

# LOVE Has NO Boundaries



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# SINCERELY, TERRYNN

## Erin Shaw

# Love Has No Boundaries

*An M/M Romance series*

## SINCERELY, TERRYIN

**By Erin Shaw**

### 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.

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## Photo Description

A beautiful man stands in front of a stove stirring French fries in a pan, trying to impress the man of his dreams with his cooking skills. Dressed only in boxers and an apron, he's hoping dinner won't be the only thing his man finds impressive.

## Story Letter

*Dear Author/Leprechaun of Love,*

*Who is he cooking for? And why is he only making French fries?*

*It would be interesting if he lived in Hollywood, but anywhere is fine.*

*Sincerely,*

*Spencer*

## Story Info

**Genre:** contemporary

**Tags:** cop, first love, hurt/comfort, love at first sight, men with pets, sweet no sex

**Word count:** 7,791

# SINCERELY, TERRYIN

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The wind was blowing frigid air down the back of Terryin's jacket, finding its way into the holes in the knees of his jeans. His ass was numb and his fingers felt like icicles had taken the place of his bones. Terryin was cold... no, not just cold, he was fucking freezing! The only thing that sucked worse than being cold was being hungry and Terryin was famished. He hadn't eaten since the afternoon before, where his lunch had consisted of a bean burrito and a crunchy taco from the dollar menu at the taco hut on the corner.

Hollywood was not what Terryin had expected. Well, maybe at first it sort of was but now that the shine was off the penny, Hollywood just plain sucked. The streets were littered with cigarette butts and discarded food wrappers. Broken beer bottles and chewed gum covered most of the sidewalks. So much so that Terryin had to kick the crap aside before sliding to the ground, his back to the wall. If he were in Phoenix right now at least it would be warm. He would still be out on the streets, but he would be way more comfortable than he was right now.

He pulled his thin jacket closer to his body and dug into the pocket of his grungy jeans for the last of his cash. He found a crumpled dollar bill and fifty-two cents. Not much, but he could maybe get a cup of terrible coffee and hang out in the convenience store for a bit until the chill left his body. The positive outlook on life that he tried to maintain was slipping and desperation began to take its place. It was impossible to find a job without an address and he couldn't get an address without a job to pay for it so here he sat, waiting for his morning glimpse of that dreamy police officer. Sadly, that was the high point of his day.

Terryin grabbed his backpack and stuffed his, HOMELESS AND HUNGRY, ANYTHING WILL HELP, sign into the front pocket and zipped it closed. He looked back up just in time to see the object of his longing

rounding the corner with his German shepherd pulling at the leash, sniffing everything in his path. He had always been a sucker for men with dogs.

Terryn should have been at the convenience store by now, getting toasty warm until the shop owner asked him somewhat politely to move along but he had to wait for the cop to walk by. The man was a work of art. His dark blue uniform fit him to perfection. Not too tight, it left a tiny bit to the imagination and Terryn considered himself to have a great imagination. Oh, the things he would do to the man given half a chance. Who needed crappy coffee to keep themselves warm when just looking at the guy was raising Terryn's temperature by a few degrees?

The hint of a black T-shirt could be seen peeking out of the officer's shirt collar since he always left the top button undone. He had soft, deep-brown hair, close cropped but still a bit wavy on top... perfect for petting. Terryn imagined the man having piercing blue eyes the same color as the cobalt stained glass window at the church around the corner from De Longpre Park. His chin was covered by a day's worth of stubble, a teeny-tiny mustache, barely visible above the man's perfectly kissable mouth... yummy! And the man looked so kind. He stopped to chat with everyone that waved good morning to him; he always wore a smile. And his laugh was a thing of beauty. It made Terryn's heart thump harder every time he heard it echo off the soot-stained buildings that lined the street. Terryn knew he had it bad. He also knew he had nothing to offer the officer, but that didn't mean that he couldn't dream.

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Brian pulled back on Macho's leash, trying to control the overexcited pup. He was a good dog; he just got a bit distracted at times. Macho was a trained patrol dog but he had a small problem when it came time to do his duty. The problem... the dog didn't have an aggressive bone in his body. Macho had flunked out of the doggie police academy but Brian couldn't stand the thought of him being adopted out, of never seeing his partner again, so Brian had adopted Macho instead. The dog was a handful and took up half of Brian's tiny apartment but Brian couldn't imagine life without Macho by his side. The

fact that he was able to take his buddy to work with him every day was an added bonus.

Today, Brian was stopped at the corner by his neighborhood grocer. He said good morning to Mr. Feinstein. Offering up a smile, he thanked the man for the dog biscuit he had given to Macho and chatted politely with the man, but most of his attention was focused on the boy huddled against a building across the street. It had to be at least twenty degrees colder today than it had been yesterday morning and Brian wondered why the guy was still outside, sitting on the cold cement hunched over against the chill instead of being someplace inside keeping warm.

Brian had seen the boy nearly every day for the past week, perched in the same spot, like he was waiting for someone. He didn't look strung out, just a bit disheveled and a lot too skinny. Brian would bet the kid was a runaway and Brian knew that in this part of Hollywood, if the kid didn't get off the streets soon he would be swept up into a life that no one should have to live. That thought made Brian's heart hurt, though he didn't exactly understand why, he just sort of felt protective of the kid. After all, wasn't he supposed to protect the people in his neighborhood? It was still a silly thought, he knew this. He'd never even spoken to the boy, was never even on the same side of the street, so all Brian could tell by looking at him was that with each day that went by the boy looked more lost, more alone and it was breaking Brian's heart.

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Terryyn was attacked with sloppy puppy kisses and he couldn't help but laugh. It felt like the first time he'd done so in days. Terryyn loved sloppy puppy kisses, even though the dog's breath smelled like dog biscuits and week old chewing gum. The dog nuzzled him playfully as he tried to climb Terryyn like a mountain, settling in on his lap. Terryyn stroked the dog's soft fur, burying his fingers into the coarse brown and black strands. He loved dogs and missed his Irish setter, Collin, something awful. He only hoped his sister was taking care of him the way that Collin had become accustomed to, which clearly meant spoiling the dog rotten.



Terryn heard footsteps pounding in his direction. He looked up just in time to see his officer skid to a stop in front of him and he did not look happy. His face was pinched, his eyes glaring down at Terryn. Oh yeah... he was pissed!

"I'm sorry," Terryn said. "I was just sitting here and the big guy jumped me out of nowhere." Terryn laughed when the dog licked his face again. He'd never been this close to the cop before and he realized that seeing the man from a distance did not do him justice. Up close he was even more perfect, his eyes the exact shade of blue Terryn had imagined.

Terryn felt his face heat as a blush crept up from his chin to the top of his head. He tried to push the huge dog off his lap gently but the dog wouldn't budge. The big guy just looked up at his owner and whimpered, knowing that he was in trouble but unwilling to move away from Terryn.

"I should be the one apologizing," the man said, the tone of his voice was so deep that Terryn swore he felt it resonating up his spine, short-circuiting his brain. He reached for his dog's leash at the same time Terryn was reaching out to give it to him. "I have no idea how he got away." The man chuckled self-consciously. "Sorry about the muddy paw prints. I'm Brian. Brian Wenchell. And the ox that attacked you is Macho."

Sweet baby Jesus! The man's smile was so amazing that Terryn had to look away. He looked down at his lap instead and groaned. Yep, damp muck caked the front of his jeans and two huge dirty paw prints were plastered to the front of his jacket.

"No worries." Terryn started to brush himself off as soon as the dog was pulled off his lap. "It's not like I was all that clean to begin with." Terryn told him, a self-deprecating grin spread across his face. "Oh shit... sorry. I'm Terryn... McAlister." Terryn offered Brian his hand in greeting and was shocked when Brian pulled him to his feet. Damn, the guy was strong.

"So, what's with the squatting?" Brian motioned to the place where Terryn had been sitting.

"Oh, God. I'm sorry... I'll move on, Officer."

“Brian, please. And I wasn’t hassling you, I swear. Just curious. I’ve seen you here for the past week or so and I thought... maybe you needed someone to talk to?”

Terryin was floored. This big, beautiful man was actually offering to listen to Terryin’s problems? How sweet was that?

“Nah... thanks. I’m okay.” What else could Terryin say? He was so not going to spill his heart to Brian, no matter how much Terryin wanted to. And the kicker was that Brian looked sincere, like he really wanted to know.

Brian could tell the kid was lying. Although, up close Brian could also see that Terryin wasn’t as much of a kid as Brian had first thought. He was young for sure, a few years younger than Brian’s own twenty-five years but there was just something about the way the kid, no... scratch that... there was something about the way Terryin looked up at him. All big brown eyes and stoic bravado when it was obvious Terryin was hurting and needed a friend.

“Oh, I get it. Never trust the fuzz, eh? Smart thinking.” Brian tapped his temple and flashed Terryin that gorgeous smile again.

“No, jeez! It’s nothing like...” Terryin paused, looking up at Brian. Terryin noticed the shit eating grin. “You’re teasing me right? I didn’t know cops were allowed to tease.”

“Well, normally we’re not but I sort of figured if we’re going to be friends then it would be okay.” Brian looked at Terryin and the twinkle in his eyes had been replaced by uncertainty.

“Friends, huh?” Terryin thought he would do anything to make that look disappear, even if it meant telling a little white lie. “Just like that? Okay, well that’s... pretty cool actually. Way better than being told to bug out.” It was all Terryin could think to say. It felt so nice to consider what it would be like to have a friend in a city that had, at least up until now, been one of the most unfriendly places Terryin had ever been.

Brian reached into his shirt pocket and pulled out one of his business cards. He unclipped his pen and flipped the card over, writing his personal cell number on the back. When he was done he handed the card to Terryin. Terryin

took the card from Brian and cupped it in his palm before shoving it into his pocket. It felt like a lifeline to Terryin, even if that was ridiculous. He didn't plan on ever using it but still, having it made him feel a tiny bit less alone.

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It was still cold and miserable when Terryin left the diner but at least he wasn't hungry, at the moment anyway. He had just spent the last little bit of the twenty dollar bill Brian had slipped into his hand. It was pressed tightly to the back of the business card Brian had given him so he hadn't noticed it at first. It was only after Brian had walked away and Terryin had gone digging into his pocket again for his change. It made Terryin feel a bit guilty when he realized what Brian had done but it was so damn sweet and he really had been hungry. It was weird that it had only been a few days since he'd talked to Brian for the first time yet he missed the man. There was no logical reason for that feeling but then Terryin wasn't a big fan of logic when his heart was involved. It was too limiting, too hard to believe the unbelievable when logic was applied, so most of the time he was able to ignore it and accept what was in front of him.

Terryin stepped out from under the safety of the streetlight that lit up most of the parking lot. It wasn't a long walk back to De Longre Park but he had to cut through the alley behind the diner to get there. That always left him terrified. He wasn't much of a fighter and rumors of violence were a common thing in Central Hollywood. Pointless and brutal sometimes, petty and impulsive other times—but to Terryin it was all terrifying.

He peered in to the alley, the same way he did every time he was faced with entering it but didn't see anyone or anything hiding in the shadows. He stepped into the darkness, speeding up his pace so he could make it the other side quickly. He was halfway through when he saw the kids step out of the shadows at the ally exit. He turned around to head back to the diner but stopped in his tracks, realizing that he was now trapped; some kids were blocking that exit as well.

Terryin backed himself up against the wall. It was icy against his back but the fear inside him was even icier. His mind was screaming at him to run, to

fight, but all he could do was scrunch his eyes closed tightly and hope to God that they didn't kill him.

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They had taken his backpack. It was sort of funny considering there was nothing of any real value inside. It did hurt losing the pictures he'd grabbed before he left his parent's house, but nothing else inside the pack mattered to him. It did matter that they had taken his tennis shoes though. They were the only thing he had left that was worth a shit, but they had left him his socks. *Such mercy*, Terryn thought as he reached his shaking hand up to wipe the tears from his eyes. He twitched a bit when his palm came into contact with his black eye. His head hurt and he could feel the snot running down his face, mingling with his salty tears, but he was alive and relatively unharmed and that, Terryn decided, was a miracle unto itself. He pulled himself to his feet slowly and made his way to the mouth of the alley.

He swiped the sleeve of his jacket under his nose in an attempt to clean up most of the snot. He could see the pay phone at the end of the diner parking lot so he made his way over to it, careful not to step on anything too sharp. The last thing he needed was tetanus or the flesh-eating bacteria his mom used to warn him about.

He stepped into the phone booth, dug into his pocket for the last of his change and the business card Brian had given him. He picked up the receiver and prayed that the phone still worked as he dropped the coins into the slot and pressed the buttons that would dial Brian's number. He hoped to God that Brian was serious when he offered to be Terryn's friend because Terryn had never needed anything more in his life than he needed a friend at that moment.

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Brian wasn't much of a cook... okay, he couldn't cook at all but what made it worse was that there was nothing in his fridge that looked even remotely edible, except maybe the eggs. He might be able to manage scrambled eggs without setting off the smoke alarm... again. He opened the

freezer and began to dig through its contents. He placed the eggs on the counter just as his cell phone rang.

Brian picked up his phone but didn't recognize the number. He pushed the answer button and held the high-tech piece of crap to his ear.

"Wenchell," he barked into the phone. He hated getting calls on his nights off; it happened frequently and Brian resented being bothered during his down time.

"Brian?" The voice was so soft, so small that Brian had to strain to hear. "I'm... I'm sorry to bother you but you said to, you know, call if—" *Hiccup*. "If I was in trouble? I think I'm in trouble, Brian. I don't know what to do."

TerryNN. Brian knew immediately that it was TerryNN and his heart froze in his chest. He never expected TerryNN to call, judging by the look of skepticism TerryNN shot his way as he stuffed Brian's business card into his pocket.

*Oh shit, something must really be wrong. Please God, nothing too bad,* Brian thought.

"TerryNN, where are you, honey?" Brian hated sappy pet names but he needed to calm TerryNN down so he had used his sweetest, most nonthreatening voice. The same voice he used to talk people off ledges or, in his mother's case, to convince her that his life was just fine and dandy.

"I'm outside the diner." There was a pause on the line while TerryNN stopped to look up at the street sign. "On the corner of June and De Longre—" *Hiccup*.

"TerryNN, my place is about a block away from where you are. Hang on, stay on the phone with me and I'll come get you." Brian was already slipping on his shoes and grabbing his keys.

"No... it's cool—" *Hiccup*. "You don't have to. I can... I'm okay. I can walk, just tell me where, please." The please was said with a tiny little whine in TerryNN's voice, and a whole lot of fear. Brian wanted to growl at TerryNN to stay where he was, that he would be right there but he was afraid that it would

upset Terryin and that Terryin would run. Brian gave in and told Terryin the way to his place.

“Thank you, Brian. You don’t have to be so cool and I know that and... just, thanks.” *Hiccup*.

“Just be careful Terryin,” Brian said. He heard Terryin sigh as he disconnected.

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Macho started whimpering at the door just before Brian heard a tentative knock. He stopped his pacing and raced to the door. He grabbed the knob and pulled the door open. Terryin stood on the other side and the pressure squeezing Brian’s chest eased a bit. He looked Terryin over quickly, noticing the bruise around his right eye and his lack of shoes. His feet were caked in dirt and there was a bit of blood on the floor where Terryin stood, shuffling from foot to foot nervously.

“They took my shoes.” It was all Terryin could say before he burst into tears.

Brian pulled him through the doorway and into a gentle hug. Terryin melted against him, sniffing loudly, a broken hiccup punctuating every other breath.

Brian held him for a few minutes, until Terryin seemed to get himself under control. Without saying a word, he took Terryin’s hand and led him into the kitchen. He pulled out one of the chairs and gently pushed Terryin into it. Terryin heaved a sigh, let out one more hiccup and let his head fall back, closing his eyes.

Brian walked to the sink, turned it on and let it run until the water was warm. He placed a dish towel under the water until it was soaked through, wrung out the excess water, turned off the tap, then he turned back to Terryin.

“You want to tell me what happened?” Brian asked.

Terryin was much calmer now. Brian dropped to his knees in front of Terryin, stripped off his ruined socks and began washing Terryin’s feet gently.

The cuts weren't nearly as bad as Brian had expected, in fact they had already stopped bleeding so Brian held off on bandaging them for now.

Terryn took a deep breath. "I stopped into the diner to grab some food; thanks for the cash by the way. That was pretty sneaky." Brian blushed but didn't interrupt Terryn's story. "I walked out and was heading back to the park, like I do every night 'cause it seems safer there, you know?" Brian nodded and Terryn continued. Terryn was feeling shaky again but relaxed instantly when he felt Macho slide in next to his chair and place his head on Terryn's lap. Terryn stroked his fur and calmed down a bit more.

"So, I have to go through this alley, beside the diner and usually it's fine, like no problem at all. But tonight, as soon as I stepped into the alley, these guys blocked the way out." Terryn's voice was getting wobbly again and his eyes were filling with fresh tears. Brian reached out to Terryn and took his hand, squeezing it gently, offering Terryn a bit of comfort.

*Hiccup.* "I turned around to go back into the diner until it was safe but there were more guys at the other end—" *Hiccup.* Terryn laughed nervously, trying to hide the panic he felt when he thought about how much worse things could have been.

Brian gripped his hand a bit tighter, smiling at Terryn warmly. "Go on with your story."

"There's not much more to tell, really. One of the guys punched me, I curled into a ball and they took my shoes. I didn't really have anything else for them to steal so I guess it could have been worse, right? I mean, they could have really kicked my ass—" *Hiccup.*

Brian was seething inside. Punk ass kids with nothing better to do than scare the crap out of a poor homeless kid and jack his shoes. He wished he had been there. He would have put a stop to that bullshit and made sure those assholes didn't fuck with anyone else for a long time.

Terryn could see the anger on Brian's face. He reached down and tentatively touched Brian's cheek, unsure how his touch would be received.

Terryn was relieved when Brian pressed his lips against his palm as he kissed it lightly.

“Hey... I’m fine now. A bit shook up, but no worse for wear. I’ll pick up some more shoes as soon as I can make a few bucks and—” *Hiccup*. “It’s cool, okay?” Terryn hated seeing Brian upset because of him. He wanted nothing more than to kiss away the lines of worry on Brian’s beautiful face. He seriously needed a distraction or he was going to climb onto Brian’s lap and burrow in like a gopher.

“Hey, Brian? Would you mind if I like, take a shower? I’m stinking up the place. And maybe, if it’s not too much trouble, because you know, I might not get another chance for a while... do you think I can wash my clothes? Believe it or not I’m not usually this disgusting.” Terryn chuckled to hide his embarrassment.

Brian jumped to his feet and tugged Terryn’s hand, pulling him in the direction of the bathroom. “Shit, of course. I should have offered, I was just... distracted a bit.” Now that his anger had receded, his protectiveness toward Terryn was creeping back to the surface.

“The hot water takes a bit of time to make it to the shower so don’t jump right in. Toss your clothes out the door and I’ll throw them in the wash. I’ll leave some clothes you can borrow outside the door, okay?”

“Awesome. Thank you Brian, for you know... everything. I’m really glad you bullied me into taking your card.”

Brian snorted out a laugh, pushed Terryn into the bathroom and shut the door behind him so he wouldn’t give in to the temptation to follow the man inside. A moment later, Terryn threw his dirty clothes into the hall. Brian picked them up, tossed the dirty clothes into the wash and dug through his drawers for something Terryn could wear. He chose a pair of sweats, pulled out a new pair of boxer briefs from a previously unopened package and a soft, comfy T-shirt. So what if it was his favorite and he wanted to see Terryn wear it. That didn’t mean anything, right?



Brian set the clothes by the bathroom door and wandered into the living room, hoping to find something interesting enough on TV to take his mind off the gorgeous man occupying his shower.

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Terryin noticed, in the bathroom mirror, the look Brian was shooting at his back as he closed the door. Terryin didn't have all that much experience with men, but even he could recognize interest when he saw it. Brian had that look in his eyes and since it was likely he was only going to have one night with Brian, he was going to have to nut up and make some sort of move. If he was shot down that was okay because at least he'd have given it a try.

Squeaky clean and feeling a hundred times more human, Terryin opened the bathroom door to grab the pile of clothes Brian had left for him. They looked comfortable as hell, but sexy? Nope, not one bit, except maybe for the boxers? An idea formed in Terryin's head as he slipped his trim little body into the briefs. When Terryin left the bathroom they were the only thing he had on.

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Terryin tiptoed into the kitchen so he wouldn't disturb Brian while he was watching TV. He looked so cute all scrunched up on the couch, his eyes glued to whatever was on. Terryin had noticed the eggs on the counter when he was in the kitchen earlier and since it seemed that he'd messed up Brian's plans for dinner, he decided to put his magnificent cooking skills to use. He hadn't been able to cook much since being kicked out of his parents' house and the thought of making something delicious for Brian made him smile. He opened the fridge and wasn't a bit surprised to find it mostly empty, just a few half-full takeout containers, a half gallon of milk and a six-pack of beer. He opened the boxes until he found one that didn't look off and smelled delicious, a nice spicy curry, with bits of chicken, bell peppers and onion. Almost perfect but something was still missing. He opened the freezer door, dug past the frozen pizzas and took out a bag of frozen French fries. He pushed aside the fabric that covered the lower cabinets and fished out a frying pan, snickering to himself. The fabric was covered in little white geese and Terryin found it both hilarious and endearing. He also found an apron that was folded neatly,

obviously put away with care. It was covered in tiny flowers and piped with a pastel-pink ribbon. It was kind of sexy, in that Suzy Homemaker sort of way, so of course he put it on. There was no sense in taking the chance of burning anything important in the event of a grease spatter, right? After placing the pan on the stove, he turned on the burner to preheat it and then cracked several eggs into a bowl and whisked them gently. He opened the bag of fries, poured some into the pan and started pushing them around with a wooden spoon.

“Whatcha doing?” Brian said, startling Terryyn. Brian couldn’t take his eyes off of Terryyn. Mistaken for skinny because of his ill-fitting clothes, Terryyn was actually quite stunning. His compact frame was covered in lean, firm muscle and smooth skin. And he was wearing Brian’s mother’s apron. Seeing Terryyn like that made Brian practically swoon, he looked comfortable and competent, sexy and loveable. The loveable bit didn’t scare Brian a bit, which Brian thought was a little odd but not an unwelcome realization.

“Holy shit, dude! You don’t just sneak up on a guy when he’s making you dinner. You scared the crap out of me.” Terryyn had a massive grin on his face. Brian soooo wanted to kiss that grin.

“Hey, I bet you’re hungry, huh? Looks like I interrupted your supper? How does potato curry surprise sound?”

“Sort of disgusting, but it smells amazing.” Brian breathed in deeply and caught a whiff of cardamom and clean man, a fantastic combination as far as Brian was concerned. Fifteen minutes later, Brian and Terryyn sat at the tiny kitchen table to eat.

“So how did you end up on the streets?” Brian asked. “It just doesn’t fit with you. I see it every day and you don’t have the look, you know. Good kid, I’m guessing good family,” Brian said, “please tell me you didn’t run away from home to become an actor or some shit like that.”

Terryyn let out a shaky laugh. “No, nothing that pathetic... or hell, maybe it’s more pathetic, I’m still trying to sort it out myself. It’s kind of a long story, but I’ll give you the highlights... you sure you wanna hear this?” Terryyn put his hands on the table and tried not to fidget. He’d known the question would

be asked and that he would answer Brian as honestly as he knew how, but now that the time had come and even though he knew he couldn't change anything that had happened to him, Terryn was terrified that Brian would judge him and it would change the way Brian looked at him. No one had looked at him with such longing and compassion in... well ever, and he didn't want to lose that. He needed Brian so much right now.

“Okay, well I graduated from high school and took a year off to sort of get my head straight, right? And I had a full-ride scholarship to a culinary academy in Phoenix, except for room and board and I was all set to start my classes in the fall. Anyway, it's a fairly typical story, boy likes boys, parents freak out, boy becomes homeless.” Brian reached across the table to hold Terryn's hand.

“I had a friend that had moved out here so I thought, hey... great time to start a new life right? So I packed up a few things, said good-bye to my sister and Collin, my dog, and moved out here.”

“So what happened to your friend?” Brian said. Concern creased Brian's brow as he began to softly rub circles with his thumb on the top of Terryn's hand. “The one you were staying with?”

“Oh, you know, fucked-up girlfriend, afraid I was gonna steal her man away. She convinced him that I had to go. I stayed at a cheap hotel for a while but I couldn't find work and I ran out of money. I tried a shelter but that place was scary, figured I would be better off on the streets than raped in my sleep by some toothless old guy. I've been sleeping in the De Longpre Park on a bench, by the old Rudolph Valentino statue.” Terryn looked mortified by the admission but kept plugging away with his story. It felt cathartic to get it all out, to share what he'd been going through.

Tears began to form in Terryn's eyes. “It made me feel like someone was watching over me, right? Like even if it was just the statue of some dead actor it was something—” *Hiccup*. “So I panhandled for food and stuff. I thought about calling my grandparents but I figured they'd be no better than my dad.”

Brian had heard enough. He couldn't stand to see Terryn cry anymore. He had to change the subject. "That always happen?"

Terryn looked confused for a moment. "Does what always happen?" He hiccupped and a snort came out with his laugh. "Oh, the hiccups? Yeah, ever since I was a kid. Mad, sad, happy, whatever... the hiccups are never far behind. It's embarrassing."

"I think it's adorable."

"You have really strange turn-ons, dude."

"I didn't say it was a turn-on, I said it was adorable."

"Are you coming on to me, dude? Because I gotta tell you, I've had a really shitty last couple of weeks and if I'm reading this wrong I'm gonna be really disappointed."

Brian raised Terryn's hand to his lips and kissed it tenderly. "Yes, Terryn, I'm coming on to you but I know things are rough for you right now. I'm good with taking things slow. It's not like I'm not going to see you again. I plan on seeing you a lot actually."

Terryn's face lit up, his smile so bright it was nearly blinding. "No shit?"

"No shit," Brian said. He pulled Terryn up from the table and led him to the tiny bedroom.

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Brian took off the apron Terryn was wearing and placed it neatly over the back of a chair before taking Terryn into his arms and kissing him deeply. Terryn melted in Brian's arms, snuggling up as close as he could get to him, savoring the intimacy. This wasn't a one-time thing. Brian had said he planned on seeing him again, a lot. Terryn could not remember a time when he had been so happy, when he had fallen so fast or so hard for a man. It felt like heaven.

Brian broke the kiss and let Terryn go so he could strip out of his clothes. He pulled the covers down on the bed, climbed in and gestured for Terryn to follow him. Terryn scrambled in next to Brian and pulled the covers up over

them both. He snuggled into Brian's arms and Brian locked them around Terry's body tightly.

Terry let out a big sigh, followed by huge yawn.

"Sleepy?" Brian asked Terry.

"A bit, yeah. It's been forever since I slept in a bed, longer since I had someone to share a bed with." Terry yawned again, sleepiness in his voice. "Actually, I've never shared a bed with anyone before." He hid his face in the crook of Brian's neck to cover his embarrassment.

"Terry?" Brian pulled away a bit so he could look Terry in the eyes. "Hey, I like that. That you've never slept with anyone before. I'm not misunderstanding what you're saying, right?"

"Doubtful. You can tell I'm not all smooth moves and pillow talk."

Brian smiled at Terry before he leaned in and gave him a tender kiss. "Cool. Get some sleep and then when you're ready... when we're ready..."

The rest of Brian's sentence was drowned out by Terry's soft snores.

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God, was it morning already? Brian didn't want to open his eyes. He wanted to stay cuddled up in bed with Terry and just ignore the outside world for a while, but Macho's soft whines reminded Brian that his dog needed to go out, and it was a workday. Brian sighed and rolled over to watch Terry sleep for a moment before starting the day and saw that Terry was wide awake, smiling up at Brian, his patented Terry megawatt smile. Right there, in that exact moment, Brian actually felt the two of them sort of click into place. It was almost tangible, nearly audible, just one big, giant CLICK.

"Stay with me." Brian touched Terry's cheek. "Just... I know, this seems way too soon and I wouldn't blame you a bit if you thought I was a nut job but it just feels..."

"Right?" Terry put his hand over Brian's, his eyes glistening with unshed tears.

“Yeah. It just feels right.”

“Okay.” Terryn kissed Brian before pulling away to wipe his eyes. “Okay.”

“I’ve gotta get up and get moving but I should be home around six. You gonna be okay here by yourself?” Brian winked at Terryn.

“Hmmm, let’s see... there’s a warm, comfy bed that smells like you, there’s a TV and I’m way behind on my Judge Judy so I can catch up on that a bit and at the end of the day I get to see you?” Terryn laughed. “Yeah, I think I’ll be fine.”

“Oh, you’re a funny man!” Brian tickled Terryn’s ribs until he was hiccupping and giggling like a twelve-year-old, then he pulled Terryn into a hug. Terryn snuggled up to Brian’s side. “Hey, I’m gonna leave some cash for you so you can go out and pick up some stuff to stock up the kitchen. That way, if you’re feeling really ambitious you can make me something fabulous for dinner. By the way, check in the closet and see if any of my shoes fit you.”

“Sweet! Someone to cook for again!” Terryn was nearly bouncing with excitement. “You got it. Anything you absolutely hate?”

“Tofu.”

“I can totally work with that. Kiss me, and then get out of here so I can catch me some Judy. Thank you so much for the loan of the shoes.”

“Goofball.” Brian gave Terryn a rough kiss, a playful taste of things to come, and got out of bed to start the day.

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It was 7:30 p.m. and Brian wasn’t home yet. And he hadn’t called. Why hadn’t he called! Terryn was getting a bit crazy. Some of it had to do with the dinner he had cooked that was currently getting more and more disgusting by the minute but most of the crazy came from the documentary Terryn had been watching while he cooked. It was all about police officers and their families. Suicide rates, divorces, fear, loneliness, pain, God... what had he been thinking? How could he even think he was strong enough to do this? He was a wreck and he’d only known Brian for a total of maybe twenty-four hours?

What would it be like when Brian was his life? Could he seriously love a man that might just disappear some day? Could he survive that kind of loss? As his eyes began to fill with tears, Terryyn walked over to Brian's desk and pulled out a note pad and a pencil.

*Dear Brian,*

*I shouldn't have watched it and now I feel so horrible and I don't want to lose you. How would I ever get over that? And it's 7:30 p.m.... where the fuck are you? I'm scared and I'm worried and I'm not sure I can do this all the time, every day, for like, forever. And I know we're not even close to the forever part but I want to be, you know, someday, but you're a cop and I could lose you and I'M SO SCARED!*

*Gotta think.*

*Sincerely,*

*Terryyn*

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Terryyn curled himself up tighter on the park bench in front of the Valentino statue. He'd stopped crying about fifteen minutes ago, stopped hiccupping ten minutes ago and now he was just cold and lonely. He'd never thought of himself as a drama queen before, but right now he knew the Oscar would go to him for best crazy person in a supporting role. He'd been so stupid, but now that he was thinking straight he was pretty sure he'd blown his chances with Brian. Why would Brian want someone who would freak out on him so easily, that couldn't be there for him when he needed him the most? And the granddaddy of dumb, Terryyn was not that person. Terryyn was a rock. He was solid and dependable and logical and patient, but he'd just lost it for a bit and now things with Brian were over.

Terryyn heard Macho's soft whine just before he felt his cold, wet nose touch his cheek. Terryyn reached down to bury his fingers in Macho's thick coat of fur and burrowed his face into Macho's neck.

“How’d you find me?” Terryn whispered, turning his head until he could see Brian’s gorgeous face.

“I’m a cop, Terryn. It’s all about deductive reasoning and you told me this is where you feel safe. I thought you felt safe with me too.” Brian lifted Terryn’s head so he could sit down on the bench then set Terryn’s head back down on his lap and stroked his fingers through Terryn’s hair.

“I’m sorry I ran out. It all just sort of hit me at once. I watched this stupid show and then dinner was ready and you weren’t home and I started thinking the worst things and then I just couldn’t—” *Hiccup*. “I mean, what would I have done if something had happened to you? And I don’t mean about being back out on the streets because—” *Hiccup*. “I can deal with that. Losing you though, not so much, and I know it’s crazy and weird but I don’t ever want to lose you, Brian. I’ve never felt like I’ve belonged with someone so much in my life more than I feel like I belong with you—” *Hiccup*.

Brian kissed Terryn with all the patience, all the love and understanding that he could before pulling back to look into Terryn’s eyes.

“It’s not crazy, Terryn.” Brian brushed the tears from Terryn’s face. “I feel it too, okay? And yeah, it’s scary. But life always has its scary moments. Will it be easy being with a cop? Hell, no! It’s gonna be tough. You’ll worry and you’ll be pissed at me for coming home late and lots of dinners will be ruined. There will be thousands of little things I do that will make you insane, but for all the rough times I promise I’ll try to make sure you always feel loved. No relationship has ever been perfect Terryn, but I think we’re sort of meant to give it a shot.”

“You do? I mean, you don’t think I’m an idiot for running out on you?” *Hiccup*. Terryn looked so hopeful but Brian wasn’t going to let Terryn off that easy.

“Oh, no. You were definitely an idiot for running out on me.” Terryn frowned up at Brian and it was hard for Brian not to laugh. The look was so adorable, so Terryn. “But only because you didn’t stay to talk to me about what was bothering you, Terryn.”



“I know.” Terry’s frown turned into a mischievous smile. “But at least if I ever lose it again, you’ll know where to find me, right?”

“In front of Rudy Valentino?”

“Nope!” Terry popped up from the bench and gave Brian a quick kiss. “Your bed.” Terry took Brian’s hand and started to drag him down the path, back towards Brian’s apartment. “Take me home, Officer.”

Brian drew Terry close and put his arm around his shoulder. “Oh, I am so gonna love pissing you off.”

Brian ducked Terry’s swing at his head as Macho bounced off after his men.

**THE END**

## **Author Bio**

*I've been writing forever and finally got up the nerve to put some of it out there. I write to make myself happy and if I put a smile on someone else's face I consider that a bonus.*

## **Contact & Media Info**

[Email](#)