

LOVE Has NO Boundaries



Don't Read in the Closet Event 2013

GREAT CATCH

Megan Slayer

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Love Has No Boundaries

An M/M Romance series

GREAT CATCH

By Megan Slayer

Introduction

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

What Is Love Has No Boundaries?

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

A written description of the image that inspired this story is provided along with the original request letter. If you'd like to view the photo, please feel free to join the [Goodreads M/M Romance Group](#) and visit the discussion section: *Love Has No Boundaries*.

Whether you are an avid M/M romance reader or new to the genre, you are in for a delicious treat.

Words of Caution

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

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

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Photo Description

Two young men are side by side on a bus and appear to be sleeping. The boy on the left wears a sleeveless dark blue T-shirt and a grey visor turned backwards. He has his arm around the boy on the right, who rests his head against his friend's chest, cushioned by a towel or pillow. Their fingers are laced together, holding on as they sleep.

Story Letter

Dear Author,

We have been best friends since elementary school and started fooling around together the summer we turned fifteen. Other than being best friends, I know that we just fool around to have fun. It doesn't mean anything more than that; at least I know that it doesn't mean anything more than that to him.

He has always been such a fun and outgoing guy, doing anything for a laugh and never caring about what anybody thinks. Believe it or not, I used to actually be shy before we met, but now I'm almost as outgoing as him. He brings it out in me, I guess. I never thought I'd be good at baseball, but after having played catcher for him so many times in his backyard, I decided to try out for our high school varsity team after he made starting pitcher. (And ha-ha, yes we have heard just about all the pitcher/catcher jokes we can stand.) But like I said, he doesn't care what anybody thinks and we always have a good time together, even when we have to take the boring bus to and from our games.

And like I said, I know that we just fool around to get off and have fun, and it's not like we do it every day. Except lately it seems that when we are together, even when we are just hanging out, I can't help but get the feeling that he is looking at me differently than he normally does... Like he is waiting

for me to say something or do something. But it's driving me crazy, because I know I want more. But I know he doesn't... Does he?

Sincerely,

Major English (Laura)

Story Info

Genre: contemporary

Tags: high school, barely legal, first time, coming out, friends to lovers, sports, coming of age, homophobia

Word count: 10,244

GREAT CATCH

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CHAPTER ONE

“Any damn time, Ky.” Jake rubbed his temples and scooted down in his seat. This happened more often than not. The pitching coaches spent forever talking to the pitchers about the next game. Being the star pitcher for the Wildcats meant Kyler got the most attention. Fine by Jake. He was proud of his best friend. Hell, maybe Ky would get a scholarship this year.

Jake stared at the closed door to the locker rooms. Was Ky in there showering? A vision of Ky, soap lathered all over his body and water sluicing down his skin, came to mind. Jake gulped. He shouldn't have such feelings about Ky—not when there wasn't a chance in hell they'd be more than friends with strange benefits. He palmed the bulge in his running shorts and fixed his gaze on the door. The moment Ky strolled out, he'd forget the way Ky made him feel and focus on remaining friends.

Except forgetting the one guy he cared about wasn't going to happen.

They'd been best friends since elementary school and started fooling around together the summer they turned fifteen. Other than being best friends, Jake knew that they just fooled around to have fun. It didn't mean anything more than that; at least, Jake swore what they did didn't mean anything more than that to Kyler.

Talk about the star. Kyler had always been such a fun and outgoing guy, doing anything for a laugh and never caring about what anybody thought. No one would believe Jake used to be shy before they met, but now he and Kyler competed to see who could be more outgoing. Kyler brought out the best in Jake. Hell, Jake never thought he'd be good at baseball, but after having played catcher for Kyler so many times in Ky's backyard, Jake decided to try out for the high school varsity team after Ky made starting pitcher. They'd heard just about all the pitcher/catcher jokes they could stand, but they didn't mind.

Kyler didn't care what anybody thought, and they always had a good time together, even when they had to take the boring bus to and from the away games.

They fooled around to get off and have fun, and it wasn't like they did it every day. Except lately. It seemed that whenever they were together, even when they were just hanging out, Jake couldn't help but get the feeling Kyler looked at him differently... Like he waited for Jake to say something or do something. It drove Jake crazy, because he wanted more. But Kyler didn't... *did he?*

They'd have to talk sooner or later, if for no other reason than to get things out in the open.

The door to the locker rooms opened, but instead of Kyler, Seth Roberts—star first baseman and legendary at the school for being a player—strolled out onto the parking lot. He loved guys, all guys, and made no bones about staking his claim when he found a guy he liked. He tipped his head back and laughed, then glanced over his shoulder. Kyler followed and laughed just as hard. When Seth gripped Kyler's shoulder, Ky didn't bat him away like he usually did with Jake. No, he left the first baseman's hand there.

Jake's heart squeezed. He knew this would happen—he'd keep his mouth shut for too long and someone else would make a play. Kyler had turned eighteen two months before Jake. He didn't have a girlfriend and didn't really date, except for Homecoming because he'd been matched up with Mallory Blevins. Jake went with Mallory's friend and pretended to have a good time. The whole night he watched Kyler.

Maybe he was an idiot. No one pined over a guy this way. But Jake knew back when he was fourteen which way his flag flew. His phone pinged, signalling a text. Happy Birthday, Jake. The text took some of the sting away. His brother remembered his birthday. So his birthday wasn't until tomorrow. Still, someone remembered.

When Jake looked up from his phone, Seth snagged Ky in a hug. He said something out of Jake's earshot then laughed again. Kyler shrugged,

withdrew, and waved. Seth said something else, but Kyler continued walking across the lot towards Jake's truck. He caught Jake's gaze and grinned.

"I thought they'd never let us leave." Kyler opened the truck door, then plopped his gear back in the truck bed. "Said the Tigers roster came alive and I've got to change up my pitches for tomorrow." He slid into the seat beside Jake. "Do you think my fastball is getting better? I thought it was my best pitch."

"You could put more thrust behind it, but it's still hard for most hitters to gauge. I wouldn't worry about it." Jake put the truck in gear and rolled through the lot. "Are you coming over tonight? Ventana put new music on the web and I downloaded them. We could have our own listening party." Jake kept his gaze on the church across the street from the school. If he looked over at Ky, he'd say something he'd regret. *Please come over. Celebrate with me tomorrow. I love you. Shit.*

"Take me home. I've got a couple things to do."

No emotion in his voice, just flat words. Jake swallowed his pride and sped across town toward Ky's house. Within a few minutes he pulled into the driveway and parked.

"Thanks for the lift. I'm working on my car this weekend. I should have the tranny fixed in time for prom." Kyler gripped the door handle, but didn't get out of the truck. He stared at Jake for a long time, then leaned over and kissed him on the lips. "I've wanted to do that all day." Ky winked and got out of the truck.

Jake sank down in his seat and blew out a long breath. Screw it. He'd either have a friend when he finished or he'd be alone. Either way he'd feel better for saying what needed to be said. He opened his door and jogged after Ky.

"Hey." Kyler grinned. "Can't get enough of me?"

"No, I can't." He grabbed the front of Kyler's shirt and kissed him. Kyler didn't pull away, didn't push, just continued the kiss. Ky opened to him, tangling their tongues and swallowing Jake's moan. Tingles shot through

Jake's brain and heat settled low in his belly. His cock thickened behind his jogging shorts, and he pressed his groin to Ky's. He expected no reaction. Ky smoothed his hands over Jake's ass, pushing their cocks together in a delicious friction. For the first time, he wanted more than a simple blow job. More than a hand job. He wanted the feeling of Kyler's cock in his ass, connecting them.

When Kyler finally broke the kiss, he panted and brilliant pink streaked across his cheeks. "Wow."

Jake gathered his courage. "Ky, I like you. You're my best friend and I'm sure this will fuck everything up, but I want you." *There.* He'd poured out most of his heart for Kyler to accept or reject.

"Seth said you were crazy about me, but I didn't believe him." Kyler kept their bodies tight together. "Told him he was full of shit."

Jake suppressed a snort. Maybe he was full of shit, too. "Look, I'm tired of the gossip on the bus. I'm tired of pretending what we do doesn't affect me. It does. The more you and I suck each other off, the more my heart gets involved. I'm not a girl and I'm not emotional, but I really, really like you."

"Jake." Kyler touched Jake's cheek. "I've got to go." He pulled away from Jake, then dipped his head and walked into the house.

Jake's heart sank to his toes. At least he knew where he stood. He turned his baseball hat backwards on his head and retreated to his truck. So much for being honest with the one he loved.

CHAPTER TWO

Kyler stood at the kitchen sink and watched Jake zip down the driveway until the Chevy's red tail lights faded from view. Too many thoughts rushed through his brain. Jake liked him. He sort of knew they had a bond. Most guys didn't spend their free time talking sports and sucking each other's cock, but they did. Christ, the two of them knew each other so well, but hearing the words *I like you* coming from Jake didn't seem real. His cock still tingled from the feel of Jake against his body—hard muscle against hard muscle, cock to cock. The taste of Jake's kiss lingered on his tongue. Boy, did Jake know how to kiss, swiping his tongue along Kyler's teeth, taking control of the situation without being overbearing... just the way Kyler liked. He could still see the pale blue flecks in Jake's eyes. So why'd he freeze up? He'd always been the one to blurt out whatever he felt. He amused people with his outgoing personality, but the moment he and Jake hid from everyone, his confidence turned to nothing.

Jake crawled under his skin and made him think. Made him feel.

Footsteps clunked on the floor behind him. "Are you going to stare at the driveway all night?" His mother, Jane, carried Jesse, Kyler's baby brother, into the kitchen and strapped the toddler into his high chair. "No Jake tonight?" she asked over her shoulder. Jesse squealed and clapped his hands.

"He went home." Kyler scrubbed the back of his hand across his chin then stuck his tongue out for his brother. When Jesse smiled and blew him raspberries, he mimicked the toddler's noises.

"Nice. Don't teach him to make rude noises." His mother chuckled. "Did you two have a falling out?" She opened a box of Cheerios, dumped a few into a bowl, and handed the bowl to Jesse. "Big Brother Number Two went home, big guy." She sat down next to the high chair. Jesse squealed, then slapped at the round cereal and blew another round of sloppy raspberries. His mother turned her attention back to Kyler. "What's wrong? It's Jake's birthday tomorrow. I thought you had plans."

“I did.” *Lots of them.* He glanced at his baseball gear. The letter from the coach waited, still tucked in the pocket. He’d planned to tell Jake and his mother over supper how OSU finally offered him a full-ride, his spot secured due to his grades. Jake had brains, athletic ability, and was a damn fine cock sucker... all of the things Ky wanted to be. But did Jake want his best friend in a romantic way? There was the sticking point. Kyler was supposed to like girls. But the night of Homecoming proved him wrong. Mallory did her best to please him. She swallowed and everything, but the whole scene felt wrong. He wanted Jake there. *To watch?* No, for more. He’d imagined Jake lapping at his balls, staring up at him when he came, and making him feel complete. He pressed his knees together and inched behind the countertop to hide the burgeoning erection. Damn thing reacted every time he so much as thought about Jake.

“Earth to Kyler.” His mom knocked on the Formica in front of him. “Are you in there?”

“Yeah, Mom.” The weight of his situation pushed down on him. He couldn’t talk to Jake. Not yet. He bowed his head. Hell, he hadn’t even come out to his family. “Mom? Have you ever struggled with something? You kind of know the answer, but you need to say it out loud and talk it out first?” His hands shook, and he folded them together on top of the counter. “Something really—you don’t even know how to say it, but you have to?”

“Well, spit it out. Your brother won’t say anything, your dad probably already knows, and I’m always here to listen.” She patted the other chair. “What’s up?”

He ground his teeth together. His father probably did know. If he was truly the angel or whatever he felt following him, then, yeah, his father probably had an inkling about Ky’s orientation. But his father wouldn’t care. Kyler pushed his knuckles into the counter. Where the hell should he start?

“I’m gay.” *Shit.* He hadn’t meant to blurt that out so fast. The tips of his ears burned and his skin itched. Relief and dread washed over him. “I wasn’t going to tell you because I was afraid you’d disown me or something.” He fixed his gaze on the tabletop. “I’m—confused.” *Scared, hurting, and lost.*

“What are you confused about?” His mother squeezed his shoulder. “You like guys. I’m glad you’re being honest with yourself. Have you told Jake? He’s very cute.”

He’s cute? Not the answer Ky expected, but then again, he hadn’t planned to have the conversation with his mother in the first place. Kyler’s baby brother tossed a piece of cereal at Ky, breaking the tension in the room.

“Thanks, Rugrat.” Kyler nibbled on the Cheerio. He didn’t feel much better, not really. “You’re not upset? Not going to try to fix me up with a girl anyway?”

Jane’s brows knotted then she rolled her eyes. “Ky, as long as you’re happy, I’m happy. Oh, by the way, I’d appreciate it if you didn’t say the d-word in front of your brother. He likes to repeat everything. New trend he started today. Don’t ask, it’s a long story, but trust me.” She ruffled Kyler’s hair. “What are you confused about? Being out? Or maybe about Jake? You don’t think he’ll stop being friends with you over this, do you? He’s a good guy.”

“Jake.” His heart hammered. *If he couldn’t talk to his mom, who could he talk to?* “I’m scared and confused. He’s my best friend. We’re a strong team.” He covered his face with his hands. “And we’ve... experimented. A lot.” He hadn’t planned on telling his mother everything, but then again he hadn’t planned on coming out. But she made talking so easy. “Did you know?”

“Did I know about you two doing whatever it is you did together? No. Do I care? A little, but if you needed to experiment, Jake’s easy on the eyes, and his heart is huge. Tell him you like him. What’s the worst that can happen?”

“Plenty. We’re on the team together. We already take heat for being friends and our tendency to sleep on each other on the bus.” He swallowed hard and faced his mother. “Mom, he says he likes me, too, but I don’t think I just like him.”

“Then you do.” She smiled and hugged him. “Talk to him. I’ll bet this will be a lot easier if you do. And if, by some stretch of the imagination, he puts distance between you, your brother and I will do our best to cheer you up.”

“Thanks, Mom.” His hands shook and his stomach flip-flopped. He knew what he had to do. “Can I borrow the car? I won’t be out late.”

“You’re eighteen. I can’t make you stick around and I can’t afford to fix your car, either.” She slid the car keys across the counter then patted his hand. “But know I’m here for you if you need me. Just leave out some of the more colorful details.”

“Thanks, Mom.” He rounded the counter and snagged his mother in a hug. He rested his forehead on Jesse’s and blew another raspberry. “Behave and don’t repeat what Momma says.” Jesse afforded him with a sloppy kiss on his nose. “Thanks, Rugrat.”

Kyler stepped into his tennis shoes, grabbed his wallet, and sprinted out to the car. “Give me time, Jake. We’ll sort this out.”

CHAPTER THREE

Jake kicked his foot against the bare tree root, swinging the hammock. The stars glittered above him and he noticed none of them. His thoughts centered on Kyler and the mess he'd made of his life. Telling Ky how he felt had been the worst mistake of his life. Instead of accepting him, Ky pushed him away. And the night before the last game, too. Jesus. He massaged his forehead with both hands. He'd have to go inside sooner or later, even if only to check the cut on his cheek.

His father's words filtered through the open windows. "I don't have a son if he's gay. I don't have a son at all."

Great. No family and probably no best friend. How much better could life get?

An engine hummed in the distance, then grew louder. Jake tipped his head in the direction of the sound. Few people drove down his road during the daytime. If someone happened down the road at night, they either wanted to be there or they were lost.

Headlights appeared at the head of the drive then came closer. Jake slipped his phone from his pocket and checked the time. *Half past nine. Must be someone lost.*

The car came to a stop in front of the house and Jake wondered who'd come to visit. A few seconds later, Jake's father's bellows filled the air. "You son of a bitch. You fucked up my kid. He needs to be fixed. Boys like girls, not other boys." Light flooded the side yard as a figure sprinted to the side gate, then jumped over it. *Kyler*. Howard raced out the back door toward Kyler and a work boot whizzed past Kyler's head.

"Get out of my house," Howard bellowed. "And take the bastard with you."

Kyler whipped around. "Mr. Lofton, I'm not in your house. Give me another couple minutes and I'll be off your property, but not if you knock my ass out cold with a work boot. Then you'll have to deal with me even longer."

He stood within inches of Jake's father. "And if you ever call my best friend a bastard again, we really won't come back."

Jake's mother, Susan, grabbed Howard's arm. "Leave them alone. You threw our son out of our house. Stop before you push him away forever."

"Fuck this." Kyler strode across the lawn to Jake, still seated on the hammock. "Let's go. You don't deserve this." He offered his hand. "We've always got room." When Jake stood, Kyler whispered in his ear. "And we need to talk."

His stomach soured. The last time he talked with Ky, Jake bared his heart and walked away bruised. He didn't want to go there again, but he didn't really feel like dealing with his father's rage, either. Jake sprinted around the house to Kyler's car.

"Want to bring your truck?" Kyler nodded to the garage.

"Can't. Dad confiscated my keys and popped my tires." Jake kept his face in the shadows and hoped Kyler didn't notice the knot or the bruise.

"The hell you say." Kyler climbed into the car and turned over the engine. "Let's go. I hate morons."

Jake slid in beside him. "He's still my dad."

"Your dad is an ass. I'm sorry, but he is, and if he beats you again, I will do more than take you to my house." He shifted the car into gear and sped down the driveway, leaving a spray of gravel in his wake. "He hit you again, didn't he? Don't try to hide from me. I know you better than you know yourself."

"He found a magazine in my room. Gay porn. It's so—I'm fucked up. I really am. I want you and I know you don't want me so I thought maybe if I got my mind off you, I'd—I don't know. I wanted to forget you and I couldn't." He stared out the window. "Ky, tell me the truth. If I don't mean anything to you other than a mouth to suck you off and a friend when no one else listens, then tell me. I'll figure something out until we graduate."

“You’re my best friend.” Kyler sped across town before he said anything else. He waited until they came to a stop in his driveway, then continued. “No one has the right to beat you up because of who or what you are.” He shifted in his seat to look at Jake and gripped Jake’s hand. “You’re my best friend, and, yeah, we’ve experimented, but I’m not letting you live on the streets because your family can’t accept you. Hell, you were my first kiss.”

That little tidbit of information knocked Jake for a loop. He could’ve sworn Becky Jones had been the first one to kiss Ky. She bragged about it to the entire freshman class. “I’m tired of being in situations where I’m not wanted.”

“That’s where you’re wrong. Mom said she doesn’t want to know what we’ve done, but you’ve always got a place with us. Right now, I don’t think you should be alone.” He opened his car door, climbed out, then rounded the hood and opened Jake’s door. “Come inside so I can look at your shiner. We’ll figure out what to tell Coach and go from there. I’ve got your back. Always.”

Jake sighed and followed his friend into the house. Ky’s smile warmed his heart but did little to calm his nerves. Every time he and Ky ended up alone, someone lost their pants. Right now, he didn’t have much nerve, either.

Ky’s mom waved from her place on the couch. Jesse lay sprawled on his blanket on the floor. “He wanted to see his brothers but ran out of steam instead.” She shook her head. “Your dad hit you again, didn’t he?”

Christ. Everyone knew about his old man’s shit-for-brains attitude.

“Asshole threw a work boot at me.” Ky strolled back into the room with a bag of ice in hand. “Here. This will take the swelling down.”

“I know,” Jake muttered. He rather liked Ky playing the role of mother hen. At least he mattered to someone. But he couldn’t shake the feeling of not belonging... anywhere.

“It’s your birthday, isn’t it?” Jane smiled again. “Get some rest and we’ll do something nice tomorrow.”

“Thanks.” He ducked his head and followed Kyler back to his bedroom. Kyler’s mother shouldn’t be the one worried about Jake’s birthday, should she?

“Boys?” she called. “I don’t want to hear a thing.”

A rare blush flooded across Kyler’s cheeks. “I told her more than I probably should’ve.” He shrugged. “Not ashamed.” He closed his bedroom door. “I don’t regret a thing we did.” He kicked out of his shoes then sprawled on his bed with his jogging shorts tented over his groin. “Here’s where we need to talk.”

“Don’t worry. You don’t have to explain anything to me. I’ll keep my hands to myself and sleep in the guest room.” Nice to see Ky knew what he wanted. Jake sighed and scratched his head. “I’m not in the mood anyway.” He snorted then sighed. “There’s nothing like turning eighteen and hearing you’re not welcome in your own home.” His eyes stung from unshed tears. “A month till fucking graduation and I’m homeless.”

“Okay, no sleeping in the guest room because I said so.” Kyler sat up and scooted down the bed until he sat on the edge. “You’re not homeless and this won’t be the worst birthday ever. I can screw up plenty of birthdays if you want.” He grinned then tugged Jake into the curve of his legs. “I came out to Mom.” His eyes glittered as he talked. “Told her everything. What we did, what you said and how I reacted like an asshole. She knows about us on the bus. It felt good to tell her the truth. I’m gay. I thought I liked girls, but you were the one guy to change my mind. Turns out, you’re more important than being a guy.” He wrapped his arms around Jake. “You’re the guy. My guy.”

Fires burned in Kyler’s eyes. “Tonight, I want to make you feel hot and wanted.” He placed his index finger over Jake’s mouth. “Because to me, you’re sexy, hot, sweet and so much more. I like you, too, Jake. More than friends. We make a good team. You catch everything I pitch in perfect sync. I’m not me without you.”

“You’re a sap,” Jake said around Ky’s finger. Despite his face hurting from the rendezvous with his father’s fist and the boot, Jake’s spirits soared. Not only had Ky come out, but the feelings were oh-so-mutual.

Kyler tugged Jake forward in a tangle of arms and legs, then rolled Jake onto his back and scrambled astride Jake’s hips. A lock of his dark hair slid forward and he licked his lips. “I might be a sap, but I’m also very, very attracted to you.”

CHAPTER FOUR

Kyler braced himself on his hands and knees. This was where he wanted to be. With Jake. Someone once told him he'd never find his true love the first time out. Maybe not. They'd had oral sex, but he'd never gone all the way with another guy. He'd sown his share of wild oats with girls. He learned enough from the heterosexual experiences to know girls didn't get his rocks off. Would things be different with another guy, or would things royally suck once he and Jake actually made love? Possible, but he doubted anything with Jake would suck... except for oral sex, and he loved that kind of sucking.

Jake balled his fists. Didn't try to touch him, just stared at him.

"I believe I owe you a birthday present." Kyler rubbed his cock over Jake's groin. "Lots of them." The deep purple and blues of the bruise, along with the inch-long cut marring Jake's cheek, stuck out in the bright overhead light.

"Ky." Jake closed his eyes. "I'm all kinds of fucked up."

"Hush." Kyler rested his forehead on Jake's. "I'll spend the rest of my life making everything up to you, but never ever think you're screwed up. I don't love screwed-up people."

"You love baseball and blowjobs."

"And you." Ky cupped Jake's face and allowed the words to sink into Jake's brain. "Yeah, big guy. I love you. Not just as my best friend, but long term, crazy, over-my-head-and-loving-it in love with you."

Instead of saying anything, Jake's mouth opened and closed. His eyes widened. He brushed his fingers over Ky's temple. Yeah, this was what Ky wanted. He nipped Jake's bottom lip, then pushed the kiss further. Pure adrenaline and desire took over. He slid down Jake's body, kissing and licking his way to Jake's belly. When Jake propped himself up on his elbows, Ky fisted Jake's shirt hem.

"Off. I can't see or taste you with this on." He shoved Jake's shirt toward his neck. "Show me, sexy." He loved his man. So much. Yeah, it was time to take things from playing around to showing Jake exactly how he felt.

Jake wrestled out of his shirt, then flopped onto the bed. He tipped his head back and pinched his nipples.

“So hot.” Ky hooked his fingers in the waistband of Jake’s shorts and boxers. He yanked both items of clothing to the floor, then resumed his place between his lover’s legs. Jake’s cock, long, thick, and with a slight curve, bobbed before him. He licked his lips then flattened his tongue along the underside of Jake’s dick.

“Fuck,” Jake murmured. He rocked his hips and planted his feet on the mattress.

“Let me make you feel good.” Ky sucked Jake’s cock from tip to root into his mouth. He hummed around Jake’s girth and licked every inch of his lover. Each moan and groan spurred Ky on. He slipped one hand between Jake’s ass cheeks and caressed his asshole. The tight flesh puckered under his care.

“Ky.” Jake reached forward, threading his fingers into Ky’s hair. He gripped his lover’s head and set the pace, bobbing his cock in and out of Kyler’s mouth.

Ky wrapped his left hand around the base of Jake’s cock and continued to ease his finger into Jake’s hole. At the same time, he lapped at Jake’s erection. The first taste of precum exploded on Ky’s tongue as Jake fucked himself on Ky’s face, groaning and arching.

Jake’s legs trembled and he tugged Ky’s hair, hard. “So close. Put another finger in my ass.”

Jake’s request knocked Ky for a loop. He liked hearing the catcher tell him exactly what he wanted. Kyler spit on his fingers, then added a second finger to Jake’s hole. He curled his finger enough to touch Jake’s prostate. When he did, Jake tensed, then spurted his seed down Ky’s throat.

Jake’s entire body vibrated, then he sagged into the mattress. His eyes closed and his chest caved with every breath. “Holy shit.” His limp dick slid from Kyler’s mouth and landed with a plop against his lower belly.

Kyler licked his lips, eased his fingers from Jake's ass, then sat back on his haunches. The times they'd blown each other before were hot as hell, but with the added dimension of being in love? God, he couldn't wait to make love to his man.

"Come here." Jake rolled onto his side, then sat up. He nudged Kyler onto his back, then pinned the pitcher's arms. "You blow my mind."

"And your cock," Kyler added with a grin.

"That too." Passion burned in Jake's eyes. "This is so unreal, but everything I wanted." He tilted his head and feasted on Kyler's mouth. Unable to hold back, Ky wrapped his arms around his man and kissed with every last drop of hunger in his body. His cock ached, and the scent of Jake snared him.

Kyler broke the connection first. He shoved his jogging shorts and boxer briefs to the floor, then kicked out of his socks.

Raw excitement crackled between them. Jake fistfisted Kyler's cock in both hands, stroking and caressing. Kyler's vision blurred and his belly flip-flopped. He loved when Jake gave him a hand job. Knowing Jake liked him made the whole action even hotter. He rocked his hips and fucked himself on Jake's hands.

"Don't you dare get yourself off until I get a taste." Jake cupped Kyler's balls in one hand, then engulfed Kyler's dick in his hot mouth. Ky's vision blurred. *Holy hell.* He scraped his fingernails on Jake's shoulders and bounced his hips on the mattress. Nothing else mattered but Jake and the way Jake made him feel. No scholarship, no offer from minor league teams, no experiences with other guys compared to Jake.

Ky wanted to last longer. Wanted to drag the moment out. Not happening. Jake rested on his hands and knees and sucked Ky to the back of his throat. He curled his tongue around Ky's dick, swallowing him deep. Kyler's skin sizzled and all the thoughts in his head fuzzed. He panted, then let go of Jake to slide his hands under his own shirt to pinch his nipples. Every nerve ending in his body came alive. The lust for his man amplified with each thrust into Jake's mouth.

“Fuck, fuck, fuck,” Kyler chanted. He bit his bottom lip, then smothered his mouth behind his arm to muffle the sound. *Shit*. He closed his eyes and embraced the orgasm washing through him. For a moment, he couldn’t feel the mattress beneath him. His body seemed to float on the wobbly, gooey sensations flowing through his veins. He opened his eyes and watched Jake. Everything moved in half speed.

Jake grabbed the blankets and covered their naked bodies before stretching out and closing his eyes; his breathing evened out as the toll of the day caught up with the both of them. Kyler didn’t care. They’d been through plenty in a short time. He’d wait a little longer to tell Jake about OSU. He pressed the buttons to set his alarm, then whipped his shirt up over his head and settled beside the man he loved. Warmth spread throughout his body. Love felt good, warm and gooey in his veins, but totally right.

CHAPTER FIVE

Jake hefted his bag onto his shoulder. He'd managed to dodge questions from his coach about the bruises. He'd even worked with Ky to make a double play, their third of the season. The scouts watched Ky, like they did every game. He glanced over to where Kyler stood with two reps from an out of state college. Ky smiled and took cards, shaking his head every once in a while.

Jake's heart sank. Memories of the night before bombarded him. Kyler said he loved him. Better than any wet dream, and the blow job still resonated in his soul. Nothing mattered but Ky, and he had no idea if Ky would even be around after graduation. He'd committed to OSU, but Ky hadn't chosen a school yet. From the looks of the scouts, he was still on the fence.

Although he wanted to listen in on Kyler's conversation, Jake stepped onto the bus and took his seat seven rows from the front. He'd brought his iPod and plugged the earbuds into his ears. Might as well drown out the rest of the world until Ky showed up. He flipped through his beat-up copy of Hemingway and stared at the words.

A shadow blocked the light between him and the overhead light. . One of his ear buds slipped from his ear and the book tumbled to the floor. "I thought you read that." Kyler plopped down next to him and nudged Jake into the chilly window glass, then tossed the ear piece onto the book. "Couple more schools wanted to talk to me."

"I saw." Jake yanked the other ear bud from his ear. "You're good. People want good." They wanted the next star to nab a championship. Hell, if Ky played his cards right, he'd be pro in four years. Maybe earlier. The words *I love you* wouldn't mean a thing then. He could hope they'd stay together, but the odds weren't in their favor.

"Those two want great." Ky threw his arm around Jake. "They won't get great." He handed his friend a piece of paper. "I committed."

Jake unfolded the sheet of paper. His brain buzzed as he read the words. *OSU. Freshman class. Baseball scholarship.* They'd both be down at the main

campus in the fall. For once in his life, things were coming together. They'd have a future—together.

Kyler tightened his arm around Jake and kissed Jake's temple. "That's right man. You and me down in the big city. I've even looked into an apartment." He rested his head on top of Jake's. "I couldn't break up the team."

"I don't know what to say." He patted his boyfriend's thigh. The dull ache behind his eyes receded, and his mind eased. Things weren't perfect, but he and Ky would be all right. Together.

"You don't have to say anything. Happy birthday, big guy." Another kiss, and right where anyone could see them. "When we get home, I've got one hell of a surprise for you."

Someone behind them whooped and another player thumped the seat. "Get a room."

"Shut up, Pike. You're just jealous." Kyler didn't turn around, instead he settled tighter with Jake. "I'm good right where I am."

"This is the best, if not strangest, birthday yet. You couldn't do more than you've already said and done." Jake cuddled against his man. "I got what I wanted."

"For now. Mom and Jesse went to Grandma's for the weekend. The house is ours," Kyler whispered in Jake's ear. "I've got the lube and enough condoms for a week of sex. I want you to fuck me. Tonight." Jake threaded his fingers with Ky's and snuggled his guy to his chest. "We're going to celebrate all night long."

When Jake opened his eyes the next time, the bus rolled into the parking lot at the school. His phone buzzed in his hand. At least he'd remembered to grab the phone before his father gave him the boot. He regretted not grabbing his truck keys—not that he had the truck, but still. With the swipe of his

finger, he checked the messages. His heart squeezed in his chest. The text came from his mother.

Dads @ work

Tires fixed.

Left your truck @ school

I love you

His mother still cared. He grinned. Between the two of them, he expected his mother to stand behind him, even if she was covering for his father.

Kyler groaned, then unwound his arm from Jake's shoulder. "We're back." He snorted. "Now we've got to figure out how to get home. Mom being gone means no car. Shit."

"My mom came through for us. She brought my truck up to the school." Jake nodded to his truck sitting under the lot light. A lone figure sat behind the wheel. "We're saved. I think."

"Maybe your dad changed his mind?" Ky shrugged. "He probably didn't, but you never know."

The bus stopped and Jake gathered his things, plus Ky's iPod and phone.

The coach stood at the front of the bus. "Next week starts the playoffs. We're strong and have it in us to go all the way. I know you can do it. You've got tomorrow off, then we hit practice hard. Each one of my seniors needs to show those colleges they're worthy of the scholarships."

Jake shook his head. *Coach loved his pep talks.* He grabbed his bag, then trudged off the bus and headed toward his truck. The figure climbed out from behind the wheel of his vehicle. His mom. She folded her arms and kept her head down.

"Mom." He sprinted the last few paces and opened his arm to hug her. Instead of letting him, she ducked away. "Ah, so you're still mad at me." He tossed his bag in the bed of the truck, then thrust his hands into his pockets. "What's the word with Dad?"

“I still love you, Jake.” She slipped a wad of money into his hand. “Your dad is very old school. Convincing him you’re still his son will take time.” Tears slipped down her cheeks. “He told me you’re not allowed to come home until you’re not gay.” Her shoulders slumped. “I had to have your Aunt Cindy follow me up here so I could get home without him noticing.”

Enough bullshit. Jake threw his arms around his mother. “Thanks for sticking your neck out, Mom. I’ll be okay. I love you.”

Kyler rubbed the back of Jake’s neck and hugged Jake’s mom in his free arm. “Thanks for bringing the truck up.”

She plunked the keys into Kyler’s hands, along with a note. “Be good to my son.” She didn’t look at either of them when she walked away. Just left them standing there in front of the truck. She climbed into the passenger seat of his aunt’s car.

Cindy waved. “Love you kiddo. Get some for me.”

The tips of his ears burned. Of all his family, she was the bluntest. Kyler continued to rub the back of Jake’s neck, both comforting him and turning him on. “That’s shit, you know.” Ky kept his hand on Jake, but standing between him and the hood of the truck. “You can’t not be gay if you are. It’s not a disease.”

“I know.” Jake sighed. He didn’t have much, but his best friend loved him and they’d both be heading off to college together in a couple months. “So.” He had to change the subject. “What have you got planned for this party tonight?”

“Plenty.” Ky wriggled his eyebrows. “But we’d both better not be able to walk tomorrow.” He opened the paper given to him by Jake’s mom, then frowned. “You’d better read this.”

Jake sat on the bumper and scanned the paper.

Jake,

No amount of screaming or disapproval will get you to change who you are. It shouldn’t. You’re a bright young man

with all the courage in the world. Kyler is lucky to have you in his life as his friend and boyfriend.

No matter what your father says, I love you. I always will. You make me proud because you're being yourself.

Don't expect a warm welcome from your dad, but know I want you to come home. I love you and will never shut you or Kyler out. Don't make the mistake I made and not follow your heart. Be yourself, be happy, and love whoever you love with your entire heart.

Mom

PS Happy Birthday, Baby

Tears blurred his eyes. Mom accepted him, and for the first time in a long time, he understood her a little better, too. She might not have been able to say the words out loud, but they had a quiet kinship.

Kyler rested his head on Jake's shoulder. "We'll go see her tomorrow when your dad's at work."

"Thanks, Ky."

"That's what love does. It understands when nothing else makes sense, and love never quits. Never." He stood, then slipped his hand into Jake's. "Let's go home. I'm tired and I can't wait to get you alone."

CHAPTER SIX

Jake drove to Kyler's house, but didn't say anything along the way. His brain whirled with too many thoughts. He'd been tossed out, found a new place to crash, realized his mother still loved him, and found out that Kyler loved him, too. He pulled into the driveway. Instead of Jane's Civic parked in front of the garage, the drive was empty and the house dark.

"Told you Mom was gone. Come on." Kyler jumped out of the truck, then grabbed his bags. He hurried into the house ahead of Jake, flipping on lights along his way. When Jake finally trudged through the door, Ky stood in the kitchen wearing nothing but his boxers and holding an ice cream cake at an interesting angle.

Jake tilted his head, smirking. "Your junk will fall off if you're not careful." He dropped his bag on the floor.

"You'll like it." Kyler walked the cake to the table. "Make a wish."

"I already did. I got you." Jake took the initiative and stuck his hand through the gap in Ky's boxers then wrapped his fingers around his man's dick. "Best present ever."

"Aw. And I have more." Kyler picked up a bag and plunked it down in front of Jake. He handed Jake a box with an envelope on top. "Open. Box first."

"With you there, looking so hot and sexy?" Jake slipped his finger under the tape on the box. He grinned when he saw the CD. A sampler of their favorite songs they'd practiced to during the baseball season. "This is awesome. Thank you." Jake kissed his man hard on the lips. "Love it."

He worked open the flap on the envelope. The lettering on the paper caught his eye. *Teddy's Tattoos*. Kyler had a tattoo of a sunburst on his shoulder with his father's name and the initials of his mom and brother woven into the rays of sun. He'd always admired the tat, but to get one of his own? He wasn't sure what to pick.

"A tat. This is cool." He brushed his fingers over the paper.

“Well, you said you wanted one.” Kyler ground his cock into Jake’s hip. “You’re in mine.”

“How?” He’d seen the thing plenty of times and never saw anything about him in the tattoo.

Kyler turned and grabbed his arm. “Right there.” He pointed to the left side of the tat. Sure enough, Jake’s name wove through the rays. “See? I’ve got my family on my arm. Dad, Mom, Jesse... and you. I had you added a couple weeks ago, and didn’t say anything to keep it secret until it healed. That’s why I kept my shirt on all those times. Didn’t want to ruin my surprise for you.”

Jake touched Kyler’s skin, running his fingers over his name on his lover’s arm. “You’re nuts,” he whispered. He turned away from Ky and sliced the melting cake. “What if we don’t work out?” He put the first piece on the paper plate, then cut a second piece.

“What if we do?” Kyler cupped Jake’s face in both hands. “If my dad taught me anything, it was that nothing in life is guaranteed. Life is short. I’m not going to waste it on the what-ifs. My heart belongs to you. My cock points to you whenever you’re around. I think about you when we’re apart, and I am loving sleeping with you beside me. College wouldn’t be the same without you.”

The things Kyler said made sense, but Jake couldn’t suppress his fear. They were young and time changed hearts. “But—”

Kyler kissed him, keeping the response on Jake’s lips. He then used the fork to shove a piece of the ice cream cake into Jake’s mouth. “You and I were strong as friends before. Yeah, we’ve fought, but we always come back to each other. We understand each other. I’d be willing to bet our relationship is stronger than some of the kids in our class who’ve been dating since the seventh grade.” He slid his tongue over the ice cream on the corner of Jake’s mouth. “You and I have something crazy, special and strong. We’re young, but we’re not dumb. We’ll sort this out. I know it.”

Jake swiped his finger through his melted cake and wiped the ice cream over Ky’s mouth. “I’m not afraid anymore.” He bridged the gap between them

and kissed his lover. The walls around his heart crumbled and his spirits rose. His belly flip-flopped. He tugged Ky closer, nipping and licking his bottom lip. His cock thickened behind his shorts. His skin tingled. They needed to find a bed and fast.

“Your mom won’t be back tonight? Right?” Jake gasped for breath and clutched Kyler. “Don’t want to be interrupted.”

“All night.” Kyler hooked his fingers into Jake’s shorts and led him to the bedroom they shared. Jake knocked Kyler backwards onto the bed. Jake braced himself on his knees and right hand, then smoothed his free hand between their bodies to cup Ky’s erection. He swallowed Ky’s moans. This was the moment he’d waited for. Alone time with no restrictions.

“Got another surprise for your birthday.” Kyler raked his fingers up and down Jake’s back. “Want you to take my virginity. Be my first.” He met Jake kiss for kiss, then spread his legs. “Take me.”

“Don’t have to beg.” Jake scooted off his man and whipped his shirt up over his head. He shoved his shorts and boxers to the floor, then kicked out of his socks.

“I’m all yours.” Kyler wriggled his hips and shucked his shorts. His cock pointed to the ceiling and his abs rippled with each movement. He folded his arms behind his head.

“Better be.” Jake crawled between Ky’s legs and smoothed his hands over the muscles in Kyler’s thighs, then stroked his tongue along the underside of his lover’s cock.

“Fuck,” Kyler moaned. He arched his back and planted his feet on the mattress. “More.”

Jake snorted. He’d barely done anything. He scraped his teeth on Ky’s dick, then sucked one of his balls into his mouth. Precum slid down Kyler’s shaft. He panted and unwound his hands. Ky tugged on Jake’s hair, redirecting Jake’s mouth.

“Get me ready. Suck me,” he demanded.

“Pushy.” Jake engulfed Kyler’s cock in his mouth. Playing around before, sucking on Ky and learning about what made Ky happy, wasn’t like this. Before had been a game. This was love. This was mind-blowing. This was crazy and scary and totally what he craved. He bobbed his head up and down, rolling his tongue around his lover’s length. His nerve endings buzzed and the thoughts in his brain blurred. He moaned, then withdrew from Ky.

“Roll over.” Jake swatted Kyler’s hip. “It’s supposed to be better, hurt less, doggy-style.”

“No.” Kyler remained in place. “I never told you about the toys. I prepped myself. I like using toys and experimented. No biggie.”

The breath ripped from Jake’s chest. They’d done everything together. *Toys?* When the hell did Kyler have *time* for toys? He pressed his lips together and stared at his man.

“Jake, I planned for this. I didn’t know if I wanted to come out, but I knew sure as shit I loved you. No one else could be my first.” He wrapped his hands around his cock and stroked.

For one of the few times in his life, Jake witnessed Kyler’s strong façade chip away. The vulnerable young man underneath poked through. Seeing him so honest and raw affected Jake down to his core. Jake slid off the bed and grabbed the bottle of lube and one of the condoms from the nightstand. He wanted to say something snappy about the sheer number of rubbers, but kept his mouth shut. No need to break the tension with a stupid joke. He stood at the foot of the bed and wrapped his cock in the condom. What a strange feeling. The snug latex squeezed him. No wonder some guys hated the protection. One day he’d feel the skin on skin contact with Kyler. One day.

Jake knelt between Ky’s legs and folded his lover in half, exposing Ky’s ass.

“Jesus, yes,” Ky panted. He rested his ankles on Jake’s shoulders. “Please?”

“Just a minute.” He kept his gaze fixed on Ky while he spread Kyler’s ass cheeks open. The tight rosette of his ass puckered and flexed. His cock bobbed

and Ky balled his fists. Jake squirted lube onto his fingers, then over Ky's ass. Ky shivered, but didn't flinch.

"Breathe with me," Jake coaxed. He eased one finger three knuckles deep into Ky. "Let me in." He stared into Kyler's eyes. "I'm right here with you." And talking like he'd made love plenty of times, like he knew what the hell he was doing. *Not quite*. But he had Kyler there to fumble along with him. Always together.

Jake worked his finger in and out of Ky's hole, then added a second finger. Ky's sharp intake of breath, combined with his shudder, made Jake pause. "Too much?"

"Feels like heaven." Kyler rode Jake's hand, getting himself nice and primed. "Take me."

He still wasn't sure about hurting Kyler, but he trusted his friend. If he'd prepped and the finger play was enough, then he'd give in to his lover. Jake stroked himself with his free hand, getting himself to the edge. Butterflies swarmed in his lower belly and fever streaked across his skin. He lined his cock up with Ky's hole, then, inch by inch, he entered his lover.

Ky's lips parted and his eyes closed, his fingernails biting into Jake's skin. "Damn." Sweat glittered on his chest and his nipples puckered. "Don't stop."

"Not a chance." Jake held onto Ky's leg, then wriggled his hips. The heat in Kyler's gaze matched the heat radiating from his body. The intensity of the moment hit Jake over the head. They weren't connected just physically, but mentally... down to their very souls. He gritted his teeth and increased his momentum, thrusting in and out of his lover's ass.

Kyler let go of his legs, then grabbed Jake's wrists. He shook his head and panted. "God, I'm close. Fuck."

"Touch yourself. Jerk yourself off in time with me." Jake grasped Ky's hips and pumped in and out of him. His balls ached and nothing existed, save for Kyler. Seeing Ky wrap his hand around himself once more turned Jake on more and more. "You are so hot."

“You, too.” Kyler arched his back and groaned. “Jake.”

When he called out Jake’s name, Kyler’s cum jetted from his cock in thick ribbons over his chest.

“Holy fuck.” Jake slammed into Ky and filled the condom with his seed. No way he’d have been able to hold back after seeing his lover come apart in his arms. Jake wobbled on his knees. The room spun, and he wasn’t sure which way was up. The orgasm knocked him off his axis. He collapsed on his man as his limp dick slipped from Kyler’s ass.

“Happy birthday, baby.” Kyler tangled his body with Jake’s and kissed Jake on the lips. “Love you.”

How the hell Ky could form not only a complete sentence, but articulate that sentence, blew Jake’s mind. He snuggled against Kyler for a long moment, composing himself and what he wanted to say.

“Love you, too.” Jake rose up on his elbow and stared at Ky. “I lost my home, but I found my heart. Best birthday, ever.”

Kyler trailed his fingers over Jake’s temple. “Well, we do have an entire house and all night to play. Shower with me, and then we can go at this all over again.”

“Next time, you do me.” Jake wriggled his brows. He swatted Ky’s hip, then climbed off the bed to toss the used rubber. “Then we switch again.”

“Perfect.”

Growing up wasn’t easy and coming out made things worse, but with Kyler by his side, Jake figured he’d be fine. He offered his hand to his boyfriend and followed Ky to the bathroom. He’d had the best birthday any guy could ask for and the night wasn’t over. Not by a long shot.

EPILOGUE

Jake stared at his reflection in the mirror. If someone told him ten years ago he'd find the love of his life in high school, he'd have laughed. Now he couldn't see his life without Kyler. He adjusted the collar of his tuxedo, then raked his fingers through his hair. They'd been through plenty of ups in their life—they'd adopted three cats and one dog, both earned their degrees... Ky even tried a couple years in professional baseball—and downs—they'd broken up a couple of times, only to make up after a night apart.

He rubbed his bicep. Three days after his eighteenth birthday, he'd chosen his tattoo. Ky had held his hand and grinned the entire time the tattoo artist decorated his skin with Kyler's name. Jake chuckled. Ten years down the road and still together.

"You two have always been so cute together." She hugged him from behind. "I'm glad my son found you. You've been the anchor to keep him grounded and the best friend anyone could have. I'm proud to call you my other son."

"I think I'm a son-in-law."

She brushed invisible lint from his shoulders, then let him go. "I don't care what you are. You make Ky happy, and that's all I've ever wanted." She offered her arm. "Shall we head down the aisle?"

Jake threaded his arm through his soon-to-be mother-in-law's arm, walked with her to the main ballroom. Friends and family stood to watch him take the fifteen steps to the head of the room where Kyler waited. Kyler had donned a tuxedo, too, and the sharp black accentuated the muscular lines of his body. He folded his hands and fixed his gaze on Jake. A smile slowly formed on his lips, the closer Jake got to him.

Ten years before, Jake admitted his heart's desire. He loved Kyler. He kissed Jane on the cheek, then winked at Kyler's baby brother, Jesse, now a big twelve-year-old, who smothered laughter behind his hand.

"Best day ever," Kyler whispered. "I love you, big guy. So much."

“Love you, too.” Jake linked hands with Kyler, then faced the minister.
“You’re a great catch. My catch.”

THE END

Author Bio

When she's not writing the stories in her head, Megan Slayer can be found luxuriating in her hot tub with her two vampire Cabana boys, Luke and Jeremy. She has the tendency to run a tad too far with her muse, so she has to hide in the head of her alter ego, but the boys don't seem to mind.

When she's not obsessing over her whip collection, she can be found picking up her kidlet from school. She enjoys writing in all genres, but writing about men in love suits her fancy best. The cabana boys are willing to serve, unless she needs them. She always needs them. So be nice to Javier or he will bite—on command.

She also masquerades under the name Wendi Zwaduk and is published through Changeling Press, Decadent Publishing, Liquid Silver Books, MLR Press, Resplendence Publishing, and Total-E-Bound Publishing.

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