

Life's

LITTLE

Changes



Maiya Willow

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Love is an Open Road

An M/M Romance series

LIFE'S LITTLE CHANGES

By Maija Willow

Introduction

The story you are about to read celebrates love, sex and romance between men. It is a product of the *Love is an Open Road* promotion sponsored by the *Goodreads M/M Romance Group* and is published as a gift to you.

What Is Love is an Open Road?

The *Goodreads M/M Romance Group* invited members to choose a photo and pen a letter asking for a short M/M romance story inspired by the image; authors from the group were encouraged to select a letter and write an original tale. The result was an outpouring of creativity that shone a spotlight on the special bond between M/M romance writers and the people who love what these authors do.

A written description of the image that inspired this story is provided along with the original request letter. If you'd like to view the photo, please feel free to join the [Goodreads M/M Romance Group](#) and visit the discussion section: *Love is an Open Road*.

No matter if you are a long-time devotee to M/M Romance, just new to the genre or fall somewhere in between, you are in for a delicious treat.

Words of Caution

This story may contain sexually explicit content and is **intended for adult readers**. It may contain content that is disagreeable or distressing to some readers. The *M/M Romance Group* strongly recommends that each reader review the General Information section before each story for story tags as well as for content warnings.

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each and every author also gives freely of their time and talent, it was decided that all edits suggested may be accepted or rejected by the author at any given time. For this reason, some stories will appear to be more tightly edited than others, depending on the choice of the author.

This story is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are the products of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental.

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Photo Description

A strong man with short brown hair in a blue, white, and green striped sleeveless T-shirt is carrying another man—also with short brown hair, who is wearing a white sleeveless T-shirt, denim shorts, and red high-top sneakers—down a city street. The man being carried has his head comfortably resting on the other man's shoulder. His eyes are closed and he appears to feel safe in the other man's arms.

Story Letter

Dear Author,

See that strong guy carrying me? That's my Daddy and I'm his little buddy :) We are in a Daddy/little boy kind of relationship. No I don't wear diapers, I'm not THAT little, although Daddy has threatened to put me in diapers once or twice for misbehaving. Mostly I get spankings or a paddling when I misbehave. I can be kinda bratty sometimes, and I tend to run my mouth off sometimes too. But really, I'm a good boy. But I did something bad the other day and Daddy got mad, really mad, and I got scared that he didn't love me anymore and didn't want to be my Daddy. So I did what little boys do and I ran away. It was a pretty stupid move, you see, we just moved to the area and I didn't know my way around the city. Thankfully, Daddy grew up in this city and knows his way around, and he went out to find me. We had a long talk after he found me in a park, and we worked it all out. Afterwards, he carried me home and made me macaroni and cheese, just the way I like it, with cut up hotdogs in it and chocolate milk. Of course that was after receiving my punishment for running away. I'm glad we straightened things out. I love my Daddy so much; he means the world to me.

Please no fantasy, sci-fi, historical or paranormal.

Sincerely,

JenTed

Story Info

Genre: contemporary

Tags: businessmen, BDSM, fetish/toys, age-play, established couples, anxiety disorder

Word Count: 21,767

LIFE'S LITTLE CHANGES

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Chapter 1

Mark looked at the clock on his computer and groaned to himself as he ran his fingers through his mop of brown hair. *Three o'clock? Only three o'clock? When will this day end?* He was more than ready for Friday to be over. As an accountant at a fairly busy accounting firm, he dealt with a lot of large businesses, and this one in particular was a mess. He'd been poring over invoices and tax receipts all day, and none of it added up. His client was missing money, and there was no evidence that any of this new paperwork held the answer.

He just wanted to go home, get into his PJs, and let Shaun read him to sleep. Instead he was stuck here, anxiety bubbling in his stomach like acid-covered butterflies, burning everything their wings touched.

He thought the move to the city would be easy. He'd had every confidence in his abilities in his job, until he'd stepped foot in Henley Cooper Accounting and was given his client list. Businesses in the city were larger, his clients more cutthroat and demanding, and it was End of Financial Year. Why did they move this close to tax time? Stupid. He'd never felt less confident than he did when he'd contacted the bookkeepers in some of the larger companies, and their terse voices sounded accusatory and annoyed. He'd been in control of his anxiety attacks for over a year, but he could feel the familiar strain only three weeks into this new job, in a new city that was massive compared to where he relocated from.

His gut twisted again, and he had to fight the urge to flee the room. He took some deep breaths and practiced the mantra his counsellor taught him to say to help soothe him. *Inhale calm, exhale negative energy.* He did this a few times until he felt himself relax.

Mark took one last cleansing breath and got sucked back into his work. He could do this. He just had to figure out what was going on with this account.

Just as Mark was finishing up his third attempt at reconciling Mr Peterson's accounts, his boss, Mr Henley, poked his head through the door.

"Mark, do you have a minute?" he asked as his large confident form entered the room.

Mark nodded and waited for him to close the door to his office. He pushed a chair over from the wall, before he sat down in front of the desk, his thick white hair settling around his aging face.

“Are you still working on Mr Peterson’s account?” he asked casually.

“Actually, yes, and I’m having some trouble with it. These numbers don’t look right, and I’ve gone over them three times,” Mark replied.

Mr Henley nodded his head up and down and had a concerned look on his face, making the creases around his eyes more prominent. Mark’s insides twisted; he squeezed his hands into fists in his lap and slowed his breathing.

After a moment Mr Henley smiled. Smiled. Mark waited for him to speak.

“Mark, I was hoping you could take on a few extra clients who were part of Glenda’s portfolio. With her going into semi-retirement, we’ve had to share her workload around, so she can manage her new part-time hours,” he said.

Mark felt a slight buzzing in his ears. His stomach tightened again. He had no idea how he would be able to cope with more clients. He felt like he was losing his mind from the accounts he already had. Glenda was as cutthroat as the clients they dealt with. He had overheard her a few times, laying down the law with her strong, no-nonsense attitude and clipped tone. If that was how she had to deal with them, he had no idea how he would be able to keep their demanding natures from swallowing him whole. It was a far cry from the gentle business owners he had worked with in his old town.

The buzzing in his ears subsided just as Mr Henley was saying, “I have every confidence in your ability to handle these accounts. You’ve already cleared up a lot of the work Thomas left behind, and his accounts were in terrible shape. I think you’ll do great things here. You’re fitting in nicely, and everyone has expressed how pleased they are that you’ve joined our team.”

“Thank you, sir.” Mark tried not to swallow convulsively as his throat dried up at the thought of all the work he still had to get through. He hadn’t met Thomas before he left, but with the brief remarks made by office staff, it was enough for him to glean that Thomas had been using this job to pilfer clients for his start-up firm. Unfortunately, his abrupt departure—when Mr Henley found out what he was doing—had left a huge workload that had been given to Mark, along with the clients he was to handle when he interviewed for the position. Adding on some of Glenda’s client list seemed impossible to get through in such a short period of time.

Mr Henley cut into his thoughts. “Right, that’s settled then. I’ll have Glenda give you a briefing on where she is in the End of Financial Year reporting and what will be left for you to do.”

He could only nod dumbly as he watched his boss stand up and leave the office, the door quietly shutting behind him.

Mark sagged in his seat, breathing hard, and tried to stop his hands from shaking. His chest felt tight, and he started to breathe too fast. He forced himself to take some deep breaths and slow his heart rate. *Inhale calm, exhale negative energy.* He thought about Shaun and their move, and how happy they were with their new space. How happy they were together. How safe he would be in Shaun’s arms. His heart rate slowed and the tightness in his chest started to loosen up. After a few minutes of staring at the door and focusing his mind on Shaun, he felt calmer and more in control.

He needed to think about this clearly. This wasn’t the disaster he was making it out to be. Mr Henley was confident in him, and Shaun would be proud of him for being able to handle bigger responsibilities. He was aware that his reaction was irrational. He could do this. He had been enough of a burden on Shaun while he was recovering from his breakdown. Shaun had been the sole earner for six months while Mark went through intense therapy. The only reason they didn’t end up on the streets is because Shaun busted his arse at his job in real estate to keep them comfortable and Mark in counselling. Shaun needed him to keep his shit together. He had sacrificed enough of himself.

With shaky hands, Mark saved the work he was doing on the Peterson account and logged out. He quickly gathered his things and almost ran down the stairs and out the door. The fresh May air smacked him in the face as he headed to the car park across from his office building so he could get home. He really needed to feel Shaun’s arms around him right now. Shaun would make him feel better; he always did.

After reaching the car, Mark unlocked the door and slipped inside. He started to feel a little better as he sat in the soft leather seat. He would be forever grateful for Shaun’s insistence that he get leather upholstery in his car. Right now, the warmth of the seat, from being outside in the sun, felt amazing through his shirt, and his muscles started to relax. God he was wound tight. After starting the car, he headed for home.

Mark drove his car into their two-car garage, then clicked the button to lower the garage door. He sat in there for a minute trying to gather his wits. His mind had been racing as he drove through the busy city streets to the Kangaroo Point home he shared with Shaun, trying to plan in his head how to organise an increase in work. He still felt wound up over the workload he had to swim through and the aggressive clients he'd have to deal with.

Mark shuddered and exhaled a sharp breath. He shook his head to clear it, and shoved his worries to the back of his mind. He was home, and Shaun would be inside. He didn't want to ruin their Friday night with his work drama. It felt stupid to get so worked up over being considered a productive employee. He'd figure it out another time.

Mark got out of the car and headed through the garage door adjacent to the front entry. He pushed the key into the lock and opened the door, pausing briefly to hang up his jacket and toe off his work shoes. Loosening his tie, he headed up the stairs into the main area of their two-story house.

It felt good to be done with the workweek. Now he could melt into the familiarity of his role at home and leave the troubles of his job alone for a while. He needed a clear head to think, and right now he was a bundle of nerves.

"Shaun?" he called out as he walked through the kitchen.

"In the bedroom." came Shaun's muffled reply.

Mark made his way through the open-plan living area, the setting sun casting shadows over the cream-painted walls as his sock-covered feet thumped along the dark polished hardwood floors. As he continued down the hall towards the master bedroom, he could hear drawers being pulled out and knew that Shaun was changing.

When he got to their bedroom, he stood in the doorway and admired Shaun's half-naked form as he bent over to put on his socks. His light brown hair was wet and matted, looking darker than its usual shade, and his pale skin was flushed a slight pink from the heat of the water. A few droplets had escaped his notice and were pooling on his neck and along his spine. Mark's eyes were drawn down Shaun's back to his narrow waist and muscular bum in his loose stonewashed blue jeans. Mark loved how smooth and toned Shaun was compared to his leaner, softer frame. Shaun liked to go to the gym after work, before heading home, so Mark always got a nice show of all that delicious muscle when he walked in the door.

Shaun turned around after pulling a T-shirt from the dresser, and a broad grin split his face. “Hey, baby boy, I’m glad you’re home.”

Mark beamed back, looking into those comforting blue eyes, slipping into that familiar space where he could let go of his worries.

“Hi, Daddy, I missed you so much,” Mark said, grinning wide.

Chapter 2

Mark was sitting restlessly on the bed, waiting, just as Shaun told him to. After giving Mark a hug and kiss, Shaun had instructed him to wait on the bed because he had something for him.

“What is it?” Mark asked impatiently as he bounced on the bed.

“It’s a surprise. I went shopping before I went to the gym today.” Shaun walked over to the tallboy and picked up a bag, but stood in front of it so Mark couldn’t see the shop name. He tried to peer around him, but Shaun was so big, and Mark was too far away to see.

“Close your eyes, baby boy, while I get it out of the bag,” Shaun instructed. Mark closed his eyes but tried to peek through his lashes as he heard the rustling of plastic.

“Mark, your eyes aren’t closed. Put your hands over your eyes please, or I’ll have to put your surprise away.”

Mark cupped his hands over his face and peeked through his fingers.

“Mark!” Shaun said. “You’re peeking. Do you want your surprise or not?”

“I dooooo, Shaun, but you’re taking a really long time,” Mark whined. He quickly closed the gap in his fingers and everything went dark.

He strained his ears and heard Shaun’s feet shuffling on the carpet as he moved closer. He heard more plastic noises, and then Shaun said, “Ok, you can look now.”

Mark quickly moved his hands to see what Shaun bought him. He gasped and giggled when he saw what Shaun had in his hand. “Shaun! That’s not clothing!” Mark exclaimed.

“Very clever, Mark. No it’s not. Tell me what you see.” His skin tingled as Shaun brushed his fingers along his cheek.

Mark giggled uncontrollably, then grinned. When he’d finished he uncovered his mouth and whispered, “It could be a dummy, but it’s the wrong shape. What is it?”

Shaun smiled at him. “This is a plug for your bottom. Will you let me put this in your sweet little bottom?”

Mark's insides fluttered, and his penis swelled and grew. He nodded his head while his eyes went wide. He chewed on his bottom lip, then said, "I like it when you play with my bottom." He quickly dropped his head, suddenly shy. He peeked up through his lashes and saw Shaun suppressing a laugh. Mark looked down and saw something moving in Shaun's pants. He knew what it was and it excited him more. Shaun was just as excited as Mark was about the new toy.

Shaun cleared his throat, and Mark snapped his eyes back up. He was smiling warmly and holding up the plug. Mark got a closer look at it. It was blue and transparent with something dark on the end. It looked too big to fit in his bottom, and he took a big gulping breath. He reminded himself that Shaun would never do anything to hurt him.

"I had this designed especially for you. See, it has your favourite superhero symbol on it." Shaun showed Mark one end of it, and it did have that familiar symbol on the end.

Mark's eyes lit up. "Really, you had this made for me?"

"Yes, Mark," he said patiently, holding the plug in his hand.

"If I have that in my bottom, will I be a superhero too?" He looked up at Shaun with desire in his eyes.

Shaun was trying not to laugh but a deep rumbling guffaw burst from his throat. Warmth filled Mark at Shaun's laugh. He loved that deep smooth sound, the vibrations sending tingles through his body. "How about we try it and find out?" Shaun asked when he stopped chuckling.

Mark bounced on the bed and said, "Okay!"

"Take your clothes off, Mark, and we'll see if we can make you a superhero with this thing."

Mark quickly pulled off his clothes. He tossed his shirt on the bed and yanked his pants down, using his feet to get himself free from the pool of fabric around his ankles. He peeled off his socks and then sat up again, waiting for Shaun's next instruction.

"Turn around for me, babe, and put your bottom in the air," Shaun said, making circular motions with his fingers.

Mark did as instructed, his body starting to vibrate with excitement. He heard a clicking noise and turned his head to see what Shaun was doing.

“Head down please, Mark.”

Pushing his head into the mattress, he wiggled his bottom in the air. The cool feel of something wet and slimy dripped onto his bottom hole.

“Ahhh, that’s cold, Shaun.” His words ended on a moan as something slippery and hard rubbed against his entrance. It felt so good and his penis started growing again. He panted a little as the tip of the plug pressed into his bottom and slid out again. He pushed back against it, but Shaun moved it away and then tapped his bum.

“Be still, Mark,” Shaun scolded.

Mark did his best to be really, really still while his skin grew hotter and his penis stuck up higher and harder. Shaun pressed the plug against his hole again, and Mark tried to keep as still as a statue. He didn’t want Shaun to take it away. The plug felt so good slipping around his entrance, and he groaned as Shaun pressed it in a little further this time.

“Does it feel good when I open your bottom up with the plug, Mark?”

“Yesss, Shaun.” Mark moaned as the plug pushed in a little further. The stretch felt good against his sensitive nerves as Shaun eased it in and out, pushing more and more of the plug in.

“Is your cock hard, Mark?” Shaun asked.

“So hard,” Mark moaned, and Shaun put his thick hand around it, giving it a tug. “Aaah.” Mark panted. He loved how Shaun’s hand felt on his penis, strong and hot and smooth, as it slid over his skin. Shaun knew just how to tug it, and he was really excited about Shaun’s hands being down there, pushing the plug in and pulling it out. The plug stretched him, and he felt a slight burn as it sank in and stopped. His bottom clenched around the hard glass. Tug after tug, Shaun kept stroking his penis until Mark was straining and moaning. He wanted Shaun to keep tugging until he exploded, but Shaun pulled his hand away. He placed a warm soft kiss on his neck, and Mark sighed and wiggled in happiness.

“Do you feel like a superhero, babe?” Shaun asked.

“Like I could fly away at any minute,” Mark replied breathlessly as he looked up at him and grinned.

Shaun huffed out a laugh and then moved away. He helped Mark up off the bed and went over to the tallboy. He pulled out some of Mark’s clothes and came back over to get him dressed. “I’m going to go make dinner. Do you want

to draw while I get our food?" Mark wanted Shaun to keep jerking his penis, but he knew he couldn't ask. Shaun would do that when he felt like it. Mark really hoped Shaun felt like it after dinner.

"Yes, I'd like to draw," he said, pulling on his pants. The glass plug was a little bit heavy, and it felt like it was moving around as he lifted his legs into the pants. Shaun helped him with his shirt, and then they both walked into the living area. Mark had completely forgotten about his workday by the time he sat down at the table to draw. Shaun was so good at making his worries fade into the background. All he could think about was the plug in his bottom, and his penis. He felt warm, peaceful contentment.

Shaun looked across the table at baby boy, who was pushing his food around his plate, his slightly shaggy brown hair concealing his eyes. Mark had been so content just a short while ago, but once dinner was on the table, he seemed to tense and fidget. Shaun couldn't tell if it was something on his mind or the plug in his bottom. He was only mildly concerned. Mark would open up to him if he was truly struggling, of that Shaun had no doubt. They had been through a lot in the last two years since Mark's breakdown, and Mark worked hard to identify his triggers, always coming to Shaun when he needed him.

Shaun's thoughts were interrupted by a clatter of metal on porcelain. "Sorry, Daddy," Mark mumbled softly, his head still bent forwards. Right. Time to focus on his boy.

"Baby boy." Shaun waited until Mark's hazel eyes met his. "Eat your dinner please," he said with only a slight edge, pointing at the mostly untouched plate of food. Mark huffed loudly and picked up his fork.

"Why do I have to eat green beans, Daddy? I hate them." Mark pouted.

"Because it's a good source of vitamins, and you need to take care of your body, baby boy," Shaun replied with only a hint of annoyance. Mark had never been good at taking care of himself nutritionally. His diet had consisted of takeaway and microwave meals before they moved in together. How he stayed strong and alert, while living alone, was anyone's guess. They went through some pretty intense arguing about what was considered food in the beginning. Once their relationship developed into the Daddy/little boy dynamic they had now, the arguing was only occasional as Shaun took over the grocery shopping and meal planning. Unfortunately, when Mark was in a bratty mood, he would pout about the food Shaun provided. Like now.

“But they taste disgusting. I want ice cream.” Mark put his fork back on the plate and looked at Shaun imploringly. Shaun wasn't swayed. It was his job to protect and nurture his boy, even if that led to tantrums and tears. He couldn't dismiss the feeling that this had been building up inside Mark all day, from whatever made him so tense when he got home.

“Baby boy, eat your vegetables and you can have ice cream when you've cleared your plate,” he said with a stern voice.

His boy's features twisted into a scowl, but he stabbed his fork through a bean and brought it to his mouth, chomping on it with exaggerated thoroughness, then made gagging noises after he'd swallowed.

Shaun suppressed a smile so baby boy wouldn't be encouraged in his rebellion. He picked up his own fork and resumed eating his meal. Shaun could admit to himself that sometimes he enjoyed Mark's brattiness. It was endearing and let him know that Mark wasn't bottling up his feelings. That didn't mean Shaun wouldn't do what he promised and correct the behaviour. Baby boy needed that consistency. It kept his anxiety attacks under control, knowing that Daddy would take care of him and keep him safe.

“I'm full, Daddy,” Mark declared after only a few minutes. Shaun looked over at Mark's plate, to see it still had most of the vegetables on it, minus the green bean that had been dramatically eaten.

“No you're not. Your plate is still covered with food. Eat the rest.”

“I said I'm full. I can't eat any more. My tummy will hurt,” Mark said as he clutched his stomach and tried to look ill.

Shaun sighed. He didn't want to punish his boy, but that was clearly what Mark needed right now.

“If you don't do as you're told, I will have to punish you.” Shaun tried one last time to avoid the inevitable.

“But I'm full, Daddy!” Mark said as he dropped his fork onto his plate. The loud noise grated on Shaun's nerves. He suppressed the urge to growl and slowly put his own cutlery down. He wiped his mouth on a napkin and placed it next to his plate. Mark was looking at him closely, probably gauging how he was going to react. He was chewing on his bottom lip and wiggling in his chair. Shaun looked into his boy's eyes, searching for what it was he truly needed from him. He saw the slight edge of panic, along with defiance. Shaun gave a nod and got up from his place at the dining table. He reached his hand out and waved his fingers for his boy to follow.

Baby boy slowly rose from his chair and shuffled over to Shaun. He looked nervous now. Good. He led Mark over to the corner of the lounge room and told him, "Strip down to your underwear, boy."

Mark flinched but did as he was told. He took off his shirt and pants and then folded them neatly and offered them to Shaun. Shaun took them from Mark and placed them on the coffee table in front of the TV stand.

"Turn around and put your nose against the wall. Hands behind your back, legs straight," he instructed. Mark's shoulders hunched in a bit, but he took a deep breath and did as he was told.

Shaun reached over to the large bookcase crowding the area and grabbed the oven timer that was kept there for Mark's time outs. He set the timer for fifteen minutes and placed it back on the shelf. The bookcase would block Mark's view in this position, so he wouldn't be able to see Shaun without turning his head.

Shaun went to the dining table and picked up his empty plate on his way over to the kitchen area. He left Mark's plate untouched. He cleaned up the remaining dishes from dinner, keeping an ear out for Mark. He could easily see him when he looked across the kitchen island, into the living area, and was satisfied Mark hadn't moved.

He busied himself in the kitchen until he heard the buzz of the oven timer and then walked over to Mark. He stood behind him and took in his form. His legs were quivering a little from the awkward angle he had to maintain and he was holding his hands together in a white-knuckled grip to keep from moving them. Even though the timer had buzzed Mark hadn't moved. He wouldn't until Shaun released him from his punishment.

"Turn around, boy," Shaun said with an edge to indicate he wasn't pleased with Mark's behaviour earlier. Mark turned around to face him with a sombre look on his face, keeping his eyes lowered. Shaun moved his hand to grip Mark's chin and move his face up so he looked into his eyes. His boy looked a lot more relaxed, but not exactly happy.

"Are we going to have any more time outs tonight, baby boy?" Shaun asked, softening his tone so that Mark would know he wasn't annoyed anymore.

Mark shook his head no as he took in a deep breath. Shaun nodded, satisfied that Mark was looking calmer.

“Good, you can move from the corner now, and get dressed.” Shaun indicated to the folded pile of clothes.

Mark quickly re-dressed himself, and Shaun grabbed his hand and pulled him into a hug. They both needed it right now. He lowered himself onto the couch and Mark climbed into his lap, snuggling his head into Shaun's neck, slow breaths puffing warmth against his skin.

After a few moments of silence, Mark looked up and said, “Thank you, Daddy. I'd like to finish my dinner now.”

Shaun smiled down at him and nodded his head. They both sat there for a minute more, enjoying the affection, until Mark wriggled off his lap, hissing a little, probably from the plug still stuck in his arse. He had the most adorable self-satisfied smirk when he looked back at Shaun; he couldn't help but huff a laugh and shake his head. Clearly, whatever was bothering his baby boy wasn't going to interfere with the rest of their night. Shaun was glad. He didn't like it when Mark was hurting, and would give him whatever he needed to help him. His heart swelled, and he inhaled a deep breath as he remembered a time when Mark fought his way back to health, for them, for this. His boy was amazing and strong. He would do whatever he could to keep Mark happy.

His thoughts were interrupted when he felt Mark pulling on his arm.

“Daddy. I said I want to finish my dinner. And then I get ice cream, right?” he asked, looking hopeful.

Shaun gave himself a mental shake to dislodge his wayward thoughts. “Yes, baby boy. You get ice cream when you've finished your dinner. Let me go heat it up for you. Wait for me at the table.”

“Okay, thank you, Daddy!” Mark said as he scrambled back to the dining table, plopping down on the seat and moaning as he repositioned himself to make it more comfortable. Shaun got up and followed, grabbing Mark's plate and heading for the microwave.

Mark was practically vibrating out of his skin by the time they'd finished watching his favourite movie. The plug had wreaked havoc on his prostate, and his skin tingled all over. Shaun had made it worse by brushing his hands along Mark's pant legs while they were propped up in his lap. Mark was hyperaware of Shaun's breathing, but he remained unaffected.

As the credits to the movie rolled, Mark heard Shaun humming the tune and turned to smile at him. Shaun looked at him with hooded eyes, and the skin on the back of his neck tingled. He gulped and took a shaky breath. He knew that look.

“Mark, I need your help with something.” Mark looked down at Shaun’s hand that was rubbing against the hard bulge in his pants. Mark looked at Shaun’s face and Shaun licked his lips.

“What do you need help with, Shaun?” Mark asked in mock innocence, his penis straining in his PJ pants. He really hoped Shaun wanted to help him with something too.

“Can you undo my pants please?” he asked. Mark nodded and then scrambled over to get to the button on Shaun’s jeans. He fumbled a little with getting the button open, but it didn’t take him too long to release it. He lowered the zipper and sat back, waiting for further instructions.

“Mark, what do you think I want you to help with next?” he asked in a low voice.

“Um, do you want me to get your jammies for you?” Mark teased. Shaun shook his head, smiling wickedly.

“No, Mark, I want you to help me take something out of my pants,” he said.

Mark looked at him, feigning confusion. “Did you get me something special you’re hiding in there?”

Shaun grinned back and said, “Yes I did. Why don’t you help me find it?”

Mark leaned over Shaun’s leg and patted a pocket, playing along with the game. He didn’t feel anything in there, so he patted the pocket on the other side. “That’s not where it’s hidden, Mark. Check in the middle,” Shaun said in a seductive tone.

Mark looked up and bit his lip to suppress a laugh. “There isn’t a middle pocket, Shaun.”

“You just opened it. Have a look in there.” Shaun pointed to the place that Mark had unzipped.

Mark looked skeptically at his lover. He reached inside the opening to Shaun’s pants and felt the hard length twitch against his hand. He gasped and looked at Shaun. A big grin split his face as he grabbed onto Shaun’s cock and pulled it over the zipper. Shaun hissed and pushed up into his hand. Mark

squirmed as his own cock jerked against his jammies. He squeezed Shaun's thick meat, and looked up into his face, grinning wide.

"Is it a lolly? Can I lick it?" Mark asked continuing to play along.

Shaun nodded his head, and Mark bent down to lick his lolly. He sucked on the end a little bit to get a better taste, and Shaun hissed again. Mark really liked it when Shaun made those kind of noises. He took another big lick of his lolly and then slurped it into his mouth.

Shaun groaned loudly and ran his fingers through Mark's hair, getting a grip on it, and holding his head still. Mark moaned around the cock in his mouth and saliva dripped all over his hands where he was holding it firmly. He popped his mouth off the end and looked up into the face he loved most in the world. Shaun's eyes were glazed, and he licked his lips again.

"This isn't a real lolly is it, Shaun?" Mark asked.

"What do you think it is?"

"It's lolly cock," Mark answered with confidence.

Shaun grinned and nodded. "Yes it is. Did you like licking it?" he asked.

"Yes, it's really yummy, and soft. I like sucking on the floppy bit at the end the best," Mark said.

Shaun groaned and looked at Mark in a way that thrilled him and made his body tingle.

"Go ahead and suck it some more, since you like it so much."

Mark went back to slurping the skin at the end of Shaun's cock and then pulled it back a little more to tongue the head hiding underneath. He took a big lick of the little pearl of liquid that gathered at the end, moaning at the salty taste, and then squeezed around the base as he pushed his mouth down and tried to swallow it whole. The feel of Shaun's penis inside his mouth made him moan again, and Shaun bucked his hips in response, breathing sharply.

Shaun gripped his hair again and pushed into Mark's mouth until his penis was all the way in. Mark swallowed around it, humming a little. He knew Shaun loved that the best. Shaun groaned and panted. "That's good, Mark. Your mouth is so hot." Mark sucked with hollowed cheeks as Shaun slowly pulled out and relaxed his throat as Shaun pushed back in. Soon Shaun was panting and thrusting erratically. He pushed in one final time, held for a second, and then pulled out and sat back. He was breathing hard, and his cock was dripping with Mark's saliva.

Shaun leaned over and crowded him into the couch cushion, moving in and licking Mark's lips. His head swam as Shaun took over his mouth with his tongue, biting and eating everywhere. Firm lips were making him groan, and Mark was panting as Shaun pulled away from his mouth and grinned.

"I want to play another game, sexy," Shaun said, with short choppy breaths. Mark's penis was leaking with excitement, and he wished with all he had that his Shaun would want to jerk him until he came.

"What game, Shaun?" he asked breathily.

"Let's go to bed and I'll show you," he replied.

Shaun got up and held out his hand for Mark. He took it and they walked into the bedroom towards the bed.

"Take off your clothes now, Mark, and hop up," Shaun said, waving his hand toward the mattress.

Mark couldn't get his clothes off fast enough. He hoped Shaun was finally going to touch his penis again. When all of his clothes were scattered on the floor, he jumped on the bed and waited on his knees, legs spread outwards on full display, just the way Shaun liked. The head of his penis was red and bumped against his tummy, leaking precum that cooled on his skin. Shaun looked at him, grinning, and he grinned back.

"Looks like you enjoyed your treat, Mark," he said.

Mark nodded his head vigorously. Shaun came across the room with a bottle, and Mark felt his heart speed up in his chest, his skin prickling and heating again. Shaun helped him lie down on the soft white sheets and positioned his legs, so he could move in between them.

"Lift your legs to your chest, Mark," Shaun said, and Mark immediately obeyed. He didn't want to give Shaun any reason to stop what he was about to do.

Shaun placed his hand on Mark's right thigh and tapped the plug in his bottom with the other. "I think this can come out now, don't you?"

Mark nodded his head and watched Shaun with wide eyes. He moaned softly as Shaun gripped the plug and tugged on it a little. He pushed it back in and tugged it out again. Mark felt the stretch as the plug plopped out. He felt slicked fingers touching his entrance and his eyes started to close. He exhaled loudly, as the feeling of Shaun's thick fingers pushed their way into his hole.

He loved how Shaun prepared him for what was to come. He held his breath as he watched Shaun looking down between his legs. The fingers were sliding in and out and stretching him.

Mark felt full with Shaun's fingers, and his cock twitched and jerked. Shaun pushed his fingers in deep and touched the gland that made Mark gasp and writhe on the bed. He panted, trying to keep from exploding before Shaun said he could. He had to wait for permission.

Shaun positioned himself against Mark's thighs, and he got so excited he wriggled a little.

"Hold still for me, Mark," he instructed in a stern tone.

Mark froze and held his breath. It rushed out of him as he felt something thick and blunt nudge against him, pushing in. It felt so big, he wasn't sure it would fit. But Shaun kept pushing in, a little at a time, making sure it didn't hurt. Shaun groaned loudly and pushed in further. "You're so tight, babe. I love how tight your arse is." Mark was thrilled at his words, and he clenched around Shaun's invasion. Mark wanted to please Shaun and make him feel really good.

He moaned loudly as he felt Shaun's big hand engulf his prick. The hand was hot and slightly wet from the clean wipe Shaun must have used before entering him. The friction felt amazing. Shaun held him tightly and jerked his penis. He would finally get to explode, but not before Shaun said. Mark lost himself in the tingly feelings all over his body, the tugging on his penis, and the fullness in his hole as Shaun moved faster and faster. Shaun kept hitting that spot inside that made Mark feel like his whole body would fly apart, and he cried out with each thrust. He panted and wriggled, trying to hold on as the pressure made his sac tighten. Shaun bucked his hips harder, pounding into him, making slapping sounds against his skin, hitting that spot, and making his cries louder.

"Let go, Mark, I want to feel you." Mark knew that meant he could come, and he let out a loud groan as the pressure released and his cock jerked in Shaun's hand. Mark was flying, like a real superhero. White cream spurted all over his chest as Shaun continued to tug. His penis felt so sensitive, and his hole was clenching around Shaun's thick length. He heard Shaun groan, and then he felt him pulsing inside. Shaun held still, filling him up until his cock softened.

Shaun fell forwards panting, slipping out of Mark's still-clenching hole. He wrapped his arms around Shaun's neck, nuzzling in like a cat. Shaun shifted off

him and lay down next to him, reaching behind and bringing back a wipe. He gently cleaned off Mark's chest and arse. Then Shaun cleaned his own cock.

Mark hummed happily, and his eyes started to close. He didn't even care that he didn't have his jammies on anymore. He just wanted to lie here with Shaun and drift into dreamland.

"I love you, Shaun," he said, because he just couldn't contain these feelings. They were too big and couldn't fit inside his chest anymore.

"I love you too, Mark," he heard Shaun say as his eyes closed, before he drifted off to sleep.

Chapter 3

Shaun was at his desk, smiling as he remembered how adorable Mark had been for the rest of the weekend. After the initial road bump of whatever had caused his stress last week, the rest of their Daddy/little time together had been perfect. They watched movies, relaxed, and finished fixing up Mark's playroom, where all his toys, art supplies, and teddies were to go. They were finally completely moved into their new home. It was a huge relief, and they celebrated with a cake Shaun made from scratch and let Mark decorate with whatever he wanted. It had turned into a giant mass of sprinkles and tiny marshmallows in a shape that should have resembled a superhero symbol but didn't. Shaun grinned and huffed a chuckle at the memory of Mark avidly convincing him "*It's not a cloud, Daddy!*"

It was Monday morning, and he was scrolling through his email, checking all the new enquiries he had on the houses he was showing this week. His grin widened as he saw an email from his mother. He clicked to open it and read through it. Among the gushing of how happy she was that he had moved closer to her and his father, she wanted to catch up for lunch with him and Mark. He'd have to ask Mark about his schedule, so they could organise it. As the owner of his own small Real Estate Agency, Shaun could probably get away with taking an extended lunch one day this week.

He hit reply and told her he would get back to her soon with a day and time. They could find something local when he'd spoken to Mark.

He looked up from his computer as he heard the bell over the door chime. His office assistant Stella stood from her desk at the front and greeted the newcomer.

He heard her say, "Welcome back, Mrs Marsh, would you like to take a seat while you wait?"

"Thank you, Stella" was Mrs Marsh's soft reply.

Shaun got up from his seat, grabbing his tablet, and brought up Mrs Marsh's file. She was a recent widow and wanted to move away from the home she'd shared with her late-husband, to something smaller with fewer memories. Her daughter wasn't thrilled, and Mrs Marsh had expressed her frustration at children and their selfish, childish wants. Shaun had internally cringed at that. He wasn't sure that it was selfish of her daughter to want a place that held her

childhood memories, but he wasn't paid for his opinion, so he'd kept it to himself.

He walked around the brown screen divider that separated the reception area from his office, affording him privacy while he was working, but giving him the ability to still hear what was going on up front. He turned to see Mrs Marsh look up and smile her sad, pain-filled smile at him. He inhaled a steely breath and took her outstretched hand to greet her.

"Mrs Marsh, it's wonderful to see you. I have great news about your house," he said, smiling and holding her soft hand in both of his much larger ones.

Shaun released her hand and led her to a chair in front of his desk, indicating for Mrs Marsh to sit down. He pulled out the paperwork for the offer that had been made on her house and smiled as he set it down in front of her to read.

Mrs Marsh's eyes widened and teared up as she read the offer that had been made. She looked at Shaun and whispered, "This is more than I thought possible."

Shaun smiled softly at her and said, "It's worth this price. You have kept the house in exceptional condition, and the market in this area is very competitive. Everyone wants to live near the city and close to the water in a restored Queenslander. The couple seemed very eager to live there and didn't want to be outbid."

Mrs Marsh grinned and her face lit up into something Shaun imagined her husband had fallen in love with. It felt like the sun shone out of her smile and warmed everyone around her. They must have been so happy together. Shaun's throat tightened as he watched that smile and thought of Mark and how his face lit up the same way. He couldn't wait to get home and hold him and love on him.

He cleared his throat and instructed Mrs Marsh on the next step. They would send the paperwork to her solicitor to look over, and if everything was approved, the sale would be over in sixty days. Mrs Marsh would have enough to buy herself a nice place to live anywhere she chose. Shaun hoped that her new beginning would start to bring that shine back into her eyes.

The rest of the day went quickly for Shaun. His phone was busy, and new clients were enquiring about his pricing to list and sell. He was starting to see the wisdom of starting his agency closer to the city. The additional courses he

had taken in commercial property sales were starting to pay off. He had a few places to look over before he got back to the owners with realistic expectations of costs and selling time frames, but none of them looked like they wouldn't sell quickly. His leasing list was steadily growing too. Looking at his workload he thought about the merits of hiring another agent to help him.

Rental inspections were boring and something he would gladly give up to someone else. He looked over his list of inspections for the next day, ensuring that he had a good idea of how long it would take, and then powered down his computer and grabbed his things together to leave for the day.

He said goodbye to Stella on his way out the door, and she locked it behind him. They had agreed that the office would be locked up by five o'clock until Stella left at six, to keep her safe. Even though the area was nice, it was still just over the Story Bridge from the city and close enough to the cricket grounds and pubs to have drunken fans wandering around at random times. He would worry too much if he thought anyone could open the door while Stella was alone.

He shuddered at the thought as he made his way to his car, the brisk air starting to chill through his suit jacket. He unlocked the door and got in, checking the backseat for his workout bag. Seeing it, he turned on the car and drove to the gym he used to unwind and relax before heading home to Mark.

Mark was fuming inside when he got home from work that evening. He had dealt with an especially difficult client that afternoon just before leaving, and he was so worked up his hands had been shaking violently as he ended the call, getting none of the information he had originally called the man for.

As he parked next to Shaun's car, he had to sit for a minute and try and calm himself. He couldn't believe how fucking rude that prick had been. He was only trying to get a copy of the last three months of the businesses incomings and outgoings, but being one of Thomas' clients originally, the bastard had started yelling at him about how he was sick of having to resend everything and repeat himself.

Mark had tried his best to placate him by assuring him it wouldn't happen again, but had ended up listening to a five-minute rant from the man, about him pulling his business and going elsewhere. In the end Mark had to tell the owner that Mr Henley would call him in the morning to discuss his complaint and go from there. Henley had not been happy when Mark had relayed the information to him before leaving for the day.

Mark took a couple of deep breaths and then sighed. He was home and didn't have to worry about work until tomorrow. He smiled a little, and anticipation tingled through his stomach as he turned off the ignition and pushed open the car door. He couldn't wait for his evening perv of Shaun's beautifully sculpted body before their evening routine.

He closed the car door quickly and entered the house. After taking off his shoes at the shoe rack, he quickly made his way up the stairs, aiming for the bedroom.

He stopped in his tracks when he saw Shaun sitting at the table with his laptop open and papers strewn all around. He couldn't help the disappointment that settled into the pit of his gut as he saw Shaun already fully clothed and deeply engrossed in whatever he was looking at on his computer. Mark stood there for a minute waiting for Shaun to notice him standing across the room and then cleared his throat with impatience when he realised Shaun didn't even appear to know he was there.

Shaun snapped his head up and looked at Mark. A little smile curled the side of his lips, and Mark relaxed. Shaun looked happy, but distracted. Mark pouted, but not enough for Shaun to notice.

"Hey, Mark, good to see you. I sold a house today." Shaun grinned. "Well it's not official yet, but the owner has accepted the offer so it's just paperwork now. I thought we'd celebrate by going out to dinner."

Mark tried to suppress his irritation and smiled as best he could. He knew it didn't reach his eyes when Shaun's eyes narrowed and his grin disappeared.

"What is it?" Shaun asked.

"Just a hard day at work with grumpy clients. I was hoping to relax this evening," Mark told him.

He saw the disappointed look on Shaun's face, so he quickly stuttered out, "But I'm sure I'll be okay after a hot shower. Where do you want to go?"

Shaun's eyes narrowed further with a flash of dominance, and he pursed his lips. Mark rushed on. "I'm fine, Shaun. Please, just let me scrub the day off my skin and I'll be good as new, promise."

Shaun gave him a hard look, so Mark did his best to look relaxed, and walked towards the table to give Shaun a kiss. Shaun accepted it and said, "If you don't want to go, that's fine. We can order in and raincheck the celebration."

Mark's gut twisted with guilt, and he shook his head. "No it's fine, really. I am so happy for you. Let's go out. Please. You've worked so hard, and it sounds like this was a great sale," he said, looking into Shaun's eyes and trying to get the smile on his face to brighten. He must have succeeded because Shaun smiled back and nodded.

"Okay, I'll just finish up here while you're washing, and then we'll head out. How does Thai sound?" Shaun asked.

"Sounds great." Mark was relieved now that Shaun appeared back to being happy. He looked at the table and pointed at the papers scattered about. "What's all this?" he asked.

"Just some work I need to get under control before Wednesday. The phone has been ringing off the hook lately with new owners wanting me to list their properties. It's great to be getting new clients in, but pretty soon I'm going to need to hire someone to help me with the increase in work," Shaun explained, looking very happy with himself.

Mark couldn't help but be happy for him too, although the fact that he didn't get to perv on his man and wouldn't get to be little until the paperwork was put away caused his previous irritation to return. He smiled at Shaun, said, "That's good news, I'll go take that shower now," and quickly spun around, heading for the en-suite before Shaun could catch the scowl he could feel forming on his face.

As he stood in the shower washing his chest, he realised how ridiculous he was being about the whole thing. This was the point of their move. Well one of them. To increase Shaun's business and his dream of being able to comfortably choose his own clients, rather than having to take everything that came his way to make ends meet. It was stupid for Mark to get so worked up about it, when it was only one day where his routine was interrupted. And really, this should be about Shaun and his successful sale, not Mark and his crappy day. He really needed to pull his head in and remember that they were partners first and foremost, and partners supported each other through change.

By the time Mark got out of the shower and dried off, he was feeling much more relaxed. The hot water beating on his back as well as his internal pep talk had helped soothe his ragged nerves and irritation. He felt calmer when he walked into the bedroom and went to the dresser to get his clothes for an evening out.

As he slipped on a pair of his little boy undies he reminded himself that tonight wasn't about him, it was about Shaun. The undies helped him relax

further, as he admired them over his bum. He chose a pair of soft denim jeans and a fitted plain black cotton long-sleeved T-shirt, white socks, and his red high-top sneakers. Even though the days were still bright and sunny, the evenings held a chill. He couldn't help feeling a little disappointed about the evening, but sucked in a breath and walked out to the kitchen, smiling big when he saw Shaun waiting by the stairs, holding up his leather jacket to slip into on the way down to the car.

Dinner was delicious and Shaun noticed Mark becoming more relaxed and happier as they chatted about their day, the move, and the plans they had over the next few months. He remembered the email from his mother that day and organised a place to meet Mark for lunch on Thursday. Mark shared some of the things that were bothering him at work, and Shaun focused on ensuring Mark remembered his coping tools when he felt overwhelmed. The evening wound down, and they headed back home.

By the time they got back, Mark looked excited and animated and was slipping in and out of his little boy role. Shaun couldn't help but smile and tease him for his slips. They didn't tend to go into their roles as Daddy and little unless it started at home, or they were going out somewhere specific. It was obvious to Shaun that Mark was more than eager to be little right now, so as they walked into the house, Shaun said, "Okay, baby boy, it's time for your bath."

The look on his boy's face was so full of joy Shaun's heart stuttered and sped up. He never got tired of seeing that look of adoration and relaxation on his baby's face.

"Can I take my new toys into the bath, Daddy, please?" his baby boy asked excitedly.

Shaun smiled as he said, "Of course, but only the toys made of plastic. Remember what happened to your cars when they weren't dried properly?"

Mark scowled and said, "Yeah, they got all brown and gross, and the wheels stopped moving."

"Right, so only your action men tonight, okay?" Shaun said.

Mark scampered into his playroom, where all his toys were, and came bounding back in with his action hero in its scuba gear, complete with flippers and goggles, a couple of plastic army figures, and a plastic boat.

“Are these okay for the water, Daddy?” Mark asked with bright eyes.

Shaun smiled and nodded, watching as Mark all but ran into the bathroom to set up his toys.

Shaun followed him in, grabbing a large fluffy towel from the linen cupboard on his way into the main bathroom. It was the only bathroom with a full bathtub in it. The en-suite had a large shower in it, and there was a separate toilet in the room next door. Standard for most homes in the area.

Shaun watched as Mark pulled off his shirt and pushed down his pants. He'd forgotten to take off his shoes in his excitement and had to bend over to undo the laces. Shaun admired the arse in front of him, covered by the undies his boy loved. He smirked as he stood there, waiting for Mark to finish undressing.

Finally, with his shoes and socks off, he stepped out of his jeans, and kicked them aside.

“Boy, pick up your clothes and put them away properly,” Shaun said with an edge of warning in his voice.

“Sorry, Daddy,” Mark said as he picked up his pants and shirt and tossed them into the basket by the sink. He looked properly chastised and adorable in just his briefs. Shaun admired the view and ran his hands over his boy's pale chest. The touch caused the muscles to jump, and Mark took in a shallow breath. Shaun could see the undies start to move.

“Baby boy, are you getting excited for your bath?” Shaun asked, keeping his face neutral. He loved to keep Mark off balance. It made his reactions more honest and open.

Mark looked up at him through his lashes, a clump of his hair shading his eyes.

“Not the bath, Daddy. The way you looked and touched me made me tingle a little.” So sweet. Shaun loved the way Mark's voice slipped into innocence as he regressed. Shaun's heart squeezed at the trust and honesty in Mark's voice. His baby always trusted him not to dismiss or make fun of him. He smiled down at his beautiful boy and pushed the hair away from his face. He wanted to see those vibrant eyes of his. Shaun waited for Mark to look up, and then he leaned in and brushed his lips against the pouty mouth in front of him. He pulled back and pulled Mark into his arms.

“You make Daddy so happy, baby boy,” Shaun said, his voice a little hoarse.

“You make me happy too, Daddy. Can I get in the bath now? I’m getting cold,” Mark said with a little shiver.

Shaun pulled away with a laugh and turned the taps on. He checked the water temperature and adjusted it the way Mark liked it, adding some bubble bath. As the water ran into the tub and slowly filled it, Shaun turned to the sink and got his boy’s electric toothbrush and fruity toothpaste out. Shaun really didn’t know how Mark could brush his teeth with the sickly sweet gel, but it was his boy’s favourite so he kept buying it. He had to keep it out of reach, because when baby boy regressed, he’d often find all the bottles of hygiene products and start squeezing the gels and liquids into the bath, trying to make “potions”. It left a disgusting film around the porcelain tub and was difficult to scrub off. He didn’t want the night to end in punishment and tears, so he helped his boy behave by keeping it out of sight.

He turned around to see Mark take off his undies and step into the tub gingerly at first and then moan as he sat down in the warm water. Shaun reached over and turned off the taps. With his baby’s big body in the water, the tub was almost full. He watched Mark close his eyes for a minute and then open them and reach for his toys. He started splashing them into the water and playing a game.

Shaun stepped out of the bathroom, leaving the door open so he could hear if Mark needed anything. He went into the playroom and grabbed some books, Mark’s favourite blankie, a teddy, and a onesie. After collecting all the things he would need to get Mark ready for bed, he went into their bedroom and set them down, arranging them all in order. Onesie first, then books, teddy, and then blankie. He knew after the stress of his day, his boy needed this to completely relax and go to sleep.

He heard splashing and water hitting the floor as he walked back into the hallway. He grabbed a couple of towels and sped up to get to the bathroom. He stopped in the doorway and saw Mark spinning around and around in the tub, the water crashing in waves and splashing over the side. Mark was humming to himself as he spun his body again.

“Mark,” Shaun said sharply. It would do no good to let him continue. The mess he was creating would take a dry mop to clean up. Shaun wasn’t irritated, but he needed his boy’s full attention.

Mark stopped suddenly and looked at Shaun, worrying his bottom lip. Shaun pointed to the floor and Mark looked over the tub.

“Oh, I’m sorry, Daddy. I didn’t mean to splash on the floor,” Mark said as his eyes widened and he took in the state of the bathroom.

“It’s okay, baby boy, but it’s time to get out so I can clean up and get you into bed,” Shaun said, with what he hoped was a warm tone.

Mark gulped and looked stricken as he lifted himself out of the bath. He held still while Shaun grabbed a towel and wrapped it around him. Shaun lay the other towels on the floor, wiping up the mess, squeezing the excess water back into the tub, and then hung the towels up so they wouldn’t get that mouldy smell. He would throw them in the washing machine tomorrow before he left for work.

He reached around his boy’s legs and pulled the plug in the base of the bath. The water started spinning around the drain and he watched his boy’s muscles tighten. The boy had a fear of drains when he was in little mode, and no amount of rational conversation would convince him that he wouldn’t be sucked down it. Shaun worked quickly to get his baby out of the bath before the sucking noises started. They needed to be out of the room for that part, or Mark would start trembling and clinging.

Shaun quickly dried Mark’s hair and rubbed down his legs. He then walked his boy to their bedroom and finished drying him off, just as he heard the bath empty. Mark shuddered at the sound, but didn’t otherwise react. Shaun watched closely as he continued to dry his boy’s body. He ran the towel between his boy’s legs and under his nut sac. In this state of regression Mark didn’t react to the touch. He was deeply in his little mind, and sexual touch was not what he needed.

Shaun put the towel aside and helped his boy into his undies and onesie. The fluffy coveralls would ensure he was warm. He looked so sweet and young in it, and Shaun smiled to himself as he took in his baby boy.

“What story do you want me to read you first, baby?” Shaun asked Mark, looking up into the face he loved so much.

“The one with the pirates in it, Daddy,” Mark said as he lifted his thumb to his mouth. Shaun stood and led his boy to his side of the bed. His boy lay down and wriggled to get comfy. Shaun tucked him in and went over to his side of the bed. Mark kept sucking his thumb and looked at Shaun with wide, sleepy eyes. *Yeah, he’s not going to last long*, Shaun thought. His boy was obviously exhausted, and as Shaun propped himself up against the headboard and opened the book, his boy grabbed at his blankie and teddy and curled them into the crook of his arm, still sucking on his thumb.

Shaun stroked baby boy's hair as he read to him about pirate adventures, treasure maps, and stormy seas. He looked down after the first chapter and saw his boy had closed his eyes, and his thumb was hanging out of his partly opened mouth. God he loved the peacefulness of him like that. His heart swelled with love for the amazing being lying beside him.

Shaun put the books on the side table, got up to take off his clothes, and switched the lamp down to a low glow. He got into bed and snuggled into his beautiful boy, slipping into a restful sleep.

Chapter 4

Mark walked into the house the following week, after collecting the mail from the mailbox hidden in the white steel fence at the front of the house.

He headed across the lawn, through the front door, and walking up the stairs with his head down, he flipped through the envelopes for anything important. He startled to a stop when he heard Shaun on the phone. His voice sounded tight with strain as he said, “Stella, I need you to place an ad in the paper for a new agent. I’m drowning in paperwork, and I can’t keep up. I have homeowners calling me constantly, trying to get me to fit them in immediately, and I just don’t have the time right now.”

Mark couldn’t hear what Stella said in reply, but looking at Shaun’s face, Mark could see the tightness around his mouth relax, and the worry lines on his forehead started to smooth out. Good. It took a lot to stress Shaun, so it had to be intense if he looked worn out.

Mark’s eyes moved to the table, and he exhaled in a puff as he saw the paperwork all over it. They were in neat piles, with sticky notes on each with what appeared to be a name, but there were so many piles. Evidently, Shaun’s business was doing better than Mark thought. Mark’s shoulders slumped a little as he looked back at Shaun, just as Shaun was ending the call on his phone. Shaun smiled and reached out his hand as he walked over to Mark, dragging him into a hug and kissing his ear.

“Hey, Mark, I’m glad you’re home. I just have a few things to do and then I’ll organise dinner,” Shaun said, as he released Mark, and walked over to his laptop next to the piles. Mark couldn’t help looking at them with a glare, and tried to make them burst into flames. He knew this meant he wouldn’t get all of Shaun’s attention tonight. Those piles were brought home from the office, which meant they needed attention now, and there was no way Shaun would be able to relax until everything was in order. Mark huffed a breath and walked down the hall into their bedroom to get undressed and into something more comfortable. This new move was really starting to feel like a bad idea. Everything was changing, and Mark was feeling left behind.

He sucked in a breath and grabbed one of his favourite shirts. It was red with a big KAPOW on the front in black jagged letters. He sure felt like punching something himself. He was so restless and annoyed with all that paper on the table, he stomped his foot on the carpet and clenched his fists. After

taking off his work clothes, he jerked on his T-shirt and pulled on some jeans, wrestling with the fabric and huffing out in frustration. He should calm down so he didn't accidentally snap at Shaun and get himself in trouble. It wasn't Shaun's fault, well not entirely, he was feeling out of place and left adrift. Mark should have expected this to happen. Shaun was setting up a business, and he was obviously doing really well. That meant that it might take a little longer for Mark to have his attention, but Shaun would always be there for him and knew what he needed. He should just be patient and find something to do while he waited. He took a deep breath and tried to relax his shoulders, letting the stress drain away.

He eyed some of his picture books on the bedside table and then walked over to pick them up. He walked out of the bedroom and into his playroom, reaching up and putting them back in the bookshelf. He looked around his room and his heart started to beat faster in his chest as his excitement grew over all the things he could do in here.

Mark walked around looking in boxes to decide what to play with first. He pulled out the LEGO box and went through all the plastic ziplock bags clearly labelled with each set. He hated when his LEGO were all mixed up, so they were sorted into sets with the instructions folded neatly with them. He decided on a city set and made his way to the play table in the middle of the room. He opened up the bag and was deeply satisfied as he listened to all the LEGO bricks tumbling out, and clacking against the surface. He picked up the instructions and started to build with a happy sigh.

Shaun was still at the dining table when Mark stumbled out of his playroom. He had fallen asleep after building his LEGO and reading a book. He thought Shaun would come to him when he was finished, and when he woke up with a jolt, he whimpered in frustration and hurt that it wasn't Shaun who had woken him. His eyes felt watery, and his breathing was ragged as he made his way over to Shaun.

"Daddy?" he said in a small voice, feeling completely miserable.

"Oh God, baby boy, I am so sorry. I lost track of time. Shit!" Daddy looked dazed as he stared at the silver wristwatch he wore. He reached out for Mark, and Mark stumbled into his arms, while he tried to stop the tears flowing. He felt deserted, and he couldn't wrap his arms tight enough around his daddy's neck. He pushed his face into Daddy's hair and took a deep breath of the

masculine, shampoo scent of him. It calmed him down a little and his breathing steadied.

“C’mon, baby, let’s get something to eat,” Daddy said as he separated himself from Mark’s death grip on his neck. Mark reluctantly loosened his arms and let them drop to his sides. He took a step back so Daddy could get past and then followed him into the kitchen.

Daddy went to the fridge and pulled out ingredients for dinner. When he had everything ready on the counter he proceeded to cook omelettes with fried vegetables, and sourdough toast. They sat down at the table with their plates and ate in silence. Every now and then Mark would glance at Daddy and see him deep in thought with a frown on his face.

Daddy caught him looking and gave him a reassuring smile. Mark frowned as he looked down at his plate. What was Daddy thinking about? He looked really worried, and distracted.

He heard the clatter of cutlery being placed on the plate and looked up to meet Daddy’s intense blue eyes. Daddy opened his mouth and then closed it again with a frown. Mark waited for Daddy to say something to him, and his heart sank a little more when the silence stretched into long seconds. He watched Daddy get up and grab his plate to take it to the dishwasher, and with a deep sigh, Mark got up with his own empty plate and followed.

After they had cleaned up and walked into the bedroom, Daddy sat on the bed and pulled Mark into his arms. Mark settled in the warmth and comfort of it and rested his head on Daddy’s shoulder.

“I’m really sorry about earlier, baby boy. The business is picking up a lot faster than I anticipated, and I’ve had an overload of work I had to bring home. As soon as I can hire someone new, I can share it, and I won’t have to bring it home with me anymore.”

Mark nodded and sighed into Daddy’s neck. He knew all of this. He saw it on the table. He knew Daddy wasn’t deliberately ignoring him, but it still hurt to find himself alone on the floor in his playroom after so long by himself. He shuddered as he took a deep breath and felt Daddy’s warm hand rubbing circles over his back. He looked up into his daddy’s worried face and said, “It’s okay, Daddy. I just felt so lonely when I woke up. But I’m fine now.”

“Thank you for being understanding, baby, I’ll try and get this sorted as quickly as I can so we can have more time together. I promise,” Daddy said and then he kissed Mark’s cheek and patted his bum.

“What do you want to do with the rest of our evening, baby boy? Watch a movie?” Daddy asked.

“I just want to be close to you right now, Daddy. Can we cuddle in bed?”

“Anything you want, baby boy. Let’s get you into your pyjamas first,” Daddy said as he got up and walked to the dresser. Mark watched Daddy pull out his PJs. Daddy didn’t wear anything to bed, so he didn’t get anything out for himself. He said he got too hot and didn’t like the restrictive movements of bunched-up fabric. Mark didn’t get it. He loved the comfort of PJs and the fluffy insides against his skin. In summer he wore shorts and a singlet, but he loved his winter pyjamas the best.

Daddy came over to him and reached for the hem of Mark’s T-shirt. Mark lifted his arms and allowed him to pull it over his head. He took in a sharp breath when Daddy ran his fingers softly over Mark’s chest and pinched his nipples between his fingers. This was a cue that it was adult time. A thrill shot down between his legs and his cock twitched. Shaun smiled at him as he leaned down and laved his tongue over one of Mark’s nipples, capturing it between his teeth and squeezing lightly. Mark shuddered and Shaun groaned as he sucked the bud into his mouth. Mark’s penis started to swell, and his pants felt tighter. Shaun put one hand to the back of Mark’s neck and held onto his hip with the other to keep him in place. Mark’s blood started rushing to his groin as his nipple was sucked, one and then the other. Mark grabbed Shaun’s hips to hold steady as he felt Shaun’s hot breath against his neck.

“You make me so hot, Mark, I just want to eat you up,” Shaun said, and then licked the side of Mark’s neck, sucking lightly on his pulse point. Mark moaned loudly and his head fell back, giving complete access to his throat. Shaun wrapped his hand around it and gave a gentle squeeze to assert his dominance. Mark’s breaths were sawing in and out quickly, and he felt light-headed as he felt the button pop and the zipper of his jeans being drawn down. Shaun shoved his hand down Mark’s pants and squeezed his shaft, pulling it up and releasing it from the tight confines of denim. Mark’s breath left him as he watched Shaun fall to his knees in front of him, and his soft, wet mouth sucked on his foreskin. “Mmmm.” Shaun groaned as he sucked the sensitive skin into his mouth and then pulled it back to get to the broad crown. Mark’s head swam as he felt the warm mouth slurp the tip inside.

“Shaun.” Mark panted and he tried to keep from bucking his hips. Shaun’s big hand was slowly working Mark’s prick as it hardened even more, while his

mouth worked the head. He pushed Mark's pants down to his ankles and then pulled back as he helped Mark out of the clothing. Mark kicked it aside and waited for his next instruction.

Shaun pushed him backwards a little until his legs hit the back of the bed, and Mark had no choice but to sit on the edge. Shaun looked at him with darkened eyes, and with a firm grasp on Mark's cock, sucked the head back into his mouth. Mark groaned at the tingling stimulation on his cockhead. Pulling his foreskin back, Shaun ran his tongue around the sensitive head and then sucked Mark back into his mouth.

The heat of Shaun's mouth on his dick and the groaning coming from his throat, sent electricity spiralling through Mark's shaft and sac. The vibrations felt amazing and increased his excitement. Shaun let go of Mark's cock, pushed him back onto the bed, lifting his legs up to his chest, and ran the flat of his tongue along Mark's taint. Mark shuddered at the sensation and drew his legs closer to his body.

He watched raptly as Shaun let some spit drip from his mouth, and Mark felt it slide down his taint to his hole, where Shaun tongued the tight pucker in big, slow licks. Mark felt the sparks from his anus to his sac and shivered from the sensation. He let out a moan when he felt Shaun probing his hole with his tongue. Mark relaxed and felt Shaun slip his tongue inside, licking and then sucking his opening. Slowly he pushed a finger inside and twisted it around, as he continued licking and sucking. Mark was floating in sensation as he felt Shaun's finger go deep and then slide out again. He closed his eyes and his head fell back against the mattress as he felt another finger push in. He jolted and gasped as Shaun hit the bundle of nerves hidden inside.

"You like that, Mark? You like when I have my fingers deep in your arse?" Shaun spoke against his hole as he continued to lave it with his tongue, driving those two thick fingers in, hitting his gland.

"Oh God, I love it, Shaun. It feels so good," Mark whisper-groaned as his stomach contracted and his sac started to feel tight. Shaun drove his fingers in a few more times, and then Mark could only clench around emptiness when Shaun's fingers left and he rose up over Mark.

Mark looked into Shaun's face as he pulled down his jeans and underwear, quickly tugged off his shirt, and covered Mark with his huge body. He grabbed Mark's face and kissed him urgently, pushing his tongue in and owning Mark's mouth. Mark could only suck on Shaun's tongue as he plundered inside, and

when they were both breathless, Shaun broke off the kiss and reached for the bedside drawer. Mark could hear the rustling of things being moved around on the wooden surface, and then Shaun pulled out a bottle of lube with a grin on his face.

“Hands above your head, Mark,” he said in his deep voice. “Don’t move them unless I say you can or I’ll bind you.”

A thrill shot up Mark’s spine. They rarely played with cuffs and ropes, but it was always exciting when they did. The thrill of Shaun being able to do anything he wanted and Mark just having to take it, got them both off quickly. Mark almost wanted to move his hands, just so he could give him a reason to bind him, but decided against it this time. They hadn’t set up their bed for proper restraints, so he would wait until they had.

With his hands clasped above his head and his legs still lifted to his chest, his body was completely exposed to Shaun’s view. His hole clenched in excitement as he watched Shaun open the bottle of lube and dribble the slick gel on his cock. He watched as Shaun capped the bottle and put it aside, then ran his hands over his big shaft to spread the watery lube as he probed Mark’s hole with his other hand. Mark was still relaxed and open from the rimming and fingering, but sparks flew as he clenched onto Shaun’s fingers. He needed Shaun’s cock to fill him up so badly, he almost begged.

Shaun pushed him further up onto the bed and settled between his legs. Mark felt grounded by a big warm hand on his thigh as Shaun started to push through Mark’s sensitive ring of muscles. Mark moaned as Shaun pushed in a little further and slid out again. He was so horny he wanted him to shove in hard so his anus had something solid to clench around.

Shaun played with his hole some more, by alternating between pushing his cockhead in and then replacing it with his fingers and pumping them against his prostate. The shock of sensation from the fingers and then the fullness of Shaun’s cockhead had Mark mindless and confused about which he wanted more. He was panting and moaning and trying desperately to keep his hands away before he grabbed Shaun and made him shove inside.

Shaun was having a hard time keeping up his game. He wanted to torture Mark into mindless need, but the beautiful arse he kept sinking his cockhead into was making him feel just as needy. He watched Mark squirm and gasp while keeping a death grip on a pillow above his head. When he fed his cock

into Mark's hole, it clenched greedily around him, and he groaned. "That is so fucking hot, babe. The way your arse is milking me."

"Please, Shaun, I need you all the way in me." Mark finally cried out. Shaun smiled. It must have taken Mark all his strength of will to hold that inside for so long. Shaun had had enough playing too, and he lined up his cock against that perfect hole. He slowly pushed in and kept going while Mark clenched and squirmed around him. The silky heat of Mark's arse engulfed him, and he felt the ring squeeze him as Mark clenched again. It was hard to hold onto sanity with that tight pucker sucking him in. Shaun pushed further and bottomed out, staying still, so he wouldn't lose it before he'd even started. He took a few quick breaths and then leaned down and gave Mark a sloppy kiss on the mouth.

"Put your arms around my neck, babe," Shaun commanded, and when Mark had a firm grip, Shaun let go of his control. He bucked his hips in fast hard stabs, aiming for that sweet spot inside Mark that would have him coming without any help. Mark cried out and clenched tightly around Shaun's cock. Damn he wasn't going to last like this. He lifted Mark up and had him straddle his lap and then pounded into him over and over. The sound of Mark's mewling and the slap of flesh on flesh, the clenching heat, was pushing Shaun closer to the edge. He grabbed handfuls of Mark's arse cheeks, and held him still as he thrust up into that tight opening, over and over again. His balls were aching, and feeling them slap against Mark's arse sent electricity charging through his blood. He slowed his thrusts and rolled his hips as Mark held onto him, gasping his name into Shaun's neck. Shaun started a punishing rhythm again, and he held Mark's hip with one hand and reached up to grab his neck with the other. Sweat was running over his face, and he cupped Mark's face to his chest as he rubbed his sweat all over Mark's skin. He sucked on the pulse point as he rammed his cock into Mark's willing hole. He was out of breath and broke away so he could flip Mark onto his stomach. Mark was boneless as he turned over and propped his arse up ready for Shaun to pound into him again.

Shaun leaned over and kissed Mark's neck as he slowly pushed back into his body. He gave a few short stabs at Mark's gland and felt Mark's body jolt beneath him. He kept at it until Mark was wailing and calling his name, and then he reached around to grab Mark's cock in his hand and gave it a few tight pulls while hitting that spot inside him. Mark erupted on a loud shout as Shaun felt the cock in his hand pulse, and warm sticky fluid drenched his skin. He kept a tight grip on Mark's cock as he slammed into his clenching hole, being milked as Mark shuddered in his grip.

Shaun let go of Mark's cock, knowing that he would be too sensitive now—even though Mark never complained—and started slamming back into his body. His balls had drawn up tight and he was right on the edge. It only took a few more deep, hard strokes before his body stiffened, and he drove into Mark one final time, growling as his cock exploded and flooded Mark with his come. He drew out and sank back in a couple of times to milk his cock of everything it had and then finally collapsed on Mark's back.

Shaun rolled to the side so he wasn't crushing Mark so much. Mark turned his face to look at him, and he had a drowsy, blissed-out smile on his face as his panting slowed to easy breaths.

“Thank you, Shaun,” he whispered, and Shaun couldn't help but grin. He loved his man so much and felt raw with it.

He kissed Mark's cheek and said, “Let's get cleaned up and ready for bed.”

Mark made a move to get up and then collapsed back down as his arms gave out.

Shaun huffed out a laugh and pushed himself up. He pulled on Mark's legs and dragged him to the end of the bed so he could use his legs to stand up.

When Mark was finally on his feet, they both headed to the bathroom for a shower.

Chapter 5

Mark was getting frustrated sitting on the floor playing with LEGO while Daddy worked at the table. He'd been doing this for the last few weeks, and there didn't seem to be any end in sight.

Daddy told him he was busy trying to get his work finished, but every time he walked in the door, he saw more work piling up on the table. Their evenings together seemed to be growing shorter and shorter, and the pressure from work kept Mark in a constant state of anxiety, while Daddy was tense and always on his phone.

On top of all that, Daddy didn't even seem to notice Mark anymore. He had been huffing and puffing and smashing up the structures he built, and Daddy didn't even look up from his work. Mark was getting worried. Maybe Daddy was tired of him and needed a break. Mark's heart stuttered and his breathing became erratic. His head swam with memories of the night before when Daddy told him that he needed space to sort things out. They hadn't done their normal bedtime routine, nor had they fallen into bed knocked out from special playtime. Daddy told him to get into his own PJs, without any help, and when he thought maybe Daddy would read him a story, he waited excitedly, with his favourite book until he eventually nodded off. He vaguely remembered feeling the mattress move and Daddy's strong body lying down next to him but there hadn't been a story, or snuggling. Just Daddy's soft snoring.

Mark's anxiety ratcheted up another notch, his frustration over the situation escalating. He was starting to resent this move and all the changes he had to make. He hated how neglected he felt.

He threw his LEGO across the floor and heard the satisfying crash of it hitting the wall and breaking into pieces. That's how he felt right now. Like he was breaking into pieces. He sat miserably with his head in his hands, breathing hard and feeling pain in his chest.

"Mark," Daddy barked from his seat. Mark slowly lifted his head, scowling.

"What?" he gritted out. His daddy was too busy and distracted, so it wasn't like he would bother punishing him.

"Why did you throw your toys across the room?" Daddy asked in a strained voice.

"I didn't want it anymore so I threw it away," he said belligerently.

"That isn't what we do with our things, Mark. Go pick it up and put it away if you're finished with it," Daddy said firmly.

"No, I don't want to pick it up. I want it to stay there, broken and useless," Mark said loudly. His voice was starting to sound choppy as his heart rate picked up. He'd never been so rude to Daddy, but he didn't know how to stop. His chest felt like it would explode, and he was so angry right now that he felt out of control, and words were just spilling out of his mouth without his permission.

"What is with you today, Mark? I thought you were enjoying your playtime?" Daddy was walking around his makeshift desk to stand beside him.

Mark jumped to his feet. There was no way he wanted to feel even smaller with Daddy crowding over him and looking so mean. Mark felt pressure in his chest building up. His body felt flushed and his heart was racing.

"Answer me, Mark," Daddy growled.

"Why would you think I was enjoying my playtime? You haven't even looked at me this whole time?" Mark said icily.

"I'm trying to finish some work. We've talked about this and you said you understood," he tried to placate.

"I understood a week ago, but it just keeps getting worse. When will you have time for me?" Mark questioned as his frustration grew.

"I don't know, Mark, but I'm doing the best I can. I'm looking for someone to help, but it's not as easy as I thought. I just need you to be patient a little longer," Daddy said as he walked back to the table.

"I don't want to be patient anymore. I hate it here, and I want to go home, back to the way things were," Mark said mulishly, his voice raised.

"Mark, seriously, get a hold of yourself. You're being unreasonable and working yourself into hysterics over nothing," Daddy scolded. "I don't have time for your tantrum right now. I have to get this finished so I can actually enjoy the rest of my weekend."

"Fuck you, Shaun. Don't fucking dismiss me. You think this is what I wanted for the weekend? To sit at your fucking feet while you ignore me?" Mark shouted as his heart broke. He could feel the prickle and burn of tears and felt his chest tighten as his breathing sped up.

“I can’t talk to you about this right now. I need you to calm down so I can get this work done, and then we can discuss why you feel ignored,” Shaun said in a voice that showed he was close to losing it.

The patronising tone set off something inside Mark, and he walked over to the neat piles of papers Shaun had all over the table. With a sweeping motion he pushed the piles across the surface and watched as they flew into the air and started fluttering to the floor around Shaun’s feet.

“What the fuck, Mark?” Shaun bellowed as the control over his temper finally snapped, and he jumped up from the chair.

Mark didn’t wait for anything more to pass Shaun’s lips. He fled the room and ran towards the door, slamming it shut and running as fast as he could to get away.

Mark stopped in the middle of a park. He looked around, huffing, trying to catch his breath. His lungs burned, and he had a stitch in his side. He curled over as the pain stabbed at him, gulping down air and looking around.

Oh God, where was he? He searched his surroundings, trying to find a landmark he recognised, anything that could tell him where he was. He could see a swing set, some bushes, jagged grey rocks, and what looked like a toilet block. So he was in a Council park. Okay, he could work with that. He walked towards a sign, stating the park name. He didn’t recognise it, which meant he hadn’t been this way before. He was lost.

He had no idea how long he had been running, his thoughts swirling in his head. He couldn’t believe he’d yelled and thrown Shaun’s work everywhere. Stupid. He had ruined everything. And now he was lost, in some park, who knew how far away from his home, and he really had no idea which direction he needed to go to get back.

His breath started to speed up again as he thought of the look on Shaun’s face. The anger and frustration, a glimpse of hurt. He walked over to a poinsettia tree and sat down under its protective cover; the lush green grass felt cool and soft under his bum. The little fire-orange flowers dotting the canopy of green leaves, the bean pods hanging down swinging in the light breeze. He stared up at them and considered what he should do now. Should he try and find his way back and talk to Shaun? Should he wait and see if Shaun came for him? He shouldn’t want to test him like that, but in his selfish heart he really

hoped Shaun would search for him. And maybe when Shaun found him, he could tell Mark how to fix this.

He thought about the pressure Shaun was under at work. His business had taken off, and Mark was glad he was successful, but the little boy inside him cried for the attention he was missing out on because of the extra work Shaun brought home. He had never brought work home when they lived down south, and they hadn't discussed how their relationship would change if that happened.

Too many things hadn't been considered when they moved here. Mark's mental state and the anxiety creeping in every time he stepped into his office as his boss gave him more work. How he hated having to make calls to rude clients. He didn't like it anymore. He wanted to do something else. Something with less pressure. But he couldn't tell Shaun, because he had already shouldered so much of the burden while Mark was getting better, and then they moved to the city. How would Shaun feel if Mark suddenly decided to quit his job? He couldn't think about that anymore. He was starting to sweat again.

He curled up with his arms around his knees, with his head resting on his arms, and worked on his breathing. It wouldn't do to speculate, or make decisions, when he was in the state he was in. He should just wait for Shaun.

The thought that Shaun wouldn't come for him made his breath wheeze out of his lungs, and caused an ache inside his chest. No, Shaun would come for him. His daddy loved him. Even when he was angry, he would calm down enough so they could talk. Mark just hoped he hadn't broken anything too badly.

Shaun was starting to sweat as he briskly walked along the waterfront, the murky brown river gently rippling from the breeze, and kept searching for Mark. His mind was swirling with what Mark had said to him, and his actions. He should have been paying more attention to his boy. If he had, he would have noticed he was unhappy and feeling neglected. Shaun's only defence was he hadn't expected his business to pick up so quickly, or to struggle with finding a suitable agent to help with the load. It seemed everyone who was selling around the city was calling his office for appointments. He had a dozen new homes to go through and list, which was what he was trying to get through when Mark had had his meltdown.

At that moment he'd been shocked out of concentration, which grated on his nerves, and that is why he had snapped. He handled it all wrong and was not prepared when Mark started yelling and throwing Shaun's work around. After Shaun had calmed down some and collected his paperwork from the floor, he realised they really needed to sort something out. Obviously there was a breakdown somewhere, and they needed to work through it and negotiate a different arrangement. Shaun felt a small amount of guilt at the way he had handled the conversation earlier. He had dismissed Mark, which was wrong.

He brought his thoughts back to the present so he could determine where he was. Where would Mark be? The way he had run, Shaun was afraid he wouldn't have been paying attention to his surroundings, and he could be anywhere. God, he hoped his boy was alright and wasn't having a panic attack out here. He'd only fainted a few times from lack of oxygen, but it had terrified them both at the time. His heart stuttered when he thought of Mark lying on the ground out in the open, unconscious from an attack. No, he couldn't think like that, or he'd lose focus on the search.

The shared bike and pedestrian footpath along the river branched off into a park area. The lush grass and shade trees made the area slightly dark in the afternoon sun. Shaun looked around it searching for his boy. His eyes drifted over someone curled up against a tree trunk, head on knees, not looking around. He noticed the red high-top sneakers on the figures feet, and his heart jumped.

He quickly walked over and crouched down in front of Mark. He didn't reach over to touch him yet because he didn't want a repeat of Mark's reaction at the house.

"Baby boy," he said softly. Mark's head shot up, his eyes red-rimmed and brimming with unshed tears, a soft noise of surprise coming from his throat. He uncurled himself and immediately threw his arms around Shaun's neck, trembling and breathing hard.

"I'm so sorry, Daddy. I didn't mean to yell like that, or throw your things." Mark sobbed against Shaun's neck.

Shaun ran his hands in circles around his boy's back and made shushing sounds as Mark cried in his arms. He sniffled for a little while and then looked up with those amazing hazel eyes of his, more green than brown with the surrounding foliage as a backdrop. Eyes he would never get tired of staring into, with their little flecks of gold.

“It’s okay, baby, I know. I’m sorry I didn’t notice how frustrated you were getting. I wasn’t paying enough attention, and I let you down,” Shaun said as his heart tightened in his chest. He couldn’t believe how much he had missed. Looking at Mark now, he could see the dark circles under his eyes and the pallor of his skin. Had his boy not been eating properly during the day at work? He really needed to get them home so he could figure out how things had gotten so screwed up.

“No, Daddy, it’s not your fault. I should have said something sooner. Your business is going so well, and I didn’t realise how much you had to do. I’ll try harder, just please don’t stop being my daddy, please.”

Shaun couldn’t hide his shock and confusion. How had Mark come to the conclusion that their dynamic had changed? He would always be Mark’s daddy. This was part of their life, and nothing would change that. They may need to make some adjustments, things they hadn’t considered when talking about the move, but they would figure it out and get back to where they needed to be.

“Let’s go home and get some things straightened out, okay, baby boy?” Shaun said as he made the move to rise. Mark clung to his neck and seemed to rise with him. Shaun smiled at the man attached to his neck and said, “Do you want to let me go so we can walk back?”

Mark shook his head hard, still clinging to Shaun’s neck. Shaun had no choice; he lifted his boy’s body up and Mark curled his legs around Shaun’s waist. Shaun grabbed under Mark’s bum and held him close as he started to walk back home. Mark’s legs were tight around his hips, and he rested his head on Shaun’s shoulder as he stepped on the path. He was a little heavy, but Shaun could carry him a short way, until Mark felt more comfortable letting go. Mark seemed to relax a bit more and hummed a happy noise as they made their way back home. A few late afternoon joggers stared as they ran by, but Shaun didn’t care. Mark needed this, and Shaun would always give him what he needed.

Shaun listened to Mark, seated next to him on the couch, as he explained how he was feeling. Shaun realised there was a lot more to it than just the interruption to their Daddy/little time. It seemed Mark had been unhappy in his job from almost the beginning, but was hopeful that once he settled in, he would feel more at ease. Obviously that wasn’t happening, and so they agreed that Mark would look into freelancing and building up a smaller, sustainable client base.

The look of relief on Mark's face, and the way his muscles all but melted in relaxation when Shaun nodded his acceptance and suggested he go freelance, made Shaun feel like a complete arse for not noticing this problem sooner. It was apparent they needed to spend more time talking about what was going on. This was a huge move for Mark, who had never lived in the city before. Shaun could kick himself for assuming that Mark would just slip into the environment with ease.

"Can you explain why you thought our dynamic might change, Mark?" he asked, paying very close attention to his boy's expression. Mark suddenly looked every uncomfortable and fidgeted in his seat.

"It was stupid of me to make assumptions. I'm sorry, Shaun," Mark said, eyes lowered, and hands wrung tight in his lap.

Shaun reached out and grabbed Mark's hands, separating the tight fists and entwining their fingers.

"I need you to tell me so I can figure out what I did to make you think that, Mark. I don't ever want you to question our relationship or where you fit in. You need to tell me," Shaun said firmly.

"It crossed my mind that my tantrum may have ruined everything for us," Mark said shyly, swallowing visibly.

"While I'm not pleased with how you behaved, it doesn't change what we mean to each other, or need from each other," he said as he ran his thumb along the soft skin of Mark's hand.

Mark smiled at him and nodded. His eyes were bright and watery. Shaun pulled him into his chest and whispered, "I'm so sorry, baby," as he felt Mark's tears soak into his shirt. Mark's body shuddered, and then he took a deep breath. He lifted his head to Shaun and smiled again, this time it was big and warm, and Shaun felt his heart unclench and some of the tension in his shoulders eased. They would be okay. He just needed to ensure Mark never felt this way again. That shouldn't be hard, as long as Shaun stayed conscious of the time and his workload.

He sat up straighter and nudged Mark to sit up and face him again. He checked his watch and figured they had enough time to duck down to the shop to grab some supplies before it closed.

"How about we go and get some food for dinner, and you can tell me what you'd like to do tomorrow?" Shaun asked as he lifted off the seat to go grab his jacket and keys.

“Okay,” Mark said as he jumped up to grab his own jacket.

“We can also talk about your punishment while we drive there,” Shaun added as he turned around and helped Mark into his jacket. Mark’s movements stalled, and he looked up into Shaun’s eyes with uncertainty.

“Punishment?” Mark stuttered out.

“Mhmm,” Shaun said with a smirk.

“Oh, right,” replied Mark, trying to get himself untangled from his jacket and slide it over his back.

Shaun looked at him curiously as they walked down the stairs to the door.

“Why am I going to punish you, Mark?” Shaun enquired in a slightly biting tone, just to get across that there was no way out of it.

Mark followed him through the door and stopped by the car and looked over the roof at Shaun. He was chewing his cheek and appeared to be calculating how many infractions he had racked up. Shaun tried not to grin as he waited for Mark to reply.

“Because I threw my things, yelled at you, messed up your work, and ran off,” Mark said firmly, making it clear he understood the severity of his misdeeds.

Shaun nodded and opened the car door. He would usually take care of punishments as soon as possible, but they needed some space from the conversation earlier before he felt comfortable resuming their normal routine. He still felt enormous guilt for his part in how Mark had snapped and needed to do something mundane to get rid of the lingering pressure in his chest. Once they were home, he would take care of the punishment so they could carry on and get back to making Mark feel secure and loved.

Mark got into the passenger side and they both buckled in. Mark huffed a breath and sat back in his seat.

“I think I earned a big one, didn’t I?” Mark whispered as he glanced at Shaun.

“Yep, pretty big one, baby boy.” Shaun nodded as he replied and then stuck the key in the ignition so they could go get their groceries.

Mark gulped a little and then looked across the car at Shaun. He wasn't sure what to think of that answer. Punishment was usually more about isolation, but he had a feeling Shaun had something more physically painful planned. He wouldn't dwell on it. It was going to happen whether he protested or not. This was how he wanted it anyway. He had built up all these problems in his head and reacted badly. It was Shaun's job to correct him and bring him back to himself. That was how this worked. Next time he started to feel that way, he had promised he would share it immediately so Shaun could help him work through it. Sometimes Mark felt he was more trouble than he was worth, but the way Shaun looked at him, he knew that wasn't true, and that Shaun loved him and thought him more than worthy, the same way he felt about Shaun.

They got to the supermarket and grabbed a basket each. Shaun instructed him on what he was to get and told him he would meet him at the checkout. Mark took off to get everything he was told, hoping he hadn't forgotten anything, and then rushed back to find Shaun waiting for him.

Mark watched as Shaun placed the food he grabbed onto the belt, and then Mark put his stuff on. He glanced at a few items, frowning at Shaun's choices, and then looked over them again. Spaghetti, franks, and sauce were in amongst the usual items that Shaun would buy. They were things that he only got for Mark on special occasions, or when he had been really good. Mark was a little confused, because he hadn't been very good. He had been moody and angry, stomping around and yelling.

"You've been so patient and understanding, I thought you could use a break from the usual." Shaun spoke low so only Mark could hear him.

Mark looked him in the eyes and grinned, until his face felt like it would split.

"Thank you, Daddy," he whispered and then pulled away so Shaun could pay for the food. They grabbed the bags and headed back to the car.

Mark was anxious as he stood in the bedroom next to the bed, completely naked and waiting for Daddy to arrive. Once they got home, he had headed to the kitchen and instructed Mark to meet him in the bedroom without clothes. Mark looked down at the king-sized mattress with its dark brown blanket and tried to keep his breathing even. He had a feeling he would be paddled tonight. The only question was how many he would receive for the things he had done.

His heart was racing, and he had to consciously block out all thoughts. He focused on relaxing and breathing slowly.

Daddy entered the room and walked past him with purpose. He didn't speak to Mark, and Mark kept his eyes down, waiting. He heard a drawer being opened and noises like something dragging against wood, and then the drawer was sliding again with a quiet thump as it was closed.

He heard Daddy's feet shuffling against the carpet as he moved around the room in silence. Mark closed his eyes briefly and let his mind go blank. He had earned whatever Daddy was going to do to him, so he needed to stay calm and take the punishment so he could have a clean slate.

Mark jolted as he felt a warm hand against his back, and air tickled against his neck as he felt Daddy's breath slowly exhaling. Daddy ran his hand down the side of Mark's body, and the skin prickled with goosebumps. He heard Daddy sigh and then walk around him. Mark kept his head facing towards the bed, not daring to move. Daddy sat on the mattress next to where Mark was standing, and from the corner of Mark's eyes he saw the paddle in Daddy's hand. It was long and thin, and although it looked like leather, Mark knew it was made of wood with a leather covering. His breath caught in his throat, and then he exhaled sharply as his heart started pounding in his chest. It had been a long time since he had earned a spanking, but he hadn't forgotten how much it could hurt.

"Come here, boy." Daddy's deep voice rumbled quietly as he held out his hand for Mark. Mark immediately moved towards him and faced him.

"I need you to tell me why you're being punished, so I know you understand," Daddy said firmly, looking at Mark with steely eyes.

"Because I yelled at you, threw things, and ran when you tried to talk to me," Mark's words rushed out.

"You're missing something important, baby boy," Daddy told him and then waited patiently for Mark to respond.

Mark tried to think but his heart was pounding and his breathing was becoming short and choppy. He wasn't sure what else there was, but he didn't want to get it wrong and make things worse. His eyes felt watery, and hopelessness flooded him. He felt stupid because he couldn't think of the answer Daddy wanted.

"You're doing it right now, Mark," Shaun said with a frown.

Mark whimpered and started fidgeting with his hands. He really didn't know what Daddy was talking about. He inhaled deeply and tried to calm his nerves as he thought. And then it hit him.

"I didn't ask you for help when I needed it," Mark stuttered out quickly.

Daddy smiled broadly and reached up to cup Mark's cheek. Mark nuzzled into the touch as Daddy said, "That's my boy. Get over my lap, please." Mark slowly bent himself over Daddy's knees so his bum was in the air and his arms held most of his weight. His toes touched the floor but wouldn't support him. Daddy rested his left hand against Mark's shoulders and rubbed his right hand over Mark's bottom. Mark was calm as he felt Daddy's hand soothing the skin he was about to hit, bringing blood flow to the surface.

"I'm giving you ten for each infraction, Mark. If you need a break, let me know, but you will get the full forty tonight," Daddy said in a calm voice. Mark shuddered but nodded his head.

"Use your words, Mark," Daddy bit out.

"Yes, Daddy, I will tell you if I need a break," Mark replied. He took a deep breath and released it slowly, relaxing further on Daddy's lap.

Mark felt Daddy's leg tense and then a whoosh of air before the sound of the paddle thudded against his right bum cheek. He jolted, and the air rushed from his lungs. There was a sting and then it faded to a burn. Before it recovered, the next one hit, bringing back the sting. He tried to keep quiet as Daddy swung the paddle, hitting his bottom over and over again, but soon his eyes were burning and tears started leaking from the corners. He grunted and moaned as the sting in his bum grew sharper with each blow.

Daddy paused and rubbed Mark's burning cheeks. Mark squirmed as Daddy squeezed and fire flared. He whimpered and moaned as Daddy massaged the sensitive muscles, then his hand was gone, and Mark cried out as the paddle came back down again. He didn't know how long he lay over Daddy's knee, but his nose was running and he was moaning and crying and babbling as Daddy worked the paddle around his tortured behind. The skin of his bum was on fire and a deep ache was throbbing in the muscles underneath. He was getting ready to tell Daddy he needed a break when the thudding stopped and something dropped to the floor. His mind was hazy as he felt a warm hand rubbing his shoulders and back, and then a hand was tugging him up under his armpit. He used his hands to try and push himself up, but ended up flopping onto his knees on the other side of Daddy's legs. His bum smarted and throbbed as it landed on the back of his calves. He tried to shift but was too shaky.

“Shhh, it’s over now, baby boy,” Daddy bent down to whisper in Mark’s ear as he rubbed Mark’s hair softly. Mark looked up and tried to see Daddy’s face. He saw Daddy’s concerned look as his eyes finally found their focus. “There you are, baby. I’m so proud of you.” Daddy smiled gently at him. The praise warmed Mark, and he leaned into Daddy’s palm. He didn’t want to move, because his bum was still so sore, and every small shift made the pain flare again.

After a few minutes, Mark had his breathing under control and was able to slowly lift himself up to standing. Daddy grabbed Mark’s arm and pulled him into his lap to snuggle. Mark hissed as his bruised bottom was scratched by Daddy’s jeans, but then he stayed as still as he could, snuggling his head on Daddy’s chest. He exhaled happily, knowing that he had taken his punishment, and even though it would still hurt for a while, Daddy wasn’t mad, and they would spend the rest of the evening being together and reconnecting.

Shaun watched Mark hum happily as he stabbed a skewer through the cut-up frankfurt sausage on the dark wooden chopping board atop the black granite countertop and then gently threaded the uncooked spaghetti through the holes, placing each completed piece on a plate ready for cooking. Each “completed” piece looked like a weird version of popcorn garland with cut pieces of franks threaded along four sticks of spaghetti as evenly spaced as Mark could make it. This was his boy’s favourite meal, and it was the only time he really loved to help cook. Anything else and he’d be at the table drawing as he waited. Shaun suspected that it was to ensure Mark actually got his favourite meal served to him, rather than risk Shaun taking it away and serving something healthier. He would never tease his boy like that, but when Mark got ideas in his head, sometimes it was hard to budge them.

“They’re ready for cooking, Daddy,” Mark said, looking excited and grinning at him while holding the plate up with the many creations he had made. Shaun smiled warmly and took the plate from Mark’s hands, heading to the stovetop and placing them next to the pot of water that was just coming to a boil. After cooking the pasta, draining it carefully so the strands didn’t break and the sausage stayed on, he mixed through some sauce, put some in a bowl and topped it with grated cheese.

Mark was bouncing on the spot in the opening between the kitchen and the combined living/dining area, a huge grin splitting his face, looking like he won the lottery. Shaun supposed he had, given that he had been punished earlier that evening and now he was being rewarded with his favourite meal.

“Over to the table please, Mark,” Shaun instructed as he made a bowl for himself and grabbed a fork for each of them. He placed everything on the table and then headed back for a glass of chocolate milk he’d bought pre-made in a bottle from the supermarket. He placed the milk in front of Mark and sat down. Mark had patiently waited for him to take his seat, but as soon as Shaun’s bum was seated, Mark picked up his fork and dug into his meal, moaning and slurping the spaghetti as he bit into the franks. Shaun’s pants tightened unexpectedly at the orgasmic sound coming from his boy’s throat. It was almost too much to listen to and concentrate on his food at the same time. He took a deep breath and tried to control his body’s reaction.

“Thank you for my favourite dinner in the whole world, Daddy. You’re the best,” Mark said while wiping his mouth with the back of his hand, the fork in it waving around spilling droplets of sauce on the table. Shaun chuckled and took a hesitant bite of his own dinner. This was not the kind of food he liked, but he would endure it for Mark since it wouldn’t make another appearance for a long while.

“You’re welcome, baby boy,” Shaun said softly and smiled at Mark. His guilt from earlier had subsided, and he was relieved they would be able to work through this and ensure they both got what they needed. This move had been harder for Mark than it had been for Shaun, and he needed to keep that in mind when things got rough. Going from small town living to the expectations and rush of the city was intense. They needed to incorporate changes that would make the fast-paced living feel less frantic and manic. Maybe some drives down south for the weekend would help Mark adjust a little better. It would be great for Shaun to get away too. Once he had another agent in his office, he could picture Mark running down the stairs dragging a suitcase, trying to get to the car so they could miss Friday afternoon traffic. Shaun warmed with the possibilities. They may be living in the city, but it didn’t mean they couldn’t capture the easy-going nature of the country on the weekends. Shaun was pulled from his thoughts by a clatter of metal on porcelain and snapped his head at Mark. Mark was beaming at him and his chest tightened at the sight.

“All done, Daddy. Can we go play now?” Mark asked, rubbing his hands on his T-shirt. Shaun shook his head.

“Boy, you need a bath. You have sauce all over you.” Shaun tried not to gag at the mess Mark had made on his face and clothes. Mark bounced in his chair, looking ready to bolt to the bathroom.

“Dishes in the dishwasher, Mark, and then I’ll meet you in the bathroom.” Shaun said as he collected his own dishes and took them into the kitchen. Mark

skirted past him quickly and raced through the house, presumably to get to the bathroom. Shaun shook his head, smiling, as he stacked the dishwasher and cleaned the countertop. He walked into the bathroom just in time to admire Mark's naked form bending over the bathtub, his hands working the taps. Shaun started stripping off his own clothes and placing them in the washing basket. After the day they both had, he needed to spend some relaxing time with his boy, and a hot soak was the perfect place to do it.

Chapter 6

“Please put it in, Daddy,” Mark said excitedly.

“Patience, baby boy.” Shaun smirked at the breathless anticipation shining in his boy’s eyes.

“But I need it in now!” Mark exclaimed loudly, taking in a deep breath. Shaun admired the warring emotions on Mark’s face as the boy tried to stay still. He thought back over the last few months and how well his boy seemed to be adjusting to living in the city.

After the initial bumps, they had worked out some changes that allowed a smoother transition into this new life. Shaun no longer brought work home. He had finally hired a new agent, Karen, who was driven, and efficient, and worked well with him. That didn’t end his increased workload, but with some negotiations, he worked a few extra hours a week and was on call on most days, so that he could come home and spend a few hours with Mark as Daddy and little.

Mark slowly resigned from his position, not comfortable leaving until his replacement was hired and coping. Freelancing, finding his own clients, and setting his own schedule made a huge difference to his mood. Shaun was proud of how well Mark had taken to being self-employed. Why hadn’t they thought of it sooner? He was calmer, more in control of his reactions, and smiled more.

Shaun felt a tug on his arm. He looked down to see Mark’s pleading eyes looking back at him.

“Daddy, I need it, please,” Mark implored. Shaun gave a small smile and looked down at the table they were sitting at. He reached down and fitted the puzzle piece he had been holding, into place.

Mark’s grin grew wide, and he bounced in his chair, showing how excited he was that they had finally finished the 4000 piece puzzle of the Sydney Harbour Bridge and Opera House. It had taken weeks but was worth every frustrating moment.

After Mark’s meltdown, Shaun had needed a casual way to let him talk about the things that were bothering him, and this seemed the best way. It also allowed him to relieve some of the day-to-day pressure and show Mark he wasn’t alone. While Shaun found it easier to assimilate into the city, the

pressure of his business was constant, and he needed to speak about it more so he didn't get overwhelmed. He loved that over something as simple as a puzzle, they could be Daddy and baby boy, or just Shaun and Mark.

"Can we frame it, Daddy?" Mark's voice cut into his musings.

"Of course, baby boy, but I think we'll have to glue it to something first." Shaun watched Mark's posture relax and the warm smile on his face. "Why don't we go out and grab what we need to mount it now and pick up dinner on the way home," Shaun suggested as he rose from the chair.

"Okay, Daddy, let's go." Mark jumped up and rushed to get his jacket. The air outside was still chilly, even though it was moving into spring.

Shaun admired the view of Mark struggling into his jacket. He was moving so quickly that his arms were getting tangled. Shaun snorted and walked over to give him a hand untangling himself. When the jacket was in place, Mark turned around to face him, and Shaun reached out to run his fingers against his cheek. Mark moved into the caress and sighed, smiling softly. Shaun leaned down and gave him a soft grazing kiss against his warm lips.

When he pulled back Mark was grinning wider and lifted his fingers to his lips, touching where their lips had connected.

"Mmmm," Mark mumbled and moved to the stairs to head down to the car.

Shaun grabbed Mark's arm and pulled him back into his arms. He grazed his lips against Mark's again and then pressed their lips together harder. He swiped his tongue against the seam of Mark's lips, demanding entrance. His body flushed and tightened as he pressed Mark against the wall and plunged his tongue inside Mark's hot mouth. He felt Mark moan into his mouth, and he drank down the sounds as he continued to lick inside. He could feel Mark's erection pressing against his thigh, and he ground his hip against it, panting as he fought the urge to take Mark right there on the stairs.

He broke off the kiss and heard Mark's protesting noise. Shaun stared into Mark's glazed eyes and kissed his lips again chastely as he adjusted his pants, ready to walk out the door. Mark had an adorable pout to his swollen lips, but he didn't say anything, just raised his eyebrows expectantly. Shaun pulled him back into a tight hug.

"I love you, Mark," he whispered as he inhaled Mark's scent into his lungs.

"I love you too, Shaun," Mark replied as he squeezed Shaun tightly.

They slowly broke the embrace and headed down the stairs to the garage so they could head out and get what they needed for the evening ahead.

The End

Author Bio

Maija lives in South East Queensland with her many children. When she is not on mummy duties, or working, she is relaxing in a comfy chair, reading erotic romance in all different varieties, or talking to her Jelly friends on Goodreads.

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