across as childish.

“I’m taking my side. Your party is boring. I don’t know anyone. And Hans was pretty cool to invite me here, to play a game with him. I won, by the way.”

“Congratulations,” Klaus offered, although Jake could now tell the man was displeased. “Hans, I had Martha book your next flight. It is tomorrow at noon.”

Hans frowned, but just a tiny bit.

“I will go pack and head straight to the hotel for the night, then.”

“You are still welcome under my roof,” Klaus reacted.

“No, I am not,” Hans shook his head. He offered his hand to Jake and shook it. “Goodbye, Jake, it was nice knowing you. If our so-called friend here behaves, I will probably see you again, and I look forward to it.”

Jake kept Hans’s hand in his.

“Are you sure you don’t want to stay? I mean, it’s not my house, but ...”

Klaus moved next to Jake and grabbed him by his shoulders. “I cannot leave my guests waiting unattended for too long. Hans, call me when you get home, ok?”

Hans nodded. It didn’t look like the man knew how to hold a grudge. He left the room, leaving the other two men behind.

Klaus turned Jake abruptly and looked him straight in the eyes.

“What did Hans tell you about me? Do not deny it. I know he did say something.”

“That you’re a cold son of a bitch, who values money more than friendship. Oh, no, wait, the last part ... I used my own head for it. Surprised?”

Klaus searched Jake’s features for several long seconds. Eventually, he relaxed, and his hands traveled from Jake’s arms to cup his cheeks. He placed a soft kiss on the boy’s forehead.

“Are you always this passionate?” Klaus asked softly into the raven hair. “I want to see this part of you more often. And preferably in bed, although I like your shy side and I am going to miss it, once you will know everything and move on.”

Jake stared into the man’s beautiful eyes and wavered. He wanted nothing more but to throw caution to the wind and embrace the handsome man. He wanted to know everything, and he wanted to be taught. But Hans’s words still rang in his ears, like an uncalled for prophecy.

“Is it true that you always ditch your lovers after you fuck them?” he asked, decided to grab the bull by the horns.

“Oh, I see,” Klaus spoke. “Jake, all we have is the present. I can take care of your future. Your town can become a better place. But I make no promises. I do not lie to get men in bed with me. If this is what you are afraid of, I can only tell you this. That right now, I want you. I want you badly, and I will try to seduce you. But happily ever after, that is not me.”

“Why?” Jake murmured.

“Do you have all night?” Klaus laughed. “Actually, I do not know either. It is who I am. You will feel loved and cherished in my arms. I remember all the lovers I have ever had in my life. And I am still friends with most of them.”

“Like Hans.”

“Yes, like Hans.”

“So, what will it be? A one night stand? Something like that?” Jake asked.

“No, nothing like that. We will spend many nights together. And we will do a lot of things together, we will travel, and I will have you meet new people and learn new things. There is a world out there waiting for you, Jake. I can take you through the door if you only let me.”

“Why?”

“Why? Because you are smart and beautiful and you deserve it.”

“Can I have all you are promising without the sex part?” Jake seemed to ponder.

Klaus laughed.

“You are a tough bargainer, aren’t you? Well, they are all part of me trying to seduce you but rest assured Jake, no one has ever managed to resist me.”

Jake snorted.

“Bullshit. You look like a supermodel, and you’re filthy rich, but you’re not that good.”

He had no idea how he managed to keep a straight face while saying that. Klaus was the stuff dreams were made of; but he could not lose face, especially when the guy was so overconfident in his charms.

“What would make me?” Klaus glued his body to Jake’s, only to feel the younger male react to him.

“What?”

“What would make me ‘that good’?”

“I don’t know,” Jake tried to back down, sensing how dangerously close they were, standing there. If he made a move, they would be rubbing against one another the next second, Jake thought. “Since I’m not like you, I guess we’ll never find out.”

“You sneaky ...” Klaus patted his nose playfully. “You are fishing for info, making me hope you are ready to give in, and then you go back to your shell with ‘I’m not gay’ written all over it, just to tease me. Do you know what I do to cockteasers?”

“I have no idea,” Jake pretended not to care.

Klaus’s lips hovered over his ear, caressing it. “I make a personal goal to have them on their knees and suck me dry.”

“Yuck,” Jake scrunched his nose, masking the sudden jolt he felt straight to his groin.

“Oh, baby,” Klaus mocked. “Do not say that. You have already tasted it. It would be a bigger serving; that is all.”

“I think I’ll pass.”

“We will see about that. Now come,” Klaus took his hand. “It is time for you to meet new people. And smile. Do not be so grumpy. That scares people away.”

“Good. At least you can rest assured that everyone will go home before some weird ass businessman gets drunk and plays cannonball naked in your pool.”

“Oh, so that is your idea of a successful party?”

“Anything else than whatever is going on right now,” Jake replied, and continued to frown.

“You are not going to make it anywhere with that attitude,” Klaus pinched his cheek with his free hand, making Jake pout more.

“If I’m playing nice tonight, can you remove that thing from my dick?” he attempted bargaining.

“I told you. That comes off when you are ready to give in and admit it that you want me just how I want you.”

“And how’s that?” Jake looked Klaus straight in the eyes.

“Preferably completely naked, and on your back,” Klaus slowly pushed away a few rebellious strands from his forehead.

Jake snorted, trying to hide the heat rising to his cheeks.

“I thought you guys liked the doggy style position.”

“Oh, is that what you prefer? Is that what you are trying to tell me?” Klaus came dangerously close.

“No way!” Jake took a step back. “Come on, weren’t you dying to parade me to some old farts?”

“Watch that tongue, Jake,” Klaus pointed the finger at him. “And this time I mean it.”

There were so many degrees of cold to describe Klaus Metzger in a funk. This one was somewhat worse than moderately chilly. Which meant the guy was serious, and Jake quickly schooled his features into a neutral demeanor.

“Don’t worry. I’ll behave,” Jake promised.

Klaus relaxed and smiled. And damn, if it was fair that he could smile like that. The fucker was the poster boy for all things holy. Yet, still a cold son of a bitch.

He had behaved. Not that it had been hard, seeing that he only needed to give answers to some pretty boring questions that told him that the people presented to him were playing nice because he was introduced by the master of the house.

The only thing that was making matters a bit strange right now was that he had way too much alcohol in his system. These rich people had the bad habit of toasting and getting smashed for the tiniest reasons. It had been too late to notice that Klaus while holding a champagne flute in his hand, had barely touched his drink.

“So, how was it?” Klaus slowly began to massage his shoulders while guiding him back to the house now that the party was over.

“Boring. I told you,” he slurred the words a bit.

Klaus laughed. When Jake made a move to go through the door to his room, Klaus just pushed him through his. Jake could already feel his knees giving in, and he had no energy left to fight.

“Hey, aren’t you a bit tired? You still have it in you to manhandle me, after squeezing so many balls tonight?” he complained.

Klaus’s laugh sounded like a roar. He made Jake sit on his bed, as he took out his tie. Unlike the other day, this time, he threw it somewhere on the floor.

“That is how you run a business, Jake,” Klaus placed one knee between Jake’s legs and pushed him with his back against the mattress.

“No wonder you’re a sadist,” Jake murmured. “You’re way too used to make people do your bidding.”

“How am I a sadist?” Klaus let his right hand wander over Jake’s face, slowly drawing invisible lines on forehead, nose, and cheeks, while his other hand searched for the buttons on Jake’s shirt.

“Take that thing off of me,” Jake mumbled.

“Why?” Klaus eyed him suspiciously.

A bubble of laughter rose to his chest.

“Oh,” Klaus finally noticed. “You’re a bit flushed. How much did you drink?”

“Don’t tell me you didn’t count,” he said instead of replying. “Your eyes are like drones. They see everything, from here to ... to ...”

His blurred conscience was fighting and losing.

“So, you are smashed,” Klaus chuckled. “And I was so looking forward to playing with you.”

“You wanted to play with me? I can kick your ass at any game,” Jake said with pride in his voice.

“I was hoping for something more like horizontal sparring,” Klaus replied and got up from the bed. “Now I must send you to bed.”

“No way,” Jake protested and climbed higher on the bed. “This is cozy,” he pushed his nose into the pillows and inhaled.

“Are you going to sleep in my bed? And expect me not to do anything to you?” Klaus laughed.

“You can do anything you want,” Jake waved. “I like this so much,” he grabbed one pillow and gathered it to his chest. “It smells of you.”

Klaus wanted to add something, to make fun of Jake’s visible state of intoxication, but the young man’s soft snoring caught him before he could act on it. With a sigh, he pushed himself off the bed and opened the window.

There was too much light to be comfortable for the sleeping beauty in his bed, although he was gone for the world. He flicked off all the lights and fished for his cigarillo case. Careful to blow the smoke into the sweet summer night, he turned his head now and then, taking in the curves of the person currently inhabiting his bed and, lately, his mind, too.

When he had first seen Jake, being pointed out by his agent as he got info on the local gangs, he had thought the boy was sweet. Still wet behind the ears, and maybe not gay, but a nice prospect nonetheless. He had not paid the young man any more mind until that night when they had so fatefully met.

It had been more like a shot in the dark, and he was not usually this forward in his conquests when the other party was not interested, but he was glad Jake had responded so well to his sudden provocation. Watching the youth coming undone under his stare had been bliss. And enough to make him want to have another taste.

Something that, so far, had proven difficult. The measly offerings Jake had allowed were making him hungry. It was a feeling he was not that familiar with. His relationships were usually clear and set in stone. Being denied was not his idea of fun; prissy partners did not have a second chance with him.

He liked things to be clear. Efficient. As a lover, he went all-in, but that never meant losing his head. Jake had been an exception. The boy had commented on how Klaus's desire for him was only fueled by the fact that Jake had no plans to give in.

But that was not it. Klaus did not like men who were into playing games. Only that, in Jake's case, he was not playing. The young man's reluctance had deep roots, and he was not just faking to be hard to get like others did.

Jake was genuine. Klaus was ready to admit that it had been awhile since he had enjoyed the company of someone who was so ... real. Hans, back in the days, had been like that. He still was. But they were nothing but friends, and Klaus did not believe in rekindling their lust. They were too good as friends. As lovers, they had been quarreling way too much. And Klaus knew that, no matter how difficult it was for him to admit it, there was something he could not give to anyone.

It was not like there had been trauma in his life or anything remotely similar. It was just how things were with him. He had no regrets whatsoever. Life was long, and occasions were many, and he saw no reason to dock into some port while there was still nice weather to enjoy, out at sea. The current work in progress, he thought, as he dragged another long mouthful of flavored smoke, was more exciting than usual.

He flicked the half smoked cigarillo out the window and sneaked into bed with Jake. No matter how amusing things were going to get later, it was natural for him to embrace Jake from behind and cover both of them with a blanket. He winced as his half hard cock brushed against the boy's clothed ass. He pondered for a moment, and then a wicked thought crossed his mind. Slowly, he proceeded to undress the uncouth man in his bed, taking advantage of his drunken stupor.

He was breaking a sweat by the time he was done, but now he could enjoy being glued to that perfect body to the fullest. Hans was right that Jake was not his usual type. He was dark and rebellious, but alluring in ways no one else had been so far. The young man had perfect lips. His mouth was maybe a bit large, but that made his smile even more radiant, on the rare occasions he did that. But his lips ... they were soft and full, waiting to be kissed.

He pressed a chaste peck on the said lips and proceeded to get rid of the rest of his clothes. Tonight, they were going to sleep naked, even if that meant torture for the more conscious one of them two. And, he had to admit, a premiere, in the sense that, if he was to think about it hard enough, he never just slept with another guy. He either had sex, or his partner had to find other sleeping arrangements. He could not stop a smile creeping to his lips. This new emotion was manageable, and it made the moment when the boy was going to give in even more worthwhile.

Jake groaned as he pushed the balls of his fists into his eye sockets. He blinked a few times, not knowing what he was seeing. That was definitely not his home. Ah, wait, he was now staying with Klaus. That was not his designated room, either.

He almost squealed when he realized Klaus had one possessive arm thrown over him. For a few seconds, he lay there, frozen. What the fuck happened last night? Finally, he decided to peek at the guy next to him. Klaus was perfectly still, his breath even.

The man was perfection. That strong jawline was enough to give Jake wet dreams. He slowly touched the man's lips and withdrew. No, no, no, he was not going to give in to temptation. The situation was complicated enough, without adding fuel to the fire. Finally, he decided he needed to hit the bathroom. He felt like an army of stray cats had been pissing in his mouth for the entire night.

He managed to take Klaus's arm and place it on top of the blanket, without causing too much trouble. But when he rolled and pulled the entire blanket with him, pushing it between his legs, Jake froze. Klaus was completely naked and now offering him the fantastic view of a muscled back, lean waist, and gorgeous ass.

He unglued his eyes from the incredible sight in front of him with much difficulty. He unconsciously touched his chest, and this time, he almost lost his shit. Why on earth was he naked, too? He almost made a run for the bathroom, and he began touching himself everywhere.

Was that it? Had he done it? While being knocked cold on expensive champagne? Even though he dreaded what he was going to find, he touched his backside gingerly. Nothing seemed different. But how could he tell? It was not like he had ever had gay sex, right?

His chastity belt was in place, too. Maybe the fucker got his rocks off while keeping Jake restrained like that. Who knew? He jumped into the shower, and he began to wash quickly. At least the structure of that torturing device allowed some water to go through.

He brushed his teeth three times. Now thoroughly clean, he was prepared for his walk of shame. Or maybe he could run, he suddenly remembered that stupid meme he had read online a while ago.

He slowly went back to the room, hoping Klaus was still asleep. Eh, no luck for small mercies, it seemed.

"Good morning," the wicked angel smiled widely at him.

At least, he had the decency to cover his midsection with the blanket. He still looked good enough to replace breakfast, lunch, dinner, and all the recommended in-between snacks, anyway, but at least, he wasn't making the situation more awkward than it already was.

"Maybe for you," he mumbled, now realizing that Klaus was a bit decent, but he was all naked.

"That should teach you something about moderation," Klaus laughed and pointed the finger at him.

“All right, where the heck are all my clothes?” he asked in frustration, seeing that there was nothing he could wear, at least not in sight.

Klaus made a small gesture with his hands.

“Poof. They are gone. Magic.”

Jake covered his eyes.

“Don’t, please don’t tell me ...” he began and paused.

“Hmm?” Klaus chuckled. “What was that?”

“We did it?” Jake blurted out.

“It?” Klaus feigned innocence. “What? Sleeping?”

“No! Did we fuck?” Jake almost yelled.

“Regardless of how much I would enjoy seeing you fret over something like this, I must regretfully say that we did not,” Klaus laughed again. “You were out like a light, and doing IT with a corpse simply did not appeal to me.”

“Oh, good,” Jake mumbled. “I mean, okay.”

“Do not tell me you are disappointed,” Klaus spoke. “And could you not tell your virginity was still intact?”

“I could, I guess,” Jake admitted. “Nothing’s ... broken.”

Klaus now began roaring with laughter.

“How innocent can you be?”

“Well, I don’t know. It’s not like I have dicks up my ass every night to tell,” Jake pouted. “But I could have told if you had put that snake inside me.”

“You are flattering me. I am not that endowed.”

“Yeah,” Jake snorted. “And pigs fly. Now give me my clothes.”

“I told you they are gone. You will have to walk around naked.”

“And give Agnes a heart attack?” Jake quirked an eyebrow.

“Oh, you are not allowed to leave the room. I will have food brought over.”

“You must be joking,” Jake rolled his eyes, trying hard to ignore the man’s hot gaze lingering on his body.

“Really, Jake, after the stunt you pulled last night on me, I think I am entitled to some compensation. And, since you are not ready to give in just yet, I have to get creative,” Klaus got out of the bed and marched in all his naked glory towards the bathroom.

“What stunt?”

“You got drunk,” Klaus spoke over his shoulder and closed the door behind him.

Jake looked around. There had to be some clothes somewhere. He went to check the closet, but surprisingly, it was under lock and key. All right, the fucker was getting annoying right now. He could not march all over the place in the buff.

He eyed the door to the room, weighing his options. Maybe he could make a run for it. His room was right next door, after all. Eh, he sighed, as the knob moved, but the door didn't budge. All right, he could deal with this. Nothing out of the ordinary in being naked and spending time with a sex god. He was completely sure nothing was going to happen. He just wondered if he was lying to himself that he didn't want something to happen.

Chapter Eight

Jake flipped nervously through the magazine left on the nightstand. It was all in German, and he could not understand squat. He sighed and buried his head in the crook of his elbows. Then he stretched, enjoying the fluffiness of the sheets.

“Nice view,” he heard Klaus calling from behind and straightened up immediately.

“Who’s childish now?” he went for a frontal attack. “The door is locked.”

“Of course it is. You have the bad habit to stray,” Klaus smiled.

Fuck, was the guy trying to blind him or something? Klaus could be in toothpaste ads and make everyone buy that shit by the ton, only because he was telling them to. Jake covered himself with the blanket and pouted.

Klaus deftly caught one corner of the blanket and pulled it away. Jake huffed.

“Don’t you have somewhere you have to be? Like your job or something?” he glared and pulled his knees to the chest, wrapping himself in a ball.

“Not today. I cleared my schedule so I can have fun with you. Plus, even I can enjoy a bit of a break once in a while.”

“Then go watch TV or play bingo or something. I’m not keeping you.”

“TV? Bingo? Do you think I am 80 years old, Jake?” Klaus climbed the bed with predatory grace.

He quickly grabbed Jake’s right hand and placed it between his legs.

“How old does this tell you I am?” he asked.

“You could be on Viagra or something,” Jake mumbled and withdrew his hand.

He would have enjoyed touching Klaus more, but the thing on his dick was a fucking pain. He was starting to discipline himself not to get hard. It just caused pressure, without the possibility of release.

“I can tell someone is frustrated,” Klaus joked. “Do you want me to take the chastity belt off, Jake?”

“Of course I do. It’s shit,” Jake replied.

“Okay,” Klaus pushed his hand between Jake’s legs.

Ah, Jake thought, if he was really, really smart about it, maybe he could tell that cipher ... Klaus’s mouth connected with his and all conscious thought was lost. He groaned as the guy pushed his tongue inside, making his eyes roll in his head. Kissing was definitely nice, as was the hand wrapped now around his naked cock.

He was barely aware of how he was made to lie on his back. Klaus's tongue was so, so good, wrapping around his, flicking and tasting, demanding and withdrawing. Straight teeth at his bottom lip, teasing, and then tongue again, and it was all like a rhythm, and he could not let go of it. He wanted it. So he kissed back, and his hands searched blindly, first propped against perfect shoulders, then traveling down, cupping pecs so good they seemed cut in marble and belonging to old statues of ancient gods made of nothing but the lust and desire carved in stone by some frustrated artist. The man in front of him was not made of cold marble, though; he was warm and hard, and Jake let his hands wander, curving and taking each muscle, down, down, down, until reaching their prize in a hot, throbbing member.

How gay was that? It was not like Jake had some gay-meter to tell, but still, two guys kissing and rubbing each other's dicks had to be pretty gay. Whatever. Walls had no eyes. And he had gone too long without using his dick. It was only natural to let the other head take over.

"Hmm, nice," Klaus slowly moved away, as did his hand until he brought his rubbing to a halt.

"If it's nice, why did you stop?" Jake demanded gruffly.

"Impatient? Seeing how difficult it can be to get you to do anything remotely sexual, I want to take my time."

Klaus moved and lay on his bed.

"How about we start with a little exploration? You first," Klaus encouraged him.

"I have a body just like yours," Jake shrugged, trying hard to hide his excitement.

His eyes were traveling hungrily over the man's body.

"I insist," Klaus grinned, showing teeth.

Jake placed his hands on the man's chest again.

"Do you like it, Jake?" Klaus whispered. "Come on, play around a little. I promise I will let you."

It was not that easy to forget he was swimming in the dark here, but he took a gamble nonetheless. He moved his hands, brushing over pert nipples, enjoying the immediate response. The room had the perfect temperature, but Klaus's nipples were suddenly even more erect.

Jake wondered. So he leaned in and took one pebble of dark pink into his mouth. He could not tell if the guy's heart was beating faster, but he hoped it was in synch with his. He closed his eyes and flicked his tongue over the object of his attention.

There was a small grunt coming from the other. He stopped and looked at Klaus. The man's blue eyes were slightly darker than he remembered.

“Continue,” Klaus ordered, his bottom lip trembling for a second.

Jake moved to straddle the good-looking man, wincing as his hard-on brushed by the other’s cock, but settling for having their balls touching. Then he bent from the waist and returned to the task at hand. He had no idea why everything seemed so delicious. It was like with each lick he was getting hungrier.

“Not that I do not think it a nice obsession, but could you move to other things as well?” Klaus spoke, his voice no longer seeming as arrogant and well-guarded as usual.

He didn’t need any more encouragement, or guidance. The man’s skin tasted spicy and fresh, as Jake guided his hungry mouth towards the arched neck. He drew a long, wet line across, reaching Klaus’s ear. His teeth sank in the vulnerable lobe presenting itself, pulling a small amused yelp from its owner.

“Look who likes to bite,” Klaus joked.

Jake could feel the bubbly excitement growing in his chest. Maybe it was that easy. And also tons of fun. That could not be denied. For a moment, he hesitated. This was getting too intimate, too fast. Out there, in the real world, there was Diaz, waiting to snap his neck for doing something like this. Here, the alluring man trembling slightly underneath him was a different kind of danger.

There was no winning for him. He was just bound to lose, but, at least, he could enjoy the scraps for all that mattered. Gluing his body to Klaus, he inhaled the man’s scent.

“I think I want to suck your cock,” he said in one go, not even stopping to breathe.

“Good, Jake,” Klaus praised him, caressing his hair. “Now that is what I call progress.”

“Just ... so that you know. If I don’t like it, will you just let me be?”

“Sure,” Klaus replied, and slowly guided his head so they could kiss again. “I have a feeling, though, Jake, that you are the addictive kind. I think you will just come back for more, once you have a taste.”

“Still. I think I want to keep my options open,” Jake murmured against the man’s lips.

“Feel free to do so,” Klaus seemed pretty smug while saying this. “You have a gorgeous mouth. It is made for cock.”

Jake bit his bottom lip to hide a smile. There was no shortage of kinky praise when it came to this man.

“How about 69?” Klaus was the one to offer. “This way, you can learn on the go. Plus, I can race you to it.”

“That wouldn’t be fair,” Jake protested. “You’ll just beat me with experience. Also, my nuts are like a loaded gun.”

“Ah, well,” Klaus grinned. “Ready to blow then?”

“It’s your fault. For putting that damn thing on me.”

“You need discipline, Jake,” Klaus chided him, slowly tapping his index finger against the tip of Jake’s nose.

“Yeah, and you’re free to do whatever you like,” Jake protested.

“Do I sense a competitive streak in you?” Klaus began caressing his back until he reached the other’s buttocks.

“Well, it’s true. You have an advantage. Your ball sack is NOT about to blow.”

“How do you know? Touch me,” Klaus ordered.

Jake moved and pushed one hand between them to feel Klaus’s hard cock and the balls beneath.

“Wow, tight as fuck,” he commented.

“For your information, seeing you so unwilling to give in, I decided to show restraint, too. So, we are at the starting line as equals.”

“You really didn’t rub one out?” Jake murmured, trying to make sense of everything.

“No.”

“And you didn’t fuck?”

“No.”

“Okay then,” Jake admitted. “At least I have a chance.”

That was what he thought, at least. He was maneuvered to sit with his ass on Klaus’s face, and he instantly groaned in pure delight, as a deft tongue was there in an instant.

“What the fuck ... this isn’t a blowjob,” he puffed and complained.

“Consider it a bit of foreplay,” Klaus laughed, as he quickly pushed Jake to lie flat against his body.

He was facing the object of his desire in all its hardness and glory. Now that was a reason to back the fuck out. The thing was damn big, at least by his standards.

“Now Jake, your mouth should go ahhh ...” Klaus joked.

And the man had to up the ante by immediately taking Jake’s balls and stuffing them into his mouth, one after another. Jake cursed and grabbed the man’s erection with both hands. With a self-encouraging sigh, he brought his lips to the engorged mushroom head.

And licked. The immediate response from the man underneath was sudden suction applied to his ball sack. He was not going to lose. Even if it was really gay, and he should have known better than just aim for the guy's cock like that, he braced himself and pushed half the man's member into his mouth.

Nothing could describe the sensation he was now experiencing. Klaus wasted no more time, and he could feel his entire length engulfed in moist heat, down to the hilt. There was no way for him to do the same, but he pushed as much as he could, gagging a little when the tip of the man's member hit the back of his throat. He withdrew, leaving a trail of saliva behind.

Klaus took in his predicament and, for a little while, he let Jake's cock slide out of his mouth.

"Do not try too much right off the start. Take what you can manage, and do not forget to make it interesting."

Interesting was how the man could deep-throat. But Jake was no fool either, and he began using his tongue to wrap it around the hard shaft. Bobbing his head, slowly at first, he began getting the hang of it. The slightly salty taste was only adding fuel to the fire. Klaus liked it, and Jake loved it because that meant he was doing a good job.

There was an advantage in using that position. Jake could focus on giving pleasure, taking a bit off the edge of his own delight, as Klaus was practically hammering his mouth with Jake's hard on. He could hold on to this. Propping one hand on the bed, he used the other to help with rubbing the guy's hard member in synch with his mouth.

Whatever he felt right now, it was hot, raw, and it was driving him a tiny bit nuts because there was no way he could make sense why it felt so damn good. It wasn't only because there was moist heat all around his hard dick. No, it definitely wasn't just because of the so-called mechanics of the situation.

The way he felt had something to do with the fact that he was doing this with a gorgeous guy, it was forbidden, and his balls were about to blow just by thinking about it. He had been in plenty of dangerous situations before. The rush of adrenaline was like a drug, more so when there were slight chances of winning.

And right now, it felt like he could win, if only by a fraction. He used his tongue to lick the underside of the mushroom, decided that he needed that to gain the upper hand. Yet, when Klaus began going deeper and deeper, hitting Jake's cock against the back of his throat, Jake's hands clenched on the base of the guy's member, trying to stop him somehow.

But it didn't look like that fazed the guy in any way, so he resumed his ministrations, rubbing and sucking the head with everything he could. At one point, he lost control, his moves becoming nothing short of erratic, and he let the man's cock slip from his mouth so he could groan in pure delight.

Where there had been hotness, there was sudden cold, and he almost whined in protest.

“Easy there, tiger,” Klaus spoke, but his voice was a bit tight. “Now comes the moment when you have to reflect a little. What would it be? Swallow? Or would you rather enjoy a nice facial?”

Jake wanted just to turn and smack the man upside the head. Were they fucking or filling in forms? But the pressure at the base of his cock was still maddening, and he grabbed the man’s dick fiercely, too.

“What will you do?”

“I will swallow, obviously,” Klaus chuckled.

“Then I’ll swallow, too,” Jake shrugged and pushed the hard pulsing cock into his mouth in one go.

It was rewarding to hear Klaus uttering a short German word, sounding like water down the gutter and nails on a blackboard at the same time. He would have taken the time to celebrate, but his mouth was full, and he needed to focus.

Especially since his dick was now back into that crazy heat and the suction increased, making him want nothing but to push and push and push. Klaus was lucky to be so strong and keep his dick at a certain angle and distance because Jake was pretty certain he was now losing it.

The air in the room was turning electric, all the moans and slurping sounds coming from both of them filling up the empty space, threatening to burst. He came without even being able to tell if the stimulation on his cock was just going and going, and he was not yet there, but the sudden constriction of his balls and the way he felt his cock throbbing in the guy’s mouth told him he was just coming inside another man and it felt nothing short of amazing.

The slightly salty, yet a tad sweet, liquid suddenly hitting his taste buds brought him back. He struggled to swallow, taken by surprise, and there was a hand on his head, pushing him down and keeping him there, so there was no way he could back down.

He coughed as he was finally allowed to let the spent cock slip from his mouth. It took him long seconds to start breathing correctly once more.

The slow, intoxicating laugh, coming from behind him, made him bite his bottom lip hard. All right, it had been cool enough, but why was the guy laughing? He turned with a large grin to face Klaus, but one of his hands surreptitiously went for a pillow. Klaus looked pretty smug, the bastard, which made the sudden change that followed even more amusing.

Smack! The pillow hit the overconfident asshole right in his face, and now Jake was the one laughing. Klaus looked like a miffed kid on his first day of school, a few feathers falling softly around him, his perfect hair finally a bit tousled. He looked more like a human being, and less like a dream man created in a lab. Jake stretched, feeling particularly satisfied.

Klaus moved quickly, landing on top of him, and keeping him pinned to the bed. The blue eyes sparkled with amusement.

“So, do you think you have it in you to take me on?” Klaus asked.

“Sure, I can take you any day,” Jake replied, feeling pretty good about himself.

“How arrogant of you,” Klaus cooed. “And right after swallowing everything like a good boy. I thought you would be more chastised.”

“Why? I fucked your mouth, too,” Jake smiled.

Klaus’s eyes turned darker.

“You are so uncouth, you make me want to discipline you all the time,” Klaus spoke.

“Yeah, like I’ll let you,” Jake chose defiance once more.

“You will let me. You will let me do anything I want, because you like it, you little pervert,” Klaus laughed.

“How am I a pervert?”

“You know. Just teasing and denying all the time, and then going all-in. I had not expected you to take me so deep and swallow everything from the first time.”

“Really? I mean, what do other guys do?” Jake’s eyes grew wide.

“Each person has their own quirks. You are not hung up on sex that is sure. So, I am wondering. What are your pet peeves?”

“Maybe not being crushed like this,” Jake joked and pushed his hands against Klaus’s chest.

“Hey, you are not going anywhere until I say so,” Klaus remained firm, not budging a muscle.

“All right,” Jake gave up. “So what are we going to do? Sit like this?”

“No,” Klaus leaned in and made their lips connect for a kiss.

The guy was really something, Jake thought, as he opened his mouth. But, this time, he didn’t just lie there; he sucked in Klaus’s tongue, and soon they were carrying a not so silent battle that was going to go for who knew how long if it wasn’t for the loud rap on the door that made them both stop.

“Breakfast is ready, sir,” a voice announced.

“Leave it by the door,” Klaus replied loudly.

Jake used the offered opportunity to push himself out of the man's embrace quickly.

“Hey,” Klaus called after him.

“I think I need another shower,” Jake said.

“Not alone,” Klaus pushed himself up and followed.

Jake suddenly noticed something on the floor. He grabbed the offending object quickly and went to the window.

“What are you doing?” Klaus asked him.

With unhidden satisfaction, he opened the window and making sure to gain enough momentum, he threw the thing as far as he could. Klaus began laughing.

“Don’t you think I can buy another?”

“Nope, I don’t think so,” Jake turned to the other with a large grin painted all over his face.

“Are you underestimating my financial situation?” Klaus quirked an eyebrow.

“You promised,” Jake shrugged. “You got me naked, on my back.”

“That is not exactly what I said,” Klaus’s eyes lazily traveled all over Jake’s body, leaving goose-bumps everywhere.

He shook off the sensation.

“Technically, it is.”

“So are you going to put out from here on?” Klaus laughed.

“You wish,” Jake said defensively. “I said nothing like it.”

Klaus grabbed him playfully by his buttocks.

“That is fine. I appreciate the challenge.”

Klaus let his hands travel slowly over the boy’s smooth, toned body. Jake was a wonder. Unrestrained, always using his own head, cautious, but ready for action. Klaus had had much more beautiful lovers in his life. More versed in giving and receiving. But for the love of all that was holy, he could not remember any of them at the moment. His mind was blank, filled only with what was offered right in front of him.

Strong shoulders, lean muscles everywhere. The most delicious ass. He could not wait to get to that part.

“Are we washing, or you’re just going to stare?” Jake turned his head, and Klaus used the opportunity to cup his cheek and drag him into another kiss.

The soft lips resisted for just a second until their owner decided to relax and allow Klaus the exploration he sought so much. It was a tad unnerving, and it was taking him by surprise to feel how much he needed this.

He liked sex. No, correction. He loved sex. It was his favorite pastime when he was not buried in work. But until now, he had always known where he stood. His lovers were predictable.

Handsome, skilled, appreciative, elegant, and smooth. Jake was rough and acted on impulse. He had no consideration for rules or etiquette.

And that made the usual expectations ... not applicable. But it didn't matter. Klaus Metzger was not the type to give up in the face of a new challenge. And if that meant feeling like walking on a tightrope, then let it be it.

"You are hard," he whispered against the younger man's lips, and his hands cupped the other's proud erection.

"Well, I'm young," Jake justified. "And horny."

"Hmm, what should we do about it then?" Klaus cooed.

"How about you suck me off?" Jake proposed shamelessly.

"Aren't you a little presumptuous? I just did that," Klaus replied, feeling the same unfamiliar sensation of having someone challenging him just for the fun of it.

"You're the one whose hands are all over my cock," Jake shrugged.

"I do not offer anything without expecting something in return."

"Shoot," Jake said, and his eyes were a bit blurred as Klaus bit playfully on his shoulder.

"Your ass in exchange," Klaus said.

"No way," Jake shook his head.

"You are going to give in any way. Why postpone it?" Klaus began rubbing Jake's cock slowly, in a rhythm he knew it was not enough to be satisfactory.

"It's just that ... I don't know. You're big."

"You are dancing around the bush."

"Am not," Jake said, now looking down. "Yeah, whatever, forget about the blowjob."

"Wait," Klaus kept him tightly. "I will suck you off. I can afford to be generous."

"Why?" Jake mumbled, allowing Klaus to turn him to face each other.

"Everything is new for you," Klaus explained. "I can allow you enough time to get adjusted."

And Jake was not the only one in need of adjustment. Maybe it served to take things a little slower. The excitement was shooting through the roof, but that might wane once the deed was done. So there was no point in hurrying things. His business required his presence in town for at least eight months. He was sure how Jake felt towards him. He was also convinced that eight months was enough time to consume the attraction he felt towards this young man. At least he hoped it was enough time.

Chapter Nine

Two blowjobs in one single fucking morning! Jake felt like floating as he was now all dressed up and ready to accompany Klaus to one of the construction sites to which the guy had promised to take him. And what was pretty amazing, and a bit unnerving at the same time, was how casual Klaus's featherlike touch on his shoulder was. The man was guiding him around, and it felt so familiar that Jake was starting to wonder about dumb things like whether he had met Klaus Metzger in another life or something mystic like that.

It was also a bit of a letdown they had to leave the bed. Klaus had promised they were going to play, but, apparently, in this guy's book, there was always room for work. He wasn't in any position to protest. His bones felt weightless. He was sure that must have been like when people talked about walking on cloud nine.

It was enough to recall just what happened about one hour prior. The gorgeous man on his knees, servicing Jake, like the roles were reversed. He wasn't street trash, and Klaus, the top dog, was not taking advantage. Klaus's lazy blue eyes had flickered upward, watching him, as Jake had surrendered to the sensation of having his cock sucked as never before in his life.

Jake wished he could suck cock like that. He could barely wait to give it a go again. The first time now felt a bit blurry, and he could not remember details. Next time, he was going to enjoy it even more.

He winced and adjusted his jeans. It was not the time to get hard again.

"Something the matter?" Klaus blew hot air over his ear, as he walked slightly behind, and pushing Jake through the large entrance door.

"Do you really need to ask?" he looked sideways and willed himself to avoid sounding like an amateur.

"Oh, did we leave the bed too early?" Klaus feigned pity.

"Yeah, right. You're a pervert, to always think about that," he threw over his shoulder.

Thompson was waiting with the door to the car open. They climbed inside, and Jake loved how Klaus chose to sit very close to him, gluing their legs hip to knee. But it was not like he was going to get all mushy and gushy over everything.

And the man smelled heavenly. He doubted he had ever met anyone to smell so good. And it was not just because of the expensive cologne. Maybe it was true what people said about perfumes smelling differently depending on the wearer's natural scent. Klaus was one of those people just smelling great by default. Fuck, there was no chip in this guy's armor; perfect all around and just pissing off people like Jake.

"Funny, I did not peg you for a thinker," Klaus joked and hooked one arm over his shoulders, pulling him closer.

Jake turned slightly to stare into the man's impossibly blue eyes.

“I wasn’t thinking,” he protested, just for the sake of saying the opposite.

“Ah, so you are just too engrossed in my presence that you cannot even think,” Klaus joked, his lips quirked into a smile that held a vague, enticing promise.

“So full of yourself, I cannot believe it,” Jake mumbled and frowned.

Klaus touched his forehead as if he was trying to smooth out the crease there.

“You are too young to be all grumpy like this,” the man spoke.

“Well, I got a rep to hold,” Jake explained right away. “If I walk around, smiling like a princess, what do you think would happen? I tell you what. Where I come from, you could get punched in the face and lose some teeth for something stupid like this.”

“That is true,” Klaus admitted. “But when you are with me, you are allowed to smile.”

“I’m allowed?” Jake snorted. “Like I’m your pet dog or something?”

“Interesting. You seem to have an obsession for canines. Could it be that you are really bent on the idea to be taken from behind?”

Jake blushed and bit his bottom lip hard.

“Could we not get all lovey-dovey like this with Thompson watching?” Jake turned his head and tried to pry himself free from the man’s tight hold.

“He is not watching. He is an outstanding employee.”

Klaus straightened up his tie with a cocksure gesture. It was fascinating to see how the man could quickly slip into his social mask, as the occasion demanded. Jake was not surprised to feel the car stopping to a halt.

Jake felt a bit awkward at first being shown around by Klaus, and introduced to the team present at the construction site. These guys were not old farts coming from money, like the ones at the party. These were people who lived in poor neighborhoods, like his, and they were watching him with a mix of distrust and envy, probably wondering how a nobody like him had ended up in the good graces of such a prominent businessman.

“Are you interested in putting in some elbow grease? Or would you rather come with me to the foreman’s office and look over some blueprints?” Klaus asked him.

Jake looked at the men who were starting to work, now that the pleasantries with the man with the money were finished.

“I think I’m all up for some demolition work,” he said with determination.

“Good,” Klaus patted his shoulder. “Go see Lou, the supervisor over in the crew’s quarters, and tell him I sent you. He will get you a change of clothes, work boots and some overalls. Unless, of course, you do not mind getting your designer jeans all dusty.”

“Gods forbid I do that,” Jake said with a smirk and headed over to the barracks without a single look back.

Klaus was more than pleased with the way things were going. The people were enthusiastic enough about being given well-paid jobs, despite the initial lack of trust in the new management. After all, they were all strangers to this place, he included.

“Did you say something about bringing a new kid over, to show him the ropes, Mr. Metzger?” the foreman asked.

“Yes. But I let him also get a feel of the hard work around here, on his first day. I hope you don’t mind; I sent him over to see Lou to get fitted out in work clothes so that he could get started. One thing I have to ask. No favors. I am the one to introduce him to this project, but it is to evaluate his possibilities, not to indulge him in believing he is better than the other workers. So, please, be honest when giving me the report. If demolition tasks are everything he is good at, I am perfectly satisfied.”

The foreman seemed to hesitate for a second.

“Has he any formal education?” the older man eventually asked.

“No, nothing after high school. But I believe in his potential, in its native form. You will help me decide whether my hunch was right or not. Do not expect him to have experience or training. I have faith in you.”

“Certainly, Mr. Metzger,” the foreman replied and proceeded to roll up the plans spread on the table. “Can I offer you a cup of coffee?”

“I would love a cup of coffee,” Klaus said politely and followed the man to the improvised cafeteria.

Sitting by the window, he brought the Styrofoam cup to his lips and watched outside. Jake was apparently having the time of his life. And, of course, it was a pleasure to watch him moving about, choosing his tools and working together with the others.

When Jake suddenly stopped and took off the regular white tee, Klaus smiled. The boy had a nice body, chiseled, hard everywhere. Nobody was allowed even to suspect he had had that gorgeous young man under him just earlier. He understood where Jake was coming from. The boy was part of a rough world, and Klaus knew everything about rough. Not because he belonged there, but because he had never steered clear of that part of the world around him.

Some used to say that he had the manners of a diplomat and the mindset of a kingpin. Of course, those were people who knew him well and were aware of the somewhat underhanded

tactics he often used to get the upper hand in the business he ran. But he had always had the best intentions at heart, or at least, he hoped that was the truth. There was always too much red tape to deal with, too many bureaucrats to convince. He was the link between two worlds, and he was known to make the best of any hand he was dealt. And, of course, bribe when the situation required.

Everything worked well at the moment. There were rough patches to smooth out, but he knew well how things stood. And this town was a promising venture. Plus, he had everything he wanted and needed to entertain himself right under his roof, he thought, as his eyes traveled to the young man swinging a large sledgehammer and hitting a wall with all his might, making his audience hoot in surprise and appreciation.

Jake was going to have a fun time by himself, and he had other business to attend. If the boy had offered more than a little play in the sheets, he could have skipped the entire day to enjoy his new lover. But, seeing that Jake was still reluctant, there was nothing wrong with using the time efficiently.

He let the foreman know that Thompson was going to take Jake back to the house at the end of the day.

“If you don’t mind me asking, Mr. Metzger, where did you find the boy?” the foreman asked. “He seems to be getting along with the team just great,” the man added.

“I know what you mean,” Klaus smiled. “He looks like a punk. He is the younger brother of one of my associates, and the deal is to get his family more involved with the project,” he answered the question promptly.

“Well, it looks like he’s doing a pretty swell job right now,” the foreman nodded. “After the lunch break, I’ll show him the ropes, too.”

“Do that, please,” Klaus said, and after shaking the man’s hand, he headed over to the car.

At first, he had been a bit taken aback to learn Klaus had left, but it was not like he was left with nothing to do. The physical activity had made him feel really good. Useful, in fact. Only that now he was in the foreman’s office and that was making him feel a bit out of place. Maybe he did something stupid?

“Sit,” the man showed him a chair. “Mr. Metzger says you’re interested in learning about managing a project.”

“He does?” he asked, feeling his throat a bit dry.

The foreman watched him with a frown.

“Look, kid, if you don’t want to sit with me here for a while and look over plans, you’re free to go back outside and work with the rest.”

Jake almost hurried to say 'yes' but something in how the man looked at him made him change his mind. This old man was judging him. He was looking at him, and he saw street trash, nothing else. Yet, Klaus had left word that Jake was to learn about this management stuff, and that could mean only one thing; that in Klaus's eyes, he was more than just Jake the Outsider. He was a guy with a bit of brain in his head, and he could not disappoint Klaus by being a chicken and settling only for what was familiar.

"I'm willing to learn, sir," he said firmly, and the foreman looked at him, a bit surprised.

"All right kid," the man shrugged. "But I won't spend my entire day trying to get you to understand what I'm saying. Understood?"

"Yes, sir," Jake replied.

It was the end of the workday, finally, and he felt pretty much spent. Who knew learning all about planning and scheduling had to be so mind-boggling? But he had persisted, and he had followed the foreman in everything he said.

"Hi, man," he saluted Thompson, and the man nodded.

He was in terrible need of a shower, but the car was already there, and he could not let the driver wait. It was already weird enough that he got to be chauffeured like he was some hot shot when he was nothing but a guy from the streets.

"Can I ride in front with you?" he asked the driver who was solemnly holding one of the back doors open.

"Certainly," the man spoke after a short moment of hesitation and closed the door.

Jake climbed in front and put on his seatbelt.

"Say, Thompson, have you been working for Klaus for how long?" he asked, hoping he didn't sound too nosy.

"Yes, just over seven years," the driver supplied the answer.

"Wow," Jake commented and looked out the window. "Do you mind if I ask you ... is he like a good guy?"

"Mr. Metzger is the best boss I have ever worked for."

"That's cool," he replied, not knowing what to say. "Sorry for bothering you," he added.

"That's okay," the man spoke. "Some work days are boring. It feels good to have someone to talk to."

"Oh, yeah? That's great. Because I definitely like talking," Jake said. "Is it true that Klaus travels all over Europe and stuff like that? Doesn't he have like a home or something?"

“If you’re asking me about his headquarters, that would be Berlin, but he is involved in so many businesses that he travels, indeed, a lot.”

“Have you ever been to France? I mean, because you work for him.”

“Yes, I have been there.”

“Is it like they say in the movies?”

“Depends on the sort of movies you watch,” the driver replied.

“Yeah, I guess.”

“It is an interesting country. But Europe is too old for new business,” the man suddenly began talking again. “That is why Mr. Metzger prefers such locations. He says nothing stays fresh for too long, and one has to seize the opportunity.”

Jake frowned a little. The man was speaking about Klaus’s way of doing business, but his words sounded foreboding. He shook off the unpleasant sensation. After all, it had been a great day, and he didn’t want to spoil it.

“My room, now,” Klaus told him the moment he entered the house.

What the heck? Was he in trouble? What for? He followed without a word, taking in the man’s square shoulders and strong back, as the guy was now wearing just a light blue polo and a pair of slacks, and not the usual suit.

He was about to speak when the man closed the door and suddenly grabbed him, pinning him against the wall, and kissing him. Strong hands were on his waist, sneaking underneath his t-shirt.

“I, like, need a bath,” he pushed the guy away gently.

“You can use the shower, but be quick,” Klaus said, his voice a little tight.

Jake hurried to get under the hot spray, wondering what had gotten into the guy. Klaus seemed to be so calculated all the time. This definitely looked out of character. He didn’t bother to wrap himself in the towel, after drying up. He just rubbed his hair a little, skipping blow drying altogether.

Klaus was still dressed, lying on the bed and reading one of his magazines. The blue gaze met him unabashed.

“Well?” Jake opened his arms widely. “Where’s the fire?”

“I am thinking of an answer, but it would be too crass,” Klaus replied with a small smile, placing his magazine aside. “Come here,” he patted the place on the bed next to him.

With a shrug, Jake climbed the bed.

“Jake, you never fail to surprise me,” Klaus spoke again. “The foreman tells me you are sharp as a tack.”

“Really?” Jake’s eyes glittered. “Wait, when did you talk to him?”

“Right before you got home and on the phone, naturally.”

“And was that enough reason to jump me?”

“Not really. Yet, the moment you came through the door, I felt the sudden need to kiss you. And I could not do that in front of the staff.”

“I guess they’re suspecting something,” Jake’s eyes fluttered shut.

“They are discreet. In return, I am not parading my passion all over the place. It would be bad taste. Although you almost make me want to break this rule.”

“No shit,” Jake shifted in his place. “Are you doing this with everyone?”

“Who?”

“You know, your boyfriends,” Jake crossed his arms over his chest, now overly conscious of his naked body.

“Are you my boyfriend, Jake? Is that what you are saying?”

“I don’t know. I’m whatever is called when two dudes give each other head.”

“There could be much more than that,” Klaus threw him a lopsided grin. “Are you hungry?”

“Yeah,” Jake answered.

“Then you should dress up, so we can go down for dinner,” Klaus move to get up. “I have a change of clothes for you right here.”

Jake grabbed the man’s arm swiftly.

“Wait, didn’t you want something?” he asked.

Klaus looked at him, his blue eyes glinting with something that Jake could only interpret as desire.

“It is all right,” the man patted his hand. “I am old enough to know that some things can wait.”

Jake jumped up and almost cornered the man as he pushed him firmly against the wall. Klaus was now amused.

“What are you planning to do, Jake?” the man asked sweetly.

“Unlike you,” Jake chose his words carefully, “I’m not a sadist. If you’re a walking hard-on, maybe the people around here will think less of you.”

“I must say that I am touched by how much you care. But that still does not answer my question. What are you going to do?” Klaus repeated the question.

Jake’s eyes traveled to one side, pondering over his options. It was not like he thought things through. But he was not some chicken.

“I’ll blow you, is that okay?” he said quickly and looked the man straight in the eyes.

Klaus grinned.

“I will not say no. But if you back down after starting this, I will not forgive you.”

Jake just nodded solemnly.

Klaus was certain he should have found the entire situation amusing and nothing more. His torrid affairs and sex encounters were usually his prerogatives from the planning stage to the end. A lover had once told him that being so clinical about such things was a bit annoying. But not for him. He knew exactly what to expect, down to the oohs and the ahhs, and that had worked just fine until now.

Seduction was a game that could be learned and mastered. Yet, now, he was in the unusual situation of being pinned against the wall by a 21-year old with fire in his eyes, and a body made for sin, who was just demanding to change the rules.

He let out a small exhale as Jake worked his belt and knelt in front of him. The boy was proud, as he had shown on more than one occasion, yet now he had no qualms about taking that subservient position and wrapping his gorgeous lips around Klaus’s hard cock.

Jake was someone who did nothing by half. As reluctant as he had been, now that a bridge was crossed, he was not looking back. There was comfort in something like that, Klaus thought and felt a small tremble from the root of his cock to his fingertips, as Jake firmly grabbed his balls with one hand and tried to stuff as much as he could in his mouth.

He caressed the raven hair. Jake was more enthusiastic than efficient, yet Klaus felt like he would not trade this oral sex session for any of the many others he had enjoyed in the past. The sudden change in rhythm, a coy lick of a tongue that was still uncertain what felt good and what not, the steady hands on the base of his cock, and his balls, they all worked together in a harmony that Klaus could only appreciate as ... thrilling.

Usually, it took him much more sensorial stimulation, and even visual, to come only from being serviced orally. There was no longer the advantage of being a little pent up, like earlier that morning. Yet, when he firmly kept Jake by his nape, to feed him his release, there was nothing forced or pushed or drawn by the sheer power of will.

Jake's hands twitched as he was being kept there and made to swallow. Klaus knew the boy appreciated being at the receiving end of assertive dominance, like now. No matter what his mouth could say against it, he liked it. Klaus did not allow him to get up until the last drop was wrung out of him.

Jake stood up, wiping his mouth with the back of his hand and a smug look on his face. Klaus should have felt a bit irritated, but he was still panting, leaning against the wall, as he came down from his high.

"You good?" Jake smiled, and Klaus grabbed him.

The kiss was sweet, like everything else about the young man. Klaus had been known all his life as a guy who had never had a problem with skipping dessert. Maybe that was the appeal. He let his hands travel down lean flanks and pulled the boy closer into his embrace.

Jake's proud erection rubbed against his spent crotch.

"You are not good though," Klaus's fingers caressed the hard length. "Do you need a hand?"

"If we keep it like this, we'll end up eating tomorrow," Jake rejected his offer.

"Oh, so it is okay for you to be a walking hard-on, but not me?" Klaus laughed.

"Well, it's not like people think highly of me anyway. So, no harm done," Jake shrugged.

"Hey," Klaus said sharply and tipped the boy's chin to look him in the eyes. "Stop putting yourself down."

"Why?" Jake's eyes flickered with what looked like tiny hope mixed with anxiety.

"That is my job," Klaus chose to joke, to clear the air.

And it worked. Jake rolled his eyes and began laughing.

"You're such a pervert, always thinking about that."

"I cannot help it. Especially when you are right in front of me."

"At least your bad jokes killed my hard-on," Jake grinned and looked down.

"You are breaking my heart."

To his surprise, Jake proceeded to stuff Klaus's now flaccid cock inside his pants, with unfamiliar care. When had been the last time someone had shown this type of courtesy towards him? Klaus was about to speak again, but he was interrupted by a short, polite knock on the door.

"Yes?" he called.

"I want to let you know that a certain Mr. Lopez is downstairs, sir."

“Invite him to join us for dinner,” Klaus said airily.

He could go through a meal with Jake’s macho brother. His attention turned to the boy. Jake’s face was ashen, and he was clutching his hands over his biceps.

“Fuck,” Jake whispered.

Chapter Ten

“What the fuck do I do now?” Jake whispered, mostly to himself.

Klaus knew what. No matter how out of place Jake’s reaction seemed, he could understand it. He walked to the closet and handed Jack a change of clothes. Since he was planning to keep the boy in his room overnight, he had had Agnes to move some of Jake’s things to his room.

“Here. Dress up,” he ordered shortly, and Jake obeyed with brisk moves. “Go throw some cold water on your face, brush your teeth, and calm down,” he continued in the same even tone.

Jake muttered something but marched towards the bathroom on auto-pilot. It took him less than two minutes to be back. Klaus cupped the boy’s cheeks and began talking again.

“Stop worrying so much. Your brother will not suspect a thing. Trust me.”

“You have no idea how Diaz is. If he ever finds out ...”

“That will not happen,” Klaus cut his words short.

“What if ... someone tells him?”

“If you doubt my staff, that is unnecessary. Jake, no one has the word ‘gay’ written all over them.”

Jake pushed him away.

“I should have known better than to get mixed up in this shit,” he mumbled.

Now was not the time to deal with Jake’s insecurities. Klaus examined himself briefly in the long mirror and gestured for Jake to move. Later, he needed to get to the bottom of things. There was more than what was apparent at the moment, and he needed to find out what.

“You look good, little brother,” Diaz smiled and opened his arms wide, hurrying to meet him, the moment Jake was through the door to the dining room. “Is Mr. Metzger here treating you right?”

Diaz ruffled his hair and pushed him away so he could shake hands with the master of the house, without waiting for an answer.

“And how are you today, Mr. Lopez?” Klaus put on his affable smile that Jake had seen so many times.

Yeah, maybe the guy was right. At least, on his face, there was no weird word written when he behaved like the hot shot he was. But Jake was not like that, and he could not fake it that well. So far, he had managed to keep things hidden from Diaz, because nothing had happened.

But right now, he was in deep shit. Diaz was going to tell something was funny, and that was when Jake was going to ...

Whatever, he needed to focus right now.

“Please, have a seat,” Klaus gestured for them to sit at the giant table.

By force of habit, Jake tried to move and sit by his brother’s side, but a firm hand squeezed his shoulder briefly and guided him to sit across from Diaz, next to Klaus.

A young girl began moving about, placing what looked like plates loaded with delicious food on the table. Jake could feel his stomach all in knots, and he wasn’t sure he was going to eat anything if he didn’t want to puke all over the table and make a fool of himself.

“Mr. Metzger, we’re both businessmen, right?” Diaz gestured towards Klaus like they were alone at the table.

Jake appreciated being left out. He fiddled with his fork and wondered whether Klaus was going to ignore his usual habit of not talking during dinner.

“Klaus, please,” the host said and put on a charming smile.

“Okay, Klaus. You can call me Diaz, too, by the way.”

“All right, what business proposition do you have?”

“I have someone bringing over a shipment next week,” Diaz licked his lips, and his eyes glinted with something nasty.

“No,” Klaus replied and took his napkin to unfold it and place it on his knees.

“You didn’t let me finish,” Diaz’s ugly smile faltered.

“I know all about shipments,” Klaus spoke. “I will not have that kind of business run on these streets while I am here.”

“Man, you’re busting my balls here,” Diaz said.

You have no idea what he can do, Jake thought but kept his mouth shut.

“Let’s negotiate a little, will you?” Diaz continued. “From businessman to businessman.”

“There is nothing to negotiate,” Klaus kept his neutral tone like he was reading the weather from a local newspaper. “I will not have drugs and dealers in this town.”

“Hey, man, who said anything about drugs?” Diaz tried to hide his unease under a wolfish smile.

“Oh, so it is guns. The answer is still no.”

Jake stole a furtive glance in his brother's direction. Diaz was working his jaw, and this time, his smile turned manic. What did you do, Diaz? Jake wanted to ask, but his jaw was rigid, too, even if for different reasons.

"C'mon, we all know that people kill people, not guns," Diaz made a lame attempt at a joke.

"Without guns, there will be less crime. It is much less what one can do when armed with a kitchen knife than when carrying a machine gun."

"So, there's no way to convince you?" Diaz spoke.

"No. Let us enjoy our meal."

Klaus was the only one not tense as the dinner carried on. Jake could barely eat, and Diaz was all a frown, chewing each bite like he wanted it dead.

As dessert was brought over, which Klaus declined, and had the girl bring only for his guests, the atmosphere seemed to grow colder. Klaus lit up a cigarillo and looked at Diaz.

"You can always ask for the money back," he suggested.

Diaz's head snapped up.

"Yeah, like I could do that."

"All right," Klaus said. "Only this time."

"What? You'll let the shipment through?"

"No. Only this time I am going to save your ass," Klaus spoke, the usual diplomatic affability gone from his voice. "Bear in mind. This is not a blank check. Say the exact figure involved. It will be covered. But, in return, you forget all about this kind of shady business while I run these streets."

"Really?" Diaz eyed his host with suspicion written all over his face and a bit taken aback by the change in conversation and the way the man across from him talked.

"Yes. This one time. Do not make me repeat myself. Next time, you are going to deal with this kind of shit on your own."

Jake wanted to laugh all of a sudden. He could tell Diaz was short of shitting his pants hearing this preppy-looking businessman talk like a thug. But it wasn't making him happy; no, he could not tell the source of the strange bout of laughter threatening to get out. He could just as well burst into tears, and he could not even explain why.

"You're going to lose that money. A boatload of it," Diaz said.

"I know. Consider yourself lucky."

"Lucky how?"

Klaus's hand landed on Jake's shoulder.

"Your brother here is already turning me a profit."

"Jake?" Diaz looked at his brother like he was seeing him for the first time since he had entered the Metzger residence.

"Seeing that he works for me without getting paid, his work's worth goes straight into my pockets."

Diaz snorted.

"So you're saying. There's no way this little runt could pay off that kind of money."

"You are underestimating your brother. Rest assured that everything you owe me I will collect from him. With interest."

Jake was thankful Klaus's heavy hand was keeping him in place or else he would have bolted through the door.

"If you say so," Diaz eyed Jake again.

"I do. I trust you will do the right thing."

"Yeah," Diaz agreed.

And suddenly, the atmosphere was starting to relax, and Jake wondered what on earth had just happened in front of his very eyes.

"Diaz did something stupid," Jake said once they were alone again. "He took that money you gave him and bought some shit."

"Yes, I know," Klaus guided him up the stairs.

"And why are you paying for it?"

"As I said. I will collect the money he owes me from you."

Jake blushed.

"Come on, man, it's not like blowjobs can be that expensive," he mumbled.

Klaus whispered into his ear.

"I was not talking about blowjobs."

Jake could feel his knees growing weaker.

"So it's about butt sex, then?" he asked bluntly.

Klaus roared as he pushed him through the door to his own bedroom.

“Really, Jake, you are only thinking about that,” the man spoke. “Not that I am not willing to cater to your little obsession.”

“Then what?” Jake asked again.

Klaus was starting to take off his clothes. Now that was making it impossible to focus.

“I was talking about the fact that the investors are willing to throw in extra cash because of the little stunt you pulled that day.”

“What? Really? And all I got was a red behind,” he protested.

Klaus pushed him flat against the bed and climbed on top of him.

“You deserved it.”

Jake was ready to revolt some more, but the warm mouth over his was cutting off both his air supply and his stream of consciousness. Luckily, the man let him breathe at one point.

“And if that didn’t happen, what would you have done?”

“I would have had no qualms about letting him solve his shit on his own.”

Jake gulped.

“Diaz is stupid sometimes. He saw himself with money, and he threw it on shit. He could have been ...”

“Killed? Yes, probably,” Klaus shrugged.

Jake froze. Anyone in their right mind should have been scared of this man. His mouth was hot, and his hands were making him all feverish, but this guy was the Ice Lord in all his glory.

“And you would have just let that happen?” Jake asked, feeling his chest growing tight.

“Well, if you had come to me and begged, of course, offering yourself in return ... I might have reconsidered his fate,” Klaus replied with a small smile.

Jake remained silent for a moment, and then he noticed the amused glint in Klaus’s eyes.

“What the fuck, man? That sounds like some bad porno,” he struggled against the man’s hold, but his wrists were pinned down in a secure grip.

“So we should take role-playing off the table?” Klaus feigned a pout.

“You’re also into larping?” Jake asked, but he could feel his lips twitching. “Man, there’s no end to your perversions.”

“We could play, and it could be fun, you know? You, the punk from a bad neighborhood in search of an owner, me, a cold-hearted businessman looking for a diversion ...”

“Hey, that’s not role-playing. That’s straight up how things are.”

“Oh,” Klaus cooed, pressing their crotches together. “So are you looking to be owned, Jake?”

“Like hell,” Jake mumbled and averted his eyes.

“Do not worry,” Klaus nuzzled his neck with his nose and lips. “I am known to be a gentle owner.”

There was so much pleasure to enjoy while treating the beautiful body underneath him with small pecks, licks, and bites, yet Klaus could tell something was still bothering Jake.

“Would you like to sleep in your own room tonight?” he moved away and allowed Jake to get up.

“I don’t know. I owe you my brother’s life. It won’t be fair to leave you high and dry,” Jake cast his eyes down.

“Hey,” Klaus called softly and cupped one smooth cheek in his palm. “Everything between your brother and me is already settled. And it has nothing to do with you. I will not accept your willingness to give in as payment. Do not sell yourself and do not make me feel cheap. Do you understand?”

“I ... uh, okay,” Jake said with some difficulty.

Klaus picked a pair of silk pajama pants and slipped into them. Maybe it was the right time for a little talk.

“Why are you so afraid of Diaz?”

Jake snorted.

“Besides the fact that he would kick my ass into the next century for this?”

“Yes, of course,” Klaus articulated each word to show the other he was serious about this conversation.

“Well, he could beat me really bad,” Jake spoke.

“You are his little brother. How far do you think he would go with this?” Klaus sensed he was on to something. “He says family is important. I am not saying that he will not lay a finger on you, but ...”

“He would kill me,” Jake cut his words short and looked him in the eyes.

Klaus’s could feel the pain in his jaw growing sharply as his teeth clenched.

“Is this your way to exaggerate the situation or ...”

“No. That’s exactly what he will do if he ever finds out. I cannot believe I’m so stupid,” Jake buried his face in his hands.

Klaus knew better than to try to touch the boy right now.

“Jake, what did your brother do to make you think that?” he asked.

The tension in Jake’s shoulders spoke volumes. He pressed the matter further.

“Has he ever killed anyone?”

Jake shook his head energetically.

“Not him, no. I mean, I don’t know.”

“Tell me. If you do not tell me, I cannot help you.”

Jake clenched his hands together in something akin to despair. Klaus waited.

“There was this guy.”

Silence followed.

“Was he gay?”

“No. Actually, I don’t know.”

“Continue.”

Unconsciously, Klaus searched for his cigarillo case and grimaced when he realized it had to be somewhere in the pile of clothes spread all over the floor. He had to deal with what followed without his nicotine fix.

“He was in jail. And I guess, there ... something happened.”

“He had sex with a man,” Klaus offered to fill in the blanks.

“Yeah, something like that. The idiot told his girlfriend. And she ... just ratted him out. I don’t know. Out of stupidity or jealousy, I don’t know.”

“I see,” Klaus pushed his hands into the shallow pockets of his pajama pants. “Then what happened?”

“The guys ... they talked. Said he was a punk.”

“A punk?”

“Some kind of name for guys taking it up the ass in prison,” Jake explained.

“What did they talk about him?”

“They said there was no place for fags in the gang. Sorry about saying ‘fags’,” Jake mumbled.

“So? What did they do?”

It was most probably painful, but Klaus needed to know. Diaz’s stunt with trying to pull strings to fill the streets with guns had been quite telling. There was little needed to complete the man’s picture.

“I don’t know. But the next day, that guy didn’t appear to our usual meeting place. It was like he disappeared. As he had never been with us,” Jake continued, staring in front of him, his eyes wide.

“What did your brother say? What did the gang say?” Klaus questioned further.

“They never spoke about him again. Only one time ...” Jake hesitated.

“Yes?” Klaus encouraged him.

“His girlfriend came around. Yelled at the guys. Said she knew they whacked him.”

Jake stopped again.

“I won’t say anything anymore. I’m not a snitch,” Jake made himself little on the edge of the bed.

“I can figure out what happened on my own. Do not worry; your secret is safe with me. Did they kill her? Is this what you cannot say?”

“They didn’t kill her. But she called them punks, so they ... they just took turns at her and beat her while at it. I ... I had to stay and watch,” Jake sniffled and covered his face with his hands. “She moved away after that. That’s all I know.”

Klaus fell silent, and this time he searched through his clothes for his cigarillos.

“I bet you feel like going away now. Leave this shitty place behind,” Jake spoke in a small voice.

Klaus laughed. Even to his ears, that sounded harsh and hollow.

“Do not worry, Jake. I have seen worse in my life.”

“But how could you? I mean, you’re like upper class and all that,” Jake expressed his wonder.

“I have visited many places. I have seen many people, and I am not scared of gangs and people like your brother.”

“Don’t you think that if he knew ...”

“What could he do? What you saw that night, Jake, when I beat the crap out of those guys who cornered you, that was nothing. There are so many ways to skin a cat,” Klaus added coldly. “These people will learn soon enough not to mess with me. I feel like I should give you a piece of advice, though.”

“Shoot,” Jake said.

“Find yourself another home, far away from here. You only have two choices if you stay: live a lie your entire life, or live in fear your entire life. I recommend neither.”

“Ah, well, that’s easy for you to say. You’re the one moving all over the place. But I’m not like that. I have roots.”

“Roots,” Klaus echoed and shrugged.

“Yeah. It’s not like I’ve never thought about taking a hike. I think about it every day. But where should I go? And what should I do? I finished high school only because I told Diaz that I was banging one of the teachers.”

Klaus chuckled.

“Were you? Was he hot?”

“Stop joking,” Jake pouted. “Of course not. I just didn’t want to be stupid, like the rest of them.”

“Who do you take after, Jake? Your mother or your father?”

Jake recoiled as he had just received a physical blow. Klaus chose to overlook it this time. All that confession time had been enough for Jake, at least for now. So he moved towards the boy and kissed him on the forehead.

“Have a good night’s sleep, Jake,” he said.

Jake looked around like he was considering his options.

“Can I sleep here?” he blurted out, taking Klaus by surprise.

“Sleep? I told you, Jake, that is not my way of doing things. You are in my bed; I expect sex.”

“I ... I can take care of you,” Jake promised.

“I am not that big a fan of blowjobs, you know,” Klaus smirked and chose the path of tough bargaining.

Jake hesitated and then opened his mouth to speak again.

“No handjob, either. Do not get me wrong; I like everything you are willing to give. Just that, tonight, I am not in the mood for either.”

“What else can we do? Except ass fucking,” Jake asked, in the most natural manner possible.

Klaus chuckled.

“Well, if you are willing to experiment ... Undress.”

Jake wasn't sure he could tell what Klaus was aiming at. It had been stupid of him to ask to sleep in the guy's bed, but he had just let it slip without thinking. It was like a giant hole was open inside his chest, and he could not fill it. Why on earth had he told the man everything about that time? Now it was up to him to face those fears again. Alone.

Maybe it was better if he just played along, instead of going to sleep on his own. It was shameful, and he was acting like a kid, but he could not help it.

He obeyed the order and took off his clothes. Completely naked, he waited for the other's move. Klaus's eyes were dark and hungry as they traveled all over his body.

"So, what do you want?" Jake asked.

"Your test results should be ready soon. Do not think I forgot," Klaus said evenly, a contrast to his hooded eyes promising delights between the sheets.

"Wow, is that your idea to get me horny? Because I'm totally limp," he brushed one hand over his cock.

Klaus barred his teeth briefly and pushed him against the bed. Jake didn't mind being an active participant, so he grabbed the waistband of the man's pants and dragged them down.

The skin on skin contact felt delicious. And it felt natural just to spread wide and let their cocks touch.

"You should not be so open," Klaus groaned and bit hard on Jake's bottom lip.

"Should I play hard to get? Is that what gets you going?" he answered, mumbling the words, as his lip was still between the man's teeth.

"No," Klaus finally took mercy and let go. "I should send you to your room for denying me the pleasure of having your ass."

"No can do, man," Jake murmured an apology. "That'll really make me gay."

Klaus began laughing.

"Really? Is this not making you gay already?"

Jake's mouth opened as if on cue, as Klaus pushed his tongue inside and kissed him deeply. He responded in kind, kissing back.

"Or this?" Klaus allowed him to breathe and pinched one of his nipples hard, making him whimper helplessly. "Or this?" the man continued his assault and pressed one hand over Jake's now half-hard cock.

"All right, I get it," Jake pouted. "But I cannot. Not in the ass."

"You chicken?" Klaus teased.

“Yeah, sure thing I’m chicken. Have you seen your cock?”

“Last time I think it was five minutes ago,” Klaus joked.

“So tell me,” Jake freed his hands, “how will a thing this thick,” he made a tunnel with both of them, “will go through something like this?” making a tiny circle with his bent index. “No way, man. I’ll be in the hospital before I can say Liza Minnelli.”

“You just do not know how anal sex works, Jake.”

“Oh really? How about I fuck you?” he asked.

Klaus’s eyes lit up with amusement.

“I do not play that role,” Klaus said.

“Then tough luck,” Jake shrugged. “And see? You don’t want to end up with a broken ass either.”

“That is not it, trust me,” Klaus’s smile widened. “It is just not my thing. I tried it. I was not crazy about it. I moved on.”

Jake grinned.

“You took it up the ass? For real? But if you don’t like it, how do you expect others to like it?”

“I did not say I did not like it. It is not my cup of tea.”

“Oh, man, I’m certain THAT has nothing to do with tea.”

“Shut up, Jake,” Klaus stuck out his tongue and licked Jake’s lips. “Some guys are more active while some guys are more passive.”

“Oh, fuck, wait ... did you fuck Hans?”

“I sure did,” Klaus said with a smug grin.

“That guy is built like a brick house,” Jake murmured. “And he had no issue with you sticking it into him?”

“Let us say he never complained,” Klaus chuckled softly.

“Damn, being a gay guy must be complicated as hell. Don’t tell me he never asked you to put your ass up.”

“He did. Without any success, if I may add.”

“So is he a top or a bottom?”

“Versatile.”

“Oh, so there aren’t only tops and bottoms,” Jake said, feeling that he was finally uncovering some strange truth about the world.

“Are we done talking or is this your strategy to make me fall asleep?” Klaus began kissing his neck again.

“But if we don’t suck each other off, or jerk off, what are we going to do?”

“Impatient? I will show you,” Klaus smirked.

Chapter Eleven

The contact of skin on skin was maddening. There was friction, and Jake could say he appreciated the closeness, but it was making him feel like he could not have enough. So he parted his legs and pulled Klaus closer.

“You love playing with fire, Jake?” Klaus pushed and made their erections battle one another, as his deep blue eyes sank into Jake’s.

“This is ... not enough,” he eventually chose to admit.

“Well, I did say that I would collect your brother’s debt from you, so let us just say this is not for your pleasure, but mine.”

“Really? There’s no way this is better than a mouth or a hand,” Jake protested.

“I feel closer to you like this,” Klaus explained and bit Jake’s lips playfully.

“It’s like dry humping,” he murmured as he kept the man on top of him in his arms.

He began caressing the taut back with slow moves. Just for the sake of experimenting, he dragged his short nails over the smooth skin. Klaus hummed in appreciation as he continued to lavish Jake’s neck with torturously slow kisses.

He was starting to get the hang of it. It was not as good as Klaus’s fantastic mouth or skilled hand, but he loved the sensation of rubbing against the other and feeling their bodies glued together. He tangled his legs with Klaus’s and began kissing the man back.

Suddenly Klaus stood up, leaving his arms.

“On your knees, on the bed,” the man ordered shortly.

He would have loved to comment something, especially about how hard Klaus was, and offer again to blow the guy, but he obeyed. There was no need for a repeat performance of that spanking episode. No matter how thrilling the sensation of being made to submit was, now he wanted nothing more but to be helped out of his misery.

Touching his cock and rubbing it, he assumed the position and Klaus sat behind him, grabbing his waist with one steady hand.

“Your legs together,” Klaus helped him, and he grimaced a little, feeling his balls a little too pressed.

When he felt the man’s cock sliding between his thighs, he turned his head.

“What kind of fucking is this?” he asked.

“The kind that will help me get off and torture you enough to reconsider my desire for your lovely behind,” Klaus replied with a small smile.

Jake snorted and grabbed his cock. Klaus's free hand came over his right away.

"No touching, naughty boy," the man cooed into his ear.

"So I'm just supposed to sit here, like your sex doll, or something?" Jake protested.

"Exactly," Klaus laughed. "My perfect sex doll."

All right, so it was not that hard to just stay there, and be used. But Klaus was biting his neck, and his hands moved all over, pinching his nipples, barely brushing over his erect cock, and doing all kinds of crazy stuff. Plus, the guy's cock was just going in and out, pushing against his balls a little, and that was a little too exciting to help him keep up to the promise of just staying there, like the perfect sex doll he was supposed to be.

And this time, Klaus had staying power, too.

"Please," he whispered.

"Please what?" Klaus smiled wickedly.

"Touch me."

"It is nice to hear you say please," his owner joked a little more.

"Klaus, I need your hand on my cock," he added.

"Demanding," Klaus chuckled.

"Please?"

"What are you willing to give?"

"I don't know ... maybe you can put a finger in my ass?"

"A butt-plug."

"No way! Two fingers?"

"Three and we have a deal," Klaus admitted.

"Okay," he took in a mouthful of air and exhaled it in one go.

Just like that, he was pushed on his back, and Klaus was on top again, kissing him and this time, thankfully, rubbing his dick.

"All right, since you are willing to open up a little, let us see to it," Klaus spoke, breaking the kiss.

The guy seemed a little bit too cheerful. It made Jake suspicious. He watched as Klaus moved about, yet another opportunity to stare at the man's perfect body. When the bottle of lube dropped by his side, he flinched.

“I thought you were an Outsider,” Klaus laughed. “Proud and unafraid.”

“Any guy would be afraid of getting his ass plowed like this. A straight guy, I mean.”

“Oh. Are you straight, Jake?” blue eyes twinkled with amusement.

“No,” he huffed. “I don’t know what I am.”

“Let’s find out,” Klaus cooed and caressed his cock and balls slowly. “The more you spread, the easier it will be.”

“Should I put my ass up?” he asked. “I suppose it would be easier.”

Klaus bit his lips, and it seemed like he was trying not to laugh out loud.

“Yes, definitely. I would appreciate having you with your ass properly exposed.”

He pushed himself up and turned. Leaning against his elbows, he risked a look back. Klaus looked pretty much like a kid on Christmas morning, finally allowed to open the gifts.

It wasn’t easy to keep cool, while something wet poured over his crack. But he looked straight ahead, trying hard not to think that he was really stepping into dangerous territory now. Klaus was gentle while probing him slowly. All right, it was not so bad.

A finger slipped inside, and he stopped breathing for a second. The sensation was not bad at all. Actually, it felt ... nice. The finger curled, exploring, and this time, a small sound left his lips.

“All good, Jake?” Klaus teased.

“Yeah,” he replied.

He grabbed one pillow and pushed his face into it, muffling the small moans he could no longer prevent. Klaus’s hands were hard at work now, one playing with his ass, the other determined to rub his stiff cock, in a rhythm, he could only find better than any thrill ride he had ever been in.

The finger in his ass no longer felt like that much an intrusion. But, when Klaus began adding the second, the stretch was real. He made a small distressed sound but just grabbed the pillow tightly.

“Do not worry. Seeing that I have every intention to use your ass thoroughly, I would not allow myself to cause even the slightest damage.”

“Easy for you to say,” Jake mumbled.

“Easy? Here I am, servicing you again, while I resign to be neglected, once more,” Klaus joked.

“If you don’t want your dick sucked, what can I do?”

“At least make a promise,” Klaus offered his voice a little sly and serpent-like.

“What?”

“If I get three fingers in your ass, and you come from this, I am entitled to penetrate you.”

“No way ... I’ll just come because you jerk me off,” Jake protested.

“All right, no hands.”

There was soon no hand on his dick, and he whimpered in frustration. Now all his focus had to be on how slowly Klaus’s fingers moved in and out of his ass. He grabbed a pillow and stuffed it under him. From there, it was just so easy to hump it.

“How can you be this much of a cheater?” Klaus huffed, but Jake could tell the guy was amused.

The pillow was unceremoniously dragged away, and he was left with nothing but air for his cock to push against.

“Do you like this?” Klaus cooed softly. “What I am doing to you?”

“It’s kind of strange, but it’s ... okay, I guess,” Jake whimpered and let his forehead rest on his linked forearms.

“Okay? You are dripping,” Klaus made a small demonstration by rubbing the index finger from his free hand against Jake’s tip.

“Fuck,” Jake inhaled sharply.

His body was feeling strange all right. Strange, but aroused, to the point that he could not hold it in. Fuck pride and everything. He chose to beg.

“Klaus, please,” he murmured.

“What? What are you asking for, Jake?”

“Jerk me off,” he replied quickly.

“A deal is a deal,” Klaus chided him affectionately. “I have made no secret of my desire to impale your beautiful ass, and I am not going to back down from this challenge.”

“You can have it,” Jake said with determination.

“What? You will need to be clear about the terms,” Klaus spoke and continued his slow movement of stretching Jake little by little.

“My ass. You can have it. You can fuck me. Rip me a new one, I don’t care,” he said, and his voice was coming out in small, sharp outbursts.

“Oh, are you sure?”

Jake moved quickly and grabbed the man with one hand to pull him into a kiss. The hand inside his ass finally stopped and slid out. Their eyes were unfocused as they stared at each other.

“I’d say fuck me now, but I’m chicken, okay?” Jake looked aside and bit his lips.

“The moment I have clearance on you that you are clean, I will fuck you,” Klaus said simply. “I allow you to be chicken tonight and I will give you what you want.”

Jake was now plastered with his back against Klaus, and a merciful hand descended upon his erection. He could not say how that felt like. Klaus was making himself busy with the other, to get back inside from behind.

He had no idea he could make such strange noises. Klaus was working him good, fucking him with skilled fingers deep inside his ass, and rubbing his cock at the same time. Jerking off had never been this fun. He watched somewhat in disbelief as he came all over the sheets. It was like the best thing he had ever felt; he came from somewhere, so deep, that he could feel like his entire body was coming, not just his cock.

He was lucky Klaus was holding him when all was over, or he would have crashed against the bed like a stupid bug against a windshield.

“Better?” the man asked and began to pepper his sweaty neck and shoulders with small kisses.

“Fuck,” he whispered.

“Well, congratulations,” Klaus laughed and moved away from him. “Now go hit the shower.”

Jake moved, wondering what that fantastic feeling, seeping right into his bones, was. He made his way to the bathroom, with Klaus following closely behind, a hand on the small of his back.

“Join me?” he asked, as he stepped under the relaxing spray.

Klaus just nodded. Soon, they were glued into a tight embrace, and Jake was first to initiate the kiss this time.

“Let me just blow you, please,” he asked.

“Not one to be in debt, are you, Jake?” Klaus said as he ran his long fingers through raven hair, now wet from the shower.

“Never,” Jake replied simply and got on his knees.

“Let’s do something a bit different,” Klaus asked, and Jake just nodded.

Klaus was enjoying this a bit too much. Was it the titillation of the promised reward? It could be, and he had thought so, until this moment. Jake was sitting on his knees, like a good boy,

his hands in front, waiting for directions. There was fight in the young man, and fire, but there was something, a hidden part, longing to yield.

Maybe it was all happening because Jake felt indebted to him due to his brother's stupid actions, and Klaus's willingness to let things slide this one time. But no. That would have been a false explanation.

Klaus was simply enjoying this ... no, Jake, too much. Strategizing for a new conquest usually ran its course through his mind down to the latest detail. Even to saying goodbye, and going different ways. But right now, with the boy at his feet, waiting patiently, his dark eyes so clear and honest, Klaus could not picture himself doing that.

He needed to take back the reins. This was getting out of hand, and as delicious as it seemed, it could be nothing good. He pushed the thought back for further examination. In all the dealings in his life, he had always walked in the front door, sure and determined, always knowing that he was bound to win. There was no other possible outcome to consider.

"Open your mouth, and stick out your tongue," he ordered a bit too harshly.

Jake's eyes grew a bit wider. Yet the young man did not oppose and obeyed. Klaus rubbed his cock against the boy's mouth slowly. He was beautiful. Dark, but beautiful. The manners of a street urchin, which was to be expected, yet courteous in his own way. Klaus needed to make right by Jake when everything was over. He had to think of something. The farewell gift had to be as valuable as what he was getting right now.

"I must teach you how to take me deep," he explained, and Jake just nodded slightly.

Jake's hands rested on his thighs as soon as Klaus pushed in.

"Relax. Slowly, you can do it," he cooed, and he could feel the boy willing himself to do exactly as told. "Yes, I know there is a gag reflex, and that may feel like a lot, but it is not impossible."

Jake was a fighter. The best kind. He never backed down. And teaching him, making him a skillful lover, was going to take a little while and that thing could only make him happy.

So many times before he had gotten bored with the men in his bed before the plan had run its course. Right now, there was something in his mind, a little, self-righteous voice, telling him that it was not going to be the case. He pushed himself a bit more inside the boy's mouth, feeling rewarded with how determined Jake was, as he knelt there, letting himself used.

"You are doing great," he caressed the black strands and pushing them away from the boy's forehead. "I think it is enough this time. Just suck me off."

He was not surprised to feel Jake's lips wrapped so tightly around his erection. And the young man knew now how to move, another excellent example of his ability to learn and adapt quickly. He was going to be exquisite, and he was going to make other men happy, as soon as he was going to leave his hometown and begin living his life to the fullest.

Now that was a stupid thing to envision. There was a surge of strange emotion running through his veins, making the hand he now held on Jake's nape flex a bit too much. He knew he was too harsh right now, forcing the young man take too much, too soon, but the sudden fire in his blood was asking him to do it.

Luckily, Jake knew how to be clever about it. He grabbed Klaus's cock at the base and gained control over the situation.

There were not going to be other lovers in Jake's life. For this short time, he could entertain the idea. Impossible, but beautiful. Just like the young man kneeling in front of him right now. And it made his release just so much better, although he barely registered how Jake's tongue lapped at the remains gingerly, long after the deed was done.

"You okay?" Jake asked, his voice a bit raspy and unsure. "You seemed a bit far away right now," he explained as he got up, rubbing his knees with a little wince.

"You just made me saw heaven, and you need to ask?" Klaus chose to joke, cursing inwardly at the young man's ability to sense such things.

Jake smiled and winked at him.

"There's more where that comes from," he joked and laughed in that uncouth manner of his that was making Klaus feel a strange sort of excitement he could not pinpoint and explain.

He pulled the boy closer and kissed him.

"Should I go to my room now?" Jake asked. "Since we're done here," he added quickly.

"No. Let's just change the sheets, and sleep. I am not as young as you, you know," Klaus smiled, picked a clean change of sheets from the closet and threw it at Jake.

The young man knew how to be efficient about house chores. Klaus followed him with his eyes. Jake hadn't even thought to ask for help. Maybe he was used to doing such things at home.

They were both on their backs, the only light in the room the moon filtered through the slightly drawn curtains.

"What do you like most, Jake?" Klaus asked, enjoying the sensation of having the boy's hair tickling his shoulder as Jake was leaning into him.

"Like what to do? Or what things I like?"

"Things. What is your biggest wish? A car? A loft apartment? Money to last you a lifetime?"

"Hmm," Jake seemed to ponder. "Are you trying to find out what I want for Christmas? Because that's a weird way to do the digging, you know?"

Klaus laughed.

“What if I am?”

“There’s still a long time until then. Like six months or so,” Jake said. “But really, anything will do. Except for those stupid ugly sweaters.”

“So, you’re okay with the car or the apartment? Or both? I also need to know your preferred location.”

Jake moved, and it looked like he was trying to stare at Klaus in the dark. Klaus could only make the contour of his silhouette.

“You’re joking, right?”

“What if I am not?”

“Then you’re crazy,” Jake snorted.

“I can afford it,” Klaus said, feeling slightly insulted.

“That’s not the issue,” Jake continued. “How am I supposed to throw a car after you? The apartment is really out of the question,” he chuckled.

“Why would you throw away ...” Klaus felt a bit lost.

“You know. When we’ll break up. Anything smaller would work. Yeah, even an ugly sweater. Like I can take it out of the closet and throw it after you and say: And take your stupid sweater with you!”

“Oh, I am impressed. Have you already planned all the details?” Klaus laughed, but only half-heartedly.

“Well, it will happen,” Jake said matter-of-factly. “Hans said ...”

“Could you not speak of another guy while you are in bed with me?” Klaus cut him short.

“Whatever. You don’t do happy-ever-afters. Your words,” Jake said. “So we will break up. I have to be prepared for that.”

“Sometimes you are a bit more of an annoyance than I thought you would be,” Klaus pulled the young man back on the pillows.

“Whatever. But just know this. I won’t be one of your exes you get to write e-mails back and forth and stuff like that. I won’t follow you on Twitter. And I don’t even want to know your Facebook.”

“I don’t use social media that much,” Klaus replied, biting his lips and trying hard not to laugh.

“You catch my drift,” Jake shrugged and ducked deeper under the covers. “I won’t be your friend.”

“Really? Why not?” Klaus now expressed his dismay.

“Because I will hate you,” Jake answered and turned his back, dragging most of the blanket with him.

“Are you sure? There is no other way around it?” Klaus questioned, and dragged the blanket back to him, along with the man wrapped inside it.

“How could it be?” Jake asked, but his question sounded like he was only asking himself that. “If I don’t hate you, it will only mean that none of this was real.”

Klaus opened his mouth to come back with a smart retort. But his mind just hit a wall, and he realized that, at least for the moment, silence was gold.

Chapter Twelve

“I am fully aware,” Klaus talked on the phone, his lips pursed in displeasure.

Jake was eyeing him carefully, as he was getting ready for work, too. The construction site manager wanted him there, first thing in the morning, and Jake could barely wait to go. Klaus had woken him up with slow and torturous kisses and, at first, he had wanted just to spend the entire day in bed.

Klaus slipped his phone back into his pocket and sighed.

“What is it?” Jake asked.

“Next week, I have to fly to Berlin. Important business,” the man said with a grimace.

“Bad news or something?”

“Yes.”

Jake just nodded. If the man didn’t want to elaborate on that, he had no reason to insist.

“When will you be back?”

“It might take me a few days, a week, at most.”

“Uhm, okay. You seem pretty pissed, though. Are you going to lose your company or something?”

Klaus stared at him, and his eyes flickered with amusement.

“No, nothing of the kind. A mere nuisance.”

Jake frowned but said nothing.

“The reason I am so pissed, as you say,” Klaus moved toward him, “is that I will have to leave you here.”

“No shit,” Jake murmured, trying to ignore the pleasant tingling sensation in his chest.

“Yes shit,” Klaus chuckled. “I am just starting to see real progress, and I find myself in the position of having to give up on pleasure for dull business problems.”

“You can take me with you,” Jake said quickly, and he was going to regret it, but Klaus replied right away.

“I could. But it is too short a time for your passport to clear. Not even I can make things happen so fast. I have yet to build long-lasting friendships at Customs.”

“Oh, yeah, right,” Jake murmured.

“Disappointed?” Klaus began to caress his cheeks, looking him in the eyes.

“More like I have no idea what to do while you’re away,” Jake said, a bit defensively.

There was no point in showing how much he wanted the man. Maybe he sounded like a clingy girlfriend or something right now.

“You have plenty of work to do. Plus, you can do me a favor,” Klaus said, letting his hands drop. “You can watch your brother for me.”

“What? Do you want me to spy on him?” Jake looked at the other man, feeling a bit annoyed.

“For his own good,” Klaus walked in front of the mirror and began adjusting his tie.

“Or yours?”

The blue eyes were scanning him now, like lasers.

“I don’t want to be your pawn,” Jake crossed his arms.

“Well, it is not like you have that much of a choice,” Klaus commented and returned to examining his perfect self in the mirror.

Jake opened his mouth to protest, and then chose to shut it.

“And before you go into a hissy fit, I am saying this only because I know how much you love your brother. I do not see you as a pawn. But you are my clever insider,” Klaus chuckled at his own pun, “and I intend to make use of the information you can provide. I need these streets to be peaceful. Do not think your brother is the only wild card around. He is just one of the many gang leaders I need to appease. It is not an easy task. You do not wish to help?”

Jake felt a bit manipulated. But the truth was that Diaz was kind of a dick. And his attitude could ruin a lot of things, not only Klaus’s desire to make a profit.

“Okay. But you have to promise me. That you won’t use whatever I tell you to have Diaz go to jail or worse.”

Klaus looked at him with a mix of appreciation and surprise in his eyes.

“Done,” the man agreed. “Now, kiss me. We are not going to see each other the entire day, and I feel like I miss you already.”

Jake rolled his eyes, but smiled and hurried to kiss the man on the lips. Klaus pulled him closer and deepened the kiss, pushing his tongue inside. Jake sucked at it and ground his hips against the other. Klaus was the one to break their embrace.

“All right,” Klaus said, licking his lips and frowning slightly. “Let’s go down for a light breakfast, and then we should see to our day.”

Jake wanted to laugh but stopped. The guy was stiff as a board as he walked out of the room, with Jake in tow.

“Jake, you seem like a decent lad,” the foreman said to him, patting his back. “You say you finished high-school?”

“Yes,” Jake said, feeling a bit proud.

“And have you ever thought about learning more? Going to college?”

“I wish,” Jake replied. “But who’s got money for that, anyway?”

“Well, you should talk to Mr. Metzger. Seeing that he is determined to make a man out of you.”

“Talk to him about what?” Jake could feel his young heart beating wildly for some reason.

“To help you through school. You’re a smart young man. And Mr. Metzger can definitely afford the expense. You don’t want to be just like one of these guys, right?” the foreman pointed at the construction team. “Not that it is anything wrong with that,” he added. “Just that you’re smarter than them.”

“Do you think so, Mr. Harrison?” Jake mumbled.

“Yes. I’ll tell Mr. Metzger about it, but I need to hear from you that you want it. And you have to tell him, too. Take advantage of having such a prominent businessman as a friend at the moment. Mr. Metzger won’t stay here forever. Ask him. Get an education for yourself. Don’t let it be just a summer job.”

“Thanks a lot, sir,” Jake said. “I will. If that is what you think.”

“Sure thing. Thank you for all the hard work today. Young men like you usually walk with their heads up in the clouds. They only think about having fun or girls. But you’re a serious young man. That’s rare.”

Jake hoped his blush wasn’t visible. At least ten or fifteen or twenty times he had thought about Klaus today, about how the man liked to touch him and kiss him. He was not that much of a serious young man.

He had to dine alone since Klaus was not yet back, and it had been a pretty awkward experience to be tended to like he was an aristocrat or something. Back to his room, he was still feeling out of place. The thing was he liked Klaus’s room much better. He had not felt alone in there.

After returning from the shower, he noticed the small package on the stand and took it gingerly. Maybe it was again one of Klaus’s strange ideas about entertainment. He sighed in relief when he saw it was only a phone. Brand new and obviously expensive, but nothing weird. He opened it, and immediately there was an incoming message.

I hope you like your new phone.

Yeah, sure thing he liked it. Only that it was way too expensive. Klaus could afford it, but that was not the most important thing. How much of what he was doing was because of what was offered to him? Klaus had mentioned that he wasn't paying him when talking to Diaz, but Jake would have preferred an honest paycheck instead of expensive gifts.

He wondered whether he should send a reply. And what to say? Klaus was most probably still caught in some important meeting.

Yes, I do. When you're coming home?

He hit send. Did that sound too clingy or something? On more than one occasion, Diaz had told him to stop being such a kid and quit depending on others. But he could not help it if he was bored.

Soon. Wait for me in my room.

He read the message with unhidden glee. Why did it feel so nice to converse with someone over short messages? He wondered what to say next. Maybe he could obey and do nothing else. The temptation was too strong, though.

Naked?

He was grinning as he walked into the master bedroom and sank on the nice smelling sheets.

Someone is in for a bit of spanking. I will be home in 10.

Now, he was laughing like crazy. Maybe it was not such a good idea to egg on a guy who was clearly bent on making his ass feel the consequences, but he just couldn't stop.

I'd rather have you undress me.

All right. It looks like I have to risk a ticket for speeding.

Jake was holding the phone to his chest, trying to cool down his beating heart. His thoughts wandered to the stern looking man, the perfect businessman who always seemed so in control, and imagined him now, telling Thompson that it was 'kay to ignore a few red lights.

Or maybe, maybe it was all a game. Klaus played it with him because he was probably bored. In a town like theirs, Jake couldn't really blame him. And it was not like he was overconfident in his looks, but the prospects for a guy like Klaus were almost null. Plus, as far as he knew, no one was gay around. Well, at least, no one could afford to be like that in the open.

All right, that managed to chill his rapid heartbeat a little. He needed to stop dreaming like an idiot. So, the guy was going to pop his cherry sometime. The thought made him feel uneasy. But a promise was a promise.

His phone let him know of another incoming message.

Your medical tests came through. You undoubtedly know what this means.

Jake straightened up. Fuck. He hadn't expected this so soon. Where could he go? Maybe pretend that he was going for a walk, and make a run for it. Klaus was going to bring him back, but at least, he could postpone having his ass destroyed, if for a little while.

He got up from the bed, determined. The door opened in front of him, and Klaus entered. The man had a strange fire in his eyes, as he pushed Jake back until the back of his calves hit the bed.

Jake chose a method he hadn't used in a very long time. He made puppy eyes at Klaus and linked his hands together.

"Please don't ruin my ass," he said in one go.

"Oh, but now I have every intention to do that," Klaus grinned. "There is no doubt that it is the only way to make you behave. I had to leave in a hurry because of your shenanigans."

"What? Really? But you said ..."

"I do not care," Klaus shushed him by placing one finger on his lips. "Now, while I take a short shower, you better undress and assume the good boy position on the bed. Do not even think about running."

"Or else?" Jake dared.

"Or else, I will consider using my belt instead of my hand," Klaus said, and Jake froze.

Damn his rebellious streak. That shit was going to burn for sure. Not that Klaus had a light hand.

"I am just joking," Klaus ruffled his hair and began undressing with short, efficient moves.

Jake exhaled, making the man laugh.

"I keep the belt only for special occasions. Just think of a blunder that will really make me lose it, and you will win the big prize," Klaus spoke, as he disappeared into the bathroom.

Jake could feel his heart now beating fast again. So, this was it. He was going to get it. Klaus was going to fuck him. And he had no time to prepare for that. How was he going to go through this?

"Well. It is rewarding to see that you can follow instructions, albeit using the old stick method."

"I thought it was called the carrot and stick method," Jake said, slightly annoyed, but taking in the man's gorgeous body as Klaus moved about slowly, with predatory moves.

“Here is your carrot, darling,” the man grabbed his cock and gave it a little tug.

“Shit,” Jake murmured. “How is that thing going to fit inside me?”

“One way to find out,” Klaus cooed and moved behind him.

Jake inhaled. Klaus began laughing.

“I hope you do not expect me just to ram it in.”

“Well, that is how fucking works, right?” Jake said, feeling the tip of his ears in flames, just like the rest of his face.

“Jake, turn over,” Klaus took him by his shoulders and rolled him around. “You will just have to trust me, okay? I had three fingers inside you. You are young, supple, and completely healthy. Now come here.”

He was pushed on his back, and the man came to rest on top of him.

“Can you feel me?” Klaus asked him gently and took his right hand in his. “Here,” he pressed Jake’s hand over his erection. “This is all because of you. I hardly remember ever feeling so aroused.”

“You just ... say that,” Jake frowned, trying to rein in the trepidations he now felt in his entire body.

“No. I never lie,” Klaus kissed him, and this time, he let their lips brush slowly, making desire soar.

Klaus moved only to grab the lube. Pushing Jake’s knees up, he began the preparations. Jake wondered if the man could tell how bad he was trembling. The man grabbed a pillow and pushed it under Jake’s ass.

“We will take it very slowly.”

“I’m too much trouble,” Jake mumbled and turned his face to one side, covering it with his hand.

“No. You are anything but trouble. You are very beautiful. You have an amazing body. I am honored to be your first.”

“Stop it,” Jake hid his face further into his hand.

“That, I am afraid, I cannot. I am entitled to collect what is rightfully mine.”

Sleek fingers were on his backside, and he could feel the man starting to work his hole.

“You’re still bigger than three fingers.”

“You will feel the stretch, that is for sure,” Klaus admitted. “But you will love it. You have a sensuous nature. If you end up hating this, I vow to become a monk,” he added with a smirk.

“Good luck with that chastity vow then,” Jake whispered.

He could not tell when the skilled fingers left his ass, only to be replaced with something much bigger. It was just a knee-jerk reaction, but he recoiled. Strong hands grabbed his hips and pulled him back in place.

“I am as patient as the situation requires,” Klaus spoke, this time his voice a tad strained, his German accent sipping through in full force. “But please do mind, Jake. I am at my wit’s end, here.”

“All right, man,” Jake agreed. “Do what you have to. I won’t run. I promised.”

Valiant were his words. When the blunt head pushed past his tight ring of muscles, he bit his own hand. But the lube was making things easier, and soon, Klaus began to descend slowly into his body.

“You see? You are doing great, Jake.”

“If you say,” he whispered.

The man was large, big in every way, and Jake dared to look up. Klaus’s blue gaze was so intense it was making his heart grow smaller. He spread his legs a bit more, he pushed his knees a bit higher, and there was a glint of gratefulness in the man’s eyes.

“Good, Jake, that is very good.”

He had never known he could feel so ... full. There was no other way to describe it. Klaus was a merciful man, after all. He let Jake a few heartbeats to recover and get acquainted with the new sensation.

And then, the man withdrew and slammed back inside fast. Merciful? He had to take that back. But the sudden move made him let out a small, strange moan. It felt good. Something in the angle, in the way the man hit the exact right spot, and even how big his cock was, all of that together, it was just right.

“Ready?” Klaus grinned, and Jake just nodded softly.

The man grabbed his hips and pulled him towards his own body. He was meeting him halfway, and each thrust made a strange connection straight into his brain, as pleasure shot from that hidden spot inside his ass, up his spine, and then back to his groin. It was like his own cock was fucked from the inside.

Maybe he was too rough for a first time. Maybe Jake deserved better. But Klaus knew, deep inside, that he could no longer control what he felt towards the boy. Never before had he felt so much yearning for another man. He needed sex. But someone in particular? Each one was different, of course. But this, this was an entirely new thing.

He had wanted to take things slowly. He had wanted to reward his beautiful charge with slow lovemaking, to show him how amazing sex could be. Instead, he was now riding the waves of his own passion, making the young body under him writhe and quiver with every thrust.

The point was: Jake liked it. If his soft, desperate moans were any indication, the boy was now floating somewhere between heaven and earth.

“Fuck, Klaus, do it harder,” the boy egged him on.

“My pleasure,” he grunted and sped up, making sure the bed would rattle with each of his moves.

The boy had open up so well. He had trembled like a small animal caught by a seasoned hunter in his crosshairs, suddenly aware of its too early demise, but he had yielded, and that kind of surrender was the most beautiful thing in the world.

He wanted to make sure Jake was the first to come, yet, when he moved one hand to grab the boy’s erection, he was beaten to it by quick hands that just covered the young cock shooting semen on its own.

He could not recall the last guy he had managed to come hands-free. It was not a first, by all means, but still a record worthy of a prize and a place in his personal Guinness book. He was thankful. The boy’s tight ass was squeezing him, as the ebbs of his climax were dying down, and he pushed inside harder, faster, one time, two times, three times, and he let go of his pent-up desire, something that had been there since the beginning, the first time he had seen the young man.

He collapsed on the delightful body he had ravaged until now. Jake’s rough hands came to rest on his nape, and he was drawn into a kiss.

Long minutes after, when they both managed to regain a resemblance to normal breathing, Jake was the first to speak.

“Wow.”

Klaus laughed and rolled over, dislodging himself from the boy’s body.

“Well, that is, Jake, how anal sex works. I know you have been wondering.”

The young man laughed.

“That was pretty fucking amazing,” Jake admitted.

“I should show some consideration for your ass since you are new to this, but all this weekend, expect to leave the bed only to nourish and hydrate properly.”

“No way, man,” Jake chuckled, his breath still uneven and raspy. “I think you gave it to me for like a decade or something.”

“Nonsense. Wait, do you feel any discomfort?”

“Except for feeling like I was just fucked by a freight train? Nah, not really,” the boy joked.

“You will not deny me,” Klaus pulled him closer and kissed him on the sweaty forehead.

“You came a lot.”

“Man, you wrung every last drop out of me,” Jake said in one beat.

“I must say that you are pretty sturdy. You took it quite well,” Klaus commented.

“It was fun, what can I say? But getting hammered like that again? Next time for sure, I’ll end up in the hospital.”

“You like to tease me so much.”

“I don’t!”

“Liar.”

“Cheater.”

“How am I a cheater?” Klaus exclaimed.

“You told me those tests were going to be ready soon. Not today. I could have had time to get ready.”

“Really? Were you willing to stretch yourself?”

“No, not that. I would have made a plan to run away.”

Klaus laughed and pulled Jake closer to him.

“You know what would have happened, right?”

“Yeah. You would have chased me down. Still worth it.”

“I beg to disagree. I would have had you strapped on a, let’s say, interesting wooden contraption, and then fuck you senseless. And, of course, you would have been rewarded with a few belts over your ass.”

“Eh, dodged a bullet there,” Jake snickered, hiding his head in the crook of Klaus’s shoulder.

Silence followed as the two lovers lost themselves in thought.

“I must apologize for being too rough,” Klaus spoke, breaking the silence.

“No sweat,” Jake rubbed his forehead against Klaus. “I mean, I guess I deserved it. And you weren’t that rough,” he added quickly.

“I must say that you do have this quality of spurring me on and you do cause me to lose some of my well-trained restraint.”

“Hey, stick to the apologies, man. My ass will surely be sore.”

“How was it?” Klaus began caressing Jake’s hair slowly.

“The best thing ever,” Jake admitted and cuddled even more snugly against Klaus. “Did you ... like it?”

That again. One of the many little things Jake did, out of the ordinary, out of the blue, different from any rule Klaus knew. His lovers were confident men who needed no reassurance on the topic. Jake needed, and that was making things different, exciting, and a tad too dangerous.

“You have an ass full of how much I liked it. You should know,” Klaus smiled.

“Yeah, I do.”

The boy’s voice was still a bit unsure.

“I enjoyed it, Jake. I enjoyed it very much.”

It was a real shame he could not convey it in words how amazing it had really felt. Talks about sexual compatibility were to him nothing but small little white lies heterosexual couples used to justify the fact that they really hated each other’s guts. Anyone could be trained to respond to a skillful hand ready to take the reins.

Yet, Jake was like a wild colt, skittish but yearning to get caught. And the strangest thing was that he needed no training. His youth, enthusiasm and native intelligence compensated for his lack of knowledge in the area.

It had been no exaggeration. Klaus was, indeed, thankful, for being the one to take Jake’s virginity. He was also going to enjoy initiating the young man in the many pleasures he could experience, now that the door was open. The fact that he needed to leave the following week and spend time away from Jake was bothersome, to say the least.

They took a short shower and returned to bed. Klaus could swear he saw things, as he looked at Jake. The boy had a sudden natural shine to him, which was making him even more desirable.

“I know what I want for Christmas,” Jake spoke.

Good. At least, when he was going to leave, eventually, he was not going to feel this guilty.

“Let us hear it, then,” Klaus encouraged the other to talk.

Jake bit his bottom lip and frowned a bit. Then he took a deep breath and talked.

“College.”

“I see,” Klaus quirked an eyebrow. “You want money to get an education. That is most laudable.”

“Nothing expensive,” Jake raised his arms in a defensive gesture. “I mean, I don’t know shit about college, but I suppose there are some that are not that expensive.”

“Stop playing down my financial abilities, young man,” Klaus joked but stopped seeing how troubled the boy seemed. “All right, something inexpensive. What is the area you would be interested in?”

“I don’t really know. Something to do with construction, I guess.”

“Engineering,” Klaus supplied right away. “Certainly.”

“And I don’t want you to pay for it. I mean, I will pay you back,” Jake hurried to speak.

Klaus smiled.

“And take from me the pleasure of doing something for you?”

“That’s the only condition I ask,” Jake added. “Just ... give me this chance. I promise I won’t let you down.”

“You are quite determined. I like this about you. But did you not know school is hard?” Klaus teased.

“I’d rather learn something to help me my entire life. Sure thing, it could be fun if you bought me some car or apartment. But that won’t teach me anything. I’d still be nothing but street trash.”

Jake cast his eyes down as he spoke. Klaus chuckled softly.

“Done,” he said as he embraced the young man and pushed him towards the bed. “We will, however, discuss the terms.”

“Sure.”

“I need you to obey every little word I say,” Klaus bit one shell-shaped ear and licked it.

“Ugh, man, I don’t know,” Jake mumbled, but he was already trembling. “That could mean a lot of things.”

He wanted so much just to mount the boy again. He was ready, too. But Klaus was a man who knew the importance of restraint.

“Well, nothing that unusual, I can assure you. Some toys, maybe a bit of rough play, and, of course, you should behave.”

“What toys other than butt plugs?” Jake blushed.

“Dildos, handcuffs, rope, a paddle, nipple clamps ...”

“Oh, fuck,” the young man whispered.

Klaus laughed and pulled him into his arms.

“I am joking. You will be introduced to everything little by little. Actually, I think I will enjoy a bit of vanilla for some more time with you.”

“Vanilla? Like in ice cream?”

Klaus kissed the boy.

“Sure, why not? Do you like ice cream?”

“Yeah,” Jake admitted.

“I will take you to eat gelato then. In Italy.”

“Really, man, you should just quit it,” Jake spoke.

“Quit what?”

“Trying to seduce me. Like you said. There’s no need to. I’m not one of those guys.”

“What guys?”

“You know. Sophisticated. Is that the word, right? You don’t have to take me to Italy. You already won.”

Klaus had only one regret: that he could not pull the young man any tighter into his arms. If he had to tie the boy down with money, he had no qualms about it. Whatever it took.

Chapter Thirteen

Jake had no idea he could feel like that. So swept off his feet, so engulfed in another one's heat. Klaus was holding him close, Jake's back flush against the man's chest and was penetrating him slowly. He almost wanted to groan in frustration and ask the other just to hurry and give it to him hard.

It was funny how comfortable he felt. He had expected to need a thousand pillows for his ass or something like that. Yet, the moment the guy's hands had been on him, probing gently and coaxing him into giving in, he had been game.

Which had eventually led to him being kept like this, on one side, and fucked excruciatingly slowly. Klaus was a fantastic lover, generous and kind, yet still wicked and a pervert when he felt like it.

Vanilla my ass, he thought. Was it really vanilla to have his cock restrained like that? Klaus had just said something about delayed gratification and how good he was going to feel, but, at this point, he wanted none of it. A cock ring? And he thought he was through with stuff like that after throwing that chastity thingie off the window.

"Can you just take that thing off my dick?" He whined.

Klaus nuzzled his neck and chuckled, right next to his skin, making him quiver.

"Just a little longer," the man cooed, and Jake buried his head into the pillow to hide his dissatisfaction.

He could deny all he wanted, but the buildup in his loins was not entirely unpleasant. It grew like an itch, and it was making his entire body tremble.

"Easy," Klaus pushed the wet strands of hair from his face and guided him in for a kiss. "You are perfect, Jake, do you know that?"

"Stop getting all mushy over me and fuck me," Jake murmured, his eyes tightly close.

He was in no shape to look at his sexy tormentor right now. A kind hand eventually enveloped his strained cock, and the tight grip of the ring was released. Klaus maneuvered him in such a manner that Jake landed on top, his back still at the man.

"How about you show me how much you want it?" Klaus spoke.

It didn't hurt to be in control. It didn't feel right, and he was clumsy as he moved up and down, impaling himself on the man's hard cock, but he was willing to give it a go, now that he felt so close.

Klaus's hands moved to sustain his legs, and he found a rhythm. The small appreciative grunts coming from Klaus each time he pushed down were enough encouragement to keep him going.

“Fuck!” he cursed out loud, as he came, without even touching himself.

It was funny to look at his own dick and see it shoot like that. That, if he were to be totally conscious of what was happening and that definitely didn't feel like it. Klaus took the reins and began manipulating him like he was a doll, dragging him over his dick in short, powerful thrusts. When the man came inside him, Jake felt complete.

He would have expected to feel at least a little grossed out, but it was nothing like that. He liked that Klaus wanted to come inside each time. Well, it was only the second time, but he could already see a pattern.

Klaus took him in his arms and pulled him close. Everything about this man seemed firm, possessive. And Jake loved it because it made him feel protected. With his brother constantly telling him to just stand on his own two feet, there had been constant anxiety growing inside him. The moments when Diaz showed that he really cared were invaluable to him, and those had been fewer and fewer over the years. He was part of the gang and everything, but he felt that he didn't belong with the others, no matter how hard he tried to blend in.

“We will go out tonight,” Klaus spoke after kissing him long and hard.

“Where? This shitty town ...”

“Jake, language,” Klaus said, but Jake knew the guy was amused. “And it will be somewhere ...that is not here.”

“So much info, wow.”

“I want it to be a surprise,” Klaus placed a quick peck on his lips. “Ready for another round?”

“You must be kidding me,” Jake mumbled, and closed his eyes.

“Just joking,” Klaus let his hands wander down Jake's flanks, tickling him.

Jake snickered and tried to escape, but Klaus was stronger, and soon he was trapped underneath solid heat, and their faces were close. It was a bit unnerving to look into the man's beautiful blue eyes. That stare was so hypnotic that he felt a bit like drowning. It wasn't fair if he was to think about it. Klaus was going to leave at some point, anyhow.

“Good,” he finally replied. “Because my ass cannot take any more. Actually my dick. That delayed gratification thing did the trick, I guess,” the words came out of his mouth like a flood.

He was silenced by rough lips closing over his. Klaus liked kissing a lot, it seemed. And that was doing funny things to his brain, making his thoughts a tangled mess.

When he was finally allowed to breathe, he licked his lips with unhidden satisfaction.

“You like this kissing stuff a lot, right?” he asked.

Klaus seemed to be taken aback and then smiled.

“It must be you I like kissing. I do remember a lover or two blaming me that I was too cold towards them and I did not care about kissing as much as they liked.”

“Look who’s talking about other guys in bed,” Jake joked, but the truth was he felt a little pang of jealousy at the brief mention of past flames.

“Then I make the solemn promise that I will keep my mouth shut,” Klaus leaned in for another, noisy this time, kiss.

“How many guys have you been with?” Jake asked, as he slowly caressed Klaus’s shoulders.

He looked away. Who knew he was a masochist? Klaus tipped his chin and made him look up.

“It does not matter. What matters is the moment we have right now. You matter. That is everything you need to know. Come now, I want to spoil you a little.”

“How?”

“I think playing in the Jacuzzi might just be up your alley.”

“Do you have a jacuzzi?” Jake’s eyes grew wide.

“And the pool you have already seen.”

“Yeah, I’d like to swim a little.”

“What stopped you so far? Anything on the premises is free for you to use.”

“Really? What if I break something?” Jake asked, but he could not hide the bubbly sensation in his chest.

“We both know you do not mind paying for your little mistakes,” Klaus threw him an all-knowing look.

“Yeah, my ass remembers,” Jake pursed his lips.

“Come. Up,” Klaus dragged him out of bed. “I want to enjoy a nice relaxing bath with you. And feed you some strawberries.”

“Really? Cool,” Jake was now livelier as he got out of the bed.

“What is this?” Klaus pressed his fingers against a long white scar going from the inside of Jake’s elbow up his arm.

He did not miss the shadow passing over Jake’s handsome face.

“I fell,” the young man said abruptly. “When I was little and stupid.”

“Oh, so it happened yesterday,” Klaus chose to joke.

“Yeah, right,” Jake snorted. “Are you going to send me back now that I’m damaged goods?”

“Send you back? Never,” Klaus protested in jest.

Yet his heart skipped a beat, strange enough seeing that this was nothing but business as usual, another tryst meant to end up with both parties satisfied and a tad bored of one another.

“What other things are you hiding from me?” he covered his sudden unease with another joke.

Jake made a one-eighty, regaling his temporary owner with a good look at his beautiful body. Klaus loved the boy’s olive skin, despite being marred every here and there by marks of what could count as a tumultuous personal history for some, but completely normal for a young man like Jake. Navigating the concrete jungle must not have always been easy for the rebellious youth in front of him, and some encounters must have ended with him on the losing end.

“I’m like all open and stuff,” Jake emphasized his actions with his words.

“Yes, I can still remember distinctly how well you open,” Klaus smiled.

“Perv,” Jake shot at him, his dark eyes becoming darker and unfocused for a second.

“You must be that one man newspapers talk about,” Klaus said.

“What man?” Jake scrunched his nose.

“The one that thinks about sex every seven seconds. I was talking about how well you have opened to new opportunities ever since we met. You are even thinking of pursuing higher education.”

“Don’t change the subject. You’re the pervert here,” Jake shot back, but Klaus could tell the boy was all bark and no bite.

“Let us catch some rest. It would serve us well since we will be out tonight.”

“You still don’t want to tell me where we’re going?”

“Then it would not be a surprise, now would it?”

Jake pouted. Klaus could feel desire, renewed and strong, coursing through his veins. Those pouty lips were pure heaven. He liked them, when Jake smiled, or bit them, or pouted like a miffed child right now. And he especially loved them wrapped around his cock. Jake was smart. He learned quickly.

Klaus pulled the young man towards him a bit too firmly, almost making him stumble.

“Oh, man, don’t give me that look,” Jake complained.

Klaus held him by his waist and looked him in the eyes.

“What look?” he asked.

“The one that says that my ass is going to be on the line again. You know, your cock up my ass, that’s what it says.”

“Do not worry. You also have a mouth,” Klaus said and lifted one hand to caress the wonderful lips slowly.

Jake seemed delighted with the proposition.

“Do you want me to blow you?” he asked, without hiding his excitement.

“It is quite interesting how much you like this,” Klaus thought out loud.

“Well, you could blow me, too,” Jake cocked his head to one side and bit his bottom lip.

“In bed, now,” Klaus ordered.

And he wondered if he was going to feel satisfied after one more time. With Jake, so far, each act had only led to more and more desire. That was something that did not fit the picture. No, it definitely did not match the picture.

“What is this place?” Jake asked the moment they were out of the car.

“What does it look like to you?” Klaus replied, with what seemed like genuine interest.

Klaus was like that. He was interested in finding out more. It was a good thing that he hadn’t insisted about the scar. Jake had felt a little tempted just to blurt out the truth. But he was not supposed to. Not to a stranger. Not to anyone. Bad memories were supposed to be only one person’s burden anyway, and he didn’t want anyone’s pity.

“I think it’s a bar,” Jake took his shot at guessing.

“Close enough. A club, to be more precise.”

“Do you feel like dancing? You?” Jake looked at Klaus, giving him a long look.

“Does it seem so impossible?”

“You’re way too stiff for dancing,” Jake snickered.

The man looked quite affronted, and Jake laughed even louder, making a few passersby turn their heads to look at them.

“Then I will be your dancing pole, and you can dance around me,” Klaus guided him towards the entrance.

There was a bit of a crowd in front of the club, but Klaus managed to have them navigate the crowd with ease until they reached a man of impressive size guarding the entrance.

“Mr. Metzger,” the man welcomed them and hurried to step aside.

Klaus stopped to exchange a few words with the bouncer, and Jake dared to take a look around.

“Fuck, you’re so lucky,” he heard someone speaking to his right.

He turned to look at a guy in his 20s, with a long earring in his right ear, mascara loaded eyelashes and a crop top that left little to the imagination. Jake gaped like a fish.

“Boo,” the guy pretended to scare him and smiled. “Pretty boys like you, always landing the fat cats,” he added, gesturing towards Klaus.

Jake was completely nonplussed. He could not make sense of what he was seeing or hearing. The stranger took a long look at him.

“Yet not too bright, are you?” the guy joked.

Jake frowned, and he was about to give the stranger a piece of his mind when Klaus’s hand landed on his shoulder and made him turn and follow.

“Have fun for me, too!” the stranger called after them.

“You are quick to make friends, I see,” Klaus smiled as he placed a possessive arm over his shoulders.

“Why do we get inside and the others don’t? It’s that kind of fancy club where people sip champagne and make jokes about politics that no one understands?”

Klaus chuckled.

“Do not worry. You will not get bored. That I can promise.”

“That guy outside was strange,” Jake commented. “But I suppose he wanted to get in really bad.”

“Would you like to get to know him better?” Klaus questioned.

“Not really. But he was disappointed,” Jake shrugged.

Klaus stopped and took a few steps back to the bouncer. Jake stared after him as the man talked to the enormous guy in front. The bouncer moved aside, letting the stranger from before inside, along with two other guys who were just as flashy.

The guy in the crop top shrieked in delight as he entered and hurried towards him. Jake almost took a swing at him as the guy embraced him and kissed him loudly on one cheek.

“You’re like my new BFF, sweetie,” the stranger claimed.

“What the fuck ...” Jake murmured and searched for Klaus with his eyes.

“Thanks a lot, man, you’re cool,” one of the stranger’s friends patted his shoulder. “Do you guys have a table? I bet you do.”

“Gary, stop it, don’t be such a leech! It’s enough that we’re in. By the way, your boyfriend is the man, dude!”

“He’s not my boyfriend,” Jake denied, having a knee-jerk reaction, rather than anything else.

What was this strange place? What were those people? As he took in his surroundings, his jaw dropped to the floor. As far as he could tell, the entire club population visible in the strobe lights were male.

And that was not all. Some of them were engaged in sensual dancing, while others were just making out, with a few couples sucking faces for real.

“What’s with him, J baby?” the one named Gary asked.

“I don’t know. Maybe he just got out of the hospital or something. Or he has some speech impediment. Baby, are you okay?” the guy touched Jake’s arm.

“He is totally fine, just a tad laggy,” Klaus finally came to the rescue and embraced him from behind.

“Laggy? Where are you guys from?” J asked, excited.

“Europe,” Klaus replied with his natural nonchalance.

Your momma’s backyard, more likely, Jake thought, but kept his mouth shut.

“Oh, so your ...friend doesn’t know English too well?” J asked again.

“Oh, trust me, that is not a problem. He just does not warm up to new people easily. And he is not my friend. He is my lover. And, by the way, I am Klaus, and this is Jake.”

A common ‘wow’ was the immediate reply from the rambunctious group. Jake wanted the earth to open up and swallow him. This weird trip was getting weirder and weirder. Was that why they drove for three hours? So that Klaus could let anyone know they were fucking?

“Did you hear it, boys? This is how they say it in Europe,” J said to his friends.

“Please join us. We could use some company since we are new in town,” Klaus said smoothly. “And, of course, the drinks are on me.”

J grabbed Jake by one arm and shook him.

“That is so frigging awesome! Jake, whatever you do, don’t lose this guy, okay? Promise me!”

What, was the guy really expecting an answer? Eventually, Jake murmured a half-assed response so that J could let go of his arm. There was no chance for that, apparently, as he was dragged along with the group.

Klaus was examining Jake from the corner of his eyesight. The young man was apparently still in a bit of shock, but he knew that, by the end of the night, Jake was going to feel much more at ease.

“So, how did you guys meet?” J asked, his eyes traveling back and forth between Klaus and Jake.

Klaus opened his mouth to give a standard answer when Jake intervened.

“He saved my life.”

The youngsters at the table looked at each other and then started laughing.

“It’s true,” Jake insisted.

The laughter died down.

“What did he do? Gave you a kidney or something? Poor you, that’s why you look a little pale.”

“J, are you an idiot? He wasn’t in a hospital,” one of the others intervened.

“He beat the crap out of five guys who were bent on fucking me up,” Jake continued.

“Wow, Europe is scary,” J pretended the conversation was giving him the shivers.

What was with Jake and this strike of honesty? Klaus pulled him closer and shut him up with a short kiss. At last, he took the hint.

“Man, this is better than a soap opera,” Gary commented. “You two are uber cute together. Jake, you don’t mind me asking, but are you from Spain or Italy?”

“Southern France,” Klaus supplied promptly.

“Wow, we should thank France for gifting us with such beautiful boys. I could have sworn you were Latino, Jake. And how is not your name French?”

“He is actually called Jacques, but his parents were anglophiles, so they called him Jake, and the name stuck,” Klaus said.

“And where are you from, Klaus? Germany?”

“Correct,” Klaus said back with a smile. “How about you take Jake for a little bit of dancing? I am afraid I am not that much of a dancer, and I do not wish my lover to become stiff with boredom.”

The trio laughed as they had just heard a funny pun. J got up to his feet, followed by the other two and they dragged Jake along with them on the dance floor. Klaus pretended to ignore the death glare Jake threw him over his shoulder and just lifted his glass.

He followed the boys with his eyes. Jake seemed a little out of place at first, but goaded by J and company, he slowly began to loosen up. Soon enough, he was dancing with the rest, smiling, and even laughing from time to time.

Klaus returned to his drink. His head thrown back, his sinewy body swirling in the rhythm, Jake was beautiful. The most beautiful man in the whole wide world, and right now, he belonged to Klaus and no one else.

“So that was a gay bar,” Jake mused, and climbed on Klaus’s lap, as soon as they were comfortably seated inside the limousine.

“Club,” Klaus corrected him.

“I had to speak with a weird French accent the entire night,” Jake pointed the finger at Klaus and hiccupped in the most adorable way possible.

“I am quite flabbergasted to see that you do not hold your liquor well.”

“Don’t change the subject,” Jake threatened again, poking Klaus’s cheek with his finger.

“I thought you would have liked to enjoy a bit of an incognito adventure.”

“Inco-what?”

“To pretend to be someone else for a change.”

“While admitting that I’m gay,” Jake frowned like he was trying to make sense of everything.

“Yes. Did you like it?”

“Yeah,” Jake smiled. “The guys were cool. And no one touched my ass.”

Klaus laughed.

“Were you expecting to be groped? Are you disappointed?”

Jake was not allowed the luxury of a reply. Klaus quickly turned the tables and caught Jake under him.

“Let me correct that,” he said with a smile and pushed Jake’s t-shirt up and drew a wet line from his belly button to his chest.

“Stop it, I’m sweaty,” Jake protested while giggling.

“Delicious,” Klaus replied and sucked in an erect nipple, with a loud smack.

“Fuck,” Jake arched into him. “Why are you so good? It’s not fair.”

“Oh, so finally I am good enough,” Klaus said and proceeded to open the fly on Jake’s jeans.

“Are you kidding me? You’re the best thing ever on seven continents.”

“How flattering. I am glad that your opinion of me finally evolved.”

“It didn’t,” Jake covered his eyes and sighed. “The moment I saw you I thought I was going to jerk off thinking of you.”

“Oh, so it was coup de foudre,” Klaus joked.

“What’s that? Some weird French stuff?”

“It means bolt of lightning, and it is the equivalent of what you people call love at first sight,” Klaus supplied an explanation right away.

“Well, maybe it wasn’t at first sight,” Jake retorted. “But definitely after.”

Klaus’s fingers stopped their ministrations. Jake said the darndest things, especially when tipsy.

“So, are you trying to say that you love me, Jake?” he could not resist the temptation.

Jake’s eyes were shining, the reflection of street lights fading in them.

“Yeah, I do. I love you, Klaus,” he said and pulled himself up to place a hard kiss on Klaus’s lips.

It was just the confession of a very affectionate drunk. Klaus could not take it seriously, by any means.

“Now, are you going to blow me or not? Because I’ve seen so much gay porn tonight that I think I’m going to explode.”

“Where in heavens did you see gay porn? I know for a fact that the guys did not drag you to some shady corners.”

“Right there, on the dance floor. I swear. A guy was grinding his ass so hard against another dude’s crotch that I think both came into their pants.”

“It is interesting what definition you use for gay pornography. That is another thing that must be corrected.”

“Please, I know what the Internet is. I’ve seen things,” Jake sounded very convinced. “And always wondered how those guys could take those dicks up the ass.”

“Now you know,” Klaus said, smiling.

“Yeah. Although, I had to be careful about deleting that damn browser history. And then bury everything with huge tits.”

“Another fetish of yours?” Klaus joked.

“No, what Diaz likes,” Jake said with a shrug.

“Good. You would have had me in a terrible pinch if you had said out of the blue that this is what rocks your world.”

Jake grabbed Klaus’s by his shirt and pulled him closer.

“Less talking, more sucking. That will rock my world.”

Klaus felt compelled to laugh. And, also, to punish a little that uncouth mouth. So, instead of proceeding with undressing Jake, he straddled him and made him face the consequences. He was quick to open his fly and almost smack the young man’s face with a rock hard cock.

“Lead by example, Jake, if you dare,” Klaus cooed and was pleasantly surprised to feel his cock engulfed in moist heat.

Jake needed no incentive once he was taken out of his shell. He went all in, like now, his mouth hungry, his tongue wicked, and his hands all over his lover’s body. Jake’s fingers fiddled with the waistband and dragged Klaus’s pants down, along with his boxers.

He was about to make a few recommendations when he felt rough fingers reaching between his buttocks and pushing, with what could be called pinpoint accuracy, against the dry hole.

“Easy there,” Klaus gasped.

He watched in fascination as Jake withdrew one hand only to take a moment and wet his fingers, without even letting go of the cock in his mouth. And then, he returned to his initial conquest and slid one finger inside Klaus’s ass.

He was going to let it pass this time. Jake’s natural curiosity had to be nurtured. And it was not entirely unpleasant. If anything, it truly heightened the experience. And it had been a while since anyone had dared to touch him so intimately.

Jake was getting good at taking cock deeper, too. And soon, as the bold finger in his ass hammered the entrance, clumsily, but pleasantly, nonetheless, he let go. Jake made a small sound but sucked in everything. Klaus caressed the young man’s neck slowly, enjoying the way Adam’s apple bobbed up and down, as Jake swallowed.

When he finally withdrew, Jake’s eyes were drowsy, and the boy seemed just ready to sleep. Klaus placed a protective hand on Jake’s crotch, and Jake covered it with his right away.

“I’m just too drunk,” Jake said. “And happy.”

“That is nice to know,” Klaus chuckled softly.

“One day, I will fuck you,” Jake mumbled, as he maneuvered himself to one side and assumed a sleeping position.

His feet rested against Klaus’s thigh, but the owner of the expensive kakis now made a mess by the boy’s kicks, didn’t mind.

“Do not make promises you cannot keep,” Klaus began caressing the pert bottom sticking out.
“I told you. I do not enjoy it.”

“Those guys who tried to fuck you sucked,” Jake said with determination. “And they didn’t want you enough.”

“You think?” Klaus let the young man entertain the idea a little more. After all, everything was going to be forgotten in the morning.

“Yeah. They didn’t know how to make you want it.”

“I must warn you, Jake, that you are talking about men with experience here.”

“Bullshit,” Jake huddled and trembled a little. “Just watch me pop your cherry.”

Klaus laughed this time. What Jake was saying was utterly ridiculous, but endearing, nonetheless.

“I am quite certain I lost that type of virginity a long time ago.”

“I’m not talking about your ass. You have to feel it. Like in your heart.”

Now that was something that required a carefully picked comeback. Luckily, one was not needed. Jake was dead to the world, snoring softly, his face against the leather seat, his feet pressed stubbornly on Klaus’s thigh.

Chapter Fourteen

Jake woke up with a head as big as Texas. With a groan, he turned only to smash into Klaus's solid shape. The man didn't seem bothered, his breath calm and even. But Jake felt a sudden rush of uncertainty. The night's events tumbled in his mind, first an incoherent succession of words, until he finally grabbed one end and began to pull slowly.

The club had been nice. Those guys had been nice, too. And he had felt amazing in his own skin. Although he had drunk a bit too much. Those sweet things the guys had sworn by had been treacherous.

He could not clearly remember how he got in bed. Maybe he had fallen asleep, and Klaus had carried him. Just how bombed had he been? Apparently, pretty much. He had the distinct sensation that there was something particularly remarkable he needed to remember. Was it something he had done or said? At this point, he couldn't tell, but it was nagging the hell out of him that he could not yet grab that thing.

So, he had felt pretty hot after those drinks and all that dancing ... Klaus had been pretty nice about it all ... Yeah, he could still remember that wicked tongue across his skin, sucking on one nipple ... His cock was stirring only thinking about it. How could he be so hard, after getting one of Klaus's high-class blowjobs? Wait, he hadn't. The guy had fucked his mouth instead.

But how on earth had they gotten to that? He could recall Klaus being pretty ready to take Jake in his mouth. Hmm, they had talked or something.

The sudden realization hit him like a ton of bricks.

"Shit," Jake murmured.

Klaus shifted in his sleep and Jake froze. He hadn't, no, no, no, he hadn't said something as stupid as 'I love you'. What would Klaus think now? Fuck, he wasn't ready for that announced breakup. It was supposed to be months from now. Fuck his stupid mouth!

How was he going to repair this mess? Maybe he could pretend he could not remember anything. Yes, he was going to play it cool. And, now, that he thought about it, he had blurted some other stupid shit, such as admitting to his hidden stupid desire to fuck the guy.

It was unclear, even to him, when and how that thought had come to him. Maybe after they had fucked. He had wondered how it would feel to be the one doing the fucking. But Klaus didn't swing that way. He had been clear about it.

So he had screwed up big time, confessing that like an idiot, and telling the guy he was going to get it. If that wasn't going to make Klaus send him back to Diaz packing, he had no idea what could do that.

The only way was to pretend nothing happened. He could not remember Klaus's reaction to everything too well. The guy was a mystery even without making things complicated. And Jake was a complete idiot.

An idiot who blurted out inconvenient truths when drunk. He made a promise to himself never to drink again. It was obviously a dangerous habit. He tried to go back to sleep, but he found it was just impossible.

The first rays of sun found him still staring at the ceiling, repeating in his head, over and over again, that it wasn't true and he hadn't confessed, and that blaming booze was the only trick in the book that was going to work.

By the time he reached the 100th time saying to himself the same thing, he finally fell back asleep.

He was pressed against Klaus when he woke up again, one arm thrown possessively over the guy's waist, one leg tangled with the other's. The man ruffled his hair and Jake looked up, only to be threatened to drown again in the blue gaze. He closed his eyes fast again.

"You cannot go back to sleep," Klaus chided him.

"I don't want to get out of bed," Jake whined and kept his eyes closed shut.

As long as he could avoid looking into the other's eyes, everything was going to be fine.

"After sleeping for so many hours? Unless," Klaus's voice became loaded with meaning, "you engaged in some strenuous activities last night. Like trying to," the man left the words hanging for one second, letting them sink in, "pop my cherry."

Jake's eyes opened.

"What?" he asked, trying hard to ignore his beating heart.

"Do not tell me you do not remember," Klaus teased. "You were quite adamant about being the one on top, for a change."

"Me? On top?" Jake began to laugh. "Yeah, right. Don't tell me you want me to give it to you and you don't know how to ask. You know, because you're proud and stuff."

Klaus seemed slightly taken aback by Jake's act.

"Wait, do you not remember?"

"Are you serious? Did I say that? I was drunk, you know. Like totally wasted."

Klaus opened his mouth to say something, but then he smiled affably.

"Then it is good to know my chastity is safe from you."

“Good. I won’t dare to mount a stuck up like you,” Jake said quickly. “You probably have a 10-foot pole up in there. No room for my dick, anyway.”

Klaus grimaced, and Jake wondered if he had gone too far. But the beautiful face returned to its natural, relaxed state and Jake was rewarded with another smile.

Good. Storm averted for now. Jake was a bit proud of being able to lie so easily. Who was he fooling? He could not lie again if he were asked to do it.

Klaus chose to let Jake linger in bed a little longer and went straight to the gym. He needed a bit of physical challenge. There was a tingling in his fingers, more of a nervous nature than anything else.

Bang! The mannequin trembled, leaned backward and came back again for another well-aimed punch.

The kid was trying to play him, by saying he could not remember. He could understand the reasons, but that did not mean he liked it. Jake was like an open book, albeit trying to pretend nothing happened.

For once, he was thankful for the shin guards. The mannequin was getting it good now, as Jake would have said.

He stopped and grabbed a bottle of water. What was bothering him so much? He should have been more than pleased with how well Jake understood the situation. They were both in for fun. Just two men enjoying their time together, however long or short.

Except that things did not feel right. Any other day, Klaus would have said that the perspective of a clingy boyfriend was nauseating. Others had tried to entice him with false declarations of love. He had laughed them all off. They had not felt real.

But Jake, the night before, his eyes dark and deep, his lips tasting of daiquiri, his heart open and threatening to overflow, that had been real.

He was caught in the middle. What was it that he wanted, truthfully? A sudden, uncontrollable impulse, was telling him that he wanted, no, he needed, Jake to admit his confession, to say it again while sitting in his lap and filling Klaus’s arms as no one had ever done before.

But that was too dangerous a thought to entertain. Fleeting sensations meant nothing. What was he going to do with a broken-hearted boy once he was going to leave?

Take him with you. Put him under lock and key. Make him yours. He needed to chase away these stupid little thoughts. This was not how things had to happen. The young man was entralling. Beautiful. A firecracker in bed. But, by all means, he was supposed to be nothing special.

What was he to do with a juvenile love confession like that? He should have known better than to get involved with someone so inexperienced. But Jake seemed to understand all the implications. He was bright, well beyond his upbringing, seeing the circumstances of his life.

That was why Jake pretended he could not remember anything. He knew he was not supposed to nurture such sentiments. Klaus could not agree more. All that was left was to pretend nothing had happened, just the same, and enjoy the young man currently warming his bed, until their passion would, inevitably, burn out.

A good decision.

One that lasted until Klaus went outside, a couple of hours later, to find his raven-haired beauty relaxing in the pool.

“Hey,” Jake swam to the edge. “Your pool is awesome. Wanna join me?”

Klaus had no clear recollection of how fast he was out of his clothes.

“Wow,” Jake laughed. “Are you sure you want to show your junk to your people around here?”

“Shut up. You are the one with too many clothes.”

“It’s just swimming trunks,” Jake protested, but Klaus grabbed him and forced him to get rid of the only piece of clothing he was wearing.

The kiss was hungry. Jake gasped for air, once Klaus finally decided that he was allowed to breathe.

“What happened with the decision not to let your staff see you smooching me?” Jake smiled.

“They will get used to it. Because I plan on doing it again,” Klaus said.

“Really? Even in front of Agnes?”

“She is a very understanding person. She would have no qualms about her boss falling ... For a pretty boy’s charms, like you.”

“Falling, eh?” Jake smiled but bit his bottom lip, something Klaus had noticed him do when thinking about something. “I can see you standing right over there without a problem.”

“Do not make me want to fuck you right here, right now.”

“You’re hard, man,” Jake grabbed Klaus’s erection and began rubbing it slowly. “Let’s go back to the bedroom. I need to give you head.”

“You need?” Klaus asked.

“Yeah,” Jake admitted plainly, his eyes traveling to the side like he was trying to avoid Klaus.

Sometimes things had to be taken head-on. Klaus tipped the young man's chin and looked him in the eyes.

"What are you running away from, Jake?" he asked in all seriousness.

"Nothing," Jake replied quickly.

"You have been nervous ever since this morning."

Jake exhaled.

"Look, I'm sorry," he said, letting his arms slack. "I don't remember everything, but I might have said some stupid shit last night."

Klaus let their foreheads touch and exhaled loudly.

"I distinctly remember what you said, and it was not remotely stupid."

Jake kept his eyes down.

"That's not how I remember," he mumbled.

Klaus could feel the young body close to him strung like a violin. He brought his hands up, cupping the boy's face, his thumbs moving slowly, caressing the tight jaw. One of them dragged a full bottom lip lower.

"I would like to hear that again," he said slowly.

"No way," Jake tried to shake his head. "I ... I didn't mean it."

"Are you sure? You are not honest."

"How do you know? I was drunk."

"In vino veritas, the ancients used to say."

"I have no idea what that means, but you're wrong," Jake continued to remain stubborn, still avoiding Klaus's steady gaze.

"Say it again," Klaus said.

"Why? If it doesn't mean anything."

"Stop dallying. You know I always get what I want."

"Not this," Jake struggled against him.

"Why?"

"Because."

"Stop acting like a kid."

“Compared to you, grandpa, sure thing I’m a kid.”

“Do not make me want to put you with your ass up.”

“See? You see me just like a kid, anyway.”

Klaus frowned, frustration taking over. Then he started laughing.

“The world will not end if you admit it, Jake.”

“No, you’d send me packing,” Jake replied. “No way. I still want that tuition thing.”

“Well, how practical of you. I will make all the arrangements, and I will make them as soon as I get back from the trip. I will honor my promise, regardless of what happens between us.”

“Good to know. But I will pay back every cent, don’t worry.”

“Now that you are more at ease in regards to my obligations towards you, how about I hear that confession again?”

Jake looked up and bit his lip hard.

“It would just sound like I say it so I can get something out of you.”

“You get something and more, regardless. This is a totally different thing.”

“I ... Nope, I cannot.”

“You are driving me insane here a little,” Klaus groaned.

“And you’re driving me up against the wall. Do you want me gone that badly? Do you already have enough? And you said ...”

Sometimes the only way to make Jake shut up was to shut him up. Klaus tasted the young man’s mouth again, this time making sure to deepen the kiss and coax Jake into responding in kind.

“You are not going anywhere,” he said in a raspy voice when none of them could take the lack of air anymore. “Do you understand? Just nod, if you do not wish to talk.”

Jake obeyed. What a miracle. He was such a good boy most of the time that his sudden bouts of stubbornness were a surprise and a nuisance.

“Alright, now say it.”

Jake looked at him with puppy eyes.

“And it doesn’t change anything?”

“Correct.”

“Then why?”

“My ego is in terrible need of being flattered.”

He often said he never lied. Yet, right now, as soon as the words left his mouth, he knew they were not true. His ego was fine and dandy. Other bits, apparently neglected for too long, were trying to demand their rights, their voice stronger and stronger.

“All right,” Jake exhaled.

The look in the dark eyes was intense. Klaus stood still, afraid that even the slightest noise would scare off the handsome man in his arms.

Jake finally opened his mouth, and his eyes fluttered shut, in genuine shyness, and not studied modesty.

“Mr. Metzger, I am terribly sorry to bother you, sir, but there is an urgent call.”

The servant did not even dare to look up. Klaus cursed inwardly.

“Thank you. I will take that right away in my office.”

Jake slid away from his arms like an eel. The moment the servant was gone, Jake was back into his swimming shorts and in a hurry to leave the pool area.

“And where are you going?” Klaus questioned.

“I need to dry and brush my hair,” Jake said quickly, putting distance between them. “And you better take that call. Sounds serious.”

The water splashed as Klaus cut it with a short annoyed move. Yes, he needed to take that. Why was work interfering with his personal life at such an inopportune time?

Jake had been a mess the entire day. All right, so Klaus wasn't mad about that stupid confession, but he was pretty weird about it. Maybe the guy was just playing with him, seeing that he could be a fucking sadist once in a while.

He decided to blow some steam playing video games, but after hours of fucking up the same mission over and over again, he grew tired and frustrated. In the end, he made his decision. If Klaus was going to cut him off, so be it. He was not going to be stupid and clingy, like a fucking idiot.

“Hmm, your bed is not that bad,” Klaus brushed his lips over Jake's ear, taking him by surprise.

Jake almost jumped out of his skin. He drew a deep breath.

“So, we need to talk,” he said, his voice a bit drowsy from sleep.

“I have no intention to spend precious time talking,” Klaus began peppering small kisses all over his cheek, ear, and neck. “What I want is to spend the rest of this night inside you.”

“Isn’t your flight pretty early?”

“And? You can sleep in if you want.”

“No way, the boss will have my ass, if I’m late,” Jake protested, although meekly.

“Then I will instruct Agnes to serve you some strong coffee before you leave. Also, you are not allowed to manipulate any machinery. Is that clear?”

“Yeah, but are you serious? The rest of the night? Like all of it?”

“Do not underestimate me. And I have only a few hours before I have to get ready. Then I will not have you for an entire week.”

“Okay, your bed or mine?” Jake turned and embraced the man.

“We should give this bed a proper inauguration, don’t you think? And, after I am gone, I want you to catch a few hours of sleep, without me bothering you by moving about while getting ready to leave.”

“Okay,” Jake agreed.

This was familiar. The pressing of lips against lips, hungry hands pushing away every little bit of fabric, everything about Klaus. Jake was glad. Most probably, the guy thought that whatever Jake had blurted out like a moron, was just a joke or something stupid. And that was fine by him.

Really fine, he gasped as Klaus entered him slowly, without breaking the kiss. His body was going to miss this.

“Fuck,” he whispered, moving his head to the side, and grabbing Klaus by his biceps.

“Yes, exactly,” the wicked angel chose to joke. “You take me in so well. I almost think you will not let me go.”

“Stop it,” Jake keened softly. “And I will let you go.”

“Really?”

“Only after you get me off,” Jake shot back.

Klaus was moving so gently it hurt somewhere deep inside. Not in a physical way, as each thrust was at the perfect angle, making him moan louder and louder, pushing him higher and higher.

“I need to rub my dick,” Jake demanded in a strangled voice. “You’re killing me here.”

“Let me,” Klaus batted his hand away and captured his cock in a tight grip.

“Why are you so slow? It’s driving me nuts,” Jake complained, the tugging on his dick torturous.

“I want to last as much as possible,” Klaus explained. “Although it might not be doable, seeing how tightly you are squeezing me.”

“Sorry,” Jake mumbled.

“You are amazing, Jake. Never say sorry,” Klaus kissed him and pushed him into the pillow.

And then things got real. Maybe it hadn’t been such a good idea to complain. Klaus straightened up and used his own thighs as leverage to drag Jake towards him. All this time, the hand on his dick was moving in the same rhythm. The bed was making weird sounds now.

“Klaus,” he moaned, “we’re waking up the house.”

“Do not worry, love,” Klaus grunted. “There is no one else on this level.”

“Good,” he whispered, trying hard to bury his face in the pillow.

Love? Why was the guy throwing words at random now? But it did fucking wonders to his dick because he began spewing jizz like on cue.

“Fuck,” he arched against the bed, as he came.

Klaus was still ramming into him, with increased speed. At least, he let go of the spent dick, but only to push wet fingers against Jake’s lips.

“Lick,” he ordered shortly.

He could feel the intense blue gaze on him, even in the faint bedside light. He stuck out his tongue, making sure to lick those elegant fingers clean.

“Yes, Jake, like this. Look at me.”

Their eyes met, and the guy began pushing harder and faster. Moments later, when Klaus collapsed on top of him, Jake exhaled. He let his hands rest on sweaty shoulders.

“You can sleep with me,” he said, after a few minutes of silence.

The guy didn’t seem like he wanted to move.

“It is exactly what I am doing,” Klaus chuckled.

What the fuck? He could feel the guy growing hard inside him again. Was that even possible? Yet, his own cock twitched in sympathy.

“We seem to be in accord,” Klaus added, and he began moving again.

“I can’t believe you’re not joking about wanting to spend the entire night inside me,” Jake mumbled.

“Are you complaining? I can feel how much you are enjoying it,” Klaus placed one hand over Jake’s hard on.

“Not really complaining. Just ...do it.”

“Thank you for the vote of confidence.”

Confidence? This guy needed no extra confidence from anyone. He was handsome, like angel level beautiful, rich, powerful, and had a huge dick always ready for action. If Jake had had no reasons to complain about getting too much attention from Klaus until now, he had a feeling he would need some pampering over the next few days.

This time, the guy didn’t lose any time with slow foreplay. Jake braced himself and let the flow catch him, twist him, and carry him away. Yeap, he was going to be sore tomorrow.

“Is this you fucking your fill?” Jake felt like he could not keep it quiet, despite the vigorous fucking he was getting.

“You certainly do not wish me to go away without being completely satisfied.”

“Why? Would you find someone else to fuck?”

“Definitely not.”

Klaus loved shutting him up by kissing him. He would have lied if he was to say he didn’t feel anxious about Klaus leaving. Anything could happen in a week.

Klaus moved slowly, hating he needed to go. After three times in a row, he should have been utterly satisfied, yet, his hand lingered on the boy’s sweaty forehead.

Jake looked at him with drowsy eyes.

“Feel free to call in sick. I will make sure ...”

“No. I like going there. I like working.”

“All right.”

“You should hurry.”

“Look who thinks he can tell me what to do. Off I go since you want so badly to see me gone.”

Klaus got up, finally. The bed and the man inside it looked much too inviting. He had plenty of work to do in Berlin, and such distractions should not have been in the way. He kissed Jake one more time.

“Head back to sleep. It is still early.”

“Hey,” Jake called softly.

The young man grabbed Klaus’s hand and placed a tender kiss on his palm. Klaus closed his hand, for once, thinking that a simple gesture like that could somehow keep that kiss longer.

He was ready to go out the door, carefully checking his watch. There was a loud thumping sound behind him that made him turn in surprise. Jake almost jumped into his arms. The kiss was hot, too.

“Don’t fuck anyone else,” Jake said shortly, after releasing him.

Klaus ruffled the raven hair.

“I told you. You have no reason to worry.”

“You’re a sex fiend,” Jake complained, looking away. “You won’t last a week without fucking something.”

Klaus bit his lips, trying hard not to laugh.

“That will not happen.”

“What do you mean?” Jake cocked his head to the side.

“You will see,” Klaus said enigmatically. “Now go back to bed if you do not want me to give up on this business trip and drag you there.”

“No way! I’m gone,” Jake began moving backward.

Klaus caught him just before the stairs to kiss him again.

“You are not allowed to fuck around, either,” he warned, before finally letting go.

“I won’t. I’ll wait for you!” Jake almost yelled after him.

The smile on his face must have been strange if Klaus were to take after Thompson’s slightly surprised expression when he climbed inside the limousine.

Chapter Fifteen

It felt a little strange to move around the house, now that Klaus was gone. He was more familiar with the layout and everything, and he knew where to find anything he might have wanted, but he was far from feeling comfortable.

The game room was nice, though. It helped him take his mind off of things. Plus, he liked it. It was just the first day without Klaus, yet he felt he was missing the guy. How the fuck he was going to deal with the guy disappearing from his life forever? At the moment, smashing the console controller seemed like a good course of action. He needed to man up. Diaz was right. He needed to learn how to stand on his own two feet, not always hoping that there will be someone to depend on.

With that new found determination in mind, he was pretty cool when he answered the phone.

“Hi,” he said a bit too brusquely.

“Are you all right?” Klaus’s voice sounded a bit worried.

He relaxed.

“Yeah. Only that it feels a bit strange to walk around this big house.”

“You do not have to stay cooped up in there all the time. Go out. See your brother.”

Jake’s blood chilled.

“Oh, that. So you really want me to spy on him?”

“I only mean for you to observe him.”

“Spying, that’s what it is,” Jake sighed.

“As you wish. It is for his own good. Sorry for breaking the news to you, Jake, but your brother is not the sharpest tool in the shed. He seems to have a tendency to strike bad deals.”

“So, I just come back and report everything to you?”

“Only if Diaz is engaged in shady business. Otherwise, I am completely uninterested in what your brother is doing.”

“Um, okay. But I’m not a snitch. If it’s nothing that concerns you or your money, I won’t tell you.”

“Fair enough.”

“Promise me that Diaz won’t end up in jail because I tell you stuff,” Jake tensed, waiting for an answer.

“I promise,” Klaus responded promptly.

“Okay,” Jake said. “Bye.”

“Where’s the fire?” the teasing returned, the cold businessman suddenly gone.

“Do you want to tell me something else?” Jake steeled himself.

It was unfair that it was enough to hear the guy’s voice going all low and sexy, and he could feel his knees turning to butter.

“Well, for starters, I wanted to hear your voice.”

“Well, you did that,” Jake tried to play cool.

“Are you feeling a tad rebellious? That gives me a few ideas for when I come back. You should prepare.”

“Nothing could prepare me for you and your perv ideas,” Jake said defensively.

Klaus laughed.

“Tonight, at ten sharp, be in the game room. Turn on the computer in the corner.”

“Oh, can we get some facetime or something?”

“Or something,” Klaus chuckled. “It is not only your face I want to see. Be ready.”

Jake stared at his phone. Kind of rude of the guy to cut of the conversation like that. What was he trying to say by that? He shrugged. There were still hours until then.

Maybe it was a good idea to see his brother instead of just spending more time alone. He could use a distraction from his own tangled thoughts.

“Look who decided to show up,” Diaz smiled at him and grabbed his nape to shake it roughly.

“What’s up?” he gestured towards the rest of the guys gathered at the workshop.

“Just chilling,” Diaz shrugged. “We worked our butts enough for today. Thought about grabbing a beer with us? Or you only drink champagne now?”

The gang laughed. Jake shook away his brother’s firm grasp.

“Cut it out, guys. It’s not like that.”

“What are you doing there, in that fancy house, all day long?” his brother questioned.

“I work at one of the construction sites. And I don’t do much else. I only sleep there.”

“Chill, little brother,” Diaz grinned. “It’s good that you decided to come around. I have a mission for you.”

Jake was pretty sure he was not going to like it. But he nodded shortly.

“You’re spending time with this guy, right? You’re in his house, so you must see plenty of him, what he’s doing, who he’s talking to, stuff like that.”

“I don’t see him that much,” Jake tried to avoid Diaz’s questions.

“Come on, Jake, you need to focus. This is important. I know you’re not stupid.”

“He spends a lot of time talking on the phone. But he only talks in German. I don’t understand squat.”

“Have you heard him talking to the heads of the other gangs?”

Jake shook his head. That was the truth.

“Damn,” Diaz said through his teeth. “Look, you need to find something we can use. This guy thinks he’s some big shot, coming to our town, making the rules. I know these rich dudes. Does he think he can play rough? He has no idea how’s life on the streets.”

Diaz’s rant was welcomed by the others, who were just nodding and agreeing on every word he said. Jake could feel his blood running cold.

“Is the guy carrying?” Diaz asked him.

“What?” Jake asked, taken aback.

“A piece. Is he carrying?”

“No. He’s like against guns, I think. You heard him.”

Diaz seemed satisfied with the answer.

“I knew he was nothing but a big mouth,” Diaz grinned. “That’s good to know. Good job, bro,” he patted Jake’s shoulder.

“What are you going to do?” Jake stole nervous looks in the other guys’ direction.

“Nothing you need to know too much about,” Diaz said. “You’re the worst liar I’ve seen. I don’t want that Nazi to smell you know something.”

“He’s not a Nazi,” Jake blurted out.

“What?” Diaz looked at him, surprised. “Are you taking his side? It was enough to live a few days in the lap of luxury, and now you’re too good for us?”

“I think he means well,” Jake spoke, curling his hands into fists. “Come on, Diaz, don’t screw up. Dude’s pockets are deep. He could make it better for all of us.”

Diaz was looking at him like he was suddenly growing horns. He circled Jake slowly, sniffing him, pulling at the hem of his t-shirt, and watching him.

“Do you think that’s enough to have nice clothes and eat well to be better, Jake? That guy looks down on us. I know he treats you like you’re his Chihuahua or something, but you’re worse than an animal to him.”

Diaz’s words were met with laughter and hooting by the rest. Jake could feel his cheeks on fire.

“That’s not how he’s treating me,” he turned and looked his brother in the eye.

“Oh, yeah? And how is he treating you, then?” Diaz’s scrutinizing look was making his resolve falter.

“I could go to school,” Jake answered, trying hard not to look away.

“School? What do you need school for? You’re done with school. What good that did for you?”

“I could get a college diploma. Have a good job,” Jake answered.

“Bullshit. The guy’s going to leave in six months. He’ll feed us to the sharks that’ll want to squeeze every penny from this shithole. All is well now. Yeah. We’re working our butts off to make a better place. For others. Do you think we will get rich? Go ahead. Go to school. Paint your hair green or whatever. Why should you care? The rest of us don’t matter.”

“It’s not like that,” Jake said again. “We could be making an honest living. Yeah, he’ll leave. But there’ll be enough left for us.”

“You’re 21 for nothing, Jake,” Diaz spat in disgust. “Should mom and dad see you now ...”

“How about you leave them out of this?” Jake frowned.

Diaz now seemed quite shocked with his reaction.

“Look who thinks he grew some balls.”

The smack upside the head almost made him lose his balance. The gang laughed hysterically. He threw Diaz a dark look.

“What?” Diaz grinned, showing teeth. “What are you going to do, Chihuahua?”

For a second, his vision darkened. But he held his arms flush against his body, ignoring the tingling in his muscles.

“Whatever. I thought I could hang out with you. But you’re all just a bunch of douchebags.”

A few guys stood up and began to approach him. The look in their eyes held nothing good. But Diaz lifted one hand.

“Just let him be. He’s young and stupid,” Diaz spoke, almost shouting the words into his face. “Now go back to your master, dog. And make sure to keep your eyes open. Anything you hear or see, and we can use, you come back and tell us. Got it?”

“Yeah,” Jake answered.

“What was that, little brother? Say it louder, so the guys can hear you. You don’t want them to think you’re a traitor, right?”

“Yes, I got it,” Jake replied again.

“Now shoo,” Diaz gestured for him to leave.

His feet felt like lead as he headed back. His brother had a thing for making him feel like he didn’t belong.

His mood was not any better when the moment for his virtual meet up with Klaus came around. He was not that surprised to see that there was a sticky note with all the instructions on what to do on the desktop. Soon enough, he was connected. All he had to do now was wait. Oh, and see what that secret drawer Klaus talked about in the instructions contained.

He fiddled with the lock until he managed to pull the drawer open.

“Fuck me sideways,” he murmured, taking in the contents of the drawer displayed in front of him.

His hands hovered over the squeaky plastic wraps. Everything seemed brand new. Some of them, he could say what they were. Others were of some alien nature to him.

“Hey, Jake,” Klaus’s voice called for him through the speakers, and he turned quickly.

Why did the guy have to look so fine? Jake sat in front of the computer, nervously running his fingers through his hair. Klaus was wearing a blue shirt that was bringing out the beautiful color of his eyes, making them even more striking. His hair was a tad damp. Jake could bet the guy smelled delicious right now. He probably just got out of the shower.

“Hey,” he said back.

“What is wrong?”

Damn. Could he tell even through the camera lens? That guy was a fricking genius.

“I went to see Diaz,” Jake said, trying to choose his next words carefully.

“And?”

“He’s an asshole,” he exhaled.

“And this is news how?” Klaus smiled.

“Yeah. I should know better.”

“So? Out with it. What is your brother up to these days?”

“He doesn’t say,” Jake looked away. “I’m not lying.”

“I did not accuse you of that. Yet, you should tell me what is weighing you down.”

Jake pondered.

“He wants to know ...”

He licked his lips nervously. Was this making him a traitor? Diaz had taken care of him, all his life.

“Nothing,” he pursed his lips.

“All right,” Klaus said. “Do I need to remind you who your brother is? He is a dangerous man.”

“He’s my brother,” Jake buried his face in his hands.

“I know, and I stand by my promise. He will have my protection, although he does not deserve it.”

Jake raised his eyes slowly. Klaus’s face looked as cut in stone. They were observing each other.

“He wants to know if you’re carrying,” Jake said slowly.

“Carrying?” Klaus frowned.

“A gun,” Jake bit his lips hard.

Klaus didn’t look surprised or, if he was, he wasn’t showing it.

“Good,” he just said shortly.

“What do you think he wants to do?” Jake blinked a few times, trying to chase away the sandpaper sensation in his eyes.

“That is something only your brother can say,” Klaus shrugged. “Why are you so upset, Jake? You know your brother.”

“Yeah, I know him,” Jake recoiled.

Klaus sighed and rested his chin on his linked fingers.

“And I was looking forward to playing a little with you.”

“I saw ... Your toys.”

“Feel free to make use of them.”

Jake shook his head.

“No way.”

Klaus chuckled.

“All right. It will be my pleasure to get you accustomed to everything and use a more hands-on approach while at it.”

“Sorry,” Jake mumbled.

“About what?” Klaus asked, and his eyes were filled with warmth.

“About ruining the mood.”

“I will not hide that I was looking forward to this. But it is all right. Now, can you tell me why you are upset?”

Jake watched the man picking one cigarillo from his case and lighting it. It was a signal he was ready to listen. Only that Jake did not feel like talking about what was really bothering him.

“Diaz is all I have,” he said.

“That means you do not have much,” Klaus replied, matter-of-factly.

“He did his best. I mean ... Always. He took care of me.”

“When you were 9. That was when you two became orphans, right?” Klaus asked. “How old was Diaz?”

Jake’s head shot up. How much did Klaus know?

“16. He was 16.”

“It must have been rough,” Klaus spoke.

“Yeah. So you get it, right?” Jake sputtered. “I owe him everything.”

“You owe him nothing,” Klaus replied right away. “He took care of you because that was his responsibility.”

“You cannot put it like that,” Jake protested.

“I certainly can. Your brother does not have any right to treat you as he wants.”

Somehow, Klaus’s words were rubbing him the wrong way.

“Maybe he does.”

“Jake,” Klaus said severely. “I do understand your loyalty, but you should start thinking seriously about leaving your brother behind. You can have a future. He cannot.”

Jake pursed his lips.

“Who gives you the right to say that?”

All the anger from earlier came rushing back like a flood.

“Easy there. I am on your side. On whose side is Diaz? Only his, is he not?”

“You don’t know how it is,” Jake tightened his fists. “How it’s always been. You don’t know. He’s my brother.”

“You seem particularly stubborn today. Very well. I will give you some time to calm down. I have a long day in front of me. As for you, you should head to sleep. Good night, Jake.”

Jake stared at the blank screen in shock. What the fuck had just happened? Klaus had just cut him off, sending him to sleep, like he was a kid or something. He stood up and pushed the chair against the desk with a loud thump.

He began pacing the room. What was he going to do now? Diaz was planning something shady, Klaus was upset, and he was just caught in the middle.

He tossed and turned half the night. This could not be right. He needed at least to make peace with Klaus. The man was right. Everything he said was right. But Diaz ... Jake stood up and grabbed the phone. It was the middle of the night, but in Klaus’s current corner of the universe, it was day. He risked making a call.

“Yes?” Klaus replied right away.

“Um, hi,” he said, feeling his entire courage slipping away.

“Please, be quick. I do not have time.”

“Look, I’m sorry,” Jake said in one go.

“I am afraid I am far from satisfied,” Klaus cut him short.

“What do you want me to do?”

“Do you want me to hold your hand? Be creative. That if you are truly serious about being sorry, which I doubt. Anything else? I am in a terrible hurry.”

“No. Bye,” Jake said.

“Goodbye,” Klaus replied in the same cold voice.

Creative, huh? Jake lay on his back and stared at the ceiling. He could not sleep anyway. After a short, but arduous debate with himself, he got up and went to the game room.

He checked the phone camera a couple of times. It looked like the angle was good. He took a deep breath. All right, he could do this. Taking a good look at the items spread on the bed, he began to think.

There was still time to back down from it all. But Klaus had clearly demanded a proper apology, and this was the only thing he could imagine that would appease the man. After all, he had bought all this stuff, right?

He fiddled with the collar. Maybe Klaus really did see him like a dog. But a look in the mirror made him think differently. There was something subdued, but sexual, in that. The long leash was nothing but a thin silvery chain, and it looked strangely appealing against his tanned skin. The leather collar was thin, too, nothing too extravagant or scary there, and it made him look ... sexy.

Now it was time to pick the more serious stuff. He grabbed the offending object in one hand and squeezed. It definitely looked real. It was even close to how Klaus's dick looked like. All right. He knew how he was going to use that. Now there was just one single thing missing. He rummaged again through his selection, and he knew. It was going to feel fucking strange, but it was definitely going to work for what he had in mind.

He sat on the edge of the bed and pondered for a while. So far, Klaus had taken care of everything. He thought whether he could do it or not. After breathing in and out a couple of times, he opened the bottle of lube. Now things were getting real.

Maybe he looked stupid. He checked himself in the mirror again, but he could not lie. The long fluffy tail was caressing his skin in passing. He could feel the butt plug inside him, and he was half hard, without even paying attention to his cock. And, all in all, he looked damn fuckable.

He adjusted the leash so that the chain followed his spine, down to his ass crack. Had Klaus imagined him wearing all that? He must have had since he got all that from some weird sex shop. And what did it mean?

Now there was no time to think clearly. The pressure inside his ass was real and, as he moved, he felt his dick twitching in expectation.

He fiddled with the phone, so it could start recording. Now there was no time to feel any lack of confidence. But he should have known how to move. He loved dancing, after all. This was no different.

He put the dildo in front of him and, placed on his fours, he began undulating his back. Throwing one look towards the phone, he bit his bottom lip in what he hoped would be a sexy

gesture. He eyed the dildo in front of him warily. All right, he was going to do it. Wrapping his lips around the latex body was easy. Pushing too much of it inside wasn't.

So the direct approach was not that doable. He proceeded to lick the dildo and closed his eyes. How would he do it if that was Klaus's dick instead? He slowly got into the rhythm, making sure to wiggle his tail suggestively.

Was the room getting warm all of a sudden? He sneaked one hand between his legs and began pumping his cock. He was pretty sure he was moaning now, giving good head to the latex cock in front of him and clenching his ass muscles only to feel a jolt of pleasure now and then from the oversized thing in his butt.

He was close. But there was one thing he needed to do, so he squeezed his cock at the base, postponing his release. He straightened up and held the dildo so that at least some of his cum landed on it. He was breathing hard at the end of it all, and he could barely keep an upright position. He brought the dildo to his lips and began licking the salty liquid, all the while looking straight into the camera.

"This is how I would apologize to you if you were here," he said with a smile.

Camera off. Hit send. No moment like the present. Maybe he was going to regret this. He hadn't even looked to see if the recording had gone okay. With nervous gestures, he opened the file. At least, he had taken care of the scene well. It was framed all right and everything, and now he was blushing like crazy looking at himself. All right, he needed to take that thing out of his butt.

The next day at work, he could only think why there was no sign from Klaus. The foreman had to scold him a few times for not paying attention. So, in the end, his frustrations needed to wait.

5, 6, 7 o'clock. Still nothing. Maybe the guy hadn't gotten the joke. It had been a joke, right? Or maybe he was still sleeping at this hour if he was to calculate correctly. He barely ate and went to the computer room for a game. He was done with going to see Diaz in his spare time. And he was pretty pissed.

He was in bed and mad as hell when his phone finally rang. For a moment, he thought about pretending not to hear it or something. Let Klaus taste his own medicine. But despite all the pent-up anger, he kept inside, he answered.

"Yes?" he said in a meek voice he could not recognize, as his courage evaporated suddenly.

"Is that your idea for an apology?"

He froze.

"No," he replied, his throat dry.

Klaus was pissed. Or not. When he spoke in that even tone of his, no one could tell. Or Jake just didn't know the guy enough.

"So it was not an apology, then? What was it?"

"Something stupid," he whispered.

Klaus began laughing.

"Jake, sweetheart, you are so easy to tease," the man spoke.

The heavy weight on his heart disappeared in an instant.

"Why are you such a jerk?" he mumbled.

"All right, maybe I deserve it," Klaus spoke. "But you are too tempting. So you are a little into puppy play, it seems. I would not have guessed it."

"Really?" it was Jake's turn to be a bit sarcastic. "Then who did you buy all those things for?"

"Got me," Klaus's voice became warm. "I thought I was going to fight you every step of the way just to wear the collar, but you went all the way. By yourself. Now I can safely say that you are a fine piece of tail."

Jake rolled his eyes. So the guy was having fun on his account. Not the effect he had hoped for.

"All right, glad I made you laugh," he said, without hiding that he was pretty pissed now. "I thought it was cool. Not my fault you're not kinky enough."

"Wait, do you think I did not like it?" Klaus now seemed surprised.

"You're laughing. What am I supposed to think?"

"I loved it, Jake," Klaus's voice grew thick.

"You're just saying," Jake protested feebly.

That voice had a way of worming its way into his heart.

"No, I do not just say it. It is the truth."

"I don't think so. You're serious about stuff that gets you off."

"I jerked off three times to your little homemade porn clip. Is that serious enough?" Klaus said.

Jake's heart leaped for joy.

"Oh," he said with a grin on his face.

“Damn, I wish it was Sunday already, so I can come back to you,” Klaus spoke. “I have a hell week ahead of me. Even now, I am letting important people wait at the door to my office so I can talk to you.”

Jake’s heart stopped leaping. It almost stopped, period.

“You should go back to work, then,” he said.

“I should,” Klaus sighed. “Why do you have to be so sexy, Jake? I wish I were there, to be the one to prepare you.”

“Stop talking like that,” Jake murmured.

“Like what?”

“Like you’re jerking me off with your voice.”

Klaus laughed.

“Up for some phone sex, then?”

“Come on, man, you got work to do.”

“Yes. Unfortunately. I cannot remember when was the last time I wished work could wait. I might not be able to call you over the next few days. I am getting only 5 hours of sleep per night, and that is a stretch. Only 4 last night, because of your little movie.”

“Sorry,” Jake felt suddenly guilty. He had mopped for hours when the guy had just been busy as hell.

“I already told you, Jake. Do not apologize for being yourself. You are perfect.”

“If you say so,” Jake held the phone tightly as he could physically touch the other.

“I do say so. Sleep tight, my little puppy.”

“I’ll never see the end of this, right?”

“Do you want to?” Klaus’s voice was a whisper now.

“No,” he whispered back. Then Jake shut off the phone. Whatever this was, he never wanted to see the end of it.

Chapter Sixteen

He could not be mad at Klaus. After all, the guy was working himself to the bone. Apparently, being rich didn't mean sitting on your butt, by a pool, eating ice cream or something. But Jake had to admit that he felt restless without being able to talk to the guy. He had wanted to call a few times but felt guilty at the thought that Klaus was getting too little sleep as it was.

A week was not that long. More than half of it was gone, anyway. Sunday, Klaus was going to be back.

And then what? They were going to have plenty of crazy sex. That was for sure. But after that? More crazy sex perhaps. Jake groaned and buried his face in the pillow. He was going to have to jerk off again; he thought his dick would be raw by Sunday if he weren't careful.

The cheerful chime of an incoming message made him jump and hurry for the phone.

I am sorry we cannot talk. I gave Hans your number. I thought you might like to talk to him. And here is his.

Jake sighed. But it was nice of Klaus to think that he was bored. And as he was a gamer, maybe he could convince Hans to play online with him. That was a good plan for killing time. So, without overthinking things, he called Hans.

"Hey, good morning cutie, thanks for calling," Hans's voice came through, friendly and energetic.

"Hey, man. Oh, shit, sorry. It's like six o'clock where you live, right?"

"Seven, actually, but don't worry. I'm an early riser."

Jake could hear someone else's muffled voice somewhere in the background.

"When is a good time to call? And sorry again. It sounds like you have someone over."

"Yeah," Hans said happily. "A very special guy."

Now Jake could distinctively hear someone kissing. Good, now he was ruining others' fun because he had none. He felt pretty much like an ass.

"Sorry about that," Hans came back. "This guy is too kissable."

Hans obviously wanted to brag about his boyfriend. And Jake didn't mind. Actually, he was pretty interested.

"Would you guys be interested in some PvP? You name the hour. Or maybe your boyfriend is not into that?"

"Stephen? Oh, he is. But he is not my boyfriend. Just some crazy awesome one night stand."

Now Jake could swear that sound was a well-aimed pillow smack over Hans's head.

“Well, like 7 or 8 one night stands, to be fair, although I’m not counting the times we did it, and it was not during nighttime,” Hans joked again.

“9 nights,” Jake heard someone yell in the background.

“Wow, like coup de foudre or something,” Jake remembered Klaus’s words from that night. He had even looked it up on the Internet.

“I guess you could say that. And how are you? Did Elsa still behave like a frozen bitch around you?”

Jake roared with laughter. The sudden image of Klaus singing Let It Go, while extremely careful about his gloves was making him hysterical.

“But I suppose not,” Hans supplied his explanation, while Jake was trying hard to regain his breathing. “What did you do to the guy, Jake? Be honest. Where do you keep your kryptonite and what is it?”

“What do you mean?” Jake managed to speak again.

“Come on, don’t be a teaser. Klaus is smitten with you.”

“He is?” Jake could feel the bubbly excitement growing inside his chest.

“Well, I don’t recall ever hearing him say that his lover must be getting bored and that he needs to do something about that. Or use any occasion to mention you, completely out of the blue.”

Jake’s ears twitched.

“Like what? Tell me.”

“Swear you’re not going to be a kill stealer and we can negotiate something,” Hans teased.

“Come on, man. You know I’m good. No kill stealing, I promise.”

“Well, for instance, just yesterday, one of his business associates, a woman in her late sixties, mind you, complimented him on his looks and told him he should be named the most beautiful man in the world. He thanked the lady and told her promptly that she would be wrong, because he had already met the most beautiful man in the world, and he found he had nothing on that guy. Guess who he was talking about? Should I give you a hint? His name starts with J.”

“He didn’t,” Jake protested, but his entire body was starting to get warmer and warmer.

“Oh, yes. And he even dared to insult my beloved to my face.”

“Oh, shit,” Jake murmured. “What did he do?”

“I introduced Stephen to him. And he just said, while still shaking his hand: My Jake is cuter.”

“Fuck me,” Jake mumbled.

“I suppose he did plenty of that, right? He had that ‘I fucked all night’ look all over him when I went to welcome him at the airport.”

“I don’t know if I’m supposed to tell,” Jake smiled. “But, yeah, he did.”

“I’m glad for you. You sound pretty happy,” Hans commented.

“I think I am,” Jake admitted.

“Good. It was about the damn time for him to settle down.”

“Oh, it’s not like that,” Jake said. “He told me we would break up.”

Hans remained silent for a moment.

“He did? That is rather strange.”

“I mean, I suppose he doesn’t want me to get all clingy and annoying. It’s okay. I mean, you warned me, too, right?”

“I guess,” Hans sighed. “But I’ve known Klaus all my life. I don’t remember him ever being like this. He might have changed his mind.”

“I can assure you he didn’t. He was pretty clear about it, too. Like he always is. You know. Serious.”

“Well, I will not fight you over this. But are you really sure, Jake? And how do you feel about it, by the way?”

“It doesn’t really matter. It’s not my choice, anyway.”

“Hmm, I beg to differ. If you managed to make the almighty Ice Lord swoon over the mere thought of you like a schoolgirl, you could change his mind, too.”

“He’s just a horny bastard,” Jake searched for an explanation.

“Horny? Maybe. But Klaus is the kind of guy who sets his sex schedule so that it doesn’t interfere with his important business deals. I’m telling you, Jake. Whether you want to or not, you are already changing him. He is sharp like always, but he even smiles from time to time now. When he speaks of you.”

“He’s only been there for like four days or so. How did you see all this?”

“Because I have spent part of my time this week helping him with this business project. He practically begged me to get involved so he could finish early and head back to you.”

“Are you recording this? Did he ask you to tell me all this? Because he seems like a totally different guy.”

“No joke, Jake. I mean it,” Hans’s voice turned serious.

“Okay,” Jake said slowly. “I trust you. You’re a cool guy. But wait, isn’t he stealing you away from your boyfriend?”

“I got Stephen to help, too. He’s a lawyer, so he has assisted me in the document review, double checking Klaus’s attorneys. So it’s just an occasion for us to spend more time together. Hey, let’s talk more a bit later? Now we have to get ready to finish our review and report back to Klaus before noon.”

“Sure thing,” Jake said.

After bidding goodbye to Hans, Jake fell into a deep sleep. In the morning, he felt like he was walking on cloud nine.

He was just finishing his work on Friday when he was called over by one of the guys from his brother’s gang.

“Diaz wants to see you,” the man spoke, giving him a dark look.

He just nodded. Most of the time, he had no idea what these guys were thinking or doing. But he had felt like the little kid who was just allowed, sometimes, to play with the grownups, whenever he was with them.

“Now,” the man added, seeing that he made no sign to move.

“Okay.”

They walked in silence all the way. From time to time, he stole nervous glances in the guy’s direction. What was his brother planning now?

“Hey, little bro,” Diaz welcomed him and gestured for him to come closer. “Why didn’t you tell me Nazi boy was out of town?”

“You didn’t ask,” Jake answered, feeling defensive and taking in the gang gathered around them.

“Playing smart again?” Diaz frowned.

“No,” he shook his head quickly. “I just didn’t think it was important enough that you would want to know that.”

“We could have come around and played in that big ass pool,” Diaz grinned, and the others laughed.

“It’s not like I am in charge of the place. There are all kinds of people there. I don’t order them around and decide who gets to get in.”

“Look at you ... You’re like a little dog,” Diaz grabbed his nape and shook him. “You could, though. You just don’t have the balls.”

He looked down, staring at his sneakers and not knowing what to say.

“But that’s not why I called you here. I sent for you because I must take care of you, seeing how much of a weakling you are.”

“What?” Jake’s head shot up.

Everyone laughed again, and Diaz gestured for one of the guys. The man made way to show Jake a laptop set on an old table.

“Nazi boy thinks we can’t Google him,” Diaz said with satisfaction.

Jake approached the open laptop with dread deep inside his soul. He blinked a few times, unsure of what he was seeing.

“What’s this?” he turned to look at Diaz.

“Are you dumb and blind too? Can’t you see? Dude’s a fag!”

Jake placed one hand on the edge of the table to keep his balance. His blood rushed to his feet, and he felt his stomach twisting. He took another look at the screen. The picture showed Klaus, in his usual business attire, apparently laughing and having fun while another handsome man was holding one hand on his arm and was looking at him with dreamy eyes. His eyes traveled lower. The page must have been translated as he was just able to make out the strange wording. But he could understand quite clearly what former flame and rekindling meant.

“I don’t get it,” he whispered, his eyes suddenly were blurry and hard to focus.

“Your master, the dog owner, is a homo, little bro.”

"And what's that got to do with me?" Jake said defensively.

"Are you stupid, for real? He might want to grab your ass."

The gang laughed again.

"Now seriously, did he touch you?" Diaz's hand came to rest on his nape again.

Jake felt like he wanted to throw up.

"No, what the fuck!" He shook off his brother's grip. "And even if he is gay, just look at these guys! They're high class, not street trash, like me!"

Diaz watched him, his eyes narrowing to slits.

"Chill, little bro. I just thought to warn you, in case he tries something."

"He has no reason to do that," Jake blushed. "He's got like supermodels to fuck. Would you fuck some ghetto girl after having playmates lining up to your bed?"

That argument had the power to put Diaz on the right track, it seemed.

"I guess not," Diaz shrugged. "So, did you catch him banging someone? Maybe we could dig up some more dirt on him to use."

Jake stared at his brother in disbelief. Diaz thought himself smart, to be capable of standing a chance to go up against Klaus.

"I told you. I barely see the guy. But thanks for the warning, I guess."

"You don't seem that grossed out seeing that you're under a homo guy's roof."

"What's that gotta do with anything?" Jake shrugged. "His money is good, right?"

Diaz grinned, showing teeth.

"Right. Right, just don't sell yourself and us out at the same time, little bro, okay?"

Jake wanted the ground to open up and swallow him whole.

"I can kick his ass if he tries something," he set his chin high.

"I suppose a pansy-ass like him doesn't have it in him to fight for real."

"Some say that five Wanderers got it good from him one night," one of the men talked.

Jake froze.

"Wanderers are pussies. But that's just trash talk. Some idiots think this Metzger guy is the shit or something. So they just invent stuff."

Jake hoped it wasn't visible the way he exhaled in relief.

"Anything else?"

"What? In a hurry to get back to that cool ass house?"

"No. I'm just tired. I worked all day at the construction site."

"Hey, we worked too. Come. Drink a beer. And don't forget where you come from, all right?"

He just nodded. He didn't want to spend time with the gang. Ever since he had met Klaus, his life had been entirely different. And he liked it. But he could not say no. Not to his brother.

He got back late that night, murmuring some excuse to Agnes and headed to his room. And then, he started searching. If Diaz who had the Internet skills of a monkey, could Google Klaus, so could he.

He stared at the phone screen, finding multiple hits. That man had never looked bad in his life. At least, what the image search could return showed only his good side. Who was he kidding? There was no bad side for Klaus.

He hesitated for a couple of seconds, and then he went for it. Boyfriends, relationships, anything the tabloids could feed him, he began devouring it. At first, he felt at ease. It was just natural curiosity, right? But soon, his thoughts started shifting, and he became more and more uncomfortable in his skin.

What was Klaus doing with a guy like him? When he had said supermodels, he had done it just to prove a point to Diaz. But Klaus had, indeed, dated guys modeling for underwear, cologne, watches, and all kinds of stuff. And those were not the only ones. Fashionable celebrities, hip entrepreneurs, and even a few actors had gone through Klaus's bedroom.

And they were all amazingly good looking. If Klaus wanted to have a calendar with good-looking men for each year of his life, he could probably make that happen, just by rounding up the guys he had slept with.

The more frustrating part was, however, how tight-lipped everyone was about their relationships and ending things with the man. Tabloids did their fair share of taking pictures and whatnot, but there were no details, otherwise. Jake had at least half of brain, and he knew what speculations were.

After two hours, he felt depressed. Klaus had come into this shithole, found nothing better to do, and decided to pick up a stray from the streets, for no other reason that he needed to get his dick wet. Jake was nurturing some stupid feelings, and the guy had been clear about not getting involved. And that was leaving him with a nasty emptiness inside his chest and a bad taste in his mouth.

What was he hoping, anyway? Nothing, he hurried to reply. He had said something stupid, and Klaus wanted to hear that again, but, otherwise, he knew very well where he stood. Soon enough, he was just going to be one in a string of lovers, and not even unique in some way. Actually, he was special. In a bad way. He was, clearly, the only one without a pedigree.

“Fuck,” he murmured and closed all the tabs on the browser.

And, on top of it all, Klaus had no problem with flirting with some guy, like right now. He had seen the date in that article. It had been published this week. That means that Klaus had decided he was not going to go many days without fucking something. The guy in that picture was handsome, too. Jake had nothing on that guy.

Maybe it was for the best if he just left. Of course, not without telling the guy, because he didn't want to cause trouble for his brother. Also, because he wanted to confront Klaus. The

man always said he never lied, but that shitty picture proved the exact opposite. Klaus had promised just before he left that he was not going to fuck around.

He was not going to be the guy who got fucked on the side. It was true that he had no experience with this sort of relationship and everything, but he was sure as hell, not going to be kept as a fuck toy, and used only when there was nothing better available.

The decision was a good one. It was making him feel like crap, but it was a good one. All he had to do was to wait now, for Klaus to come back. It was going to be nasty, and he was probably going to regret everything, but he still had his pride. He was not ready to let go of it, just because Klaus was good at fucking. Or because he was taking Jake to nice places, and promising him that he could go to school and get a diploma. Or because he was so handsome. Or because he was talking to him and making him feel good about himself.

Or because Jake was terribly, hopelessly, stupidly in love with him.

He had gotten the message and now was waiting in Klaus's room. It was the best course of action, seeing that he needed to get out of there and fast, and not just dally around, once he had that ugly conversation with the guy.

No come back this time?

He read the second message.

Okay. Come home already.

He hit send and waited.

Someone is impatient.

What could he reply to that? Klaus was playing him, like the fool he was. He could hardly wait to get this conversation over with, call it quits on this whole relationship or deal, whatever it was and get the hell out of this place. There wasn't another message, and he chose to remain silent. Standing by the window, he began tapping his foot. His palms were getting a bit sweaty, so he began to wipe them against his jeans. Those had to be given back, too. He didn't need anything from the guy.

The limo stopped in front of the house, and Jake could feel his heart seem to skip a beat at the sight of the man. Klaus was looking sharp as always; no one would have thought he was coming back from an exhausting business trip.

No moment like the present, he drew a deep breath. When the door opened, he was ready.

"Knock knock?" Klaus said, a small smile spreading across his lips.

He had to take some of the things he thought back. Klaus was a tad tired, but even that made him look good. He was tired in an aristocratic way or something, the tiniest shade of dark under his eyes, and nothing else.

“Hey,” he spoke, suddenly not knowing what to say.

His throat was dry, yet he could feel cold sweat pouring down his spine. Klaus’s smile began to falter, and the man placed his briefcase on a chair, then leaned against the wall, crossing his arms over his chest, and taking a long good look at Jake.

“To what do I owe this icy welcome?” Klaus asked.

“You should know!” Jake lashed out but immediately felt like clamping his hands over his mouth to keep from saying anything more.

Klaus frowned.

“Maybe I should, but it looks like I am at a loss right now. Please enlighten me.”

Jake was stealing nervous glances around the room.

“You know,” he said again.

“You are testing my patience, and I just returned from a long trip with one single wish in mind.”

“Yeah? Like what?”

“Like being welcomed properly by my lover. After that little movie you sent me, I was hoping to find you in more suitable attire and sprawled on the bed. Definitely not to see you so passive-aggressive and ready to fight.”

“Maybe someone else could do what you want better than me,” Jake mumbled. “Like that Sebastian dude.”

“Sebastian?” Klaus seemed surprised.

“The guy you fucked while away,” Jake said. “You can be a cheater; I don’t care. But don’t be a fucking liar, okay?”

Klaus sighed.

“Although I must admit that I find this little jealousy scene cute, I am quite affronted. Your accusations are false. Anything else?”

Jake could not believe what he heard from Klaus. This guy thought he was stupid.

“Do you really think I’m retarded? I saw you! In the newspapers online!”

Klaus’s frown deepened now.

“You are the one who is insulting the other here, Jake. Do not make a mistake to anger me. You have three seconds to get naked and in bed. Otherwise, I will be furious.”

“Be furious. I don’t care. What you gonna do? Beat me up?”

“You know very well that I am not against physical punishment. One. I will make the seconds longer, to give you time to reflect on whether you want this to be my welcome home party or not.”

“You cannot do this! You cannot treat me like this!”

“I can and I will,” Klaus took off his coat and placed it on the back of the chair. “Two,” he added as he began pulling at his tie.

“I cannot believe you! Will you just beat me because I think you’re a cheater?”

“You think. That is the operative word. No, I will not just beat you. First, I will prove to you that I am innocent. After that, I will handle the punishment as I see fit. And you will accept it. Of course, if you are man enough to admit right now that you were wrong. Should I say three?”

“Go ahead,” Jake set his chin high. “I don’t see how you can prove that.”

With a smooth move, Klaus took his phone out of his coat, punched a speed dial key and placed it on the nightstand.

“Who are you calling?”

“Hans. I suppose you will not go as far as to think I could have staged this. I could not have foreseen you going into a jealous fit out of the blue like this.”

Jake fell silent. He pursed his lips. The silence in the room was getting thick, only the faint sound of the phone breaking it.

“Guten Abend Klaus, zu was ...” Jake heard Hans speaking in German.

“Hey, Hans. Let’s have this conversation in English, all right?” Klaus spoke.

“Hey, man, what’s with you?” Hans spoke. “Aren’t you already home? I thought you would be in your fantastic Jake’s arms by now. Tell me you’re not stranded somewhere, and you have to talk English in front of the authorities.”

“Nothing of the kind. I can assure you. I wanted to talk to you about Sebastian.”

“Sebastian?” Hans’s voice sounded surprised. “Why do you want to talk more about that asshole? I swear to God, I thought he was going to get down on his knees and suck your cock right there on the sidewalk, at that very moment. What nerve on the guy, really! And when you flatly told him ‘no’, he went crazy. I am glad Stephen and I were with you to help deal with him. I heard he landed in some random guy’s bed that evening.”

Jake could feel his resolve faltering with each word he heard. No, that could not be staged. Hans was genuine.

“I believe that you helped me a great deal again, my friend,” Klaus said with a small smile. “I just needed to have my reputation cleared in front of a particular someone who proves to be quite jealous.”

“Jake, are you there?” Hans’s voice sounded concerned now. “Buddy, run. Klaus doesn’t do jealousy.”

“Thank you, Hans,” Klaus cut the connection.

Jake took a step back.

“Do not even think about getting close to the door,” Klaus said slowly, his voice thick.

What had he gotten himself into?

“No, I won’t run,” he finally spoke and stood upright.

“Very well. I expect nothing less of you.”

Jake flinched when Klaus took off his belt in one fluid motion.

“Shit,” he whispered.

“Three,” Klaus confirmed.

Note on the gaming lingo used in this chapter:

PvP – Player versus Player (a gaming mode)

Kill stealing – one of the biggest dick moves in gaming; when someone does almost the entire output damage to an enemy and one teammate comes and scores the kill, by landing the last hit

Chapter Seventeen

Jake eyed the belt with growing unease. Klaus was balancing the scary object, ever so lightly, and that seemed hypnotizing. He could not tear his eyes off it.

“I believe you know the drill, Jake,” Klaus began speaking.

This time, Jake was not fooled. This was Klaus when angry. Never mind the even tone, the controlled gestures. He was going to get it good.

“You will obey each word I say,” Klaus continued. “Undress and come here. On all fours.”

Jake took one deep breath and pulled off his t-shirt. He quickly kicked off his sneakers and took off his jeans. One stolen glance at Klaus’s face told him he could not hope for forgiveness. Not this time. So he lowered himself to the carpet and proceeded to crawl towards Klaus.

Quickly, his face was inches away from the belt.

“Good. Now lick,” Klaus said.

He looked up, unsure of whether he understood the order. Klaus swung the belt lightly, caressing his face in a false gesture of affection. So he stuck out his tongue and licked the leather, his eyes flicking upwards, taking in the man and his dominant stance.

Blue eyes could burn with cold, cold fire. Then suddenly, an idea hit him. He grabbed the belt with one hand and pulled hard at it. He could feel the vibration in Klaus’s wrist as the man took a stronger hold of the belt in his hand.

Jake looked up, saying nothing, but begging with his eyes. There was a flicker of surprise in the cold, beautiful eyes, and the hold on the belt released.

Slowly, Jake took the belt and proceeded to wrap it around his neck. He touched it carefully, not yet sure what he was getting himself into. But he stalled no longer and handed Klaus the other end. He placed one small chaste kiss on the back of Klaus’s hand, now wrapped around the belt, as well.

The man’s voice was thick as he spoke again.

“You may come to think that this was a bad idea. You should back out right now.”

Jake shook his head. Of course, it was a bad idea. But he didn’t want that belt on his ass. The thought was terrifying.

“I will need a verbal confirmation for that,” Klaus said.

“Yes. Do what you want to do now,” Jake replied, hoping his voice was not trembling and he didn’t look as weak as he felt.

“Then go climb the bed. Ass to me.”

Jake obeyed turning quickly, surprised of how the belt suddenly pulled taught around his neck. His sharp intake of breath took even him by surprise.

“Easy,” Klaus whispered, in a gentler tone this time, stepping closer to Jake.

Long elegant fingers came to his neck, adjusting the belt and making sure there was enough room for Jake to breathe. Klaus guided him onto the bed, placing himself behind Jake.

He did not dare look behind, but it sounded like the man was pulling out his cock.

“It is going to get a little rough. No, I should not lie to you,” the man’s voice was laced with sarcasm now. “It will be plenty rough.”

He heard the man spitting, and he braced himself for the invasion. The burn in his ass was real, and he cursed as he grabbed one pillow to muffle his cries. Klaus pulled back, adding more spit to Jake’s hole and his dick. After the initial shock, Jake willed himself to relax. And with the second push, Klaus’s cock slid in halfway.

It was still painful, and his body was fighting, refusing to relax and let Klaus in. But Klaus was in no mood of slow preparation and his usual gentle coaxing with plenty of lube. He thrust inside again, and Jake gasped and arched his back.

A firm hand on the belt yanked him back and upwards.

“Please indulge me in hearing you cry out,” Klaus demanded.

Damn the guy and his sadistic streak. But this was what mattered. This was what both of them were there for anyway.

“Maybe you will have to do better than this,” Jake spoke, his words a bit strangled.

“Are you this ready to kick the hornet’s nest?” Klaus asked, and pushed himself all the way in, making Jake hiss.

“Yes. I want your best,” Jake whispered. “And your worst.”

He had no idea words could have such power. The belt loosened and he was forced forward with his head down, kept there by a steady hand, while his ass began taking the pounding of his young life.

While still painful, it felt insanely good, to be dominated like that. Jake grabbed his own cock, groaning and moaning with each thrust. Klaus’s initial angry thrusts became one fluid motion that was making the both of them move in unison. Jake’s cries of pain were mixed with pleasure, to the point that he could not tell what was real anymore.

He could not fight or maybe didn’t want to, so he succumbed. To the rhythmic movement of Klaus’s hips, slamming against him, over and over again. To the hand grabbing his hair and pushing him down. To the way his dick was getting impossibly stiff with each thrust like he could not have enough.

“Fuck, Jake,” Klaus asked. “Are you really enjoying this?”

“Yes, yes!” Jake yelled back. “Give it to me hard already.”

It could not have gotten much harder. Yet, it was happening, the bed creaking loudly under them, the air he breathed nothing but fire, and the sudden explosion of his dick, that came right after Klaus slammed deeper into him and came inside him with a loud groan.

They collapsed on the bed, heaving, and fighting for air. Klaus moved only to pull the belt on Jake’s neck a little looser.

And they lay on the bed like that, just breathing hard, clutching at each other.

Klaus took in Jake’s profile, the way his Adam’s apple bobbed up and down. A small tinge of guilt climbed up his throat.

“Are you okay?” he whispered, as he stroked Jake’s neck.

Lazy dark eyes moved to meet his.

“Are you still pissed at me?”

“No, not anymore.”

“Then I’m okay,” he said with a faint smile.

Klaus pulled the boy closer to him and kissed his damp forehead. Then he placed another kiss lower until their lips met and Jake reacted, by biting sharply on soft flesh.

“Ouch!” Klaus winced. “What is this for?”

“You looked way too happy in that picture, with that douchebag all over you,” Jake said.

“You make me regret not giving you the proper punishment. You know it cannot count as much if you enjoy it.”

“I think it’s exactly why it was better like this,” Jake smiled, both with lips and eyes.

Klaus could feel laughter bubbling in his chest.

“You are such a naughty little thing. I should ask. How did you know?”

“Well, you know. Collar? Leash? Those were dead giveaways for what you like, man,” Jake shrugged.

Klaus pulled him closer. He hadn’t expected this, Jake to be so quick to understand what he wanted. Other lovers had at most been enthusiastic, whenever trying something new, but he had the distinct sensation that Jake was reading him, without even having to talk about it.

“You’re trying to change the subject,” the same fascinating eyes glared now.

“I do not understand how you can feel so ill at ease. I made a promise, did I not?”

Jake exhaled and pouted.

“What are you doing with a guy like me, Klaus?” he asked, and the look in his eyes was vulnerable now. “You could have any of those guys flown in just to suck your cock. God knows you have the money for that.”

“Those guys? What do you mean?” Klaus frowned.

Jake rolled his eyes in an almost childish gesture.

“Your lovers. Your exes. The guys you fucked. They’re all like fucking supermodels. You know that’s not fair.”

Klaus pressed his index finger against his lips, trying hard not to laugh. If Jake only knew. The boy looked and saw a charmed life, filled with pleasures and no boundaries, but the truth was somewhere else. The week away had changed him, and Klaus was not that much of a hypocrite to ignore what that meant.

“Fair?” he chose to tease the raven-haired beauty in his bed a little more. “You should stop talking in half-truths. Come, out with everything. I am tired, and I was not expecting to engage in rough sex first thing back home. So do me the pleasure of getting everything off your chest, without having me drag you every step of the way.”

Jake made a small annoyed sound, but he suddenly began talking.

“I have like, nothing on these guys. Am I a supermodel? Far from that,” he snorted in that self-deprecating way of his Klaus wanted to wipe definitely from the boy’s persona. “Am I rich? Hmm, let me check my bank account. Oops, I don’t have one. Do I know how to suck dick a thousand different ways? No, only a few, but I bet those guys know. They’re like those people who like to be burned with candle wax and stuff, I think.”

The small tirade ended with a sigh.

“Are you finished?” Klaus asked. “What else do you have against yourself?”

“They’re ... them. And I’m me.”

“True. You are nothing like them.”

Jake looked away.

“See? You agree with me. So why?”

Klaus seemed to ponder, looking at the ceiling as if he was expecting some divine intervention to come to the rescue. But just as quickly, he pulled Jake closer, this time by the improvised collar, and forced the boy to look him in the eyes.

“You are nothing like them, and that makes you special.”

“Yeah, in a bad way,” Jake bit his bottom lip hard.

“No. Not in a bad way. What is the only thing you ever truly asked from me?”

“To go to school.”

“That came after I introduced you to the field of work you are now in. And I talked to your foreman. I know he pushed you towards this. He did the right thing. What I mean is what you truly asked for me to do?”

Jake scrunched his nose and began thinking. Klaus came to the rescue and provided the answer.

“You asked me to protect your brother. You could have asked for anything. You can ask for anything. I can, and I will buy it for you. But instead, you just kept on insisting for me to protect your brother. Do you know what that tells me about you?”

“Fuck if I know,” Jake smiled a little, looking puzzled.

“Responsibility makes a man, Jake. Believe it or not, at this point, you are your brother’s keeper.”

Klaus hesitated. It could not serve the young man to know about the restless gangs and the plan he had to put in motion. Jake had done Diaz a huge favor. When the going was to get rough, Diaz was going to walk through the fire unscathed like a Middle Eastern magician walking on hot coals.

“If you say so,” Jake said, looking every bit as unconvinced as he was before.

“Do you say those men are more handsome than you?”

“Yeah, like are you blind or something? Or are your eyes weak? Wait, do you wear glasses?”

“On occasion,” Klaus smiled.

“For real?” Jake blinked a few times and blushed suddenly.

“What is this?” Klaus grinned. “Would you like to see me wearing glasses?”

“Yeah,” Jake came back and smiled sheepishly. “You would be like a cool teacher, right?”

“I sense my little kinky lover getting more out of his shell. Is that something you would like for us to play? Are you in need of a little discipline, my naughty student?”

“Fuck,” Jake whispered. “I am, I mean, I would like to play that.”

“Look who is the expert at derailing conversations now. None of the men I slept with in the past can compare to you. As far as physical appearance is concerned.”

“Bullshit,” Jake protested. “You should wear those glasses more often.”

“I mean it. You are the most handsome man I have ever had,” Klaus said with conviction. “They may be posing for fashion magazines or work at the gym five times a week, but you are like this without even thinking about it. That is the difference.”

“I’m all scarred and everything.”

“I like your scars. They are part of who you are. And I want you to tell me the story behind every one.”

“That’ll teach you not to waste your time on crap,” Jake spoke, but his eyes were gleaming.

“What was next? That you are not rich like them. I do not care about money. I have plenty, in case you have not noticed. So that is not part of the criteria on which I pick a lover.”

“Street trash is not that either,” Jake snorted.

“Jake,” Klaus warned. “I am exhausted. I wish I could fuck all your insecurities out of you, but I am in no shape to do that. Particularly thanks to you and your little shenanigans. And as far as being kinky, you top everyone else so far. You, surprisingly, do not need as much guidance as I thought you would. I appreciated each lover I have had in my bed, but you are the first one to surprise me. You push all the right buttons.”

“How about Hans?” Jake shot quickly and recoiled like he wanted to hide.

“You had to go there,” Klaus said with a tired sigh. “Fine. But I need something in return.”

“Shoot,” Jake shrugged.

Klaus placed his index finger on the long white scar on the inside of Jake’s arm.

“The story of this scar.”

Jake’s face darkened. So it was true. There was a painful story behind that one particular fading wound. Klaus wanted to know it. To learn everything the young man had ever experienced, everything he had lived. And Klaus wanted to be part of everything Jake’s life was going to be from this point forward.

“Deal?” he insisted.

“Deal,” Jake whispered. “But not right now. You’re tired, right? And I could use a break, too.”

“A break from what?”

“Nothing,” Jake said quickly.

“You know it is not nothing. Speak.”

“I must have ... spent too much time online reading about your ...” Jake struggled with the words, “past flames.”

Klaus laughed. He ruffled the boy's hair.

"That serves you right, I must say. You are the only one for me."

"Right now."

"We will talk about this," Klaus placed a small peck on Jake's forehead.

"You were pretty clear. By the time you leave, we should have already broken up or something."

"Things have changed."

"Like how?"

"Let's just shower and sleep. We will talk tomorrow. I want to make sure that you understand everything."

"Why? Do you think I'm stupid?"

"No. Just stubborn and a hot-head."

Klaus could barely wait to talk about it, too. But it could wait. Just like the dark history behind the fading scar.

It felt exhilarating to go down to breakfast and find Klaus reading the newspaper, with a fresh coffee and an ashtray in front of him. Jake could not stop thinking that the scene was pretty domestic and he found that comforting in some way.

"Morning," he said, still yawning and rubbing his eyes.

Klaus folded the newspaper and Jake had to blink a few times. Tell the guy a thing ... He was wearing thin-rimmed reading glasses that were making him look a little bit older but in a distinguished way. There was nothing distinguished, however, about the perverted smile that fluttered over the man's perfect lips. Jake groaned.

"You know I have to go to work," he glared, and he was about to take a seat when Klaus gestured for him to come closer.

"Good morning," Klaus spoke.

Jake leaned in and placed a small kiss on the guy's mouth. Short and sweet, and doing his best to ignore the firm hand briefly pulling him closer to prolong the kiss.

"You do look nice with glasses," Jake murmured. "But I suppose you already know this."

"A friendly reminder never hurts," Klaus joked. "Sit and have breakfast. I have to leave early today, so I had to get up before you. I still hoped to see you before leaving. Your bed head is a sight to behold, I must add."

Jake ran his fingers through his hair.

“I did comb,” he said, a bit miffed.

“I was talking about how you looked earlier, sprawled all over my bed,” Klaus chuckled softly. “You are a possessive one when it comes to territory. I may start to think that I need a larger bed.”

“No way,” Jake grabbed one of the mini muffins neatly placed on a plate. “I’d just roll to your side and still be all over you, even if you get a bed that goes wall to wall. Ah, shit, you didn’t sleep well because of me, right?”

“Nothing of the kind. I have business to attend to, and that is why I had to get up from your arms earlier than I would have wanted. It pleases me that you prefer to sleep wrapped around me. I always know exactly where you are.”

Klaus took off his glasses and folded them. Then he rose and placed a small peck on Jake’s forehead.

“Be good today,” he said.

Jake snorted.

“You don’t have to tell me that. You are the one who has supermodels fighting over him.”

“You do know how to flatter my ego. But all I have on my schedule are business meetings, nothing more. No supermodels fighting over me, I think.”

“Good to know. Just don’t wear those glasses everywhere. People might just start drooling over you.”

“Hush,” Klaus pulled at his hair a little and made him roll back his head until he was forced to accept a rough kiss. “See you tonight.”

Jake’s heart sank a little. He had to think about what he was going to say. Brace himself for it. Hope that Klaus was not going to see him the same Diaz saw him.

Uneventful days were always a good thing. But Klaus did not believe in this calmness. The agent he had on the ground was yet to come back with his latest findings. Planning ahead was vital for this to succeed. In two month time, he would have no more reason to care about such trifle things anymore.

But there was always an upside to unhurried days. He could, for the moment, focus on Jake and the plans he had for the both of them.

Jake almost stumbled on the stairs as he hurried to greet him that night. Thompson had told him that he had taken Jake home about an hour before, and the boy had run upstairs to shower off the work dirt and change. Klaus was pleased with how good the boy looked lately. He was

still rough around the edges, and he was always going to be, but he was developing a new shine. It was something in his eyes. The moment of their first encounter, Klaus had thought of him as a diamond in the rough. He had thought that new clothes and better living standards were needed to make the young man lose that raggedness about his being, the too protruding bones, the restlessness he carried with him like a badge.

But those were not the things that had changed. Jake's eyes were now full of wonder, expressive, rebellious and anxious. Now, the fear that seemed to live in them all the time was more subdued, and Klaus liked the relaxed way Jake behaved around him.

Klaus embraced the young man and kissed him loudly. And he just continued to kiss him as they climbed the stairs. By the moment they were in his room upstairs, they were almost out of breath.

Maybe it was a good thing after all that Jake preferred the more hands-on approach. And Klaus had to admit that taking his lover from behind aroused him to no end. Jake assumed the position without being told anything. But this time, Klaus chose to use proper lubricant. Jake was still sore after their much too torrid last time, and it served no one to be careless. No matter what his rambunctious little lover had in mind, Klaus was the one responsible for his wellbeing and hurting him for no reason was not part of how he treated a lover.

He buried one hand in the dark mane and kept Jake in place, using the other to steady the frantic hips that wanted nothing but to push against him. It was freeing to enjoy so much power. Before, he used to think that being overly considerate to Jake in bed was his strongest point in winning over the boy. Yet Jake was forcing him to reevaluate his actions. The young man liked to be taken in hand, and Klaus loved to do it, as well.

And Jake was a little moaner, too, never leaving Klaus guessing. The boy liked it, and he was loud about it. It made Klaus hotter and want him so much more. His resolution was firm. And he had no more reason to postpone his feelings and wants.

Minutes later, they reached their peak, and this time, Klaus preferred to remain inside a while longer, crushing Jake with his weight, wanting to infuse himself with the other one's being, breathing, smell, and power.

“There are many good schools in Germany.”

“What?” Jake's voice was raspy from too much overly generous expressing his passion earlier.

“Exactly what you heard,” Klaus caressed his lover's chest slowly, as they lay on their sides, looking at each other.

“You mean ...” Jake bit his lip. “Do you, like, want me to go to school...there?”

Klaus grinned.

“Bingo.”

“Why?” Jake’s dark eyes fluttered shut.

That was another sign of strong emotions he had noticed in the boy.

“I would say that it is fairly obvious.”

“You want me to go with you? To Germany? Like in Europe? When?”

“Once I finish the project here. At the beginning of next year. You could start school here and arrange for a transfer later on. Or just wait to start there next year.”

Jake’s eyes were now wide like spinners. Klaus enjoyed the young man’s predicament a bit too much, perhaps.

“But ...why?” this time there was so much insecurity in the boy’s voice that Klaus felt compelled to put him at ease.

“I want you there, with me. I am now certain I do not wish to leave you behind.”

“Are you sure? Because I thought you wanted to break up.”

Klaus took pleasure in twisting a perky nipple. Jake grunted but did not pull away.

“No one is going to break up.”

“I don’t know, man. You might grow tired of me. Not now. But once I’m there. And then, what I’m supposed to do?”

Klaus rose from the bed and brought a pen and paper from the small desk in the bedroom.

“Here. Write it down. The amount of money you need to feel safe if I grow tired of you, as you say. Which will not happen, but it is for your peace of mind.”

Jake seemed to ponder.

“How much does the plane ticket cost from your home to here?”

“One thousand at best, I suppose,” Klaus spoke.

Dutifully, Jake began writing down the sum, and after some scribbling handed it back. Klaus took the pen and paper from his hands.

“You would never make it in business like this,” Klaus said with a smile and added a few extra zeroes, then handed the young man the paper back.

Jake’s eyes grew wide.

“I’m like a high-class prostitute or something?” he asked. “That’s a fortune.”

Klaus laughed.

“No, you are not a prostitute. I will write a check for this amount and give it to you. If we ever break up, you are covered. What do you say?”

“You must be crazy,” Jake mumbled. “Throwing so much money away for a fuck?”

“A great fuck,” Klaus laughed. “And I intend to use you thoroughly. But let us not joke anymore, you are more to me than just a great fuck. I want to take you to Germany because I see no end in sight for you and me.”

Jake stared at him in disbelief, gaping like a fish a few times.

“Tell me I’m dreaming,” he murmured. “Here, pinch my arm.”

This time, Klaus pinched both the young man’s nipples, quite harshly.

“I do not understand why you find this so extraordinary.”

Jake batted his hands away, his cheeks slowly coloring despite his dark complexion.

“You don’t huh? What happened to the Ice Lord? The guy who said no relationships or something?”

“Oh, you think I want to pursue a relationship with you?” Klaus joked. “I was thinking more along the lines of an arrangement that makes you my sex slave. I simply need to stave my hunger, preferably by devouring you little by little. Of course, I need to plan. You are a bit too skinny, and you might not be enough. And where do I get another Jake?”

“They sell them at Walmart. A dime a dozen,” Jake snorted. “The prepackaged food aisle.”

“Are you fond of your nipples or should I attempt to tear them off completely?”

Jake placed his hands protectively over his chest.

“Stay away from me, you perverted sadist,” he said.

“Your answer, Jake,” Klaus demanded.

“Like right now?” Jake looked away.

“I can wait. But not too long. I need to know.”

“Okay.”

“All right, how much time do you need to think about it?”

“No. That was my answer. Okay. I mean, I’ll go with you.”

“Are you sure?” Klaus felt a bit taken aback by the boy’s quick determination.

“Breaking up with you makes me rich. Staying with you means I go to school and get a good job. It’s like a win-win,” Jake shrugged.

Klaus could tell that was not the reason, but he had to let his lover have his pride. After all, he was asking a great deal right now, and Jake's hasty decision could only mean one thing.

That the words spoken that night, drunken stupor aside, were true.

Chapter Eighteen

It was a tad disappointing to wake up alone, but at least, he knew that he was going to be wrapped around the man again tonight, and the certainty of that thought was making him feel something, between a chuckle and something ticklish, right in the middle of his chest. His phone chimed from the nightstand, and he smiled as he read the message.

Time to start cashing in your hard earned money from the construction site. The foreman has your paycheck, pick it up from him. Use your lunch break to go to the branch bank two blocks over from the site and open a bank account.

A bank account. In his name. Jake Lopez. Klaus had clearly listened. He pushed his face into the pillow to stifle a laugh. And it was honest money, not whatever shady deal Diaz chose to get Jake involved in. Neither was it the “charity” that Klaus provided him to buy clothes and the other costs of daily living. This was money he had earned, worked hard for and he could not help it as his chest filled with pride.

He got up, dressed and was out the door in record time, barely touching breakfast, at the risk of facing Agnes’s disapproving looks. He could barely wait for the lunch break.

When he went to the trailer, Mr. Harrison, the foreman, had his paycheck as Klaus had said.

“Jake, this is your first month’s pay since you started here. It came in while Mr. Metzger was in Germany, and in all the activity since his return, I forgot to give it to you. He reminded me this morning. You can choose to keep getting paid monthly or every two weeks from now on. Most guys choose every two weeks.”

“Yes, two weeks sounds good, like the rest of the guys,” said Jake.

He went out of the trailer, heading towards the gate while opening the envelope. He studied the pay stub carefully, sure enough, every day he had worked since the first day was included. Klaus had paid him from the very start.

His words to Diaz about him working for free, Jake now understood, were to distract Diaz from becoming too suspicious and it fit with his brother’s opinion that Jake’s worth was not that much. He took a deep breath, held his head up and nearly marched towards the bank.

He had been excited all right to get here, but now he felt like a bull in a china shop, except actually, no, he felt more like a mouse, seeing that he seemed so little and everything so big around him. The bank employees, busy working behind their desks, seemed too preoccupied to ask him what he wanted. The guard, though, was eyeing him warily.

He frowned. Yes, maybe this place was too fancy-schmancy for the likes of him. But it was not like he could just walk away, tail between his legs, and tell Klaus that he hadn’t had the guts to do such a simple thing as opening a bank account. Well, simple for someone like

Klaus. Not for someone like Jake, though, he had never been allowed one; Diaz had always controlled any money they had.

He pushed himself forward from where he had stood for what seemed like several minutes, and approached a clerk who didn't look busy at the moment.

"Hi, I am here to open up a bank account," Jake blurted out. The clerk looked him quickly up and down, but before he could speak, Jake swiftly added, "Mr. Metzger sent me ..."

The clerk's eyes widened, but he quickly tapped something on his keyboard.

"Right this way, Mr. Lopez," the man stood up and invited him to follow.

Mr. Lopez? That sounded weird as fuck. But anyway, it was not like he could run out the door. So he followed the clerk.

He read a name on the door in passing, and ... branch manager? Why was he seeing the branch manager? Was he in trouble already? He surreptitiously smelled himself. He had washed his hands and face before he went to get his paycheck, and his clothes did have some dirt on them from the work of the morning, but he didn't smell or anything.

"Mr. Lopez, welcome, please, take a seat," the branch manager, a man in his late 50s, pointed to an empty chair, after a short moment of hesitation. "Mr. Metzger informed us that you would be coming in to open an account with us. It is our pleasure to do business with Mr. Metzger's associates."

No matter how much they look like street trash, Jake completed that phrase in his mind. He knew what that purse of lips and quick looks in his direction meant. He felt almost tempted to grab a pen or something from the man's desk, just to see him jump. But that was not him. Not anymore. So he just waited for the man to do whatever he had to do.

"The message I have here says you have a paycheck to deposit; you need to open a savings account, with debit card access and set up an electronic deposit of your future paychecks, ... does that sound correct?" the man asked.

"Yes, yes, that's what I want," Jake responded quickly. Damn, he thought, Klaus had this covered A to Z.

He supplied answers to the perfunctory questions, as the man began to talk and enter the information into the computer.

"Home address? Same address as the driver's license you gave me here?" asked the manager.

Jake opened his mouth and then chose to shut it. He was going to leave with Klaus, and never to return home. Diaz's home. So it was much better to tell him Klaus's address instead. Yeah, much better.

Only he had no idea about what the address was. In all the times he had been driven to and from the house, he had never bothered to look at the house number. He had never needed to ... Fuck! He thought.

“No, could you, please, give me a second?” he asked politely and fished out his phone.

The man threw him an odd look but said nothing. Should he call Klaus and ask him? No, maybe the guy was busy right now. As he browsed through the contact list, Jake was happy to see that all the important numbers had already been saved by Klaus, including one that said ‘Home’.

Agnes’s voice came through, as he turned slightly away from the manager.

“Metzger residence.”

“Hi, Agnes. It’s Jake, sorry to bother you,” he mumbled. “Agnes, I am at the bank, depositing my paycheck, could you, please, tell me our home address?”

The small pause on the other side made him feel stupid for a second. But Agnes began jabbering, and Jake could swear the old lady was suddenly extremely happy for some reason. Oh shit, what did he just say? He wanted to add something, to cover that fuck-up, but Agnes began enunciating the address in a very loud voice, so he chose just to shut up and listen for a change.

After telling him the address, Agnes asked, “What would you like to have for dinner Jake?”

“Uhm, what? I mean, sorry. Whatever you want.”

“You must have a favorite food,” Agnes insisted.

The banker was looking at him, but showing no sign of impatience. Probably the guy was still trying to wrap his head around what someone like Jake Lopez could have in common with someone like Klaus Metzger.

“Everything you cook is my favorite food,” Jake replied quickly, and he thought honestly. “So, whatever you like.”

He had to move the phone away from his ear. Agnes was either having a weird seizure, or was ... expressing her happiness?! Was she laughing?!

“See you tonight,” he added quickly and smiled a bit after listening for a few seconds to a shower of unintelligible words, probably all German.

He told the branch manager the full address. If the guy recognized Klaus’s home address, he was professional and gave no indication. Jake signed the paperwork and his check. The manager summoned a clerk with a crook of his finger to take the documents, then turned back to Jake.

“It will be three days before we can have a debit card sent by courier to your home, Mr. Lopez. Do you need some cash to use before your card arrives?”

Jake thought for a few seconds.

“Yes, how about a \$100.00, in twenties?”

Minutes later, with money in his pocket, his money, the manager was escorting him through the bank towards the door. With a strong handshake, the manager wished him a good day and thanked him again for his business. Jake turned towards the entrance and began to hurry to get back to work. But, just as he was focused on the door, he saw the security guard look toward him as well.

What was going on now? It felt like something was amiss.

Jake tensed up as he got near the front door. But, the guard who was standing nearby, simply touched his cap and made no move to stop him.

“Have a good day, Sir,” the guard said promptly as he ushered Jake through the door.

Jake walked into the sunshine nearly in a daze; he felt so accomplished with such a small thing. Klaus had made this possible, and he would not forget it. He would have to get used to that he thought, as he headed quickly back to the job site, his work boots clumping heavily on the sidewalk.

“You missed dinner,” Agnes said a bit reproachfully, but Klaus just smiled.

“I am sorry for that, Agnes. You know well that I cannot survive for too long without your cooking. Thompson brought me something while I finished up at the office. Did Jake have dinner?”

“Of course,” Agnes replied. “He was not home late and ate a hearty meal.”

Klaus smiled again, and, by the way, Agnes smiled back, he could see that he had not been missed that badly. Jake was starting to win over his staff, and he was happy with that.

“A hearty meal you say, what did he have?” Klaus inquired, he was curious as to what was behind Agnes’s smile.

“I grilled him a large ribeye steak, one of his favorites, to celebrate his first paycheck,” she stated somewhat proudly. “I also gave him a half glass of that cabernet you like so much, to go with it. He needs to get used to your business entertaining,” she stated flatly, looking somewhat downward.

“Thank you, Agnes, that was very kind of you. What would I do without you?” he asked.

“Don’t let me find out, now get out of my kitchen and go relax!” exclaimed Agnes and shooed him good-naturedly towards the door. Klaus laughed, bade her good night and headed upstairs.

The day had been too long, so he took the stairs two at a time, ignoring how much like a teenager he must have looked. When he pushed the door open to the bedroom, though, he chose to rein in his excitement. By the silence in the room, Jake was already asleep.

He turned up the dimmer on the room lights and smiled as he took in the handsome young man sprawled on the bed right across the middle. The faint glimmer of the chain running down Jake’s back made his dick twitch. Yes, the boy did nothing by half. Maybe he could teach him new tricks. For now, this one seemed to work wonders.

He climbed on the bed and gently traced a long line, following the leash, stopping between Jake’s buttocks.

“Hmm, surprise, surprise,” he said to himself.

His enthusiastic lover had even taken upon himself to pre-lube. Apparently, Klaus wasn’t the only one to think too many hours had gone with them being apart. Now, he could not let all that preparation go to waste. So he began to remove his clothes slowly, to make sure Jake remained asleep.

Jake shifted just a little as Klaus began to probe the muscled ass crack with his fingers. But even in his sleep, the young man began to yield, bucking his ass slightly upward, to allow Klaus’s fingers to go deeper.

Klaus moved his hand lower to cup Jake’s sack and suddenly felt the urge to just lean in and place his lips over his lover’s balls. Jake whimpered at the contact. Klaus showed no hesitation when he just engulfed the boy’s tight sack into his mouth.

“Mmm, Klaus?” Jake’s drowsy voice made him smile.

Try to smile. It was not exactly an easy thing to do with a full mouth. But he let go, somewhat reluctantly.

“Were you expecting someone else?” he joked.

“Yeah, the Tooth Fairy,” Jake snorted.

“Are you always lubing yourself for this particular imaginary character?”

“No,” Jake snickered. “Also for Santa and the elves.”

“I really need to put parental control on your phone. I believe you have been watching some kinky adult entertainment.”

Jake turned on his back and used both his hands to drag Klaus’s body over him. He wrapped his legs around Klaus’s waist.

“You know, I was just in the middle of a nice dream,” Jake said with a small, secretive smile.

“Did it involve Santa’s elves?” Klaus joked.

“No!” Jake scowled. “It involved this,” he added and pulled Klaus closer to kiss him.

It was amazing how the simple skin on skin contact and a kiss could ignite his inner fire, Klaus thought, as he kissed back.

“So ...will you fuck me?” Jake asked, as soon as they were both almost out of breath.

“You should be on top, though. I had a rough day,” Klaus smirked.

Jake’s eyes flashed with uncertainty, and Klaus caught too late the meaning of what he had just said. He pushed the rogue thought away. He made both of them roll over, to have Jake on top.

“Have you ever played cowboy?” he joked, to dispel the little tension in the air.

“Not with a dick in my ass,” Jake smiled.

“There’s a first time for everything,” Klaus laughed and grabbed Jake’s hips.

Jake was quick to act on directions, and that was one of his greatest strengths. But Klaus could not stop himself from teasing a little, as Jake slowly began to impale himself on his lover’s cock.

“Aren’t you forgetting something?” he teased.

Jake threw him a questioning look, panting slightly.

“The leash,” Klaus opened one hand.

Jake was quick to obey, reaching for his neck to adjust the collar and get hold of the chain and then hand it to Klaus.

“Hmm, good boy,” then Klaus yanked the leash to cause Jake to fall forward and crash their chests together. “Yes, definitely better,” he emphasized his words with a short bucking of his hips that made Jake’s breath hitch in his chest.

He didn’t let go of the leash and used the other hand to steady Jake so he could pound into him from below.

“Fuck,” Jake groaned. “I thought I was supposed to ride you. Weren’t you tired or something?”

“What can I say?” Klaus dragged his lover closer by the leash. “You give me strength.”

Jake smiled in return. And Klaus watched, hungry for the play of emotions on the young man’s face, the small surprise, the wonder at what he felt, the satisfaction, the naked desire, growing with each thrust.

He knew he was getting closer. In this position, Jake's ass was just squeezing tighter, and Klaus had gone an entire day without having his lover close.

"And now you ride," he released the leash, allowing Jake to straighten up and use him as a sex toy.

"So frigging great," Jake whimpered, seemingly just as affected. "I can feel you so deep in me."

The chain was bouncing slightly against Jake's taut muscles, as the young man increased his rhythm. And it would have been such a terrible lie to say that that display was not erotic and heightened his pleasure. Jake was pumping his cock fast, closer and closer to the edge. Now Klaus was the one in need of confirmations.

"Do you want me to come in your ass, Jake?"

"Yes, yes, yes," the young man whispered his mantra in return.

"Do you want me to fill you good?"

"Yes, fuck, yes!" Jake's words came out a strangled shout.

"Then let me see you come first, all over me. Come for me, Jake!"

Jake could no longer articulate words, as his hand began pumping harder. For Klaus, the warm droplets hitting him everywhere were the trigger he was waiting for, giving them both the satisfaction they needed.

Days were setting in a rhythm of their own. But both of them knew what had remained unsaid between them. Klaus could tell when Jake was nervous.

"Hitting the controls harder will not make you more effective at your game," he commented as he continued his work at the computer.

"Sorry," Jake mumbled. "I should just go to my room and let you work."

"Stop chastising yourself. You are relieving me of my duty like this," Klaus joked, closing the documents he had been working on for the last two hours. "I finished. So now I am quite prepared to learn what is eating at you."

He turned the rotating chair and looked straight at Jake. Linking his fingers and setting his chin on them, he took in the young man's tense posture.

"Jake," he called softly. "I cannot help you if you do not talk. Is this about that scar? It is all right. I do not need to know if it causes you so much pain. I would like to learn everything about you, but I cannot stand you feeling so miserable."

Jake's response was a self-deprecating snort.

“I have to tell you about it, anyway,” he said.

“You do not have ...”

“Yeah, I do. Otherwise, I’ll just be a fraud.”

Klaus chose to remain silent.

“What?” Jake spoke slowly. “Aren’t you going to tell me nothing would change your opinion or something? You know, like in the movies?”

“I do not need to say it. You already know it.”

“I do?” dark eyes shot back at him, the hurt in them almost too much to bear.

“Yes, Jake, you do,” Klaus replied shortly.

Jake wiped his hands on his jeans and looked away.

“That scar ... I have had it since I was nine. I was with my parents. Diaz was away, somewhere with friends, on a vacation or something.”

Jake stopped for a few seconds and took a deep breath.

“We were in the car, coming back from another family my parents were friends with. And I ... I was a total brat. I kept nagging my dad about some shitty action figure I wanted. My mom was getting annoyed with me, telling me to stop it and be quiet. But, I kept going on and on and on. And then, at some point, my father turned and told me that misbehaving will not make me a better son.”

Jake clenched his hands together nervously and stared at them, his lips set in a deep grim line.

“I yelled at him that I didn’t want to be a better son. All I wanted was the damn toy. To this day, I cannot stand superheroes,” he added with a small, anxious laugh. “My father seemed hurt as he looked at me. He ... opened his mouth to say something more, and there was this big bright light from the front and ...” Jake’s words got lost in a small choking sound.

Klaus chose to wait, doing nothing but look at the young man he had grown so fond of.

“I don’t remember much after that. It was like the air was pushed out of my lungs and there was this sharp pain out of nowhere. I was in the hospital when I woke up, days later. I had this arm all wrapped up. I heard the nurse saying something to another that I was a lucky kid to have kept it. And then, Diaz came. And he looked like hell. And he told me, when I asked about mom and dad, that they’re gone, and they’re never coming back. I didn’t get to be at the funeral. I didn’t get to see them one last time.”

Klaus stood up slowly and sat on the couch next to Jake. He moved with infinite care, taking the young man in his arms and pulling his head against his chest, letting him sob a little and express his pain. He didn’t say anything and just caressed Jake’s raven hair for minutes.

Jake eventually was able to continue.

“I guess Superman and the gang were not on duty that day,” he spoke. “I told Diaz that ... I was the one responsible. All right, maybe not like this. Maybe I said I killed them. And that is why he hates me, even now.”

“Jake,” Klaus took the boy’s head in his hands and forced him to look up. “You did not kill your parents. It was an accident.”

“I shouldn’t have behaved like that,” Jake shook his head. “And Diaz said ...”

“Fuck Diaz,” Klaus cut his lover’s words short. “He was hurt, naturally. At least, he was lucky he still had his little brother. That he was not left all alone in the world.”

“I think he would have rather been alone. There were many things he couldn’t do because of me.”

“And I have the very distinct feeling that you kept your brother out of serious trouble over the years especially because he could not do everything that he wanted to do.”

Maybe he was not the right person to deal with this sort of things. Human emotion usually made him feel awkward, but the boy in his arms deserved the effort. So he continued to hold Jake close, as close as he could, almost squeezing him, and wanting nothing more than to push away all that old pain.

Jake could not remember what he had expected, and what he had thought about how Klaus was going to react, but this was a surprise. He was trapped by that muscular body, almost impossible for him to move, while the man kept his blue gaze trained on him. The man began to kiss him slowly, but firmly, putting weight on every move, making Jake feel close to the point of being crushed, but weirdly secure, guarded against the world.

“You are to be loved, Jake,” Klaus cooed, once he allowed his lover the basic right to air.

Jake wanted to be able to say something, to protest, maybe, but his mouth was taken again, and this time the kiss deepened, becoming more passionate. Klaus slowly wiped the wetness at the corners of his eyes with the thumbs, and it almost made him want to cry for real, now.

He was not allowed. He could do nothing. He was almost powerless, but safe, as Klaus just continued to press him against the couch like he wanted to be a human shield. And the truth was he did feel protected. The usual anxiety always walking by his side throughout his entire life was now nothing but a soft low thrum at the back of his mind.

He should not have felt so good, seeing that he had just confessed to his crimes. But it felt like a huge weight had been lifted from his chest, and, while Klaus apparently had a mind of ensuring Jake’s staying alive only through mouth-to-mouth resuscitation techniques, he felt like he could finally, truly breathe.

Diaz had been a good brother if anyone was to ask him. Jake had forgiven him countless times for his usual outbursts because the good he did often outweigh the bad. But this? This was different. Klaus was not judging him. He was not asking Jake to fit a mold. And Jake felt free. And that had to count for something.

That night, Klaus took his time, making sure Jake was first in everything. And Jake could not help thinking that he had never been this close to someone else, in his entire life.

“Hey,” he called, lazily opening his eyes.

Klaus pulled him close.

“Hey,” the man replied with a small smile.

“Thank you,” Jake felt his throat getting tight.

“No need to mention it,” Klaus waved.

“Is it a bad moment to ask you about Hans?” Jake asked, almost regretting his words right away.

Was this insecurity ever going to be gone? Ever? It was like he just needed to check, to make sure that it was real, that nothing could come between him and Klaus.

“A deal is a deal,” Klaus said. “So ask away.”

“How did you two meet?”

“We have been friends since childhood. I can safely say we have known each other all our lives.”

“Strange. He doesn’t sound like you. He’s a bit like ... I don’t know, less ... stuck up.”

“Stuck up?” Klaus protested but grinned. “His family was a bit more unconventional. My parents were strict.”

“Strict? You always look like you are straight out of a box or something, though.”

“Let us say, for the sake of your lovely behind, that I take this as a compliment. Hans’s family was all fun and giggles if I can say so. I escaped to their house on a regular basis.”

“So, did you two, you know, find out you were ... gay, together?”

Jake wanted to know more about Klaus’s family, but now it was not the time. He was already prying too much. But it was not only his fault he felt so jealous. Klaus could trigger feelings of possessiveness just by looking at someone else. And that was a maddening thought.

“No. Hans was the first. He has always been carefree. He told me he was gay while we were talking about a video game that had just been released. I thought I heard wrong. Had him repeat that. We were 15, at that time.”

“Wow, so early,” Jake mumbled.

Who was he kidding? It had not been much different for him, either. It had been around that time when he had noticed for the first time that he would instead look at guys than girls. Only that he needed someone like Klaus to rock his world and make him admit it.

“I was rather disappointed with him. We had a fascinating plan at that time to marry the twins living on the same street, and have a joint wedding.”

“No shit. Do guys really plan such stuff? Here, you won’t catch one dead doing that,” Jake snorted.

“Well, the truth was I was the one with the plan. I needed predictability, and I needed my friend. For my 15-year old self, that sounded like a solid choice. The girls were from a good family, and they were close to home. Hans, I suppose, just played along.”

“And? What happened next?” Jake could not suppress his curiosity and shifted in his place, so he could look at Klaus and gauge every reaction.

“I did not speak to him for days. It felt so annoying not to have someone to talk to. He had always been there. And then, he just brought some guy home. His family, as I said, was open to this sort of things. It was not unusual to have their son bring a boyfriend home. My parents would have had a heart attack. I felt like I was losing my best friend.”

“And? Did you jump his bones or something? Because you were so frustrated and stuff?”

“No. Nothing of the kind. But I told him I forgave him. He shut the door in my face. And the worst part was that I could hear him laughing with the other guy through the damn door.”

“Wow,” Jake whispered. “Hans is something, isn’t he? But how did you two get together?”

“It happened much later when we were both grownups. During high school, I got used to him getting together with various guys. It felt strange to me, but he was my friend, so I grew accepting of the situation.”

“And how did you come to ... You know, discover you were gay?”

“That is another story, right?” Klaus smiled. “You wanted to know about Hans, did you not?”

“Okay,” Jake admitted.

Klaus ruffled his hair playfully.

“I was a late bloomer, I suppose. The occasional get-togethers with girls were pleasant, but I did not feel the need to engage in intercourse with them. But, when I was in business school,

well, things changed there. I would not go into details right now, but I hooked up with a pretty guy, and, well, from there, I knew what I liked.”

“And what did Hans say when you told him?”

“He laughed, obviously. And told me that it was no wonder seeing that I enjoyed having a stick up my ass all the time. Something I believe someone else told me lately, too,” Klaus smiled, and Jake snickered.

“Yeah,” Jake buried his head into the crook of Klaus’s shoulder.

“We got together the first time more as a joke. None of us was tied in a relationship at the moment, and we thought it would be fun.”

“And was it?”

Klaus grimaced.

“At first, so it seemed. Fuck buddies, I believe this is the term. But we began fighting. Really fighting. As grownups, that can complicate things a great deal. Eventually, we grew so far apart that I started missing my friend, just like before. So we decided to split. And it was plenty of unpleasant. Because Hans told me he wanted more, while I only wanted less. I wanted my best friend back.”

“That must have been nasty for Hans.”

“And I have to admit that I just made things worse,” Klaus admitted. “A few times after breaking up, we still landed in the same bed, somehow. I am really glad he has now found someone. I was not that one. Not for him.”

“What kind of guy is Stephen, by the way?”

“I see Hans gushed over him to you, too,” Klaus smiled. “I think he might be the guy Hans has been looking for. They are insanely annoying. They just met, but they are already finishing each other sentences. I have no idea what sort of planet alignment happened the day they met, but it was a lucky one for both of them. They are on the same page all the time. It gets on one’s nerves; I must say,” Klaus spoke, but continued to smile. “All in all, they are perfect for one another.”

“Wow, that must be nice,” Jake spoke.

“Do not tell me this is not nice, too,” Klaus playfully grabbed his ass and pulled him closer.

“Nice? No,” Jake denied and laughed seeing his lover pouting. “It’s awesome. You know, exciting. Like a rollercoaster.”

“I think I do not like the comparison too much. Fun rides usually have an end, right?”

“Maybe not,” Jake teased and pressed his lips against Klaus’s. “Maybe it would be fun to be stuck on repeat.”

Trapped on the best ride in the world.

Klaus listened to his agent, his lips pursed, and his fingers tapping methodically against the varnished wood. For two whole months, it had been quiet. He might have even let himself be fooled into thinking that everything was working just fine. No, he had never stopped thinking that could not be the case.

He looked out the window, as the man in front of him continued his observations. Outside, Jake was laying by the pool sunbathing, enjoying the last days of summer. His body had filled out with more muscle since he first came; between the hard work, regular meals and being away from an environment of constant worry and danger, the young man was growing up and becoming even more handsome, if that was possible. Typically, he would have contemplated the beautiful sight, and let his mind wander and relax for a bit. But now, the horizons were starting to get bleak.

Something he had expected. He had planned for such scenarios.

“*Bellum omnium contra omnes?*” he murmured, mostly to himself.

“Sir?” the man stopped and frowned, leaning forward.

“I suppose we should let these “city warlords” as they see themselves settle this between them,” he decided, the thrumming of his fingers against the desk finally brought to a halt. “It is the most efficient method. And when the king gets crowned, we can proceed to settle things once and for all. However, in the meantime, I want you to keep a close eye on the gang called The Outsiders, especially their leader, Diaz Lopez.”

“Do you favor them to be the dominant gang?” the agent asked, surprised.

Klaus snorted.

“Not exactly. However, I must honor a promise, so keep close tabs on Diaz when things begin to get rough. I care nothing for the rest. Hire extra men if you need to watch him,” Klaus concluded.

“Very well, but what happens when the restlessness affects some work sites?” the agent said.

“We can afford a few delays. I would not dirty my hands fighting with every one of them. And let them think they have control. This is, after all, the biggest illusion of them all.”

The man nodded, his face as expressionless as always.

Note on the Latin phrase Klaus uses:

Bellum omnium contra omnes = the war of all against all

Chapter Nineteen

Jake stole a nervous look in Klaus's direction, but the guy seemed as impassive as ever while reading his newspaper.

"The gangs are kind of fighting," he eventually managed to speak.

The last few months had been like a fairy tale. Not that he believed in such things. But whatever was happening between him and this man he could no longer call a stranger pretty much seemed taken from a movie, the kind that was supposed to have a happy ending. He wanted to believe that was the case with Klaus and him, too.

Only that the streets didn't care that much about his stupid dreams. He had seen Diaz almost weekly, and his brother had seemed more and more different from the guy he knew. Diaz was changing, and Jake could not say whether it was for the better or, the worse. Diaz was focused, a sort of new determination in his eyes, harsher than usual, and Jake had not had the guts to ask him what was going on. Now, that he had heard more and more about the gangs fighting, he wished he had asked.

"What else is new?" Klaus seemed immersed in his correspondence and newspaper.

"Shouldn't you be doing something? To stop them?" Jake insisted.

"What makes you think I am not doing anything?" Klaus looked up from the papers straight at him.

"You are?"

The man's strange smile was doing nothing for his nerves.

"Tell me what you are concerned about, love," Klaus said casually, while his eyes traveled to his papers again.

Diaz was not the only one too focused these days. And Jake could not shake off the sensation that he was kept in the dark by the only two people in his life that mattered. Plus, Klaus was using that endearing term so often lately that Jake wondered if it meant anything. At least the guy hadn't insisted for Jake to confess again. They seemed to be too busy ... living. Sharing moments, minutes, hours, sometimes only in pleasant silence, sometimes having crazy sex, like usual, and sometimes only talking about their days. It kind of reminded Jake of something, something he had thought lost and gone a long time ago.

"Is this about your brother?" Klaus made a ball of paper out of one of the envelopes on his desk.

"Yeah, I mean, Diaz ..."

"Diaz is old enough to take care of himself," Klaus said shortly.

"I guess," Jake said unconvinced.

“I gave you my word,” Klaus spoke. “Your brother will not end up imprisoned. Regardless of his wrongdoings. Is this enough of a guarantee for you?”

“Yes,” Jake said, casting his eyes down.

“Come here. Kiss me,” Klaus beckoned him close. “I think that you have not kissed me during the last hour at all.”

Jake rushed to the man and threw his arms around his lover’s neck, placing a long kiss on Klaus’s lips. It was a cheap trick if he was to think about it, but if Diaz and Klaus thought themselves too smart to let him in their dealings, he was ready to find out what was going on without their help. And pretend he was the only guy with his head in the clouds in this.

“I still have work,” Klaus sounded genuinely regretful when Jake broke the kiss. “It feels like I see you too little these days.”

“It’s okay,” Jake smiled. “My ass is thankful for the break.”

“You cannot be serious,” Klaus huffed, but his lips stretched into a smile. “I know for a fact that you are in mint condition.”

“Yeah, right,” Jake rolled his eyes. “Tell that to someone who doesn’t know what a sex demon you are.”

“As usual, you are quick to flatter me. Off you go now, or I will not be able to finish here this century.”

Of course he went, but only after sharing another long kiss with Klaus.

Klaus did not need his beautiful lover’s warnings to know that the noose was tightening. But it was not yet the moment to intervene. Timing was everything. Too early, and he would have risked complications. Unwanted expenses. Right now, it was for the best just to wait.

Another long night spent sorting out business matters. For the first time in forever, he felt weary. He would have traded his place with anyone just to be able to head back to sleep and spoon with Jake. The young man had kept a solid promise to be all over him if they slept together, and now Klaus was wondering whether he could ever sleep alone again.

Highly unlikely. He was not usually impatient, but he wanted to wrap things faster and head back to Germany, with Jake. He could not wait to show his lover his real home. And it was time for him to let others handle his business so that he could spend more time in the same place. Jake was going to have school for a few years, and that meant that he could not travel with Klaus all the time.

He wondered briefly how it had come to this. Hans kept telling him that it was long overdue. And that he was lucky it had not happened with some random gold digger. Yes, he was lucky. No one else was luckier in the whole wide world.

If he was efficient enough, they were going to spend Christmas in Germany, settled in Klaus's old home. He had a hunch Jake was going to love it. It was smaller and cozier than the estate he used now. And Jake still felt ill at ease, as far as he could tell. The young man preferred only a few places and did not venture a lot to get more acquainted with the rest of the property. Surprisingly one of those places was in the kitchen with Agnes, where Klaus suspected that she was giving him some informal cooking lessons after Jake had repeatedly offered to help her in the kitchen.

A creature of habit, Klaus thought and smiled. He was one, too, but he was about to change some of the old habits in favor of enjoying a comfortable life with his Jake. That was earned, after all.

"Hey, Diaz," he casually waved at his brother.

"What are you doing here, little bro?" Diaz eyed him, a bit suspicious.

"What's this stuff you all moving about?" Jake gestured towards the wooden boxes laid on the floor.

"Nothing kids like you should know," Diaz ruffled his hair.

"I heard the Wanderers are like all gone and stuff," Jake mentioned. "Not one guy left. Nothing."

"Yeah," Diaz replied, and there was a small glint in his dark eyes that Jake didn't miss.

"And not just them."

"And?" Diaz shrugged, as he sat on one of the boxes and looked up at Jake.

"You're like the only guys left," Jake gestured around. "I think."

"Good to know you have two eyes," Diaz snorted. "How's your life, dog? Going to that fancy school yet?"

"Not yet," Jake looked down.

He had not yet mustered the courage to tell Diaz he was going to leave the country and go to Germany with Klaus. Eventually, he and Klaus decided that it was for the best to just start school there, and skip all the complications with a transfer. But now, he had to find a lie that was easy to believe, at least by Diaz's standards. So far, he had come up with nothing.

"You know what, Jake?" Diaz looked at him and seemed to ponder over something. "You go to that school. Get that paper that tells you that you're smarter than the rest of us."

"It's not like that," Jake protested.

“Yeah, it is,” Diaz cut him short and pointed the finger at him. “Because you might be that. The thing is, you have no pride in yourself. Licking that guy’s shoes for what? Education?”

Diaz spat the last word like it was poison.

“It’s the only reason why I let you do that,” Diaz continued. “Mom would have liked that. One of her boys getting into college. She would have bragged to all her friends. So do that. Okay?”

Jake just nodded. Yeah, mom would have liked that. But she would not have wanted to see her firstborn involved in shady stuff like Diaz was right now. Jake wasn’t stupid. He wasn’t sure if he was smarter than the others, but he did have both eyes and half a brain to know Diaz was up to no good.

He pretended to take a hike and returned after a little while. No one was going to wonder why he was around. But he was careful not to let himself be seen.

That night, he didn’t sleep well. Nor the next. Nor the following. Maybe it was a good thing that Klaus worked late every night. The man was going to see something was not right if he could spare one of his scrutinizing looks in Jake’s direction. And that, luckily, was not happening.

The dinner had been quite silent, which was unusual, even for a guy like Klaus who had admonished Jake a few times about talking with his mouth full. But now, he had to go to sleep alone, and he needed to know where Klaus was. If what he had heard from Diaz that night was true, some things were bound to happen.

So, listening to his gut instinct, he left the bedroom to check on Klaus a few hours later.

“Where are you going?” Jake watched Klaus putting on gloves.

The man seemed surprised to see him at the top of the stairs. Jake was surprised to see the gloves. It was late at night, but by no means so cold to wear leather gloves.

“Some small issue I need to tend to,” Klaus replied.

“I see,” Jake said slowly, but didn’t move.

“You go back to sleep. I will be back later, and then I will not let you rest until morning,” Klaus joked.

Funny thing. The man said he never lied.

Klaus lit up a cigarillo and patted the pocket of his coat. So the final act was finally in the works. Maybe he had lied to Jake, but the boy did not have to be privy to everything. After all, Klaus was doing this to protect him, as well.

The car slowly came to a halt. Slipping into his usual no-nonsense persona, he proceeded to get out of the vehicle.

“You really have some balls to come here,” Diaz opened his arms in fake welcome.

“I believe I was invited,” Klaus smiled affably.

“Well, I didn’t think you’d come, though,” Diaz rubbed his chin. “Anyways, since you’re here, let me tell you this. We rule this city, okay? We’re the masters around here. And you better put up all the money you have, pretty boy, or you won’t like it.”

“I am terribly sorry, Mr. Lopez, but I do not know of any changes in the structure of the city hall as of late. Have you perhaps become mayor?”

Diaz’s lips curled unpleasantly.

“Nazi boy here thinks he’s smart,” Diaz showed teeth in his snarl.

The men around him began to move. Klaus could sense the wave of hostility growing. He consulted his watch. A little time to play cat and mouse. A small luxury by all means.

“I might not be the mayor. But you know what the fuck I’m talking about,” Diaz sneered. “I’m not that cocksucker, quick to kiss your ass. I’m the real king of this place, so you better pay respect.”

“Respect, Mr. Lopez,” Klaus tasted every word in his mouth, “is earned, not given.”

“Mr. Lopez? Why so formal?” Diaz opened his arms and laughed.

There was nothing remotely hilarious in the situation. But Klaus smiled, nonetheless. A bit of a dogfight could be entertaining once in a while.

“I am not comfortable with being on a first name basis with scum like you.”

The sound of guns cocking was to be expected. Nonetheless, Klaus chose to stand his ground, looking Diaz straight into his dark mean eyes. He could see the resemblance. Diaz was, indeed, a lucky man to be Jake’s older brother. Even if the young man had not asked for his brother to be spared, Klaus would not have found it easy to get rid of that character. It would have felt wrong.

Diaz balanced the gun in his hand, most probably with the intent to scare. Klaus just squared his shoulders.

“I could just put a bullet in your head,” Diaz pointed the gun at him.

“And risk losing money? I thought you were fond of it,” Klaus smiled thinly.

“Ha, you think you’re in any position to negotiate? We can kill you and bury you in a place with no name on it. What do you think will happen?”

“Except for signing your death warrant?” Klaus drawled the words like he was having fun. “And everyone else’s?” he gestured around.

“You’re just one guy. And we can take care of your driver later. Wreck your car. Pity that’s a nice ride. Make it look like a fucking accident.”

“And now you are just talking out of your ass,” Klaus sighed.

Diaz flinched like there was suddenly a fly getting in his eye. The hand on the gun trembled. The sound was deafening in the strange silence, and everyone turned.

Jake rushed through the door and ran to stand between Klaus and his brother. Through a haze, he registered the surprised look in his lover’s eyes, mixed with something he had never seen before.

“No! You can’t!” he yelled at Diaz, raising his arms like he was trying to block the entire space between the two.

“Jake, what the fuck are you doing here?” Diaz looked at him like he was crazy. “Get the fuck out!”

Jake was about to say something when he felt grabbed from behind. His blood pounding in his ears stopped, brought to a halt by a curdling sensation in his stomach, as cold metal pressed against his temple. He almost stumbled backward, kept on his feet by a strong arm belonging to someone he knew too well. He thought he knew.

“How fortunate,” Klaus spoke, his German accent unhidden now. “What are you going to say about this, Diaz? Do you remember what collateral means?”

“Let him go,” Diaz yelled and raised his arm higher, but his hold was just growing unsteady.

“He is such a handsome young man,” Klaus continued, tapping his gun against Jake’s temple. “His entire life before him. And you want to ruin it? For what? It would be quite a shame, don’t you think? Now be a good boy, and put the weapon down. And tell your acolytes to do the same.”

“Yeah, right,” Diaz began laughing. “What else?”

“Do not test my patience,” Klaus added.

Jake felt like he was paralyzed. His mind was blank like he was moving through muddy water. He heard the words. He felt Klaus’s strong body pressing into his. But he could not make sense of anything. The familiarity of being so close only made him feel sick and confused.

“Let’s just shoot them both,” one man yelled.

Diaz turned like he was burned with acid and pointed the gun at that man.

“What did you say, dog? You want to kill my little brother?”

Jake felt air returning to his lungs, and he began struggling against Klaus’s arm keeping him in place. The man just pulled him closer, tightening his grip. He tried to turn his head so he could look at Klaus.

“Drop your weapons, gentlemen,” another voice shouted.

Jake could not turn to see everything that was happening. But there were men in dark blue pouring through the door now and coming from seemingly everywhere, and soon the sound of guns hitting the floor, curses, and yelling filled the air.

Jake watched in horror the scene before his eyes. A man was now pushing Diaz with his face against the wall and putting him in cuffs.

“Ah, the cavalry,” he heard Klaus commenting, and he turned to face the guy.

The gun kept until earlier to his temple was gone, and Klaus was taking in the scene, with a satisfied smirk on his face.

“You promised,” he whispered, hanging on the man’s arm. “You gave me your word,” he hissed through his teeth.

Klaus looked at him and dared to look hurt. He frowned and gestured for one of the men in blue, who seemed to be in charge, to come closer. The gang members were taken away, the workshop quickly emptying.

Jake watched as the cuffs on Diaz’s wrists were released by the man Klaus had spoken to, earlier.

“Sir,” the man passed by and saluted. “Are you certain?”

“Just this one time,” Klaus said with a strange smile.

There were only the three of them left in the room. Klaus pushed Jake aside firmly and walked towards Diaz. The man took a few steps back until he almost hit the wall.

“So, Diaz, let me hear it,” Klaus stopped a few feet away from Jake’s brother.

“Hear what?” Diaz’s eyes were darting sideways, looking for an escape route.

“Well, let me hear you thanking me,” Klaus’s voice became frozen.

“Thanking you? Are you fucking crazy?”

Jake’s feet were made of lead. He wanted to yell at them, to stop already.

“As you can see, I just saved your ass from prison. How about a little gratitude?”

“Fuck you,” Diaz spat.

“How about thanking your little brother then? He did ask me to look out for you.”

“Fuck you!” Diaz’s voice was now angrier, as the guy stole one quick look at Jake.

“That is not very nice of you. So, seeing how you lost your crew, how about a little mano a mano? What do you say?”

Diaz’s eyes settled on the man now.

“Diaz,” Jake called. “Don’t, just don’t do it! He’ll fucking wreck you! Klaus ...”

“Jake, shut the fuck up!”

“Jake, stay out of this!”

Strange how the two rivals were on the same page when it came to putting him in place.

Diaz smirked as he put up his fists.

“Don’t you worry, little bro. Fancy pants here needs a lesson. But first, Nazi boy, lose the piece.”

Klaus reached into his pocket and fished out his gun. He threw it on the floor, away from both of them. Then he showed his open palms. Jake shifted in his place, not knowing what to do.

“Let’s have Jake keep score,” Klaus offered.

“Fuck score. I’ll fuck you up before you can move your fag ass one inch.”

Jake felt the first blow like it was aimed at him. Diaz wobbled and shook his head.

“Taking me by surprise, eh, fag?”

Klaus evaded the next clumsy attack gracefully and made Diaz stumble and fall face first to the floor.

“I dislike that word to the extreme,” Klaus said with a small huff. “But I will allow you the courtesy to stand up again. I also dislike hitting a man when down.”

Diaz stood up with murder in his eyes. This time, he managed to push Klaus against the wall and send home a punch, right into the man’s side. But Klaus pushed his knee between them and used both his hands to throw Diaz away from him and onto his back.

Klaus towered over the man.

“It may seem a tad late to talk rules here, but you can yield at any moment.”

“Fuck you,” Diaz replied and struggled to get to his feet.

Jake attempted to move. Klaus pointed the finger at him, without even looking.

“Do not even dare, Jake. Your brother and I will settle this like men.”

Diaz took advantage of what he thought to be an opening, only to be met by another harsh punch. He was breathing heavily now, just moving around and throwing his fists at random. Jake could feel his heart breaking. Klaus was merciless, meeting every failed attempt with another strike.

Diaz fell to the ground, blood pouring from a split lip. Klaus came next to him.

“Let me hear it now, Diaz.”

Diaz spat a glob of blood at the man’s feet.

“When hell freezes over.”

“Very well.”

Klaus grabbed Diaz, forcing him to his knees.

“I do appreciate resilience in a man, but not when it is directed against me.”

Diaz’s head lolled to one side. Jake covered his eyes.

“Jake,” his brother called for him at the third strike. “Grab that piece and shoot this bastard!”

Jake searched for the abandoned weapon with his eyes. He hurried and took it, the gun real and threatening in his hand. He was trembling as he held it with both his hands.

The two men looked at him.

“Shoot him, Jake! Don’t be a fucking coward!”

Klaus remained silent. He was just looking at Jake, his eyes trained on him, unreadable. Diaz continued his bellowing. When the feet were cut from underneath Klaus, Jake dropped the weapon to the floor, like it was burning him.

This time, the two men were fighting on the floor, and Jake could not tell who was winning now. Diaz seemed to have found new strength and was pinning Klaus to the floor. His victory was short-lived, though.

The howl felt deafening in Jake’s ears. So did the terrible sound of bone cracking. Diaz’s body fell limp.

Jake hurried by his brother’s side.

“Oh, no, oh, no, no, no, no, no!” he cried, as he pushed against his brother’s unconscious form, dragging him to nestle his head in his lap.

“Do not worry; he is not dead. But he should better have that leg put back together by a good surgeon. Otherwise, he might develop a limp. Now come, Jake. There is nothing left for you to do here.”

Jake looked up, his eyes filled with tears.

“No,” he said, fighting to stop the trembling in his lips.

“No?” Klaus watched him, with unhidden surprise.

“No,” Jake said again.

Klaus’s face turned to stone. He took a few moments to straighten up his suit.

“Is this your final answer?” he asked again.

Jake hated him. He hated his blue eyes and perfect face. Yeah, fairy tales were for stupid idiots.

“Yeah,” he replied, pulling his brother’s head closer and cradling it in his arms.

“Suit yourself,” Klaus shrugged and turned on his feet.

He stopped only for a second, to pick up the gun from the floor. Then he was gone as he had never been there.

Jake barely registered the sound of the door closing behind the man. He should have never dared to dream. Klaus was just another asshole in a world of assholes and Jake should have known better.

Chapter Twenty

“Is that you, little bro?” he heard his brother calling for him.

“Yeah, it’s me,” Jake spoke. “I’ll make you something to eat.”

“With your cooking, I might be dead by next week,” Diaz joked.

Jake helped his brother up on to his good foot and then guided him to the kitchen table. At least he knew how to make scrambled eggs.

“How come you didn’t go running back to that asshole?” Diaz asked as he ate.

“I’m no longer collateral,” Jake spoke as he fiddled with the cutlery. “Whatever business he had with us, that’s over.”

Diaz seemed to ponder.

“I thought fags were pussy ass bitches. He did a number on me, the fucker.”

“I tried to warn you,” Jake said. “That guy, when he’s not working, he’s just training. He’s into some weird shit kung fu stuff.”

“You should have tried harder and fired that gun,” Diaz mumbled.

“And have us both in jail? Or worse? You don’t know this guy, Diaz.”

“Yeah, I don’t know him. But I thought I knew you. And you chickened out. So what if we ended in jail? This shit isn’t a good life anyway. What do you do? Wash dishes?”

“Diaz, just stop it. Any kind of work is good. Especially in our situation.”

“Why don’t you go to one of those construction sites? They pay better, at least.”

“I don’t want to go back to work for him,” Jake replied.

Diaz seemed to ponder.

“I suppose that would be shitty, yeah. But don’t worry, once I’m on my feet, I’ll be right back into action. And you won’t have to wash dishes no more, little bro,” he said.

Jake shrugged. Whatever plans Diaz had, he didn’t want to hear. He could not give a damn about anyone’s plans.

Later, after his brother fell asleep, he took out his phone and stared at it. Missed calls, unread messages. He had to get rid of the damn thing.

It was quite a surprise, Klaus thought, as his eyes bore into the papers in front of him like he wanted to burn a hole through them. A very unpleasant surprise. Like a shard of ice that made him feel cold from the inside. He frowned.

“Sir?” his secretary’s musical voice brought him back to the real world. “Are the terms to your liking? You have not said a word. I can have the legal team ...”

“No, it is all in order, Martha,” he smiled at the woman who seemed relieved.

Everything was in order except for one thing. And that had to be corrected. The past several weeks was enough time for things to settle down.

Jake felt like he needed three nights of sleep. Working two shitty jobs was enough to make him a little crazy. Or just very tired. At least, Diaz was on the mend. Soon enough, they were going to be both working, and that meant he could catch a bit of rest.

He kicked a stone and watched it roll. Until it hit a pair of perfectly shined shoes. His head shot up.

“I think it is time for you to come home now.”

“That’s exactly where I was heading until you blocked the way,” Jake looked away with growing unease.

“You are not answering your phone, nor reading your messages. I believe this rebellious period should come to an end. You did not even go to work.”

“Believe whatever the fuck you want.”

The man started walking towards him. Jake looked around. The deserted street didn’t look to have too many escape routes.

“I do not like repeating myself, Jake. Come home.”

The hand on his wrist was warm, but Jake was done with being lulled into a false sense of security. He pulled his arm free.

“Or what? Are you going to put a bullet through my head? Or beat me bloody?” he spat.

Again, the blue eyes swam in hurt. Jake wanted none of it. Believed none of it.

“It is true that we need to talk.”

“Talk about what? Are you for real, Klaus? You held a fucking gun to my head!” he pointed two fingers at his temple to emphasize his words. “Don’t tell me that thing wasn’t real!”

“It was real,” Klaus sighed.

“Was it loaded?”

“Yes, it was loaded.”

“For fuck’s sake,” Jake pushed his hands through his hair in despair. “What do you want me to say, huh? That I’m crazy enough to like playing Russian roulette with you? That shit ain’t flying; I can tell you that!”

“Do you suggest that I could have hurt you? The safety was on.”

“No shit,” Jake spoke. “Well, I don’t give a fuck anyway. I don’t want your fucked up games. Just stop being in my way. Ah, and take this stupid phone. It’s yours, anyway.”

He took the phone from his pocket and held it. Klaus made no move to take it.

“I bought it for you. I do not want it back.”

“Well, you should take it, because it’s not mine, either. I am not going just to break it or throw away your property; it’s too expensive.”

“You can keep it.”

“Fine,” Jake pushed it back into his jeans. “I’ll drop it by your house when I have the time.”

He began walking. He could not stand one more minute to be around the man. He could not stand looking at him and think of all the stupid lies. And the time before. Before everything went to shit.

“I will wait for you, then,” Klaus called after him.

Jake was entitled to feel hurt. But he should have known better. Klaus tossed and turned. The boy should have trusted him. It did hurt like a bitch. Something of Jake’s language seemed to rub off on him.

And sleeping alone was a bitch, too. He gave up and went to the window to light another cigarillo. The prey was proving difficult to catch. Maybe he could start to corner it. Then Jake would have to talk to him. And he could settle things, explain everything, and they could go back to normal.

It felt unreal. Like a pain in his side that refused to go away. He could have just gone and forced the boy to come back. But the thought did not appeal. Jake had to want to keep up his part of the deal. After all, Diaz was free as a bird, despite being the most deserving of a few years behind bars in probably the entire town.

That was the fourth place where they said they didn’t need any help. The situation was starting to feel creepy somehow. At least, Diaz was bringing home money, only he knew how. Jake didn’t care to know, and he didn’t want to get involved.

Maybe that was the sign he had been waiting for his entire life. This town was a dead end, nothing more. He could lie to himself all he wanted, but the thought of dying while peddling drugs or doing something stupid was not his idea. It was maybe his brother's, but not his.

There were a few loose ends to tie up. It hurt like a bitch, but it was needed. He felt so stupid for still caring for that asshole. But he would have rather cut his hand than grab the phone and call him. They were going to forget about each other. Klaus was probably already swimming in supermodels by now. And one day, maybe he was going to get together with someone else. Not like Klaus. That was as definite as the scar on his arm.

He went straight to the post office. Counting the few crumpled bills and change in his pocket, he spread them on the counter.

"I'd like to send a package."

"What's with you home so soon?" Diaz questioned.

"I can't seem to find a decent place to work in this shitty town," Jake shrugged. "I'm thinking about leaving."

"Leaving? Why would you leave? You can work with me," Diaz grabbed him by the shoulder.

"Nah, I'll pass," Jake shrugged.

Diaz threw him a strange look.

"Ever since you went to live with that fag, you got all these crazy ideas in your head. We have to rebuild the Outsiders. It's only you and me left now."

"Only you," Jake shook his head. "I was never one of you, guys. You made sure I felt that. I was the fucking Outsider. Even to you."

"You were just a kid, little bro. I could not let you in everything. But now things are different. Come on. We'll have fun, women, everything. Don't tell me that fag made you like to take it up the ass, too," Diaz joked.

Jake recoiled from his brother's touch.

"Stop saying the word fag," he said through his teeth.

"Say what?" Diaz moved closer like he pretended he could not hear well.

"I said," Jake straightened his back and looked his brother in the eyes, "to stop saying the word fag."

"Are you taking that guy's side now? He took our gang away from us, our home, he beat me up, broke my leg, and you're on his side?"

“I’m on no one’s side but mine,” Jake replied.

Diaz’s eyes grew wide. Then he began shaking his head.

“Nah, that cannot be,” he spoke. “What are you trying to say?”

Jake sighed, and inhaled deeply, knowing it was now or never.

“I’m gay, okay?”

Diaz stared at him for a moment and then frowned.

“Is April’s Fools or something?”

“No. That’s who I am. And don’t worry, Diaz, you don’t have to support your little brother’s weight around no more. I’m leaving.”

“Did that guy turn you like a little bitch then?” Diaz asked.

“No. I was always gay.”

“Like hell you were. You fucked girls. Don’t tell me shit just to piss me off.”

“I never liked it with a girl.”

“Bullshit!” Diaz swept the plates off the table, making them land on the floor and break into pieces. “Stop joking, little brother, or I won’t mind beating the shit out of you!” Diaz pushes his index finger into Jake’s face.

Jake remained calm.

“I’m leaving tonight. If you have anything to say to me, just say it now.”

“This is what I have to say to you.”

The punch made him lose balance for a moment. But he regained it and put his fist into Diaz’s face so fast that the other staggered, both in surprise and because of the strength of the hit. Maybe he had picked up a few things lately too.

“You don’t get to beat me up anymore, big brother,” he said bitterly. “If you can’t live with me being gay, I can. And I prefer it.”

He went through the door without a look back.

“Jake, come back here,” Diaz yelled after him.

Jake just continued to walk faster. They had not had a good surgeon. Diaz now had a limp. And that meant he could not catch him.

He waved for another car, but the driver didn't stop. He could feel his jaw starting to hurt, where Diaz had hit him. That was not going to look good. But he had some money left from the time he had worked for Klaus to put a roof over his head until he found work.

The least pleasant thing, however, was not how his feet were starting to hurt, or how his belly grumbled. The annoying little thoughts dragging on him like an elastic band, and all related to that guy. The further he walked away from his place of birth, the further he was getting away from him, too. And that put an empty space in the pit of his stomach that was making it almost impossible to breathe.

A car almost blinded him, coming from the other direction. Jake was tempted for a second to give the guy the finger, but he was too damn tired for that. Maybe he could just find a place to sleep not far from the road and continue his trip in the morning.

The driver that had just passed by him made a sudden U-turn, and Jake looked behind him. The silver Merc didn't seem ominous by no means, but it was not like he could tell good guys from the bad guys lately.

The surprising part was that the Merc stopped by his side. When the window slid down, he wondered if he should make a run for it.

"Jake, buddy, what's with you here?"

Jake stared in shock at the last person he was expecting to see.

"Fuck," he murmured under his breath, as he looked back into Hans's face.

"Come on, don't just stand there. Get in, and I'll give you a lift."

He looked down the road. There was a chance in a hundred he was going to get someone to drive him to the next town. And Hans was a nice guy, after all.

"So where to?" Hans asked him, once he was seated comfortably inside. "Is it just me, or you're traveling to the opposite direction of what I know to be your hometown?"

Jake snorted. But he was thankful for the consideration.

"I just need to get to the nearest town. Or just somewhere that is far enough from here."

Hans made a small non-committal sound.

"Should I ask what happened?" he kicked the car into gear and they started moving. "Wait, what's that on your face?"

Hans frowned as he spoke.

"Just tell me it was not my friend who did that to you or it means that I don't know anyone anymore and I should lose faith in humanity."

“No, it wasn’t,” Jake hurried to talk. “It was my brother. I kinda came out to him or something.”

“Then I’m surprised you don’t look worse,” Hans said in good humor.

“I know how to run,” Jake replied.

“It looks so,” Hans added. “Do you want me to call Klaus?”

“No,” Jake said sourly. “I’m through with that guy.”

“Something did smell fishy to me,” Hans spoke. “Klaus only speaks about work, and you’re never online. I should have guessed there was something wrong in paradise.”

“Paradise?” Jake snorted. “It was not anything like it.”

But it had been everything like it. Only it had been nothing but a fucking ugly lie, nothing else.

“But what brings you here?” Jake chose to change the subject. “And you even left your boyfriend behind, it seems.”

“Well, Stephen has a lot of work to do. And he’s not my boyfriend anymore.”

Jake stared at the man in shock.

“What? Did you guys break up? Why?”

Hans laughed.

“He’s actually my fiancé now. We’re getting married.”

“Fucking A!” Jake exclaimed. “That’s pretty awesome, man! Congrats!”

“I am here, actually, to invite you and Klaus to my wedding. I thought it was pretty important news not to deliver over the phone. And I wanted to see both of you losing it when I broke the news to you.”

“Well, you can definitely say I’m losing it! It’s fucking great! I hope you guys will be happy and all that stuff people say to those ready to tie the knot.”

“I also wanted to propose something else, but never mind,” Hans said quickly.

“Ah, man, it’s like the biggest news ever,” Jake shook his head in disbelief. “But what did you want to propose?”

“Ah, I’ll bring it up another time. Let some things chill.”

“If you say so,” Jake said unconvinced.

“Now that I told you my secret, how about you tell me yours? What made you make a run for it? And how is Klaus not after us this very moment, with a special unit, just to take you home?”

“Long story,” Jake mumbled.

“I have time. I’ll take you where you want to be, and then I’ll see to you getting settled. It looks to me like you don’t carry any luggage. Do you always travel this light?”

“Okay,” Jake exhaled. “Well, maybe the story is not that long. He held a gun to my head, beat up my brother, and didn’t even say sorry.”

Hans remained silent for a moment.

“I doubt he had any intention to hurt you for real. And, while I don’t know your brother, I suppose he had it coming.”

That Jake could not argue with.

“Yeah, I guess. But ... I don’t know this guy, Hans. He ... I don’t have a fucking clue who he is.”

“Well, did he explain to you why he acted the way he did? There must be an explanation for it. I know Klaus well, and this is not just me taking sides with my best friend. Despite his annoying personality, he always means well.”

“I don’t know,” Jake shook his head. “I just ... I cannot. I need to set my head straight. Be on my own. Learn who the fuck I am, you know? Maybe that’s the problem. Not that I don’t know who he is, but that I don’t know who I am.”

“Well, distance makes the heart grow fonder,” Hans said while watching Jake intently.

Jake winced. At least, Hans was not quick to just take Klaus’s side, and that meant something. As little as he had interacted with the man, he was sure they were friends, to some degree. Hans had grown on him, in a way that not many people had.

“Hey, don’t expect me just to leave you here!” Hans protested as he forced the cash into his hand. “And don’t worry. I’m not Klaus. You’re sexy as hell, but I want that money back to the last cent.”

Jake snickered.

“I will pay you back, don’t worry.”

“And let us get you settled,” Hans said as he took out his credit card. “I’m paying for your stay, but then I’ll be on my way.”

“Isn’t Klaus expecting you?” Jake asked.

“He can deal with a bit of waiting. Plus, if what you tell me is true, he deserves it.”

“All right. But don’t let him wait too long. He’s an asshole with that kind of thing.”

Hans laughed.

“It looks like you do know him well, Jake. Yeah, he’s a stickler for etiquette, when it pleases him.”

“And ... please don’t tell him anything about me. That we met and, you know, Everything.”

“I won’t. I’m your friend, too, and if this is your decision, I respect it.”

Jake could not say he wasn’t thankful for having Hans to help him. At least, this type of relationship was honest, and he didn’t have to question the man’s reason.

Klaus was carefully perusing his correspondence when his butler let him know of Hans’s arrival. Anything was welcome to keep him occupied. It had been weeks since Jake had promised to drop by. His patience was wearing thin, and, for the first time in who knew how long, he felt like he had no clear idea what to do to make things happen. No, it wasn’t like that. He knew what to do, how and where to squeeze. It was all a matter of time, and then Jake was going to have to listen to him. And then things were going to get back to normal.

“Hey,” he stood up and let Hans pull him into a bear-like hug.

“How are you, my friend?” Hans pushed him at arm’s length and searched his face with inquisitive eyes.

“All well. Business as usual.”

“That’s what you’re good at, after all. But where’s Jake? I was expecting to see him running to the door, wagging his tail,” Hans joked.

Klaus froze his face into an expressionless mask.

“Oh, he’s not here.”

Hans seemed taken aback.

“I see you’re evolving, Klaus. How nice of you to leave a longer leash for your lover. Good thing you’re less of a control freak than usual.”

“Trust me, that is nothing of the kind,” Klaus pursed his lips. “We are ... taking a break, I think.”

“Taking a break?”

Why on earth Hans had to sound like a fucking parakeet at this very moment? It made a small muscle in his jaw begin to tick.

“Yes, we had a bit of a misunderstanding, and now I need to let him cool his hot head off a little. He will come around, eventually.”

“This sounds serious,” Hans’s eyes filled with worry. “Come on, spit it out. Don’t make me nag you until you tell me everything.”

“I would appreciate if you skipped playing the best friend part, for now,” Klaus snapped.

Now Hans frowned.

“How about you skip being an asshole for a change? I don’t ‘play’ this role. You should know better.”

“Yes, I know,” Klaus exhaled. “I am terribly sorry. I have no idea what is happening to me these days.”

Hans nodded in understanding.

“Apologies accepted. But I suppose you don’t take Jake’s absence as easy as you want me to believe.”

“Maybe,” Klaus shrugged.

“I don’t understand how you’re not after him, dragging him back. This is definitely new to you. I mean, everything is new when it comes to Jake and you.”

“What do you mean? I never run after a lover.”

“This is not just about any relationship you had in the past. Klaus, let me be honest with you. I don’t remember ever seeing you so invested in someone.”

Klaus sighed.

“Jake had to be unruly at the most inopportune time. I needed to settle things with his brother, and he chose to make an appearance. He just misunderstood my actions.”

“Oh,” Hans murmured. “And did you explain to him what really happened?”

“He is too stubborn to listen to reason sometimes. So, no, for now, he believes whatever he thinks he is entitled to believe.”

“How long has it been until you two are like this?” Hans questioned.

“I think a few months,” Klaus felt irritated by the question.

“And aren’t you afraid he’s going to go down some wrong path? You know where he’s coming from, right?”

“Well,” Klaus’s frown deepened. “If he wants to be a gangster, let him be a gangster. He knows what is on the table.”

“Wow, I thought you would be more into making him take the right path. You don’t sound like yourself.”

“In this matter, my friend,” Klaus ran one hand through his hair, “I must say ... I want him to come back because he wants to. This, whatever happened between us, was never real if he does not choose me over that asshole of a brother he has.”

“Oh, my ... fuck me,” Hans chuckled. “You’re frigging jealous! I’ve never seen you jealous! Frankly, I think Jake should be examined by a team of CERN scientists to see what he carries in that pretty head of his because if he managed to make the Ice Man himself jealous, he might have the keys to some important mysteries of the universe.”

“Stop joking. And I cannot be jealous. It is not like he is fucking his brother. Why would I be jealous?”

“So making him choose between you and his family is totally normal,” Hans shook his head.

“I do not make him choose.”

“My friend, you’re a total bundle of contradictions. I’m this close to want to smack some sense into you.”

“I think you should refrain from that,” Klaus replied sourly.

“Well, it appears that Jake is not the only one with a hot head in all this. Anyway, I wanted to tell you something important.”

Klaus examined his friend and pondered.

“You are smiling like the famous Cheshire cat. What did you do?”

“Well, you don’t have to be so annoying, but yes, I did something. The most important thing in my life to date.”

“Hmm, did you buy a new house? I have yet to see someone with so much aversion for new property. Seeing that I am engaged in real estate businesses everywhere I go, that is a tad unnerving.”

“No, something more important than that.”

“Hans, you are testing my patience. Just do not tell me that you fell in love, because that I heard at least one thousand times in the past few months. Unless, of course, you were so excited for the new law that has just passed, that you went and did something stupidly romantic like getting on one knee.”

Hans’s smile widened. Klaus chuckled.

“Ah, you old devil. This is it, right? And what did he say?”

“Actually, I was the one proposed to,” Hans said with satisfaction. “And of course I said ‘yes’.”

“Wow,” Klaus leaned against his desk. “So when should we expect the happy event to take place?”

“We both decided that Christmas is a wonderful time of the year to have the celebrations. And you are invited as the guest of honor, of course.”

“Have you decided on a place for the event? I would love to offer my house, you know,” Klaus spoke.

“That is wonderful news,” Hans clapped his hands.

“Yes, it is,” Klaus said, and a bit of warmth returned to his voice. “I am happy for you. It was something you wanted for a long time, was it not? And do not worry; I know you just manipulated me into putting my house at your disposal for the party. That means that nor you or Stephen want a thousand people you don’t know at your wedding. You know the place is rather cramped.”

“It’s perfect for what we have in mind. The only thing is, I want to invite Jake, too.”

Klaus felt his lips twitching, seeking to form a grimace.

“That would be difficult. The annoying brat is not answering his phone.”

“But you know where to find him, right? I expect you to tell him the news,” Hans said.

“I do know where to find him,” Klaus admitted.

That could be the perfect opportunity. Klaus thought about it. It was worth considering, nonetheless.

“So you are settling down,” he said after a small pause.

“Yeah. He’s perfect, you know?” Hans said with a small smile.

Perfect. Something usually difficult to achieve. But not impossible. He loved imperfections most now.

“I also wanted to hold you to your promise from our childhood,” Hans added.

“What promise?” Klaus asked.

“You know, the joint wedding,” Hans said with a small smile.

Klaus snorted.

“That was just something stupid. Plus, I think the twins are already married with children by now. You know they were older than us.”

“Joke all you want, but just think about it,” Hans smiled again. “Jake seems to be a commitment type of guy. And, just to be sure, you won’t have any issues with him straying, if you tie him up properly.”

“Regardless of your choice of words, Hans, for me, it would be just a stupid idea.”

“Why? You told me you wanted to take Jake with you to Germany.”

“Yes, so we can continue what we have begun. But marriage? Sometimes, Hans, I think you know me too little.”

“Again, you’re contradicting yourself. You know, you’re not getting any younger. And Jake, well, he does have a future. He might grow bored with you, and head over to greener pastures.”

“And that is how I know you sometimes like talking out of your ass,” Klaus shrugged, but a small annoying seed fell and dipped right into his heart. “As I see it now, Jake and I are hanging by a thread. He holds it in his hand. If he chooses to sever it, I have no qualms about it. I am not like you. I do not believe in romantic nonsense, and happy-ever-afters.”

“Oh, no,” Hans pressed his chest in a theatrical gesture. “The saddened prince decided he could live without love. And then he roamed the earth, trying to rekindle the flame in his heart to no avail.”

“Frankly, Hans, you sometimes make me want to punch you in the face. We are not 15 anymore, nor will we ever be again. Jake was more interesting than many others I have met. But he is not the end of the road for me. I am not going to wait for him forever.”

“As you say, my friend,” Hans shrugged and threw Klaus one shrewd look that seemed to see down right into the bottom of his heart.

That night, he slept like hell. He had not thought about Jake finding someone else. And Hans had to come and just say that. Now, he could not get that stupid idea out of his head, regardless of how hard he was trying.

Chapter Twenty-One

“There is someone here to see you, sir,” the butler announced him. “He doesn’t want to say his name, but he has been here before. A certain Mr. Lopez.”

Klaus quirked an eyebrow. Not the Lopez brother he wanted to see, that was certain. It was late, Hans was already asleep, and he was just burning the midnight oil, for no apparent reason.

“May I suggest something, sir?” the butler spoke again. “This visitor looks rather strange. Maybe I should send him on his way?”

“No, it is all right. I will see him. Just check him, would you, please?”

The butler nodded and disappeared as silently as he had entered.

Klaus rested his chin on his linked fingers, pondering. Why was Diaz paying a courtesy visit at such a strange hour? He had to give it to the man. Diaz was not scared to face the man who had put him in the hospital, with a broken leg.

He looked straight at his visitor the moment Diaz walked through the door. Yes, that must have been painful. Yet, the man still tried to keep his head high.

“Where is Jake?” Diaz asked directly.

Klaus pointed towards the chair across from him.

“Come in, Mr. Lopez, and take a seat. You look like you could use a bit of rest.”

The man looked haggard, more so than usual. There was an unhealthy pallor stretching on his face, lost in the stubble. But what was very noticeable was the limp he had, even with the short walk across the room.

“Where is Jake, you motherfucker?”

Despite the insult, the words had been spoken softly. Diaz seemed tired.

“Just have him come down here. I want to take him home with me.”

Klaus frowned. That was an unexpected development.

“He is not here. And may I suggest refraining from insulting your host? It is bad taste.”

Diaz snorted and shook his head, ignoring the correction.

“Don’t make me search this big ass house. Just make him come here.”

Klaus sighed.

“I told you. He is not here.”

Diaz searched his face and finally seemed convinced.

“Are you fucking my little brother?”

Ah, that explained some things.

“As you can see, currently no,” Klaus joked, his eyes narrowing, as he measured his adversary.

“What a fucked up asshole you are,” Diaz said with bitterness. “Don’t you have plenty of fags to fuck up the chute? Why did you have to turn Jake into your little bitch? He didn’t deserve this.”

“Deserve?” Klaus murmured. “I think he deserves to be whoever he wants to be. And I did not ‘turn’ him, as you said. He is gay. I did not make him change his sexuality, as you imply.”

Diaz shook his head, with a pained expression on his face.

“That’s not ... that can’t be. I know Jake. You did something to him.”

Klaus shrugged.

“I will not waste my breath trying to convince you otherwise. You are definitely not worth the effort. But now I should ask you. Where is Jake? And how did you come to the conclusion that he was involved with me?”

“I know how to put two and two together. I don’t need to see you fucking him to know stuff like that.”

Klaus could feel a migraine starting to take root deep into his temples.

“How come you cannot keep tabs on your brother? It is not like you have much to do these days, anyway.”

“I have plenty to do, asshole. He ran away. I thought he came here.”

Klaus could feel the tension rising in his muscles. He gripped the edge of the desk, to control his emotional reaction. That should not have affected him so much. He needed to learn where the boy was.

“I’ll find him, and I’ll take him home. Then I’m going to get this ... thing out of his head. Couldn’t you settle for ruining the entire town? You had to go after my little brother, too?” Diaz spat in disgust.

“You clearly understand nothing,” Klaus said slowly, careful not to let his true feelings known. He was not one to beat up a broken man like Diaz, no matter how much the guy wanted to provoke him.

“What’s to understand?” Diaz raised his voice. “What did you promise him? Jake never wants anything. He’s a good boy. How could you convince him to do something so dirty?”

“Trust me, Diaz, your brother needed little convincing to end up between the sheets with me.”

It was not like him to be crass, but Diaz, apparently, needed to hear the whole truth. Most probably, Jake had not said everything. Maybe he had not been given a chance.

“He was like low hanging fruit. Ripe for the taking,” he continued, feeling a surge of bloodlust rising.

“Bullshit!” Diaz paled even more.

“He is an exquisite lover. I must say that I have met few who can compete with him on this level. He really does bend over nicely.”

“Stop it with the fag talk. My brother is not like that!”

Klaus exhaled slowly.

“What your brother does and what your brother is, these are things that are completely up to him. Not you.”

“Not you, either,” Diaz replied. “You had no right, asshole! No right to mess with his head, and make him think he’s a freak, like you!”

“I should warn you, Diaz, that my patience is running thin. I have already indulged you too much at this late hour and now with you insulting me under my roof, on top of all things. See yourself to the door.”

Diaz got up and stumbled backward.

“You better leave this town, motherfucker,” he threatened on his way out, pointing the finger at Klaus. “You cannot watch your back forever. For what you did to Jake, you’ll fucking pay!”

“Spare me the big talk. Out,” he ordered. At that moment, the butler appeared and ushered him to the outside door.

At least, Diaz knew not to overstay his welcome. And he was probably way too pissed with the idea that he could not, indeed, do anything. A fangless dog, that was what he was now. Since the butler had checked the guy for concealed weapons and come out empty, that only strengthened that belief. Diaz had been obliterated, and Klaus could at least say that was according to plan.

There were other things not working as he wanted, though. Klaus took out his phone. Maybe Jake was going to pick up finally. Maybe he was somewhere, alone and scared, right now. If he had come out to his brother, perhaps he was even hurt.

The faint sound took him by surprise. Intrigued, he began searching for the source. The small package, wrapped in brown paper on his desk, lay there, cold and uncaring. Klaus put his phone down and proceeded to unwrap the package.

He took out Jake's phone and looked at it. That was unexpected. So Jake had run away, indeed. He had run away, from them both, without a look back.

His entire body went rigid as he grabbed the offending object and threw it in the trashcan. It was clear as day what he needed to do.

"Are you coming back with me?" Hans seemed shocked by his decision. "What about the business you run here? And what about Jake?"

"What good would it do to have as much power and money as I do, if I am still going to behave like I'm a slave to someone else? I want a change of scenery. I can conduct business from the headquarters location, just as fine."

"Earth to Klaus," Hans frowned. "What about Jake?"

"Jake," Klaus said, pursing his lips. "Jake, well, he made a decision, after all. I have no intention of getting in his way."

"What the hell is that supposed to mean?" Hans asked.

"That lowlife of a brother he has was here last night and informed me that Jake ran away from home."

"All the more reason to go after him."

"Please, do not interrupt me. Jake sent me back the phone I gave him. That is a clear sign he does not want to be found."

"For a man like you, it's easy to find him."

"Yes, it is," Klaus admitted, and his eyes became a tad unfocused. "Point taken. I do not wish to do so. Let me explain it better: there is no reason for me to do so."

"Wow," Hans shook his head. "I thought you were in love with him."

"Really? What gave you that idea?" Klaus began arranging the things on his desk, nothing but busywork, to avoid looking at his best friend.

"Geez, I don't know," Hans chose to be sarcastic. "Your own words. Jake is the most handsome man I have ever met. Do you know what Jake did today? And how smart he is? You would not believe it. I must be with Jake. I cannot stand leaving his side again."

"Stop it already," Klaus snapped, and Hans finally shut up. "Nothing of the kind matters anymore. My ... interest was misplaced. I am not going to chase him. He does not want me. And that leaves me no choice."

“And I thought you were the master of control,” Hans shook his head. “As a friend, I will only tell you this. You are making a huge mistake. The biggest in your life. You will not meet another like him.”

“Really? Boys like him are everywhere you look,” Klaus said with a small shrug.

He could not believe his own ears. He had never told a bigger lie in his entire life.

“Keep telling that to yourself, buddy,” Hans patted his shoulder, a bit too forcefully. “One day, you might just believe it.”

“I am in no mood to argue, Hans. I have to pack.”

“Gosh, and I never thought ever to see the day,” Hans sighed.

“I should not, but I will ask anyway. What day?”

“The day I’d see you acting like a coward.”

Klaus shot a dark look at Hans. But then his shoulders slumped.

“Maybe,” he admitted. “I have already dealt with his rejection for much too long. As a friend, you should understand. I will not take this anymore. If I go after him, he will just tell me the same thing over and over again. And a masochist ... that I am not. Plus, by now, he should have known better.”

Hans seemed on the point to say something, but then he smiled.

“Thanks for being honest for a change,” he spoke. “You’re my friend, and I support you. Even when you do stupid things.”

“Thank you, I suppose,” Klaus replied.

He did not like Hans’s smile at all. Not one bit. He could almost hear the gears in the guy’s head turning. For what purpose? At that moment, he was too tired to care.

Jake blew hot air into his cupped hands, as he waited for his coffee. The last two months had been tough, but he had managed to rent his own place, and find work. He was working two jobs, and he felt worn to the bone, but it still felt like the right thing.

“Thanks, man,” he smiled at the guy behind the counter.

He was rewarded with a big flashy smile back.

“Hey, Jake, I was wondering if you ever want to, you know, go out and have some fun,” the young man spoke.

Was he being hit on? It was funny how he could still not tell. The city was much bigger than his hometown, and he had even identified a few places where gay people liked hanging out.

Well, those places were advertised in the local magazines, and there were flyers everywhere, it was not like his gaydar was functioning or something.

“I still work two jobs,” he said. “I use Sundays just to sleep.”

“Only for a few hours,” the guy smiled at him again. “We can just go grab a bite and talk. Brunch next Sunday?”

Brunch. Stuff people from small towns like Jake’s had never heard of.

“Yeah. That would be good,” he said and exchanged phone numbers with the guy.

Well, that had to be a first. He had been busy finding work and saving up some money. He needed to repay Hans and also to start planning for the future. Getting a lover had not been one of his priorities. But maybe going out with a nice guy was a good start.

And a way out from using all his free time only to mope over that asshole. Time heals all wounds, my ass, he thought. Memories of Klaus were fresh in his mind like he had never left. Each morning, he still woke up to find the place next to him empty. From all the things, that was, strangely, the sorest point. That he could not wake up wrapped around that sexy jerk.

Maybe it was his fault. He was the one still thinking of the guy. He was the one incapable of letting go. And it was time he did something about that.

“Klaus Metzger, just the man I wanted to see.”

Klaus turned and watched the young man in the black suit who had given him the eye for the entire evening walking towards him. He seemed the preppy kind of guy who was looking to get ahead in the world.

By all means, he was passably cute. And his self-imposed celibacy should have come to an end by now, Klaus thought idly.

He offered the young man his most charming smile.

“And you are ...” he offered.

“Very much enthralled with you,” the young man said smoothly while taking a seat next to him.

“Flattering. What I meant is: I want to learn your name.”

“Not a lot of fun, are you?” the young man patted his arm and smiled at him. “Not a problem. I can compensate.”

Klaus’s lips twitched in displeasure. The man’s touch was irking him, for no reason. Maybe he could just fuck the guy and be done with him. And with his celibacy.

It was unnerving how much he still thought about Jake. He had been approached countless times since he had gotten back to his home country. But somehow, he had felt that not one of the prospects could come close to what he needed.

The only few times when he had felt a smidge of interest had been when the men had a dark complexion and dark hair. But each time, as he had looked at them, something had not seemed quite right. Like he suddenly had the eyes of a trained artist looking at a painting reconditioned by an unskilled hand; too many flaws.

He tried to focus his attention on the young man next to him. The guy was just chirping away happily, full of himself, and sure that he was going to end up in bed with this prominent businessman with a reputation to be extremely generous with his lovers.

“What do you want most? In the entire world?” he asked suddenly.

“I am terribly sorry. I don’t understand ...”

“What would you like? The latest Mercedes? A house?”

The guy seemed taken aback, and his resolve faltered a little. Eventually, he chose to laugh.

“It is true, indeed, that I have expensive tastes,” he said, with a small flutter of his eyelashes, he must have thought seductive.

His gesture was as fake as the décor of a theater from the 19th century. The paint was new, but there was nothing but mold growing underneath.

“So say it. Consider that you have carte blanche. Complete access to all the money you could have. Just name one thing.”

The young man shifted in his chair. He could sense something was wrong, but he could not tell what it was. Or how to act.

“Well, I have always wanted to travel to Paris and shop on the Champs-Élysées. So maybe a platinum card, and a ticket to get there,” he said with a short, nervous smile.

“Good,” Klaus said shortly. “If I were to give you these things you want, would you stop with these pathetic attempts to get me in bed? Skip all the tedious parts?”

The guy gaped like a fish. Maybe he was a bit too harsh. Before, he would not have minded at all to be approached like that.

“Uhm, okay,” the guy said slowly like he was measuring his every word.

Klaus laughed. The young man just confirmed he was a gold digger of the worst sort. He gestured for one of the waiters to come closer.

“Everything the young man here present wants and is on the menu, put it on my tab.”

He turned towards his companion.

“Have a good night. Just be careful not to get smashed too hard on the champagne, it leaves you with a bad hangover. Rejection is just part of life.”

He was pretty certain the guy said a few unflattering things at his retreating back.

Jake tried hard to focus his attention on the boy sitting across from him.

“Sorry, what did you say?”

The boy smiled, but he seemed disappointed.

“Are you in love, Jake?” he asked, genuinely interested.

“Why would you say that?” Jake looked away like he had been caught with one hand in the cookie jar.

“You’re spacing out a lot. And, I don’t know, you have a look on your face. Like you remember something. Something you truly like thinking about.”

Jake sighed. He was just wasting this guy’s time. And his own.

“I went through a nasty break up, actually,” he spoke.

“Oh, I’m so sorry,” the guy patted his arm.

“You’re nice,” Jake said. “But I think it’s just too early for me to move on.”

“That must be true. Were you in love with the guy?”

“Yeah,” Jake admitted.

Still was.

“Well, how about a round of pool? We can still be friends, I hope,” the boy smiled. “And, if you ever need to just trash talk the jerk, I’d like to hear that.”

Jake laughed.

“Nah, I won’t speak badly of him.”

“Was he that much of a jerk?” his new found friend joked.

“Sometimes. Not always. He was ... too damn perfect.”

“Wow. Now you make me want to hear the entire story.”

“Maybe someday. I really need to get my mind off of him, though. Let’s just have some fun.”

“Hey, buddy, how’s life treating you?”

Hans's voice sounded happy through the phone speakers. Ever since they got together playing games online again, they had been exchanging phone calls now and then. It had felt quite nice to just log in to the server and have Hans and Stephen all over the chat, wanting to know about him. And gaming was the only pastime he was indulging in these days with the infernal working schedule he had.

"Pretty well. Hey, listen, you should give me your details, so I can send the money to you," Jake smiled while he arranged his groceries around the kitchen. "I finally managed to save up enough."

"Don't bother about that."

"Hans, you promised," Jake complained.

"Yes, I know. But I also know that you will need the money for something else."

"Ah, don't worry. I'm working two jobs, so I have all the bases covered."

"I'm thinking about some extra expenses."

"What do you mean?" Jake asked, squinting as he tried to check the expiration date on a carton of milk.

"Well, something like a nice suit."

"What for?" Jake wondered out loud, and then it hit him as his eyes landed on the calendar hanging on the wall. "Ah, damn. I know you invited me, but, Hans ..."

"I won't take no for an answer. You must have a few days off on Christmas."

"I do, but, come on, it's like on the other side of the planet," Jake tried to explain.

"Don't worry, Klaus will fly you in. And it's still one month away. You have enough time to get your passport, right?"

Jake sighed.

"Hans," he said softly. "I ... I don't want to see him."

"Why?"

"Isn't it obvious or something? I'm not over him. If I were to see him ..."

"You two need closure," Hans cut his words short.

"What's that?"

"You didn't break up properly. Give the guy a chance. Give yourself a chance. I'm not asking you to get back together with him. I just want to see two guys I know and consider my friends having at least the chance to end up things the right way. Plus, I told you I want you at my wedding."

Jake pressed his head against the refrigerator's door. The cool metal was supposed to help him think.

"It's kind of hard. I can't seem to be able to stop thinking about him," he spoke.

"Which I think is the same thing that's been happening to him, too," Hans replied. "I've never seen a colder fish in my entire life. I'm starting to think he's going into a cryogenic state, or something," Hans joked. "Look, just come to the wedding. You don't have to speak to him if you don't want to. It's not like I can force you to do that, and I don't want to do that. But I think seeing him, talking and setting things straight will set both of you free. Don't you want that?"

"I think I do," Jake mumbled.

"Then it's settled. Just bring yourself and don't forget about the suit. If it were up to me, dress code would be casual, but my parents say they want a full-fledged wedding party. I cannot argue with them when they're like that."

"All right," Jake said.

"Awesome!" Hans said happily. "Don't worry about a thing. I will have all the arrangements made, even for your return back home. How does that sound?"

"Okay," Jake replied. "If you want me to see you tying the knot so much ..."

"Of course I do."

"But I'm still giving the money back," he added quickly.

"Fine," Hans said with a theatrical sigh. "I can barely wait to see you again. We'll have fun!"

"Sure thing, man, sure thing," Jake said back.

"I need you to give a lift to a special passenger when you fly back from the States," Hans said promptly as he leaned against Klaus's desk.

Klaus's head shot up.

"I have business there that I do not know of?"

"You do now," Hans said with a smirk.

Klaus leaned back in his chair and observed his friend. Hans looked like he was ready to burst with happiness. Yes, the wedding was coming, but that was not it.

"You surely have some loose ends to tie up with the project," Hans spoke. "And I need you to fly in Jake for the wedding."

Klaus blinked a few times.

“Jake,” he said like the name was foreign in his mouth.

“Yes, I invited him.”

“How?”

“Hello, it’s the 21st century, and Jake plays a killer ADC in our team. Stephen and I, we’re pretty sure that he dragged our asses out of elo hell, just because he has the skills of a platinum player. I think we’re actually the ones holding him back,” Hans whispered like he was sharing some big secret.

“Well, he is skilled ... at everything he does,” Klaus admitted, trying to quench the small bout of pride at his friend’s words. “But where do I fit into the picture of this happy MOBA-based family?”

“You could play support,” Hans joked. “No, you couldn’t. You’d clearly be the assassin. The opportunist in you would not let you be anything else. Plus, I think you would cry if you didn’t score 20 kills every match.”

Klaus chuckled.

“With you, Hans, I feel like I never grew up.”

Hans shrugged.

“So, it’s settled? Go there, get Jake, come back here?”

“That is a pretty expensive endeavor, don’t you think? I suppose you want me to use the jet?”

“Of course I do. Just imagine how busy the airlines are this time of the year. Plus, don’t you want to impress your Jake a little?”

“I am well beyond such childish games. Plus, if you remember, he is not my Jake anymore.”

“Come on, man. Just hop on the plane and get him here. You must talk to him.”

“I must?” Klaus snorted.

“Yes. You’re still not over him. Give it a chance. On your jet, you will be able to say to him whatever you said you couldn’t. You could hear him out as well, and the best thing is with just the two of you on the plane, he has to stay and listen. Then, move on, do whatever you like. Seeing you freezing gradually is no fun, trust me. Sometimes I wonder if your heart’s still beating.”

“Hans, do me a favor and tell Stephen to throw away all those stupid romantic movies you watch. I know you would not have it in you to do it.”

“He’s the one who’s selecting them. We have a really nice lineup for the holidays. Care to join us?”

“Maybe next century,” Klaus joked. “All right. What you say makes sense. And I think it would be good to see the brat. At least, just to know he is doing well.”

“So mature of you. I’m impressed,” Hans laughed.

“As you should be,” Klaus replied with a small smile.

Gaming lingo terms explained:

ADC – attack damage carry – the most important place in the team, high damage, high reward (the ‘carry’ term comes from the fact that a good ‘carry’ can have enough damage output at the end of the game to finish off the entire enemy team, hence ‘carrying’ the game)

Elo hell – elo is a ladder system in place for online games, organizing players based on skill; elo hell can occur when better players are caught at a rank inferior to their skills, hence being forced to play with lousy teammates and score loss after loss.

Platinum players – the highest ranked players

MOBA – Multiplayer Online Battle Arena

Support – the role in the team assigned to characters that have support abilities (heal, crowd control, blocking damage); this player usually babysits the ADC

Assassin – another role in the team, just like ADC and support, but for loners; these characters roam all over the map usually, trying to score as many kills as possible; usually efficient against one target only (no matter how good, they cannot ‘carry’ the game)

Chapter Twenty-Two

“Hey, man,” he shook hands with Thompson and eyed the limo with growing unease. “Couldn’t he just send word where should I be?”

A few people were staring at them. Jake waved at them.

“It’s good to have limo drivers as friends,” he spoke to his neighbors, and the people just laughed.

He turned towards Thompson with a serious expression on his face.

“I ride in front,” he said quickly.

“Of course,” Thompson nodded politely.

“Let me put your backpack and suit bag in the trunk,” Thompson offered.

“Ok, but please don’t hold the door. People already think I won the lottery or something.”

He got into the car quickly.

“So, where are we headed? What airport? Is he there already?”

He must have sounded like a nervous broken chatterbox, but Thompson didn’t seem to care.

“Mr. Metzger is waiting for you. I am not allowed, however, to say anything more.”

Jake rolled his eyes.

“This man and his games,” he shook his head.

“Jake,” Thompson said, and he seemed hesitant, for a second. “May I ask you something?”

“Shoot,” Jake shrugged.

“Whatever happened between you and my boss, was it so irreconcilable?”

Jake pondered for a while.

“I don’t know. It was pretty bad.”

“Mr. Metzger always means well,” Thompson continued to speak. “Maybe it would not be a bad idea to listen to his side, too.”

A few weeks before, Jake would have been annoyed with that kind of conversation. But Hans had said the same thing to him.

“Yeah,” Jake admitted. “I should or something.”

His resolve lasted up to the moment that he got out of the car and saw Klaus waiting, on the stairs of a fucking private jet.

Why did he have to look like that? Why wasn't he ugly, or bald, or fat? And why was he not somewhere, anywhere else, right now, fucking some actor or supermodel? Klaus looked straight at him, his hands in his pockets, measuring him up and down.

Jake drew one deep breath and followed Thompson through the security gate and onto the tarmac. He turned to Thompson to thank him and climbed the stairs with his luggage.

"I'm still not talking to you," he shot at the man.

Klaus moved to the side to allow him entrance.

"As you wish," the man said, his voice rough and tired.

Jake took the seat indicated by the flight attendant. So the guy had a fucking jet, and the personnel to go with it. What the fuck was he doing with a guy like that? Jake thought he must have been out of his fucking mind, to believe he had a real chance with Klaus fucking Metzger.

Thankfully, the engines of the jet started, and Jake could ignore Klaus as he stared out the small window, trying to rein in his excitement. It was his first time getting on a plane, and it had to be on a frigging private jet, on top of everything. To ignore the small butterflies in his stomach was a bit too much, no matter how pissed he was at Klaus right now.

After reaching cruising altitude, Klaus looked at Jake as the boy fiddled in his leather seat like he could not get into a comfortable position. The brat looked good. Damn fine, if he was to think about it. He had so many things to ask. But Jake had been clear he was still not in the mood to talk. And he was way too proud to beg for it. At least, for now. Jake was going to stay at his house after the wedding party, and they had a few good days to finally have the conversation at least he had been looking for.

"Why are you staring so much?" Jake complained, shooting him a dark look.

"Am I not allowed? And I thought you were not talking to me."

Jake pouted. Klaus shifted his position. There was nothing he wanted more than just to kiss those pouty lips.

"Whatever," Jake shrugged.

"So, how have you been doing?" Klaus chose to be the one to speak, after all.

"Fine. No guns held to my head lately. I'd say that's pretty awesome," Jake looked across the aisle, straight at him, challenging him with his dark eyes.

"Ah, I see. We will talk about that. Not now, but soon."

"All right," Jake admitted.

That was surprising.

“So, you do want to talk, after all?” Klaus expressed his wonder.

“Yeah, I do. I need closure or something.”

“Hans has been talking to you. Always one ready to play the head doctor,” Klaus shook his head.

“He’s right. But I agree with you. Let’s just talk after the wedding. I don’t want to drop going to the wedding, just because I’m going to fight with you over what you did.”

“What I did?” Klaus quirked an eyebrow. “How about what you did? You were not supposed to be there. If you did not misbehave, we would not be having this conversation right now.”

“Oh, yeah? So you were just going to have Diaz arrested?”

“With you, it is always about your brother. I cannot fathom what he has done in his life to warrant so much high esteem or loyalty on your part.”

Jake frowned.

“This is just the crap that I thought would happen. Let’s just not talk anymore. Or I’ll just get off this plane.”

“You do not simply get down from a plane, Jake.”

The brat rolled his eyes.

“No shit, teach. I was just joking.”

Klaus could feel his lips twitching, wanting to curl upward. It felt like he had not smiled in ages. His face hurt. It was good to see Jake’s fire, shining brightly as always.

“You look good,” he spoke again.

Jake’s eyes flickered, but the boy chose to keep his features in a neutral demeanor.

“You, too,” he said solemnly, after a few moments.

“I hope you will find the accommodations comfortable enough.”

“As long as I don’t have to sleep on the streets, there’s no point to worry about stuff like that. I’m not like you, Mr. Money Bags.”

“Blue suits you,” Klaus chose to overlook the attitude for now. “It is just the same as the room you had.”

Jake now seemed surprised.

“Wait, I’m going to sleep at your house? I am so going to kill Hans.”

“Let’s not be too murderous on the eve of such an important event. Consider killing him after the wedding. At least, he will die a happy man.”

Jake giggled. Music to his ears. And it felt so good to see him again. Despite all the bad blood between them.

Jake wanted so much to hate the man. But it was impossible. One good look at him and he was ready to forget all about the thing with Diaz, and gang wars, and guns. But he was not a fool. He was not going to fall so easily. So he shut his eyes. Tightly, as tightly as he could.

“I need to sleep,” he mumbled. “I’ve been working two shifts for the past weeks,” he thought an explanation was in order.

“I see. Should I bring a blanket?”

“No, I’m good,” Jake sank into his chair, stubbornly keeping his eyes closed.

“I distinctly remember you dislike being cold. You always wrapped yourself around me, just for that reason.”

“Stop remembering that crap. That ... was not real.”

At least that made the man shut up after all.

And he chose to pretend he was still asleep while careful hands draped him in a cozy blanket. It was probably just the flight attendant doing his job. And probably the guy had expensive tastes and used the same cologne as Klaus. He knew that smell.

It was strange that he could sleep like a log, seeing how excited he had been about the flight and seeing Klaus again – although he was not going to admit that, even to himself. However, he had not lied when he had told Klaus earlier that he was beaten.

The flight attendant gently nudged him awake, and, at first, he blinked and looked around in surprise.

“Please, wake up, sir. We have a light supper ready to eat,” the young man said politely.

Only then Jake noticed the white cloth covered table set at the rear of the plane. And Klaus, waiting for him. He could pretend he wasn’t hungry, but he could not exactly deny food. Just as a friendly reminder, his stomach grumbled like a miffed old man. So, albeit reluctantly, he got to his feet and walked to the table.

“How long have I slept?” he mumbled, trying to arrange a few rebellious strands of hair.

“A bit over two hours. Please,” Klaus gestured to the nicely set up table.

The flight attendant efficiently placed a covered dish in front of him and lifted the lid with a bit of a too studied gesture. But any thoughts he might have had about the serving were gone from his mind, as soon as a nice and familiar smell tickled his nostrils.

“Wow! That’s Agnes’s beef stew!” he exclaimed.

Klaus was looking straight at him, with a small smile. It was not a smug smile, but a fond one. Jake coughed and looked away, to cover his childish outburst.

“I tried to make it, but somehow I can’t seem to do it right,” he spoke again.

“The moment she heard you were coming to the wedding, she went straight to the kitchen. Trust me; I had to fight her off she was so decided to send at least ten different dishes. She has this idea that you lost weight. I must say, she is a bit right,” Klaus said.

The guy’s stare was unnerving.

“She misses you,” Klaus added, leaving the unspoken words hanging in the air.

She wasn’t the only one.

“I . . . miss her, too,” he said quickly and started eating, hoping he was not going to knock over the glass wine or do anything else, equally stupid.

And not only her.

It was a blessing that Klaus was firm about the no talking rule during meals, because it allowed him just to fill his belly with Agnes’s delicious stew, and just ignore the guy.

Half an hour later, he was back to his seat. He could just spend the rest of the flight sleeping, and continue to pretend he wasn’t so close to Klaus. Yeah, he could do that.

“Do you want me to tuck you in?” Klaus cooed.

“Shut up,” Jake mumbled and dragged the blanket up to his chin, stubbornly closing his eyes.

At least, the guy left him alone after that.

He definitely felt relieved not having to spend any more time in Klaus’s company as the host of the event seemed busy with stuff that didn’t include him. Walking into the room that looked like the dead ringer for the one he had had during his short time at Klaus’s estate flooded him with memories. He drew a deep sigh as he sat slowly on the bed. What was he going to do now? Eventually, he and Klaus were going to talk.

And all he could think of was how much he wanted just to jump the man. It was enough to get close enough to him, and he wanted nothing else. He was a hot mess, a bundle of feelings and instincts that were just pushing him into the one direction he knew was wrong.

But that talk, they needed to have it.

“So finally I’m meeting you, Jake, wow!” Stephen expressed his enthusiasm by pulling him into a hug.

Hans’s soon to be husband was really nice. And seeing him from up close was enough for Jake to understand why Hans was so smitten with the guy. With wavy chestnut hair and deep green eyes, Stephen was a looker. But, strangely enough, it was not his looks that made him stand out so much, but his smile, so genuine, so honest, that no one could believe he was earning his living as a lawyer.

Stephen pushed him back, without removing his hands from Jake’s shoulders, and just looked at him, seemingly fascinated with what he was seeing. Jake had to say that he felt pretty much embarrassed with so much attention.

“He’s awfully cute,” Stephen turned his head, to look at Hans. “Jake, you’re awfully cute,” he added, turning his attention back to him again.

“Honey, I think he heard you the first time,” Hans said with a smirk and came to embrace his lover from behind.

Jake was about to say something when he felt like someone was watching him. It didn’t take long to identify the source of his discomfort. From not far away, Klaus’s eyes were shooting darts at them.

Stephen grimaced and shivered slightly.

“Is it just me or is it a bit cold? Maybe we should crank up the heat a little more?” he asked Hans, and quickly placed a peck on his man’s lips.

“I think other guests are arriving,” Klaus spoke, this time standing right next to them. “You two should welcome them. Do not forget about the champagne.”

“Klaus, you’re the man,” Stephen said enthusiastically and unwrapped himself from his lover’s arms to embrace Klaus.

Who, no surprises there remained cold as a fish at the guy’s display of affection. Stephen didn’t seem to notice, though, as he dragged Hans to the door, to receive their guests.

“Why are you such an asshole?” Jake spoke, as he nervously flattened his palms against some invisible wrinkles on his suit.

He was not used to wearing stuff like that. It was like he was carrying some dead weight.

“You look fantastic,” Klaus ignored his question.

Jake gulped and shifted his weight from one leg to the other.

“Yeah, I’m trying,” he replied. “I mean, to be up to the occasion and such. I’ve never been to a wedding. I mean, not since I grew up.”

And now he was just babbling nonsense. He should just stop.

“Allow me to play the obliging host,” Klaus took his arm to guide him. “May I show you around a bit? Agnes did a great job arranging the garden. It is too cold to take the entire party there, but I believe you will enjoy the lights. We just turned them on.”

Jake was not saying anything, but by the small smile on his lips, he was, indeed, enjoying the view. If everything had just worked out differently. Klaus shook his head. It hurt to be so close to the one he so much desired, without being able to touch him. Really touch him.

“This house is smaller,” Jake commented. “Then the one from before. It’s even nicer.”

“I knew you were going to say that.”

“You knew?” Jake frowned.

He wanted nothing but to smooth that frown with the tips of his fingers.

“When I believed that I was going to bring you here with me. I am still glad that I can show it to you.”

Jake nodded and looked away. The Christmas lights threw their reflection in the boy’s beautiful eyes.

“Jake,” Klaus whispered.

The young man turned to face him. His bottom lip was shivering a bit.

“We should go inside,” he added.

Was there a tinge of disappointment in the way the boy’s lips curled downward? At this point, he could not allow himself to be hasty. They needed to talk. Regardless of how much he wanted nothing but to close the gap between them, gather Jake into his arms and kiss him deeply. And tell him how much he missed him.

Jake was amazed with the party. It was nothing like the stiff functions Klaus had thrown before. Here, the atmosphere was lively, everyone was having fun, and even he, a stranger, felt at home. Hans’s parents were pretty much acting like a comedic duo, and Stephen had to show everyone that he basically mastered every style of dance ever invented on the face of the planet.

The only thing that seemed strange was that each time some guy approached him, interested in striking a conversation and even blown-out flirting, after a few minutes, something had to come up and the guy was acting as he had never talked to Jake.

He didn't have to be a rocket scientist to figure out what was going on. When Klaus sat gracefully next to him, he rolled his eyes.

"Why are you scaring everyone? What are you saying to them? That I have some weird STD?"

"Nothing of the kind. But I do politely let them know that you are not single."

"I'm not?" Jake pursed his lips, to stop himself from smiling. "I could bet that I was."

"That is an assumption that definitely needs correction."

It was not fair. How many times had he thought that? There was just something about that man that just drew him in and stopped him from thinking straight. He looked around. People were having fun. Stephen and Hans were happy. And he just stood there, moping over things that couldn't be.

He didn't even think twice as he looked at Klaus, with determination in his eyes.

"Do you think anyone would notice if we ditched the party?" he asked.

Klaus threw him a surprised look.

"I suppose my presence is no longer needed," he confirmed.

"Then let's just fuck," Jake said simply.

Normally, he would have argued. But nothing was normal. Not anymore. Klaus stood up briskly and made a small sign for Jake to follow him. He didn't need to look back to know the young man was right behind him.

The moment they were in his room, Jake grabbed him and smashed him with his back against the door. The kiss was savage, his lips bitten to the point of drawing blood. And then, the boy just withdrew to look at him with eyes swimming in a mix of contradicting emotions.

"Jake," he said with a tinge of regret.

"Shut up," the young man murmured, slowly rubbing his lips against his.

There was no more biting this time. There was nothing but scorching heat, and there was so much warmth, suddenly pouring into his veins, making him move and feel alive again. They landed on the bed, a tangled mess of limbs, hands searching, trying to reach through, pulling at stubborn buttons and stiff clothing.

He caught the boy's head in his hands and stared at him, trying to ignore, for at least one second, Jake's body, glued to his, towering over him.

"Jake, we should talk first," he made one last, lame attempt.

"Like fuck we should," Jake retorted and shut him up with a kiss.

The boy must have had a good teacher because all rational thought was soon gone from his mind. Jake's hands were skilled as always, rougher now, as they dispatched layer after layer of clothing, bent on reaching the naked burning skin.

It felt like he was coming down with a fever, and it must have been all Jake's fault, as his calloused hands were causing too much friction, almost unbearable, but still deliciously erotic.

He tried to make them switch places and put the boy on his back, but Jake resisted, deftly capturing his wrists and pushing them over his head into the plush coverlet. The raven-haired boy shook his head slowly, telling him without words what he wanted. Yet, that did not mean he did not want to hear it. Loud and clear.

"What do you want, Jake?"

"You," the answer came promptly. "Only you."

Under any other circumstances, Klaus would have found the entire situation a tad unnerving. He was no longer in charge. Jake managed to undress him entirely, and he was now on his knees, next to the bed, working his shaft with his usual skill.

Jake seemed to have gotten a lot better at blowjobs. He could still remember the way the expert tongue had felt during the last times the boy had given him oral satisfaction. But he was more determined than usual, focused even, as he was just taking Klaus's cock deeper and deeper. A small tinge of jealousy touched him, feather-like.

"I have not been with others since you left," he croaked, his voice hitched, tied up in desire.

The mouth working his cock stopped, and for a second, Jake let him be.

"Me neither. I couldn't. Just fucking couldn't."

That was the only confirmation he needed. His hands came to rest atop the boy's head, guiding him. He was surprised to feel his wrists grabbed again and his palms pressed firmly to the sides, as Jake continued bobbing his head up and down.

There was definitely enough tongue there, making sure to add pressure. And Jake just had to be an expert at everything he did, blowjobs included. Klaus closed his eyes, too engulfed in the rhythm to care about anything else. Jake was making this about Klaus, not him, and if that was what he wanted for the moment, Klaus was not going to stand in his way.

There must have been a clap of thunder in the distance, or maybe it was just the pounding of his blood in his ears, when he came into that generous, unpretentious mouth, licking him clean and taking everything in.

He was breathing hard and trying just as much to collect his thoughts and place them in some logical order. He grunted in surprise, as his legs were pushed up and he felt something moist at his back entrance. Even in the faint light, he could see Jake's eyes burning with intense heat, as the young man was rimming him and using the semen in his mouth as an improvised lubricant.

"I want to fuck you," Jake said simply as he stood up and began to get rid of the remainder of his clothes.

Klaus pondered for a second. Was a reply really expected? Probably not, as Jake pulled him closer to the edge of the bed and began pushing inside him. That was not going to be this easy, he thought idly.

He hissed as Jake pushed too hard.

"Fuck me," he cursed.

"I'm trying," Jake huffed in response.

Laughter bubbled in his chest.

"Damn, too fucking tight," Jake added and began withdrawing.

Klaus used his legs to quickly trap the young man and prevent him from fleeing the battlefield.

"You are not going to back down now," he said, finding his voice this time. "If it is what you want, be a man and go all the way."

"Like this?" Jake's eyes glinted with mischief.

Klaus had to bite back another curse, but at least now, the boy was, indeed, all in, down to the hilt. Jake smiled as he hovered close and teased Klaus's lips with a wicked tongue. And just like that, he began moving slowly.

Klaus bit his bottom lip hard. Was it just the situation dictating his reactions? But no, it was deep and physical, and Jake somehow knew how to push and brush over that sensitive spot he knew well it was not the most enjoyable for him. He sneaked one hand between them, wondering how hard he was again.

"Hey, no cheating," Jake grabbed his hand and pushed it up, linking it with the other. And then, he leaned in and whispered in his ear. "Your cherry is fucking delicious."

Klaus snorted.

"Make me laugh, and that will kill my erection."

“Oh, yeah? Funny, because I think I can feel how hard you are.”

To drive home his point, Jake pressed his free hand over Klaus’s cock.

“Damn, yes, Jake, like this,” Klaus moaned.

“You wish,” Jake, the naughty sadist, said as he removed his hand, to press it onto the bed, to sustain his weight. “Can I trust you not to touch yourself? I want to give it to you hard.”

Klaus nodded, turning his head and trying hard to focus somewhere, far away from the unbearable sensation. Jake’s hands were steady, planted on his hips, pulling him onto that young hard cock that seemed to know exactly how, where, and how much to hit.

“Where did you learn to fuck like this?” he murmured, fighting the strangled cries he felt building up in his chest.

“Don’t you know? I felt you inside me so many times. You’re the one who taught me.”

Of course Jake had to be good at everything. Especially learning by example.

“Please, Jake. Let me jerk off,” he pleaded.

“No,” Jake answered stubbornly.

He had to grab the coverlet with both hands, as he slid in and out on Jake’s cock. The boy was only averagely endowed, but now was as good a time as any to concede to the idea that size was not the only thing that mattered. He had loved that cock so many times before, liked to feed on it, enjoyed the slight curve, the hardness, steel wrapped in silk, but now that he was feeling it from the inside, it was a different matter.

White hot desire was pooling in his groin. He could only watch in defeat as his cock wept, so unrightfully neglected. He rose on his elbows, trying to draw Jake’s attention once more. The young man’s breathing was coming in short gasps, but his own grunts were taking him more by surprise.

“No one has ever made me feel like this,” he managed, letting his body be pillaged.

“Of course not,” Jake answered and grabbed him by the nape to bring him closer. “No one has ever loved you the way I love you.”

Maybe it was the kiss that followed that sudden declaration or just his own body no longer able to handle the rough, but skillful hammering of Jake’s cock at the same spot over in over again. When he came, it was everything the books described. He lost himself in the sensation, barely registering the way Jake came inside him, moments later.

He pulled the boy into his arms and fell asleep with him all around.

Yet, the next morning, he woke up to the same empty bed.

Chapter Twenty-Three

He went to his office, without even wondering whether he was supposed to search for Jake or not. If last night had been any indication, the ball was in Jake's court now, and he only had to be patient and wait for events to unfold as the new master of the game desired.

But waiting was torturous, he thought, as he carefully arranged the papers on the desk. The rest of the house was bustling with activity, with his personnel busy with putting everything back together after the party.

There were messages on his phone from Hans, but he decided against reading them. Right now, there was just one thing he needed to think of. Jake. No one and nothing else.

The soft knock on his door was barely a surprise. But his voice was still a tad hesitant as he urged the person on the other side to come in. The first thing he noticed was the luggage.

"I came to say goodbye," Jake spoke, without moving an inch away from the now closed door.

"So soon?" Klaus frowned. "I was quite certain you could stay a few more days."

"Yeah, well, that was before," the young man said with a sigh.

"Before what?"

"Don't pretend you don't understand," Jake almost snapped. "It's enough for me to just be in the same room with you and I can only think of one thing."

"I feel the same way," Klaus replied.

He remained seated, despite what his instincts were yelling at him to do.

"Bullshit," Jake murmured.

"Jake," Klaus hoped the warning tone in his voice was enough to make the young man pay attention.

"It feels wrong, you know?" Jake spoke again. "That you only have to snap your fingers and I do what you want me to do. How can I trust myself? Whatever you say, I'll just accept it. Like I don't even have any power over myself."

Klaus felt his chest growing tighter.

"Aren't you even interested in hearing me out?"

"You'll just make it sound like you were right and I was wrong. And I'll just agree with you. Because ..."

The boy looked away, with a pained expression written all over his handsome face.

“I know why,” Klaus interjected, trying to make his voice as gentle as possible. “But this does not mean you are wrong, Jake. And I must apologize.”

Jake seemed shocked at the last words.

“You’re like ... sorry?”

“Yes. I acted on impulse that night.”

“Really? You? The guy who has a tight schedule on even when to take a leak?”

Klaus pursed his lips. Now was not the time to laugh at Jake’s jokes.

“You really do not see it, do you, Jake? You taught me what it feels to be afraid.”

“Like hell I did,” Jake protested but leaned against the door, a sign that he was, at least, willing to listen.

“You walked through that door like you were the savior. And I was in a room packed with trigger-happy morons, just waiting for a reason to shoot. If you had gotten hurt then, I would have never forgiven myself. All it could take was for them to think you were a traitor to their ... whatever they believed in. So I did the only thing I could think of. I turned the tables and counted on your brother’s sense of loyalty towards you. Which, luckily, worked.”

Jake seemed to ponder over what he was hearing. That was a good sign.

“I wanted you to trust me, even without telling you everything.”

“You lied to me,” Jake said accusatorily. “You thought I was blind or stupid.”

Klaus sighed.

“I wanted to protect you. And the truth was I wanted you as far away from your brother as possible.”

“See? You just think that you’re right, all the time,” Jake’s eyes darted sideways, as his resolve was clearly shaking.

“No. I was not. And I am not. You just made me feel things I never thought were possible. Not for me. And not only fear. Also jealousy.”

“Jealousy?” Jake snorted. “Like who could you be jealous of?”

“Your brother.”

“Diaz? What the fuck, man? Did you think I was screwing him on the side or something? That’s gross.”

“No,” Klaus shook his head. “It was nothing like that. But you often spoke of him. Diaz did that, Diaz said that. If Diaz were here, he would do this or that. Diaz, Diaz, Diaz,” he said through his teeth, glad, for a change, that he could finally express his frustration. “Yes, I was

wrong to be jealous of him. And I suppose it was natural for you to speak of him so much, seeing that you two had been on your own since you were so young. But ... I did not think clearly. And, along with my apologies, I have to admit that taking my frustration out on him held a certain degree of petty satisfaction.”

“Fuck,” Jake murmured.

“Can you accept my apologies?” Klaus pressed and got to his feet.

Jake recoiled.

“Yours, maybe, but mine, never,” he spoke.

“What do you mean?” Klaus frowned.

“I knew shit was about to go down,” Jake spoke. “I didn’t tell you.”

Klaus exhaled. Was that all?

“I knew what was going to happen without you telling me. Stop fretting over nonsense. You are here now, with me. This is all that matters.”

“Like hell it does,” Jake said back. “I don’t want your understanding or your pity.”

“What are you talking about? You make no sense,” Klaus started to walk.

“Stay where you are,” Jake said, and Klaus froze.

Jake was different from what he remembered. Last night had not been just a whim, Klaus thought. But that did not change anything in his heart.

“All I am asking is for you to stay,” Klaus spoke.

“No,” Jake said stubbornly.

“Please.”

The word felt foreign in his mouth. When was the last time he had said it? Jake just looked at him, his eyes swimming in hurt. If he could only tell this good-looking amazing young man, who had taken his entire world by storm and changed everything, that nothing mattered, that he could not care less about white lies and what not.

“I love you,” he said simply.

“Don’t fucking say it,” Jake protested.

“Marry me.”

The first thing he had not planned in maybe his entire life. But it just felt like the right thing to say. Nothing felt more right.

“Now I know you are completely out of your fucking mind,” Jake turned quickly on his feet and pulled the door open. “I just came to say goodbye. So goodbye.”

The door slamming shut was like a physical slap. Klaus pressed his palms against the desk, to regain his balance. Nothing was more wrong than this.

Jake went out on the street, without any idea where he was heading to. He took out his German dictionary, something he had asked Hans to lend to him and cursed inwardly, after sweeping through a few pages. At least, he knew how to hail a cab.

And who to call in such desperate times.

“Hey, man, sorry to bother you. I know you’re already on your honeymoon. Oh, damn, thanks a lot. I need you to tell me where I can find the following.”

He repeated each word after Hans as the guy was slowly speaking. Eventually, he chose just to record Hans’s voice. That would have to do, he thought, as he murmured his last thanks to the guy.

“Sir, you should at least put on a coat,” his butler spoke, opening the door to the balcony for the umpteenth time.

“Please, you are becoming tedious, Bernard,” Klaus waved him away.

The ashes burned his fingers. It was all beautiful and white. It had snowed the entire morning, and the garden looked even better all covered in white like this. Everything was beautiful, but it was all for nothing. Because it did not matter if there was no one to share it with.

The door behind him swished open once more.

“Bernard,” he sighed. “I told you ...”

A coat was placed carefully over his shoulders, and he wanted to protest, but strong arms embraced him from behind, and he stopped, not daring to turn. He placed his palms on the hands holding him like he wanted to check if they were real and not just some trick of his imagination.

“You suck at proposing,” Jake spoke, without letting go.

“Is that so?” he exhaled.

“Yeah.”

Jake made him turn and watched him carefully.

“This is how you do it,” the young man followed and rummaged for something in his coat.

Klaus chuckled as he saw the object.

“Don’t you dare to laugh,” Jake mumbled as he took Klaus’s hand. “I hope I’m not stupidly off the mark here.”

No, he wasn’t. It fit. Klaus put out his hand, admiring the simple golden band on his ring finger.

“And now?” he turned his attention back to the raven-haired beauty in front of him. “What is next?”

“I suppose you should say yes, or else I’ll have to consider selling my ass to get the money for the airplane ticket back home,” Jake responded promptly.

Klaus pulled him into a hug and laughed.

“Do not even dare to say that in jest. Did you spend all the money you had on this?”

“Yeah, like why not?” Jake shrugged.

A few snowflakes caught into the long dark eyelashes and Jake blinked a few times.

“Well, I don’t suppose that you brought this ring’s counterpart, so you have me at a disadvantage here.”

“Actually, I did,” Jake protested and struggled to break free so he could bring forward the second ring from his pocket.

Klaus took it slowly and examined it.

“Please don’t start commenting on how cheap they are and shit like that,” Jake spoke.

“Nothing of the kind,” Klaus linked his fingers with Jake’s and slid the ring on the designated one. The one connected to the heart.

The small clink made as their hands came together as the rings touched had to be the happiest sound Klaus had ever heard in his entire life.

“May I ask you what made you change your mind?”

Jake sighed, a bit too theatrically to take to heart.

“I lost this battle a long time ago. I wanted to go back and just try to forget about you. But then you had to say all those stupid things, and I knew I couldn’t leave no matter how much I wanted to. Or that I would be stupid to do that. Or maybe I would have just grovelled and begged for you to take me back anyway. Even if you didn’t say anything. I don’t know, really.”

“That certainly explains everything,” Klaus joked.

“So just hurry up and say yes already.”

“I did not say yes already?”

“No, you didn’t. You just want me to go crazy here.”

Klaus cupped the young man’s cheeks.

“Yes,” he said solemnly.

Jake smiled.

“That’s better. Oh, shit,” he exclaimed.

“What is it now?” Klaus frowned.

“I will have to learn how to speak German, right?”

“You will do just fine. You can start with some familiar terms, that is all. And I will be glad to help you.”

“I won’t count on you.”

“And why is that?” Klaus asked, taken aback.

“I’m pretty sure I won’t be able to concentrate with you wearing glasses around me, behaving like a teach.”

“Oh, that. Well, it will do you good to get used to a little discipline.”

“No way, I’m done with that. I’ll just have Hans and Stephen help me. By the way, I already know a few words from them, and I know that you swear a lot when you think no one understands you. So stop playing the sour teach act. You’re not a fucking spinster.”

“I was almost in danger of becoming one,” Klaus joked.

Jake’s hands were cold as the young man struggled to pull his shirt out and sneak inside to rest on his chest. Klaus winced, but it was not that unpleasant. Actually, he wanted nothing more but to make Jake burn head to toes now.

“Let’s take this inside,” he whispered, as his lips hovered closer to Jake’s mouth.

He was rewarded with the sweetest kiss.

“What do you think the guys will say?” Jake asked sheepishly once he was allowed to breathe.

“I bet they will say that it was about damn time. But, for now, let them just enjoy their honeymoon. By the way, they go to Martinique tomorrow. Would you like us to go, too?”

“And ruin their honeymoon? Nah,” Jake shook his head. “I like how winter feels here. And I just want to be with you.”

Klaus could not have hoped for a better answer. Just like the man saying the words, it was absolutely perfect. He took his soon-to-be husband by his shoulders, and they walked back inside. Agnes was waiting in the hallway, outside the open bedroom door with the tea set already prepared.

“Hot tea?” she asked with a smile that shone brighter than all the Christmas lights in the garden.

Klaus was about to say something, but, instead, he suddenly sneezed. Jake laughed softly next to him.

“Let me get that, Agnes,” the young man hurried to take the tray from the old lady’s hands.

Klaus stared at the scene in front of him with new found fondness. Then he noticed something and frowned slightly.

“Did Agnes just ... wink at you?” he asked Jake, as the head of housekeeping walked away, humming something to herself, closing the room door behind her.

“I don’t know, man. You must be imagining things.”

By the mischievous smile on Jake’s lips, that had to be a blatant lie. The kind he could live with. He allowed Jake just enough time to place the tea set on the table. Grabbing him and squeezing him tightly, he whispered in Jake’s ear.

“Do you have any idea how much I missed you?”

“I think I do,” Jake whispered back.

For long seconds, they just looked at each other, getting lost in each other, and holding on to each other like drowning men holding on a straw.

“I still cannot believe it,” Klaus chuckled softly.

Jake giggled in turn.

“Well, you should.”

“Promise me,” Klaus’s voice turned stern and serious. “That you’ll never leave again. Never leave me.”

“I promise,” Jake said back, just as solemn. “But you should promise, too.”

“Anything you want,” Klaus agreed.

“Promise me you’ll never let me go,” Jake said while biting his bottom lip.

Klaus’s quirked an eyebrow.

“Wait, you little rascal ... Were you disappointed I didn’t chase you down? I thought you wanted nothing to do with me.”

“Well, it wasn’t like that,” Jake’s eyes darted sideways. “At first, I was so pissed at you. I wanted nothing to do with you. But, after a while, I just started to wonder what you might be doing, how you would go about your day, who you would fuck. And stuff like that,” the boy added quickly.

“So were you jealous?” Klaus laughed. “Imagining me in another man’s arms?”

“Jealous?” Jake glared like he could not believe his lover was really accusing him of such a thing. “All the time,” he added matter-of-factly.

“That is good to know,” Klaus smiled.

“Why?” Jake seemed alarmed.

“It means you care, Jake,” Klaus shut his lover up with a short kiss.

“Oh, that,” Jake giggled. “I don’t know ... I mean ...”

“Quit joking,” Klaus pretended to frown.

Jake touched Klaus’s forehead and smoothed down the wrinkles there with his fingers. The touch was featherlike, but it conveyed so much. Klaus caught Jake’s hand, forcing it down slowly, without breaking eye contact.

“All this time,” he spoke, “I wanted nothing but for you to come running back to me.”

“Well, I took a cab just earlier. It was faster than running. Does that count?” Jake joked.

“I want you so badly. It is a little scary, you know?” Klaus said gently.

“If it’s of any help, I’m freaking out here a little, too. But I own up to it. Will you do the same?” Jake’s eyes darkened for a second.

Klaus let go of Jake’s hand so he could cup the young man’s cheek.

“Never been surer of anything else in my entire life. I want you here, with me. Forever.”

“That’s good, that’s good to know,” Jake stuttered, biting his lower lip.

Klaus covered Jake’s mouth with his, licking the bite. It had been too long. And Jake seemed to think the same thing, as he began to undress Klaus with the same impatient, although hesitant at first, moves.

They landed on the bed with a loud thump. Jake tried to giggle again, but this time Klaus was having none of it. He pushed his lover on his back, staring at him with hooded eyes.

“You know, Jake, you might come to regret your decision to tie the knot with me.”

“Really?” Jake glared, but his lips were quirked into a smile.

“I might not let you out of bed for days.”

“Then I’ll go out at night,” Jake shot back.

“I will be possessive and sometimes act like a jerk.”

“Sometimes?” Jake quirked an eyebrow.

“Well, I will try to function like a normal human being.”

“Oh, yeah? And what do you want? A prize?” Jake challenged him.

“I get the feeling someone wants to be taken in hand.”

“Like who?”

“Hmm, funny,” Klaus commented.

His erection was pressing on top of Jake’s crotch, and there was no understatement that both were feeling the same way. Carefully catching one naked ankle with his fingers, he made Jake bend one knee until it pressed against his chest.

“You are definitely a keeper. So brave,” Klaus cooed.

Of course Jake had to roll his eyes and make a cute little sound.

“I think I might want to show you right now how much I want to tie you down.”

That earned him a quizzical look from Jake.

“Do you still remember your old friend?” Klaus asked as he sneaked one hand to rummage through the clothes rumped on the floor.

Jake’s eyes flickered when he saw the belt. The familiarity of it all was almost making them both tremble with want. Jake tried to rise on his elbows, bending his head a little, but Klaus pushed him down. As much as the small sign of submission was filling him with pride, he wanted something different this time.

“Give me your hands,” he asked instead.

The question in Jake’s eyes remained there, but the young man offered his hands together. Klaus was quick to tie them and fasten them to the headboard with steady fingers. Jake looked beautiful like that, as Klaus pushed him higher on the bed so that he could lie comfortably, his sinewy arms bent from the elbows. The young man was not tamed, as his gaze remained unflinching.

“Amazing,” Klaus commented.

Jake’s eyes fluttered. It took so little to make his lover come undone. Nice words worked best. Always.

“Just bring your knees up and show me,” he asked.

Jake obeyed. Klaus began preparing himself. No matter how much his body throbbed with want, he wanted to take it all in, while taking his time.

“Say it, Jake,” he cooed as he placed himself at the tight entrance.

“Nobody fucked me,” Jake replied.

“Good answer, love,” he said as he pushed inside.

Jake cursed softly, his head turned to one side. Klaus was louder. His lover was tight and hot, and that made his eyes roll in his head, as he was gripped by that powerful channel of muscles.

He was maybe in over his head now. But there was no other confirmation needed except for Jake’s abs going up and down with each thrust, as the young man’s cock lay on them, jerking steadily.

It was perfect. So Klaus took Jake’s hard-on in one hand and began pumping it to the same rhythm of his hips. Jake stared at him, mouthing things with his soft lips, biting them from time to time, driving Klaus mad.

He knew he would not take long. Not this time. But Jake still beat him to it, letting the words of his rising excitement flow with impunity out of his sexy mouth, as Klaus just continued to pound into him with careless abandon. He followed swiftly, grabbing one of Jake’s ankles and sinking his teeth into the sensitive skin there, wanting to mark his lover in more ways than one.

Minutes later, as they both lay panting on the bed, Jake’s drowsy voice made his eye snap open.

“Hey, how do you say ... you know ... the words in German?”

“The words?” Klaus blinked and turned to look at the beautiful man in his bed and his life.

“C’mon, you know what I mean,” Jake pouted, knowing what kind of effect that had on Klaus.

“Oh, the words. Ich Liebe Dich,” Klaus pulled his lover closer and looked him in the eyes.

“Then, I should just say them,” Jake smiled. “Just in case.”

The words, no matter how clumsy, were sweeter than honey on his man’s tongue. Klaus took Jake in his arms and kissed him. Yes, nothing else ever felt more right in his entire life.

Epilogue

A few years later

Jake rechecked his phone and sighed.

“What is it?”

He turned to face his husband and smiled.

“Nothing, really,” he pushed the phone away from him, on the desk.

Klaus leaned against the desk and watched him with an expression on his face that was telling him it was not a good idea to hide anything from the man.

“I know that there have been certain financial transactions from here to somewhere across the pond,” Klaus spoke slowly.

“Well, I’m using my own money,” Jake mumbled. “I would not steal from you.”

Klaus shut him up with a short kiss.

“You know very well that you have the right to spend all my money if you want, love.”

“No. He’s my brother, my responsibility.”

“I respect that. But if you ever need my help ...”

“No way. He hates your guts. He barely talks to me.”

“And? Did you manage to tell him that we have been married for years now?”

“I did. After that, he did not speak to me for a whole month. But now, ever since he got shot, and cannot do much, he seems more willing to talk and accept my help.”

Klaus caressed his hair slowly.

“It feels wrong that I cannot do anything to help your brother. He is, after all, family.”

Jake grabbed Klaus’s hand and placed a small kiss on his palm.

“I would not trust the two of you in the same room. You would be at each other’s throats in no time.”

“You underestimate my restraint.”

Jake snorted.

“Maybe you could be civilized. But I doubt Diaz could. I do what I can for him. The rest is up to him alone. Are you ready to go to bed?”

“Yes.”

“Then let’s not talk about my brother anymore. All I want is right here, next to me.”

THE END

Author’s note:

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