



# A Tall Order (Shade Grown Coffee Boys #1)

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**Category:** LGBT+

**Description:** "It's going to be okay." Remington whispers the words. He pulls my head down to his shoulder, his hand moving from my hands to squeeze my knee comfortingly. "You're going to be okay, Austin."

Austin Westcott never imagined he'd be living alone, trying to get by. After suddenly finding himself without a Daddy, he feels lost and doesn't know what to do. So he throws himself into work and cuts that part of his life out.

Remington knows that grief affects everyone differently. He is worried for his best friends Little. Austin says he's fine, but Remington makes it a point to check on him every so often. Austin is throwing himself into his adult work, ignoring the side of him that Remington knows is still there.

After three years of watching Austin push his own feelings down, Remington visits the coffee shop. Austin can't hide his grief or the need to be Little any longer. Remington wants to help, but when one night turns into a whole weekend, can they go back to being just friends?

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## Page 1

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“I need two turkeys and a Reuben!” I look up briefly to see if my words have fallen on deaf ears again. The display case is getting dreadfully empty and it looks terrible. We aren't supposed to let it get this empty, but people don't want to work here. I can't blame them, though. They have lives and friends. Stuff to do and people to see outside of the job. I have nothing. Not since Paul passed.

I'm being dramatic.

It's also maybe because I'm in a terrible mood. Today is the three year anniversary of Paul's death and I'm trying not to think about it. Throwing myself into making this place as spotless and well-run as I can is my go-to answer when I'm missing Paul. I am the manager after all. No one likes the manager when they're in a mood.

I take a deep breath and look back at the guys, trying to keep my voice even. “I'm sorry. Can you two please refill the case for me? We have about twenty minutes until the lunch rush and I don't want to be caught empty. ”

“Got it, boss.” Tyler —or Taylor?— says. He was the most recent hire and seems to be buddy-buddy with Amir. They graduated high school at the start of the summer and took a gap semester, doing this as a way to save up some money. I will have to think about hiring someone or two someones soon.

I move to the office to grab one of the inventory checklists. It's a small, cramped space that allows for a desk, a swivel chair, and the safe. There are cabinets above, filled with stacks of different papers. It's not the most organized, but I know where everything is.

The coffee shop is a decent size for the city. The back room, where my office sits, holds the cooking area that includes two freezers and a tall oven, and the storage closet are all smushed together. The 'Deli' side of the coffee shop is small, only offering croissants during breakfast and grab-and-go sandwiches until they run out for lunch. The coffee is what takes up the majority of the space. It's a semi-circle counter with shelves filled of different goodies. The espresso machine is state-of-the-art and makes hot or cold coffee drinks. There is a whole stand of different flavors and chocolates to add to sweeten the pot. I love a good latte, but my guilty pleasure is a white chocolate hot chocolate with caramel drizzle.

I sigh, thinking of the way Paul would always kick off the Fall season by bringing one home to me.

I need to focus on the day. I don't have time to think about him. My old Daddy. I have a store to manage, customers to keep happy. Three employees to make sure they're ready for the hour lunch rush.

Walking back out to the main floor, I check that Tyler— definitely Tyler— and Amir are making the sandwiches I asked. Jason is on the coffee side, with a line of three people. I head over there to see if he needs help. He's a great worker, loves doing the coffees. He's working on his latte art skills, even though ninety percent of our drinks are to-go and have lids.

"Hey Jason, are you doing okay over here?" I set the clipboard down on the counter, out of the way, and look at the list he has scribbled beside the register. It looks like each of them have already been checked out and are just waiting for their drinks.

"I think I'm good on these drinks, but I did notice that some of the tables were a little dirty. I haven't had a chance to clear them and make sure everything is stocked yet."

"I'll do it," I say with a smile. Jason is one that works hard but also isn't scared to ask

for a helping hand. Even as the manager, I didn't mind having Jason ask me to do something. "Have you been able to do inventory on this side yet?"

"Uh, I got half way." Jason wipes the steam wand off and positions the milk to get ready. "I'll get to the—"

"No, don't worry about it. I can finish the rest of it after work today. I'm going to be here doing some paperwork anyway. Just keep up the good work."

I move back around the counter and toward the tables. There is a small opening with one of those swinging doors on the side facing the seating area. It's a convenient short cut for the employees. I nod to the customers waiting for their drinks. One of them I recognize as a regular.

There are a couple other customers sitting at the tables. The rest aren't too bad, but I take a towel from the bucket that sits in a sanitizer bucket out of reach of the customers. I wipe down the first table, pick up an empty cup from another, and then pass a mom with her younger son before wiping a sticky mess off the third table and one of the seats .

I look up from the task at hand to see the little boy watching me. He smiles and waves, his other hand holding tight to the stuffed koala bear. It's a cute stuffie, no bigger than the kid's head. I wiggle my fingers back at him with a small smile.

"Hey, Austin! I think we're out of shredded lettuce!" Amir calls out across the small space.

I sigh, glancing once more at the little boy and his stuffed animal. It reminds me of the ones I've kept over the years, too scared to take off the shelf in case something happened to them. Paul got them for me for special occasions; our first year together, my twenty-fifth birthday, and the night he proposed.

I take a deep breath and will the tears to not fall. I won't cry today. Not in front of people.

The lunch rush goes as expected. We sell out of our food items within twenty minutes and I'm helping Jason keep up with coffee orders the rest of the day. There is no stopping between lunch and the end of the day with clean up and the different checklists to go through. After I'm sure Jason and the other two can handle cleaning up, I head back to the office and sit down in my chair with a huff. The distraction of the rush took my mind off of things for a short while. But now all I have is paperwork and inventory to do. Mindless work; work that won't stop me from thinking about Paul.

I put my elbows on the edge of the desk and my head in my hands. Two deep breaths and I'm fighting to keep my composure. The guys will be gone in about half an hour. There's not much to clean up at the end of the day. Just one deep breath at a time.

I've missed him for three years. One thousand and ninety-five days. Paul isn't coming back. When the first tear slips, I turn around and close my door. I don't do it often, mostly only when I have to take an important phone call or have a meeting. Hopefully the guys will assume so and not bother me.

Tears roll down my cheeks and I try to wipe them before they fall to the paper sitting on the desk between my arms. I miss him so much, though. Five years with the best damn Daddy in the world, the love of my life, my everything, my protector, lover, fighter, healer, kisser of boo-boos, and best storyteller. These are all the things I couldn't say at his funeral. His mom knew that we had a different dynamic, a more intimate one, but she didn't know the specifics. She didn't know that most nights, I would wear my comfy PJs and play with blocks while Paul would cook and then feed me and then read me a bedtime story.

It's been so long, I can barely hear the different voices he used to do.

A chime on my phone alerts me that I've been dwelling on my own stuff for far too long. It's well past the time the guys have left and I should be leaving in ten minutes myself. I clear my face with one hand and shake my shoulders. It's hard.

I open the door and, thankfully, everything looks like it's been done. The lights are all dimmed, the coffee machines are cleaned and off. The hot case for sandwiches is wiped out. Glass is clear of smudges, utensils and napkins all stocked. They really aren't bad workers; I'm just in a shitty mood. I look out the window to the side street the shop faces. The sun is past set this time of year, but the streets are still going with a bit of traffic, both cars and foot. The coffee shop is set in a busier part of town, near a hospital where most of our customers come from. The street has limited parking out front and it's only one way traffic, but there's a parking lot in the back that has more than enough spaces for our shop and the restaurant to the left .

I move to the table area once more, my section to clean each night. It's only fair that the chores are split evenly. I grab the sanitizer bucket and refill it with a fresh solution before walking back toward the tables.

A silhouette at the door startles me and I jump, sloshing a bit of the water on the floor beside me. The person isn't menacing, though, and the light settled under the canopy brightens his features enough for me to see that it's Remington.

My nerves settle slightly and I reach for the key on my waistband. He hurries in the door and I lock it back behind him. I should have expected him. He's come to visit each year. And random days in between. Always checking up on me, keeping his promise to Paul, his best friend, to keep me safe and okay.

"Hey Remi," I say. My voice clearly gives away that I was crying. As I'm sure the red around my eyes does too. They still feel sore.

"Austin." Remington Higgins, property manager extraordinaire, greets me. He's been

around more than once when I've been in my Little space. He hasn't brought it up to me since Paul's passing. "I was in the area and saw the light was still on. Figured I would come see how you were."

"You don't have to pretend." I move back toward the tables and start giving them a good cleaning. "It's the anniversary of Paul's death. I honestly should expect your visit by now."

"If you don't want me here—" I can hear the hesitance in his voice.

"No, I'm sorry. I'm just on edge today. I couldn't stop thinking about Paul and then I just sat in the office for god knows how long crying. I'm just ready to get home."

"You should have taken today off," Remington says. "For starters, you deserve it because you haven't taken a break in over a year. I've been keeping tabs on you. And two, given the circumstances, I think people would understand."

I grab the broom and start sweeping under the tables against the wall. They aren't deep, but from my height, I can't see what's under them. When that same stuffed koala skids silently across the floor, I freeze.

That little boy earlier looked so happy with it. How did it end up there? My eyes drift to the table where the little boy had been sitting. It isn't far away. Looks like maybe it was tossed by accident.

"What's that?" Remington asks. He scoops down into my view and picks up the stuffie. It's small in his hands. "Is this yours?"

"No," I say quickly. "Mine are at home. There was a little boy here earlier that had it. I remember because it reminded me of the ones Paul gave me. The panda one he got me the night he proposed."

“You still have it?” I watch Remington dust off the koala and set it down on one of the clean tables. “Do you still have all of your stuffies? I remember watching you make up stories with them for hours. It was one of my favorite things when I came over to visit you and Paul.”

“Really?” I don’t mean for the word to come out so defensive but that can’t be the truth. Paul and Remington were best friends and sure, Remington would interact with me from time-to-time, but to openly admit that you liked watching another man act out stories with stuffed animals?

“Yes, really. Austin, you know I’m in the lifestyle too.” Remington moves to stand in front of me so I can’t avoid his look. I nod. “I may not have found what you and Paul had, but I do know when a Little needs some Little time. You went from having that whenever you needed to nothing for three years. I came by to see if you wanted to—”

“I can’t,” I cut him off. “I’m sorry, Remi, but I can’t do that. Not with- without him. It just doesn’t feel right. I get all icky and it just feels wrong.” More tears are threatening and I can feel my whole body starting to shake.

“Hey, Austin, it’s okay. Sit down, okay? Here. Let me get you something to drink.”

“No, I’m fine.” Even as the tears start and I know this time I’m not going to be able to stop them. I’ve thrown tantrums in front of Remington before, tears that I tried to use to get my way, but the real ones, the ones of grief and pain, these I haven’t shown anyone.

“Austin.” The sharp tone of his voice has me looking up in surprise. It’s definitely a Daddy voice. I realize now that I never once saw a Little with him. He talked about one or another he met at a club from time-to-time. Paul and I went to the club on certain nights but we were never regulars. Paul was a technician and while he made decent money, he didn’t have the means to pay the dues each month. It was okay



though, because he spoiled me in every sense of the word. “Sit down and let me get you something to drink before you start hyperventilating. Have you eaten today?”

“I ate earlier,” I answer meekly. Earlier being sometime before noon and it had to be at least seven, maybe even eight now.

“How early is earlier?” When I don’t answer, Remington has his answer. He picks up the koala and hands it over. Then he bends down and rests one hand on my knee. I wrap the koala in my other hand. Remington’s brown eyes look directly into mine. “I’m going to get you something to eat and drink. I want you to sit right here for me, okay? This little guy is going to need someone to take care of him. He might be scared and lonely right now since he was left here accidentally. Can you make sure he feels safe?”

My eyes dart between Remington, with his now soft voice, and the koala. It’s fur is soft and the eyes are the same color as mine. A pretty blue that Paul always said sparkled in the sunlight. I smile and run a hand over its head.

“You sit here and think of a name for him, okay?” Remington waits until I nod before going off. When I’m sure he’s out of hearing range, breaking all kinds of health code violations for going behind the counter without proper gear or training, I open my mouth to talk.

“I’m sorry you got left behind today, Mister Koala,” I whisper. “I got left today too. Well, three years ago. My Daddy left me. He was hurt really bad in an accident and didn’t make it. He was the best Daddy ever. We would play blocks and he gave me a whole collection of animals just like you. He sang silly songs while we did bath time and did funny voices during bedtime stories.” I hug the koala to my chest and squeeze my eyes shut. I can feel myself wanting so desperately to slip into that comforting Little space. To let the problems of the world slip away for a while. I can’t, though. I don’t have a Daddy to take care of me when I’m that vulnerable. I bury my nose in

the fur between the koala's ears. "I'm sorry you were left alone. No one should feel like they're alone."

"Austin," Remington's voice is somewhere around me, but I don't open my eyes this time. I cry harder, letting out sobs that have built over the years of pretending to be strong and put together. "It's okay, Austin. Let it out. I'm right here. I'm right here with you."

Warm arms wrap around from behind me. Some part of my brain registers that Remington is sitting in the chair behind me. His arms come around my middle and rest lightly, his chest pressing with just enough pressure against my back that it comforts me more than suffocates. He remembers that I don't like heavy things on me. I move one hand from the koala to rest on his hands on my stomach and listen as he mumbles soft words, reminding me that I'm not alone tonight.

When I think that all of my tears are dried up, I cry a little more. At some point I moved from being hunched forward to leaned back against Remington's chest. I'm not the smallest guy either. At thirty-years-old, I'm close to six feet and have built a little bit of muscle. Nothing intentional, but I joined a gym and go on nights I can't sleep. Which is a couple times a month, at least. My torso is half twisted so my cheek is pressed against Remington's chest and the soothing sound of his heartbeat calms me further. His fingers are carding through my short hair.

"I'm—"

"Austin, if you apologize for crying on today of all days, I'm going to be upset. I'm glad I could be here for you. Do you feel better?"

"Not really," I answer honestly. "I feel like I should probably go home and sleep."

"Can I ask you something and you promise to not get mad at me or shut me down?"

I sit up slowly and look at him. Mister Koala is still in my right hand, clutched tightly. “I don’t know?”

Remington’s features are all soft and earnest. He’s kept his hair short for years now. It isn’t shaved, but nowhere near long enough to flop in his eyes like mine does sometimes. His muscles are more prominent, intentional with his workouts. It’s been years since I saw him in the gym, but he and Paul had a routine for a while and it looks like he keeps up with it. His eyes are kind, a soft brown with little specks in them. His nose flares slightly at the nostrils, the Higgins curse he would always joke. His lips are surrounded by a mustache and a beard that hits his chest.

“Do you want to slip into your Little space tonight?” Remington’s hand traces down my back, stops mid way, and moves back up to my shoulders. “I’m not trying to invite myself over or do anything untoward, Austin. But I heard what you said to the koala. I’m not the best at voices, but we can do PJs and I can read you a story. I’ll slip out once you fall asleep.”

## Page 2

*Source Creation Date: July 18, 2025, 10:27 am*

I drive behind Austin, making sure not to lose him. He's moved out of the house that he and Paul shared and into a small, two-bedroom cottage style house. It's quaint and the yard is kept intact, mostly.

As a property manager, I notice the small things. Like the bushes out front have been trimmed down, but they're not even. Walking behind Austin, up the stairs, I notice that the mulch bed is definitely in need of some fixing.

Inside is much the same. It's nice, homey. But there are things that catch the eye when looking for more than a glance. The bookshelf with all the books Paul liked to read has a layer of dust. There's an empty plate and cup on a tray table, which tells me that Austin most likely eats his meals in front of the TV.

Maybe I can get him to eat something at the table with me .

He never ate the bag of chips or the wrapped sandwich I found in one of the fridges. I put the food back before we left, untouched. Even though I know that Paul never lived in this house, the framed photos and the touches of him still remain. It makes my heart hurt to know that Austin still misses him so much. We all do, but I know it hit him harder than anyone.

"Um, so..." Austin stumbles over his words and I give him a small smile as I take off my jacket. We closed the door the second both of us were inside. It's making out to be a cold winter this year, for sure. "I don't really know..."

"I want you to go put on your comfiest jammies that you have," I direct. "And I'm going to make you something to eat. And we'll eat together and then read a book."

Austin looks like he's going to argue the plan but instead of words, a surprise yawn filters in and he relents without a discussion. I nod, tamping down the urge to say good boy to him.

I turn to walk through the rest of the house. The front door opens to a big space. There are three doors on the left wall, two bedrooms and the closet presumably. Then straight across from the front door is the bathroom, set into a half wall that separates the bathroom from the open dining area. I know that because I catch a glance when Austin sheepishly opens it and slips in quickly.

The space is longer than it is wide. There is a three-cushion sofa on the wall separating what I'm assuming is the kitchen. On the right wall is a fireplace with shelves on either side. Random knick-knacks throughout Austin and Paul's relationship, photos as well, sit on those shelves. I recognize myself in two of the photos. The TV is sat between two windows, which evenly split the wall into thirds. The bookshelf is the first thing I pass by, only a foot away from the front door. There's a basic two tone rug covering most of the floor.

The dining room is as simple. A few photos sitting on a mantle against the back wall, the table large enough to fit six chairs. It's the same one he and Paul had in their home. The kitchen is homey, more like a grandma's kitchen than modern chrome. The appliances don't match, the fridge is basic white with no ice maker, the counter tops are a laminate style.

In all of my quick discovery of Austin's life over the last three years, I notice one thing. There is not a single thing pointing toward his Little side. Sure, most people don't parade it around and some are only looking for a scene here and there, but Austin was a lifestyle Little. He loved playing with blocks and had the colorful racecar rug where I had, more than once, raced him around the track, only to lose again and again to his delight.

Paul always had a basket of toys in the living room, ready to be played with. He would have colorings and artwork from Austin pinned everywhere proudly. Stickers were a must have thing too.

I continue thinking about my best friend and all the good he did for Austin over the years as I head to the kitchen. There isn't much food in the cabinets, which I add to my list of concerns to bring up. I'll have to stop by more often. I always felt like I was crowding him, being that person that hung around too long and reminded him of times past. I only want the best. Paul made me promise I would take care of him if anything happened and I hope I've done an okay job. At least physically.

I'm stirring a pot of noodles when Austin clears his throat behind me. I look over my shoulder and see him fiddling with the zipper of the onesie he's wearing. A dark line starting at his collarbone and trailing down the middle of his chest catches my eye before he zips the outfit closed and folds his arms nervously around his body. It doesn't look like a scar, something like that I definitely would have noticed before. More like a tattoo.

The onesie he's wearing is adorable. It's a giraffe pattern, footies included. The hood isn't up, but I know this one well. It has the eyes and ossicones on it. And the only reason I know that word is because of the man wearing the pajama set currently. He is obsessed with random animal facts and the fuzzy horns on a Giraffe's head is one of them.

"You look comfy," I say with a smile. He does. I'm still in jeans and a button down over a white t-shirt. I feel way overdressed now. "I'm making spaghetti. Is that okay?"

"Yummy," Austin says. His face goes still and then he looks down and starts picking at his hands. I set the spoon down and take a step toward him.

“What’s wrong?”

“I’m sorry,” Austin says. “I’m just— Not used to doing this.”

“Have you given yourself any Little time at all? Even on your own?”

Austin shakes his head. “It just felt weird. I can’t get into the right headspace if I know I still have to do all the things for myself. Even if I put it all out at the beginning, I still have to think about clean up and it ruins it.”

“Well, tonight you don’t have to worry about anything,” I say with a wider smile. “How about you go watch something on TV for a bit while I finish cooking and we’ll sit down together. What would you like to drink?”

“Just some water is fine,” Austin mumbles. I lift my arm up to grip his bicep and squeeze reassuringly .

“Go sit down and I’ll get it taken care of,” I say. I drop my hand and nod to him, signaling that he should go sit in the living room. Dinner will be ready in no more than ten minutes. I rummage through the other cabinets, smiling in success when I finally find what I’m looking for .

He has a single cup, plate, and bowl in an astronaut theme. It’ll be perfect for tonight. I grab a bottled water from the fridge and fill the cup, downing the rest of the bottle myself before taking the cup out to Austin.

He’s flipping through a couple different options. It’s a mix of cartoons and what Paul would call the grown up movies. “Find anything you like?”

I set the water next to him on the side table. I note that he looks at it for a second before turning back to the TV.

“Not really,” Austin says. And he sounds dejected. Like he’s already expecting this night to fail.

“What about that one show you used to watch? With the kid doctor that helped all the stuffies? That was a good one. I remember when I came over that time you had a marathon. I think I watched more episodes than you did. I could probably still recite the song they sing, too.”

“Oh yeah,” Austin says. His voice sounds just a smidge more excited. “I’ll look for it.”

I step around the side table and squat down, hiding a grunt at the quick movement. Austin is clearly fighting back a smile. I rest a hand on his thigh. “If this is what you need tonight, that’s okay. Anything goes with me, Austin. For tonight. If you want to watch TV, read a book, dance party. I just want you to feel better tonight, okay? ”

Austin closes his eyes but nods. I start to get up, but Austin opens his mouth to speak before I’m fully standing. “Can you feed me tonight?”

I smile and move my hand to rub over his knee lightly. “Yes, of course. I’m going to go finish cooking. You get all settled and comfy and I’ll be back in a bit, okay?”

“Okay.” I stand up and turn to walk back toward the kitchen, but Austin reaches out his arm to grab my hand. “Thank you, Remi.”

I swallow around the lump in my throat. “Of course.”

The spaghetti is ready in just under ten minutes and I dish it up on two plates. I can hear the theme song of the show I mentioned playing and smile to myself. “Austin, do you need more water?” I call before I leave the kitchen. I have a bottle for myself, but I’ll grab another if he needs it.



“No, I’m good. Thank you.” His response is a lot lighter now and when I walk into the living room, my heart both breaks and leaps for joy at the same time. He must have gone to get all his stuffies and lined them up on the couch beside him. Each of the ones that Paul gave him. They look like they're in perfect condition.

“Now now,” I say, keeping my voice light and playful. “Where am I supposed to sit if we have a full house tonight?”

“I can just move them.” My smile fades just slightly because Austin sounds more serious than I want him to. I was going for silly.

“No, of course not.” I set both plates on the tray table, taking the old one to sit in the sink and wash later. “I’ll just grab a chair from the dining room for now. They’re already settled in for the show. ”

I definitely would have fallen asleep sitting on his couch anyway. Austin turns the volume down but doesn’t pause the show as I grab his food and start twirling the first bite onto the fork for him. It’s been a minute since I’ve fed another person but instinctively, I blow on it to cool it down.

Austin opens wide and I make a small airplane noise with my lips as I feed him the first bite. I remember Paul doing that a lot when he would feed Austin. It seems my gut made the right choice when Austin smiles around the fork.

“Be honest with me chef, did I do a good job?” I tilt my head slightly, contorting my expression to seem equal parts worried and waiting. Calling him chef is only a joke, a way to make him smile again. Austin takes his time to answer, chewing slowly. He continues watching me and I fight to not break the silly expression and smile because I can see him finally falling back into that space.

He reaches over and takes a sip of his water. The contrast of the smaller cup in his

hand, and even the small plate that doesn't hold much of a serving for his size is adorable. Maybe I can go out and buy him a couple sets to keep that would be more fitting for him. That thought gives me pause for a moment.

This is just one night. For Austin to unwind and be Little for a while. I shouldn't be thinking of buying him things like that.

"I think it's delicious," Austin finally says. I slump my shoulders and let out a puff of air. "Better than what I can make. My noodles never turn out right."

"You know, your Daddy was the one that taught me to cook," I say. "I was a broke, college student when we met. He taught me spaghetti first, then we moved to chicken alfredo. I can make great burgers on the grill, too. And tacos. I love tacos. "

"I love tacos, too!" Austin says excitedly. "Daddy used to do taco nights and I would help him put all the stuff on and roll them up. They were so yummy."

"Can I tell you a secret?" I lean forward slightly, like I'm about to reveal something serious. Austin does the same and we're only inches away from each other. Austin's eyes are trained on me. "Your Daddy once told me the secret recipe he uses for the meat in his tacos."

"No!" Austin seems genuinely surprised about that. It is the truth. Paul liked to keep his secrets, but he did share a few with me when he was teaching me how to cook different things. And unlike him, I wrote them down so I wouldn't forget. He always loved that people came to him to ask for things. He was definitely meant to be a Daddy, through and through.

"Cross my heart," I say, omitting the last half of that saying. It's not needed for Austin to know I'm being serious. "Maybe we can make them one day? I bet you make the best tacos. What are your favorite things to put on them?"

Just like that, Austin talks and talks. Between bites, he tells me about his favorite taco toppings, introduces me— or reintroduces me— to his stuffies. He brought home the koala and it's tucked in beside the panda. Pam-da, Austin calls her. Once Austin is done with his food and I wipe his face clean of sauce, I settle in to eat my own as we continue watching the show. As expected, after hearing the song once, I sing along the next time. I can hear Austin mumbling the words too.

It's close to ten when Austin starts yawning for real and I decide that it's bedtime. "Alright, Mister Sleepy Pants. It's bedtime. Do you you want to get your stuffies back in your room and then we'll get your teeth brushed and go to bed?"

"Do you need- "

I interrupt him immediately, not wanting him to pull out of his Little space so quick. "I want you to go pick out two books and we'll read them before you go to sleep. Don't worry about anything else."

Austin doesn't argue. He gathers the stuffies and heads across the space to his bedroom. It's the last door on that wall. I vaguely wonder how he has the extra bedroom set up, but I'm not going to pry tonight. I would like to do this with him again. If he wants.

When he comes back out, he's yawning again. But he has two books in hand. He gives them to me before motioning that he's going to go to the bathroom. I nod and flip through the books. They're simple. One is *The Ugly Duckling*, which is always a story that makes me sad. Then the other is a more upbeat one, with shapes and colors decorating the pages and every other line rhyming.

"All fresh," Austin announces when he comes out of the bathroom. It's an adorable sight the way he bares his teeth to show me that they're clean. I purse my lips playfully.

“I don’t know.” I draw out the words and tap a finger against my chin. “I think I need a smell test.”

Austin rolls his eyes but giggles. The smell test was something else that Paul did with him as well. It was a running joke between the two. Usually ended up with a kiss or two but even tonight, Austin knows that I’m just playing with him.

“How about you grab one of the blankets on the back of the couch and we’ll get to reading? I can’t promise my voices are all that great, but I’m going to try.”

I wait until Austin is snuggled up on the couch. His head is resting on the other armrest and his feet are curled up next to my hip. I move them so he’s stretched out with his feet on my lap. “You’re fine, Austin. Now, which are we reading first?”

I really give my best with the voices. I’ve only heard Paul’s reading time once in my life. It was usually reserved for the two of them, but there was a time when he was stuck late on a job and I had been with Austin. He read him a book from memory over the phone.

By the time I’m done with *The Ugly Duckling*, I look over and see that Austin’s eyes are closed. I wait a few moments to make sure he’s really asleep before I set the books aside and slowly move myself out from under his feet. It isn’t the easiest of feats, but I manage.

Austin is the same length of the couch and I know he’s probably going to wake up with a least a crick in his neck if he stays there. So, like any good pseudo-Daddy, I brace myself and scoop him up toward my chest. He stirs a bit, but doesn’t wake.

I maneuver my way into his bedroom, taking care to not trip over anything. This is definitely the most-used room in his house. I smile when I realize that there are pajama sets in the floor and on the bed. He must have tried out at least six different

ones before settling on what he is wearing now. The others are plain colors and way too boring for slipping into Little space. I'm glad he went with the giraffe.

Austin lets out a small noise in the back of his throat when I set him down on the bed. He snuffles, then rolls over and is out cold again. I fight the urge to brush the hair back from his face.

The room is warm enough and with the footie pajamas, he isn't going to need the blanket tonight. I fiddle with the clock on his bedside table and smile when I see he already has an alarm set for six AM. Hopefully that's the time he needs to be up. I make sure it's turned on before cutting off the main light and leaving the door cracked just a bit.

As promised, I clean up. I go slow to keep the noise down. It takes me about twenty minutes to wash the dishes and fold up the blanket that Austin used. I find a notepad next to Austin's phone and write a short message. Austin has my number, but I leave it again with a message to call me any time. I also promise to share the secret recipes I know at our next hangout.

I'm hoping there's a next.

## Page 3

*Source Creation Date: July 18, 2025, 10:27 am*

I wake up in my adult headspace. The night before comes back to me in snippets, like one of those old timey films that go slide-by-slide.

Breaking down.

Driving home.

Putting on my giraffe onesie that I haven't worn in years.

Then the TV show and asking Remington to feed me. I shouldn't have done that. That's not casual Daddy stuff. That's relationship stuff, isn't it? He didn't hesitate to agree and the food really was delicious.

I don't remember falling asleep, but I definitely remember settling down on the couch. Not in my bed. Did Remington carry me? I blush at that thought. I also hope I didn't say anything in my sleep. Paul always said that I mumble in my sleep.

There's a note on the dining room table and I stop to read it. I'm still in the onesie, but I've unzipped it and tied the arms around my waist. The note is simple. It's written on a torn off sheet from the notepad that I keep on the counter beside the fridge. Each page has a simple flower design in the corners and small stars randomly placed around the page. It's no larger than sticky notes, but it looked pretty in the store. The notepad originally had a magnet on the back to stick on the fridge, but it since peeled off and I just leave it on the counter.

Remington's handwriting is legible enough. He slants his letters to the right, telling me he's a leftie. Which, if I think back hard enough, I'm sure I already knew that

fact.

Thank you for tonight, Austin. I'm more than happy to do this again. Call me any time. Sweet dreams.

The words leave me smiling alone in the house. Last night was definitely something I needed. I didn't sink too far into Little space, but like Remington wrote, maybe we could keep doing this. At least every now and then. I went three years without much of anything, so a scene here and there would be better than nothing. I'm not entirely sure how similar in style Remington is from my Daddy as far as the Daddy-ing goes, but it's worth a conversation at least. If he's willing. I remember times he would join in my play, but hanging out and taking on the role of Daddy are two different things.

Looking away from the note and thinking about my Daddy, my fingertips trail the length of the tattoo on my body. It's a solid black line, a quarter of an inch thick. It trails from the right side of my collarbone, down, and cuts across to my left hip. My smile widens as I remember everything that the tattoo represents. My Daddy was the best.

I move to the kitchen next and unlock my phone to text Remington. The coffee pot I have has a timer and he must have set it last night because there is a fresh pot waiting for me .

Austin

Thank you, Remi. And yes, maybe we can talk about it over dinner this weekend? If you're not busy.

I don't wait for a reply. If he's sane, he's still asleep. I pour my coffee in the thermos I use every single day— which Remington seems to have also cleaned from where I brought it in last night— and add a little sugar and way too much cream. I'm not a

big coffee drinker, despite where I work, but the morning caffeine is necessary. Although I did sleep soundly for the first time in a while last night.

I might make myself a hot cocoa if the weather is chilly when I leave today.

It's hitting seven when I finally walk out the door. We have to wear slip resistant shoes and black pants to work, but the shirt can be whatever we want. And today I've gone with a soft, blue t-shirt. The air is a bit windy so I have on my favorite black hoodie and green beanie. Does it all match? Not really. Do I care at seven AM? Also, not really.

By the time I get to the coffee shop a couple of miles into the heart of the city, the other guys are already there. The shop opens at eight and all I have to do for morning chores is open the registers.

"Smells heavenly in here," I comment as I'm signing in the till at the coffee station. It's Thursday, which means that there will be a group of at least twelve doctor-like people from the hospital two streets away coming in for their espressos and this-and-that's before a weekly meeting. I don't know if they are doctor's or not, but they seem... doctorly. If that makes sense to anyone but myself. Jason has all of their orders memorized by now.

"I'm trying out a new recipe I saw last night. It's essentially a hot chocolate packet, the powder mix kind, but instead of milk, you mix it with a shot of espresso first. Then you add whatever else you want."

"I don't know if that sounds good or not," I say. I finish double counting the money from last night. I wasn't exactly in the best of mindsets after my breakdown last —

Oh shit.



I forgot the koala. What if the kid comes back? I don't want him to think it was taken. I'd tell him the truth and promise to bring it back. But the mom would probably think that's weird, wouldn't she? That I took her kid's stuffie home?

I pull my phone out without thinking, shooting off another text to Remington. We've sent a couple of texts back and forth this morning so far, just general stuff about plans for the day and agreeing that he would make dinner at my place Friday. I already told him where the spare key is since I'll be home later than he gets off work.

Austin

I forgot the kid's koala at home. What if he comes back for it today?

"Who are you texting this early in the morning?" Jason asks half-sarcastically. He has one of our mugs in both his hands and sips on the drink. "Oh, that's actually good. We might have to add this to the Fall and Winter menus. Some cinnamon or something in it would be amazing."

"Play around with it and I'll bring it up to the owner in the next meeting," I say with a smile. "As far as the text, it's just a friend. And he has a meeting this morning so he was up early."

I don't know why I explain that much detail to Jason. Probably because I don't usually have any life updates. I've really been going through day-by-day without much change in my schedule. Wake up, work, go home, watch some TV, read a book, shower, bed. My weekends, since the coffee chop is closed, are mostly cleaning the house, working in the yard, or visiting with my family. I used to go around to Paul's family but it became clear that I was fading into the background of their lives. After the last birthday party, where I sat at a table for the majority of the time listening to the others go on and on about different things, I realized that their lives had gone forward. I was still rehashing the same stories of Paul and myself. I stopped

going to their get-togethers and they stopped inviting. It was mutual, I tell myself.

I decide to not make the moment awkward and continue talking, turning the conversation to the coffee shop. “I’m going to double check they have everything on the other side and then get some paperwork filed. If you need me for anything, just ring the bell okay?”

“Got it boss,” Jason says. He’s sipping on the Espresso Cocoa— that definitely has a ring to it for a menu item— as I turn to walk away. My phone buzzes in my pocket but I don’t pull it out until I’m alone in the office again .

Remington

I’ll run over and grab it and bring it to you. My meeting is a couple of blocks away from Shade Grown anyway. Is around nine-thirty okay?

I was not expecting him to go to my house and get that when I sent the text. I can’t stop the small smile that tilts my lips upward at the thought that he so easily offered. It doesn’t surprise me. He was best friends with my Daddy. They would both do anything for anyone.

Austin

You don’t have to do that, Remi. I’m sure it’ll be fine. I can just tell him he got dirty and is getting cleaned or something. Or I can get their address and mail it to them.

Remington

I know I don’t have to. But I want to. I realize now that I should have been there for you more over the last couple of years. I’m sorry for failing on that part. But it’s no trouble. I’ll get it and stop by. You can repay me by making the strongest drink you

can legally give me because this meeting is going to be a doozie today.

I don't know how to respond to that. Last night was much needed and I definitely want to do it again. The last three years have been hard, dealing with my grief over losing my partner and Daddy. Remington was there for me. In the beginning he would stop by the house. He stayed over a couple of nights. He'd bring take out and we'd either watch a movie or just sit in silence. As the months and years went on, I had to move and got busy with the new job and he was taking on new properties. We both started to make excuses. I knew, in the back of my mind, that he would randomly show up just to check in. I took that for granted. I never once reached out to him. He always came to me.

Austin

I should be the one apologizing. I didn't make an effort to keep in touch. I'm sorry.

I don't want a repeat of yesterday so I set my phone to the side, screen down, and focus on knocking out some of the reports before the end of the month. The last week of every month is the most stressful. I planned on staying late tomorrow before another lonely weekend, but now that I have something to do, I want to get it done today.

It's close to an hour later that I hear the bell Jason has tingtingting and I stand up, stretching my back. I grab my phone, glancing at the text Remington sent half an hour ago.

Remington

You have nothing to be sorry for. We'll talk more this weekend. I'll see you shortly.

None other than Remington himself is standing by the coffee counter, koala proudly

in hand. He's wearing a pair of khakis with brown shoes and a matching belt. His go-to button down shirt is a faded green color today. His beard is the same as last night, clean and well maintained. It's several inches, the tip hitting his chest. He looks good. In a totally presentable way for a business meeting, I mean.

I offer him a genuine smile and hold out my hand for the stuffie. "Thank you for doing that. You really didn't have to."

"I told you I don't mind," Remington says. He lowers his voice, even though we aren't within ear shot of anyone. Jason is currently busy with a customer so I know he isn't listening even if he could. "Although, I did have to go into your room to get it." His eyebrows raise knowingly and it takes me a second to understand what he means by that.

"Oh, yeah. I was planning on cleaning Friday. But I'll get it done today." I never did put away the several different pajamas I tried on before settling with the giraffe one.

"Don't worry about it tonight," Remington says. His expression changes, softens. I can see the worry between his eyes and the way his lips are in a thin line. "I'll be over tomorrow and we'll do it then, okay? We'll give the place a good dusting too."

My face falls at the mention of dusting. If he wants to dust, that means I'll have to move Paul's books. They haven't moved since I moved into the house two years ago. Yeah, I would wipe the edges of the bookshelves off and stuff, but it was just me living there. It wasn't that bad, was it?

"Hey, it's okay." Remington places a hand on my shoulder and squeezes gently. "He was my best friend and I still have memories of us around my place. We'll make sure to take extra care of everything and put it back how it was, okay?"

I nod, not trusting my voice. He gives me a warm smile and his expression morphs

once again into something happier. I know that he's worried about me. I don't like when people worry about me. I'm doing okay.

"Now, I think I was promised a hot drink."

"Just tell Jason to put it on my employee tab and order whatever you want," I say with a smile. "I have to finish up some paperwork, but thank you for this. I'll see you later."

"Text me later," Remington says before stepping away to get behind a lady waiting for her coffee. I nod and turn back to head toward the office. Tyler is working on replenishing the croissants.

"Hey, Ty. If a mom and her kid come in looking for this little koala, let me know. It was left here yesterday but I'll have it in the office."

"Will do," he says. "Oh, I needed to talk to you about some time off coming up as well. I have a few appointments coming up that I couldn't schedule outside of work hours."

"No problem," I say. "I'll show you how to put those into the system tomorrow, if that's okay? I'm trying to finish the paperwork today."

"Sounds good. They aren't for another month so plenty of time."

I make sure that Amir is doing good. He's finishing up the back stock inventory for me today. Thursdays aren't terribly busy, outside of the group that comes in in the morning. Tomorrow will be busy, though. Fridays always are. So I really want to focus on this work today.

The next four hours go by in a flash. I have music playing softly from my phone to

keep me company. The numbers on the reports start floating together at one point and I stand to walk around and make sure everything is going well. I clean off the tables and restock a few items before heading back in to finish. I have maybe another hour left.

Just as I'm about to sit down, the bell chimes. I love the bell, but also don't. I turn around and walk right back out to the main floor. Jason raises his hand and points out toward the tables.

"The kid is here," Jason says just loud enough.

I smile, beyond grateful for Remington now. I snatch the koala off my desk and walk through the coffee shop to the tables. The little boy has three fingers in his mouth and is clearly crying, his other hand secured in his mother's. She's bent over, looking under a table.

"Excuse me," I say, trying my best not to startle either of them. I have the koala in plain sight and the moment the little boy sees it he starts crying harder and reaches for it. Slobbery fingers brush against mine as I squat down to his level. He can't be more than four. "I found him here last night. I cleaned him all up and made sure to keep him safe. I figured you were missing him."

"What do you say, Seth?" The mom nudges his back lightly. Those fingers go back to his mouth and the koala is being squished against his chest.

"Thank you." The words are mumbled and slurred around his fingers, but it is easy enough to hear the words.

"It's no problem," I say with a smile I hope is happy for him. The boy will never know how much that koala did for me in a short amount of time. The least I can do is repay him and his mom for the time I did get. "How about we go over here and get

some hot chocolate? If it's okay with Mommy?" I glance up and she's smiling and nodding.

Seth takes his fingers out of his mouth. He still has big tears in his eyes but they aren't falling anymore. "With mallows?"

"Of course with mallows," I say happily. "That's the only way to drink it."

"You are a life saver," the mom says as we walk toward the coffee bar. "Seriously, he barely slept a wink. That koala is his absolute favorite toy."

"I get it," I say. And I do. The three I have flash through my mind. I get the sentimental attachment to them. "It's no problem. I was actually hoping you'd come back and claim him. He was going to become our mascot if not. I was going to let him sit in that window and have him wave to all the people walking by." I get Seth's attention and point to one of the three windows we have in the table area. The windows each have a little shelf at the bottom. Two of them have plants but the third is empty. "Do you want to go wait over there and I'll bring your drink? Mom, what would you like?"

"Oh, no. It's okay."

"I insist, really."

Jason is on break at the moment, since the afternoon rush for coffee isn't as demanding. Amir knows how to make drinks, but Tyler hasn't been trained yet. I set about making everything, losing myself to the movements. I've been here for two years as the manager and in that time, making drinks has become second nature.

I think about going to the store and buying my own koala stuffie since this one has officially been reclaimed. Pam-da, Berry, and Elle— a panda, bear, and elephant

stuffie accordingly— could use a new friend. Especially if I'll be getting more Little time. That thought alone has me smiling to myself as I slip on a glove and drop a few marshmallows into Seth's drink .

“Order up,” I say after rounding the counter and bringing the drinks back out to them. “It's still a little hot so be careful, okay?” I look to his mom. “I just used the hot water from the tap so it shouldn't be too bad, but just in case.”

“Thank you so much,” she says in response. “Seriously, you have saved us from another sleepless night. Are you the manager here?”

“I am.” I take pride in that fact as well.

“Well, you have a great place here. Definitely a five star review.” I laugh at her joke and excuse myself to get back to my office. And my phone.

Austin

Koala was picked up today. Poor little guy cried when I brought him out so I made him hot chocolate. Thank you for bringing that this morning. Hope your meeting went well.



## Page 4

*Source Creation Date: July 18, 2025, 10:27 am*

Remington Properties isn't the largest property management business in the city, but we have a few decent clients under contract and several smaller ones. Enough to have our own office building in the city with a team of ten and contracts to other businesses in the area.

I use the excuse to see Austin once more on my way to work. I want to reach out and hug him, but he's at work, so I settle on gripping his shoulder. He looks more relaxed today than when I stopped by yesterday evening. Where there were tears yesterday, he's smiling today. I get my drink and turn to look for him, but he's already back in his office.

The meeting starts out with an itemized list, by property and even apartment dwelling because my assistant is the literal best woman ever, of the repairs that need to be completed. There are two urgent repairs but the rest can be scheduled within the month. With the colder months coming up, I also want to get checks of furnaces and air filters before the three commercial buildings start cranking heat in the offices.

The second order of the meeting is past due payments and collections. It is my least favorite part of every meeting. I know that people fall on hard times and need help, but there is only so much that we can do as a company. Contracts are binding and the owners of these buildings are counting on us to uphold them. There is only one location that is past due this month.

"If they don't pay at least the past due amount in the next fifteen days, we'll need to send them a letter." Everyone sitting around the table knows I hate doing that. I have a soft spot for people. I'm not greedy, I don't do this job for the money. I do it because I like the honest work and making sure that people have a safe place to work

and live.

“I’ll try to contact them this afternoon and see if we can work out a payment plan at least, Remington.” Clara, one of the two accountants on the team, says.

“Thank you, Clara. I appreciate it.”

I’m not a pushover. Not at work, at least. But I appreciate her offer to find a solution for the family. I’ll follow up with her on Monday about it. I jot down a note on my legal pad.

“The final thing we need to discuss is marketing,” Josiah, the supervisor in that department, says. There are three of them since marketing is a big thing for us. “We’ve been in talks with a few places, but there’s a networking business event at the end of the month that we’ve signed up for. So we’ll need to make a banner and some fliers. I wanted to bring it forward to discuss what should be included on it. Plus, Remington, we’ll need some more business cards made up.”

I add that to the ever growing list of things I need to do. The business cards aren’t hard. I just have to reorder our stock. I hope it’s a good thing that we’re having to reorder, though we haven’t had many new properties sign with us in the last year.

By the time the meeting is over, my coffee from this morning is long gone and I feel like I need another. I know I shouldn’t, though. I don’t claim to be the healthiest man alive, but I take pride in how I look and maintaining the muscles that are fighting to disappear as I get older.

The first thing I do when I’m back in my office is check my phone. It’s almost three in the afternoon and I have a text from Austin. The boy and his mom collected the koala. Watching the way Austin clung to it last night, crying, broke my heart. I should get him one to keep, add to his collection.

I pulled up a chair behind him and did what I could to give him comfort while he grieved his Daddy and my best friend. I realized in that moment that I never should have let us drift apart. Life got busy for both of us, but that wasn't an excuse and I see that now.

"I'm sorry Paul," I whisper to the empty room. "I'll do better by him and by you. I promise. I miss you, man. We both do."

After a moment and a deep breath, I compose myself enough to focus back on work. I have two more hours and then I'm heading to my mom's for dinner with the family. We are celebrating my sister's birthday and I need to stop by the house to grab her gift. After getting Austin's text, I kind of forgot to grab a couple of things from the house.

The business cards are ordered and I've scheduled a follow up email to go out to Clara for Monday asking for an update. The last hour of the day, I'm on the phone with the repair guys. One of the apartments has a leak. It's only on the ground floor, thankfully. It means they won't have to go floor-to-floor looking for water damage beyond that. They schedule an emergency repair for six PM. It'll cost an after-hour fee, but the building owner OK'd it through email before I confirmed. I went ahead and scheduled the air filter and furnace checks with the same company for each building too, since they do air and plumbing services.

"You guys are too good to us," I end the conversation ten minutes to quitting time. "Seriously, I owe you and your whole crew some beers for all the work you do for us."

"I'm pretty sure none of them would turn that down, but it's the job Remington. We're just happy you're keeping us in business. Have a great weekend and I'll send you invoices on Monday."

“Sounds great, thanks.”

I hang up the phone and shoot a text to my sister that I’ll be at Mom’s right on time. She is always getting on me for showing up ten minutes late to every family function. It just happens. She texts back a thumbs up and nothing else. Such the conversationalist, really. I finish my day and head to my car.

My house is about twenty minutes from the office building. I run in quickly, grabbing the gift bag with a candle in my sister's favorite scent and a bag of her favorite candies. She's told me more than once that she keeps a stash in their bathroom cabinet so she doesn't have to share with her kid or husband. I find it hilarious.

Austin texts me during the get together and my sister just happens to be beside me. And a snoop. The message is innocent, but she still raises an eyebrow at me .

Austin

Just got home. I didn’t realize you had leftover spaghetti and I’m totally eating that tonight. Thanks for being amazing.

“Don’t even go there,” I say, knowing the conclusions that she is jumping to in her scheming brain. I don't know how much she remembers of the few times she's met Austin. He and Paul came to a few events where my family was as well. “Yesterday was the anniversary of Paul’s death. I went over to make sure he was okay.”

“Oh shit,” she mumbles. “I’m so sorry. I totally forgot about that. I didn’t even call to check on you. How are you?”

“I’m fine, really. We made dinner and talked, hung out for a while. It was nice.”

“How is he doing?” she says. “You should bring him around. I'm sure Mom would

love to see him again. We have Terry's party in a couple of weeks.”

Terry is my nephew. He'll be seven soon and is a crazy talented kid when it comes to instruments. I swear that kid can pick up anything and know how to play it like a pro in less than a week.

“I'll see if he's up for it,” I say. “I don't think he's done much socializing since Paul's death. I was worried about him yesterday.”

“You've always been a great friend to both of them, Rem. But consider this a blanket invitation for him to join in whenever. You know Mom won't care.”

“I know she won't.” There always seems to be a random person at most of the Higgins' gatherings that someone has invited.

The cake and ice cream is brought out then and thankfully distracts the birthday girl long enough for me to send a text back without her reading over my shoulder.

“It kind of feels weird to say welcome home to you,” I say with a smile as I help Austin get the grocery bags out of his car. He informed me today, after I was already at his house, that he would stop by the store and pick up some fresh cleaning supplies he knew he was low on. He's a sneaky one, because he knows I would have offered to pick them up. It's Friday and I closed up the office early, dropping by the store for a handful of items myself already.

I notice something fluffy in one of the bags and pause to examine it. I look back up at Austin. “Did you buy yourself a stuffie?”

Austin just nods and heads inside the open door with two bags in his hands. I smile at it, knowing that I have a nearly identical one waiting for him inside as well. I grab the bag with the stuffie and the other with a new mop head and trail behind him, making

sure his car is locked.

He's standing by the table, picking at his nails again. I can tell something is on his mind. I set the bags down and gently run one hand up his left arm. "Austin? What's wrong?"

Austin doesn't answer and I move one hand to stop his fingers from picking at his skin and the other to lift his chin so his eyes meet mine. I can see he's fighting back tears. I soften my voice, dipping my head just slightly. "Austin?"

"I didn't want to give the koala back," he admits and a single tear falls down to his cheek. I wipe it away and pull him in for a hug. I know he doesn't like to be squeezed so I keep my arms loose around him, rubbing softly up and down his back. "Of course I gave it back with a smile and the little boy was so happy, but I wanted one too."

"That's okay, Austin. You can buy yourself whatever you want, especially if it brings you comfort." I take his hand and move him from the table to the living room, specifically to the couch. I give him a second before tilting my head for him to look. I can see his lips turn up in a smile.

"You got me a koala?" He turns his whole body to look at me. His smile turns to confusion. "Why'd you buy me one?"

I flounder for words. I don't know why I bought it. I felt like he would want one to add to this collection. The other koala looked cute next to the others while I fed him his spaghetti. "I just thought you would like it," I say honestly. "I can take it back if you'd rather keep your own."

"No," Austin says quickly. I bite the inside of my cheek to keep from laughing at his reaction. "I mean, I'll keep both of them. They can be friends together."

Austin steps forward and wraps his arms around me. He's tall, a few inches shorter than my height, and fits perfectly in my arms. I feel his chest rise and fall against mine as he takes a deep, steadying breath.

"Can I ask you a question?" I try to keep my voice even.

"Yeah." The single word sounds so pitiful coming from him. But he pulls back and looks me straight in the eye.

"Would you be okay if I bought you some other things too? I noticed the other day that you don't have a lot in here. Maybe it would help you relax more."

"I have most of my stuff in the extra bedroom," he admits. "I don't go in there a lot unless I'm really missing my Daddy. It makes me sad to see everything packed up."

"Oh, sweetie." I pull him in for another hug, letting him bury his face in the crook of my neck as he cries. "You're okay, Austin. We can get you new things or I can help you go through the stuff and organize everything. I bet that extra room would make a great playroom like you and your Daddy used to have."

"That's what I wanted, but it just felt weird living alone like this. And thinking about having to buy all my own... uh, supplies." I nod, understanding what he means. I remember Austin would occasionally wear diapers and Paul would almost always have him dressed in the cutest outfits. The boys at the club were just that, more Middle and Boy age than little. I'm not particular, but I have a soft spot for little Littles.

"Do you want to go through it this weekend?" I prompt. "I'm free until Monday if you want to. You can get as much Little time in as you need and we'll get this place looking sparkly."

I watch Austin's eyes widen minutely and I hope it's in excitement. "Really? You would do that for me? I know we planned tonight, Remington, but you don't have to waste your whole weekend with me."

"Austin Westcott." I turn on my Daddy voice and that definitely gets his attention. "You are not a waste of time. Nor is helping you. You know me well enough that I wouldn't offer if I didn't mean it. If you want me to, I'm more than happy to hang out and help."

"Okay." Austin nods once. "I'd like that."

"Now, I'm going to check on the chili I'm making and put the cornbread on. We're going to tackle cleaning off the shelves beside the fireplace and the bookshelf first, okay?" I grip Austin's hand tightly when I see him worry his bottom lip. "I promise that we will keep all of his stuff safe, okay?"

I've been here for an hour, letting myself in with the key he keeps hidden under a flower pot sitting on his porch. I started the food to cook slowly on the stove but then went ahead and swept the kitchen and dining room areas and vacuumed the area rug in the living room. I didn't touch the more private rooms without Austin here. So dusting and spot cleaning is really all there is left to do.

"I'm going to go change and pick up my other clothes real quick," Austin says. "The food smells good, though. Thank you for cooking again."

"Hey, maybe we can do tacos tomorrow night? I'll even write down the recipe for you to keep." Austin's smile at that suggestion is infectious. We split ways and I head to the kitchen to check on the chili. I would have made it in a slow cooker, but Austin doesn't have one. So it's in a pot on the stove. The cornbread is nothing fancy, just the boxed stuff I picked up.



I navigate the kitchen easily now, already getting familiar with where things are placed. The muffin tin is shoved in a cabinet alongside a couple of other glass and dark pans. Maybe organizing the kitchen could be added to the list as well this weekend.

I really don't mind helping Austin. He keeps his home clean, but I know that Paul did a lot of the upkeep around their house. Austin wasn't incompetent, he helped Paul from time to time with cleaning and general maintenance of their house. But he spent a handful of evenings each week in Little space, which Paul would always clean up. On a good day, Tornado Austin could do some damage.

I slide the muffin tray into the preheated oven and move back to sort through the cleaning items he bought. The stuffie is adorable. It's very similar to the one from Wednesday, but slightly larger. I move to the living room to sit it on the middle cushion of the couch, next to the one I purchased. The one I got is holding a green plant in one hand. Paw. Paw?

"All done with the clothes." Austin's voice travels from beside me and I turn my head to see he's in a pair of shorts and a white t-shirt. "Oh, I can just put them in my room with the others."

"I think they're fine there for now," I say. "But let's get started, shall we? Dinner will be ready in about fifteen minutes. I figure if you want to work on the bookshelf, I'll clean the shelves since they're a little higher up?"

"Sounds good to me."

I smile and give him a quick nod before walking back to the table to grab the wood cleaner spray.

"Remington." Austin is standing right behind me when I turn around. His arms reach

up and wrap around my neck and he hugs me tightly. “Thank you for all of this. It means a lot.”

“Of course, Austin.” I hug him back, taking advantage that he’s okay with my squeezing him closer to me this time. “After dinner, we’ll do some Little time until bed, okay?”

“Did you want to stay here tonight instead of driving back and forth?” Austin asks when he pulls back. We grab the necessary items and move back to our assigned spots for the tasks. “I only have the one bed, but I can easily sleep on the couch.”

“I’m not going to take your bed, Austin. I’ll be fine propping the recliner back and sleeping.”

Austin doesn’t argue and we get to cleaning. Austin makes a pit stop at the TV to pull up his music playlist so it isn’t just silence while we work. I take my time, keeping my promise to be careful with the pictures as I move them to spray and wipe the shelves. The lower two aren’t bad, but the top one has a good layer of dust. Which would make sense because even I can barely reach it without a step ladder.

The photos are cute. One is early in Austin and Paul’s relationship. I recognize the pond behind them as the one where all the ducks live. The city even built little houses for them when they stopped migrating as people started feeding them on a regular basis. Another is of the two of them celebrating a birthday. I’m in the background of that one, but I don’t remember the person we were celebrating. The cheap party hats and smear of icing on Austin’s face tell me what it was though.

The third one, up on the top shelf, is of Paul and Austin at what appears to be a tattoo shop. Austin is the one getting the tattoo, but Paul’s shoulder is in the frame. He got the tattoo two years into their relationship. It was Austin’s favorite flower but there were little dots and lines in two half circles on the upper and lower side of the flower.

Neither of them would ever say what the design meant.

“Hey, Austin?” I turn around and hold the frame up. “What was the significance of the tattoo Paul got in this picture? He never did tell me.”

Austin’s smile holds a reverent feel and his own hand travels to graze down his chest. I remember a flash of the tattoo I’d seen the other day. Maybe it’s the one he was getting in the picture?

“It’s a private thing between us,” Austin finally says. “Maybe one day, though, I’ll tell you. I just— I want to keep that to myself for now.”

“Of course,” I say. I can’t lie; that comment has me curious. I look at the picture a moment longer before putting it back on the shelf. I finish up the other side in a few minutes and straighten the little figurines that line the fireplace mantle before turning back to Austin. He has all of the books stacked neatly around him and is spraying the bottom shelf. I offer a bit of advice to him. “If you want to start at the top, that way any dust that falls doesn’t go back on the clean shelves.”

“Oh, yeah, I guess that makes sense. I was just already down here.” I step over to him and hold out a hand to help him back to his feet. “Thanks.”

“I’m going to go check on the food. Then we can eat and focus on the rest of the cleaning tomorrow. Sound good?”

“Are you okay if I have some Little time tonight still?” Austin glances over at me and then back to the task at hand.

“Of course, Austin. I told you, as much as you need. I can sort through things on my own if you want.” If it’s going to be too hard for you, is what I don’t say, but I think he understands.

“Honestly, I don’t know how I’ll react when we start going through things. It might be one of those fluid days for me, slipping in and out. I don’t even remember half the things I have packed away. It’ll be fun to go back through the clothes, though. I know there’s a few things I’d like to pull out for myself. ”

“That is one hundred percent okay with me,” I say earnestly. Austin's tone is definitely hinting at excitement the more we talk about going through the things in the extra bedroom. And I can’t lie; I’m excited at the prospect of playing that Daddy role for a few days instead of just a couple of hours this weekend.

The cornbread is cooked perfectly when I pull it out of the oven and I make sure to turn everything off. I scoop two ladles of the chili into Austin’s astronaut bowl and plop a piece of cornbread on top. I do the same for myself in a glass bowl and grab two bottles of water.

“Dinner is ready whenever you are,” I call across the house. There is a backdoor off the far side of the kitchen that leads to a small patio and a decent backyard. There is a chain link fence around his property but not much privacy from his neighbors on either side. There’s a tree that looks like it creates a nice, shaded area in the summer.

“I’m almost done putting these back on the shelves. Give me just a minute.”

“Take your time, Austin.” I sit down and watch him gently lift two or three books at a time, using both hands, and place them exactly where they were on the shelves. Once or twice, he wipes the cover or spine of one book before placing it back. When he finally turns back toward me, he’s smiling and I return it easily. “Feel better?”

“I do,” Austin says. “I know I’ve been avoiding it, so thank you for pushing me to get it done. Thank you for helping.”

Austin sits at the table where I placed his food. The table is longer than wide, with

two chairs on the sides and one each at the head and foot. I'm sitting in a side chair and Austin sits in the chair with his back facing the living room .

"This looks amazing. Smells good, too." I grab my cornbread and crumble it over the chili, using the spoon to mix it all together. "Ugh, Daddy used to do that too."

"Oh, that's right." I mentally slap my palm to my forehead. "You don't like your food touching. I'm sorry, I completely forgot."

"This is fine," Austin says quickly. "Soups and chili I'm not too weird about because I like to dip my sandwiches and stuff in them. But other meals like chicken, mashed potatoes, and such, yeah."

"I'll remember that next time," I promise.

## Page 5

*Source Creation Date: July 18, 2025, 10:27 am*

I can feel myself slipping into Little space easily around Remi. It feels natural. And that kind of scares me. Sure, he's been around when I was Little before and that is probably helping the situation that I know him. Add the fact that I haven't properly let my Little side show like this in years. I've missed the freedom that comes with it.

I don't know how much time passes, but dinner was cleared a while ago and I think a whole movie has played in the background. Remi changed from his work clothes to his own, casual clothes he'd packed before he left home this morning and sat right on the floor with me while I piled all my stuffies around. I changed my clothes again, too, back into the giraffe onesie. It's the only thing I didn't pack away when I moved in here.

"Okay, so let me get this right." Remi points to each of the animals as he continues speaking. "Pam-da used to date Elle, but they broke up because Elle was in love with Barry. And now Koka the koala is interested in....?"

I roll my eyes and sigh. I'm sitting crisscross no more than a foot or two in front of him. He is in a similar position, leaning back against the couch. "No, Remi. Pam-da and Elle are married. And now Koka and Kola, both koalas, can be married too!" Koka is the one I bought for myself, while Kola is the one that Remi got for me.

"But what about Barry? Maybe they can be a threesome? They're all bears, right?"

I look at the animals, contemplating how they would all work together with no one being left out. "Koalas aren't bears, Remi."

"They're not? Don't people call them Koala bears, though?"

"They are called marsupials." I pronounce each syllable slowly. I hold up Koka and Kola and look between both of them. "Do you want Barry to join you?"

"Yes, please!" I crack up when Remi goes a high pitched voice for one of the koalas. "We need a real bear to protect us."

I look at Remi, giving him a once over, and laughing again. I turn back to the stuffies in my hands. "Bears are quite nice to have around, if I say so myself."

This time, it's Remi that laughs at the joke. I set them back down on the floor, all in a huddle.

"Oh, okay. I think I get it now. Your stuffies sure do have interesting lives." I watch Remi reach out toward one of them, pausing until I give a slight nod that he's okay to pick it up. He picks up Koka. "Don't tell the others, but I think Koka is the cutest."

I gasp and snatch up the other stuffies. In a quick second thought, I lean forward to snatch Koka away too but Remi is too fast. He holds the stuffie above his head and laughs. "You can't say that around them, Remi! They're all cute. You might hurt their feelings."

"Actually, you know what?" He sets Koka to the side and then places his hands on my arms and tugs to let the other stuffies fall to the floor around us. I look at them and then back up at Remi. He's smiling and I smile back. Then I start giggling because Remi's fingers trail down my arms and land on my inner thigh with how I'm sitting. It tickles. "I think you are the cutest of all of them."

I laugh more when Remi's fingers find the sensitive spot on my hip that is super ticklish. I tilt my body a little too far and quickly, his hands go from tickling to pulling me back upright so I don't hit my head on the floor. From a sitting position it wouldn't have hurt too bad bumping it on the rug, but I'm grateful either way.

A sudden urge hits me and I straighten up, struggling to stand up quickly. “I gotta potty. I’ll be right back.”

“Wash your hands!” Remi calls after me. I race across the floor and barely make it to the bathroom. Usually I get a little more warning between urge and urgency. It pulls me out of my Little headspace just a bit to question why.

It dawns on me when I tuck myself back into my briefs. I was almost always diapered when I was in Little space. My mind must have just kept that assumption.

Embarrassment rushes through my body at that and I can feel my cheeks flush and tears sting my eyes. I’m trying to wipe them clear when I walk out of the bathroom.

“Austin? What’s wrong, sweetie?” Remi is in front of me in a second. I look up at him and try to smile .

My voice is wobbly when I speak. “I almost had an accident. My brain thought—” I trail off, not wanting to say it out loud. “I’m sorry.”

“Hey, there is nothing to be sorry for. Accidents happen. Do you want to keep playing or maybe we can watch a movie? It’s getting pretty late already. We don’t have to wake up early tomorrow, so you can stay up as late as you want for tonight. But just tonight, okay?”

“Can we cuddle on the couch and watch a movie?” He nods easily and I wrap my arms around him again in a hug. I like hugging Remi. I count to ten in my head, slowly, before letting him go. He grabs the blanket and sits first. He pats the spot beside him, but that isn’t the kind of cuddling I want.

I plop down onto his lap without warning and smile when he lets out a surprised grunt. “Sorry.” I do feel a bit bad, but not enough to move. “I just wants to be closer.”



“I’m okay with that,” he says easily. “Just remember you have a bony tush, Austin. Need to be careful plopping down on my lap.”

I rock my hips side-to-side in his lap and it gets a laugh out of him. His hands land on my hips and stills me. “Alright, alright. Grab the remote for me and then we can cuddle up for the night.”

I stand quickly to grab it from the other end table while Remi reclines the seat back. He shifts just slightly and I fit my body in the space between him and the arm rest. He’s warm and smells like a spicy cologne. My other Daddy always smelt like a rainstorm. I like both of them. Instead of feeling sad about that, it makes me smile.

“Comfy?” Remi asks once the blanket is tucked around both of us. His left arm wraps around my back, fingertips dancing lightly over the fabric. It’s soothing. His other hand is holding the remote toward the TV. My right arm is kind of trapped between our bodies, but my left hand moves to stroke against his beard.

“Comfiest,” I respond. “I like your beard.”

“Well thank you,” he says. He turns his head slightly and his beard brushes against my face where my head is resting on his shoulder. “Do you still like it?”

I giggle and blindly reach up to turn his face away from me. I let my fingers trail down his beard once more and then dance over his chest. I draw patterns on his shirt: hearts, rockets, letters. It’s just a plain white t-shirt but it’s tight across his chest. I laugh to myself and poke where I can see his nipple through the thin fabric.

“Hey now!” Remi calls out and moves his hand from my back to tickle at my sides. “What’s that for?”

I shrug. “You’re taking too long to pick a movie.”

“If you would look at the screen instead of me, you could help me pick one out.”

I sit up slightly, letting out an unexpected yawn. Going from playing to cuddling is already making me sleepy. “Oh, the one with the birdie please! I love that movie.”

“I don’t think I’ve seen this one,” Remi says. He chooses it and we wait for it to load. I settle back down against his body. I’m cocooned in a blanket of warmth, both from the actual blanket and from him. “Do you promise to not spoil everything for me?”

“Pinkie promise!” I hold up my left hand and he holds his right. We lock pinkies for a second before dropping our hands to his stomach. Our pinkies remain locked .

I don’t remember getting past the opening scene before I’m asleep.

I wake up in the same spot I fell asleep. So much for one of us taking the bed, because I’m currently splayed across Remi’s body, my head resting on his shoulder and facing the framed photo of myself and Paul, my Daddy. My first Daddy.

Remington shifts underneath me and our bodies rut together unintentionally. I pull away, squarely in my big headspace. And adult me knows that that is a line we can’t cross.

“Um, sorry for sleeping on you. We must have both fallen asleep.” I mumble the apology as I untangle myself and stand up. Once again, my bladder is calling for relief and I use it as my escape. Remi seems to still be asleep when I shut the bathroom door.

My cock is hard. Like, more than the typical morning wood hard.

Last night was amazing. There wasn’t even an ounce of sex or any type of tension between us. Remington was just giving me what I needed, some time to let my

problems go and express myself in a safe space. But my mind isn't catching up with the difference that it isn't Daddy out there waiting for me.

It's not my Daddy.

I turn the shower on and brush my teeth while I let it warm up. We have a long day ahead and I know I'm going to be bouncing between emotions and headspaces today as we got through all the stuff. So, taking care of certain things now makes the most sense .

I finish brushing my teeth and strip down for a shower. The steam clears my mind, but I waste no time wrapping my hand around my cock. I keep the water on my back and brace one hand against the far wall as I slide my hand up and down my shaft. I'm already leaking, small drops of precum dripping to the shower floor.

I tighten my fist, squeezing on an upstroke, and teasing my slit with a blunt nail. My legs quiver at the sensation. I move my other hand to tug on my balls and the feeling drives me on faster. I'm panting and moaning, sure that if Remington stood right outside the door he'd be able to tell what I was doing now.

I drop my head and watch myself. It's only been myself and my hand for the past three years. Well, on occasion, the dildo in the bottom drawer of my bedside table. I collect the next beads of precum on my fingers and rub it into my shaft to soften the glide. I run my thumb on the ridge of my head just as I feel the first tingly feelings of my orgasm spread.

"Fuck," I whisper, drawing out the word with the first spurt of cum against the shower wall. I continue to pump my hand, drawing out the orgasm until I can't stand it myself. I let my body slump forward to rest my head against the wall to catch my breath. It's over quickly, but much needed. Even with myself, it'd been a while.

A knock on the door fills the room and I jump to attention. I stick my head out of the shower curtain and call out, “Yeah?”.

“I was just going to let you know I’m making breakfast. I have coffee brewing too.”

“Okay, thank you. I’ll be out in a few minutes.”

“Do you mind if I take a shower after you?” I glance back at the spot where I can still see my own cum dripping down the wall. I’ll have to spend an extra minute making sure I clear all the evidence away. More than I usually would.

“Yeah, that’s fine. I have plenty of towels in here too.”

“Okay,” Remington says on the other side of the door. “Don’t take too long. Breakfast will be ready in about twenty minutes.”

“Thank you, D—”

Whoa. No. No. It’s just my brain messing with me. I was thinking about my Daddy and I just got myself off. I am certainly not thinking about Remington as my Daddy. Maybe having all this Little time is just confusing my brain more than it should. The memory of almost having an accident last night comes to mind too.

I’ll have to talk to Remington about it.

I finish my shower quickly after that, making double sure to use the detachable sprayer to clean the wall. I wrap the towel around my waist and open the door. The house smells amazing, but I can’t place it exactly. It’s sweet. Delicious.

I move to my room and dry off. I don’t know how the day is going to go, so I settle on a pair of black sweats with my favorite hoodie. It’s comfort over style today.

Remington is listening to music and washing dishes when I walk back out. The kitchen sink is set on the outside wall of the house, with a window that looks over the driveway and to the neighbor's house. I have a curtain that usually covers the window for privacy, but Remington has pulled it open this morning to let in sunlight. Same for the living room windows as well; the curtains are tied back enough that the overhead light isn't needed.

“Oh, are those muffins?” I ask, my line of sight zeroing in on the Blueberry goodness that is sitting on the counter. I reach for one, but without me seeing, Remington has spun around and catches my wrist. His fingers are sudsy and hold my arm from going any closer.

“Sorry, but they just came out. The pan and muffins need to cool down.” Remington drops my hand. “I don’t want you to burn yourself.”

“Oh, sorry. Thank you.” I lean my back against the corner of the open door frame. “You didn’t have to do-”

“I wanted to,” he says quickly. He turns back to what he was washing. There's a silence between us and I can see the tension in Remington's shoulders. “Do you want to talk about last night?”

“What about it?” I ask genuinely. “I thought it went okay?”

“Austin.” Remington says my name almost like I should know what he’s talking about. “Yes, the Little side of it was fun and I enjoyed it. Don’t get me wrong. You don’t feel like we maybe crossed a line with falling asleep like that?”

I scrunch my brows together in confusion. I hadn’t thought that, until now. I move fully into the kitchen and stand next to him. I place my hands on the counter, secretly picking at my nail bed on my right thumb. “Do you? I didn’t really think about it. I

remember plopping down on your lap and us talking a bit before I fell asleep. Should I have just gone to my room?"

I loved last night. It was innocent and fun and safe. I don't regret anything, but it makes me sad to think maybe he does. He rinses the final dish and dries his hands before turning to me.

"I don't regret it, Austin." His eyes are serious. So is his expression. "But I just want to make sure that we're doing this to make you comfortable. I don't want anything to happen that you might regret or it might be too much too soon for you. "

I back out from bringing up what I told myself I would talk to him about. Maybe later in the day. Or tomorrow. I take his hand in mine and smile. "I don't think anything we did last night was too much for me. I enjoyed myself."

"And you'll tell me if you're feeling uncomfortable?" Remington searches my face and I hope it relays the honesty in my words.

"Of course I will. But you have to tell me if anything is too much for you too. I know this isn't exactly a typical situation we're in, with our history, but I'm enjoying it so far."

"Okay, good. That's all I needed to hear." He rolls his shoulders, like my words were the thing he needed to let it go. "Now, let's see if these muffins are cooled enough yet. Go sit at the table and I'll bring it to you."

"Thank you," I say and do as he says.

When he brings me my plate, it's filled with more than a muffin. There are orange and apple slices, a dollop of peanut butter, the muffin, and a glass of milk. He goes back into the kitchen for his matching breakfast.

“I’ll have to run to the store at some point today to get stuff for tacos,” Remington says between bites. “Did you want to go with me or hang out here?”

“I might just hang out here,” I say. “Depending on what we can get through and all.”

“If any of that gets too hard for you, I need you to tell me.”

“I will, Remington. I promise, I’ll be okay to go through it.” I give him a smile before shoving a quarter of the muffin in my mouth.

“Small bites, Austin.” Remington immediately admonishes me and scoots the glass of milk closer. “Chew carefully. I don’t want you choking. ”

I roll my eyes at him playfully, but I do as he says and wash it down with the cold milk. We finish breakfast and Remington takes our dishes to the sink and washes them quickly. I’ve never had such an empty sink for so long. I usually let them pile until I don’t have anything else to cook with or eat off of. Not the best way to do it, but I swear dishes have secret dish sex and multiply if you leave them overnight.

“Are you ready?” Remington offers his hand to me and I take it, letting him pull me from the seat and to the spare bedroom. I take a shuddering breath and nod, giving Remington the permission to open the door for the first time in six months.

Cardboard boxes sit everywhere. Some are stacked, others are on their own. There are black scribbles on the sides to remind me what is in each box. I count ten boxes. And I know there are a few things tossed into the closet as well. A tote of embroidered items my Daddy made and a couple of photo albums.

“Okay, so I say if we move all the boxes to one side of the room and go through them one-by-one together. You can decide if you want to keep it with you, keep it packed away, or possibly donate or trash it. Does that sound good?”

“I guess so,” I say. I’m nervous. I don’t know why because Remington has seen all of this stuff already. At least most of it. He’s a Daddy himself and no virgin. He’s played with other Littles so the toys won’t be anything new, most likely has dressed them and even diapered them if the moment called for it. I wonder exactly what his preferences are and ask that as he cuts through the tape on the first box.

“What do you mean?” Remington glances up at me and smiles. We’re sitting across from each other on the carpeted floor. I haven’t completely abandoned this room for the time I’ve lived here. I come in and vacuum, knock down any spiderwebs in the corners, that sort of thing.

“With the whole age play,” I say matter-of-factly. “I know you have a membership to the club and you do scenes and stuff. I don’t remember you ever bringing a Little of your own around, but you’re really good at it. Even years ago, you would play with me and just go with everything like it was natural.”

“First off, it is natural. There’s nothing wrong with age regression play or kink. Second, I don’t really have a preference. It depends on the person, I guess. I’ve done scenes with different boys. Some were more Middles and liked video games or sports, some regressed fully until they were non-verbal. I like being able to play though, make up stories and have fun, but also cuddle and diaper them, dress them.”

“And do you like the naughty touches during play times?” Why? Why did I just ask that? My brain is really on a roll today with not thinking clearly. “I mean, I’m sorry. That’s personal.”

“You’re allowed to be curious and ask questions, Austin.” Remington is almost done pulling all the items out of this first box but I haven’t looked at a single one yet. “To answer the question, I don’t mind it either way. As long as it’s communicated beforehand and my boy knows what the safety word is and understands it. I like the dialogue it creates. I won’t do it if I don’t think their Little headspace will keep them



from safe wording.”

That is really smart, and I’m completely ignoring the way more than just my brain agrees with that statement. I took care of that in the shower for a reason, but talking about this so openly with Remington is nice. My Daddy and I would do some stuff, especially during bath times, but by the time the water drained, we’d either stop or I’d be coming out of my Little side and we’d move things to the bedroom. The thought of doing more was intriguing.

“What do you mean by dialogue?”

Remington finally moves the box out from between us and I look to the floor at the items. Most of them are toys. A few action figures and dolls, a baby doll I forgot about, and a couple of smaller blankets. I examine each one while Remington talks.

“Phrases that can be said during sex while my partner is Little that would be... stilted? I don’t know if that’s the right word for it, but things that your society-deemed typical couple wouldn’t think to say. Like you said, calling it naughty touches and things like that. I can’t really tell you specifics as it just happens in the moment, but talking during sex, laughing, having fun, is a big turn on for me and I’ve found I enjoy it both when my partner is in Little space or not. If that makes any sense.”

“Oh, okay. Yeah, Daddy and I used to do things like that,” I say. I look up from the baby doll to Remington. “Is it okay I still call him Daddy around you?”

“It’s fine, Austin.” Remington unfurls one of the blankets to reveal the design throughout. He starts folding again immediately. “We both agreed to a temporary thing for you to get some much needed Little time in. Paul was your Daddy, and a damn good one too if all these boxes are filled with toys and spoils for you.”

I sigh but smile, holding on to the other blanket now. “I think he was upset with himself sometimes because he couldn’t afford a membership to the club for us to go so he overcompensated a bit. But I didn’t need that. I loved just being at home with him, eating dinner, playing together. Bath time was always my favorite. I’m sure one of these boxes hold all my bath toys. I’d like to keep those for sure. ”

“Keep the rubber duckies and boats, got it.” I choose to keep the baby doll and one each of the action figure and doll before putting the others in a donate pile. “Is that something you would like to do this weekend? A bath with your toys?”

“I’ll think about it,” I say honestly. I would love a bath with bubbles and toys. The thought of Remi seeing me naked is a line I don’t know if I want to cross or not. Maybe I could wear my underwear?

We go through four more boxes like that, going back and forth to ask about each other’s preferences and experiences. A lot of our preferences align and for some reason, that makes my stomach swoop a bit more with each new reveal. I slip in and out of both headspaces. I don’t fully regress, but seeing some of my old toys has me getting sidetracked easily and Remi has to remind me to focus over and over.

“Austin?” Remi gets my attention from where I’m laying on my stomach sorting through a container of toy cars. The racecar rug is laid out in the middle of the floor, courtesy of Remi. I look up with a smile, totally relaxed about going through these boxes. All the pressure and scary thoughts of going through the things alone are gone as Remi asks questions about items or simply lets me take a minute to play with something he pulls out of the box. “Do you need to go potty? We’ve been in here for a little while.”

“Oh, um, maybe.” I don’t really feel like I need to go, but after last night I appreciate that he is asking.

“How about we stop for lunch now?” I nod again at his question. “What would you like to eat?”

“Can we do soup and grilled cheese?” I smile and set the box of cars to the side.

“Of course we can. Go wash up and I’ll get it started.”

## Page 6

*Source Creation Date: July 18, 2025, 10:27 am*

Remi lets me spend so much time playing today, doing everything for me with ease. He cuts my grilled cheese into three slices during lunch after a failed attempt at dunking the whole thing into a delicious tomato soup. Then, the fight I put up for a nap time. He gave me a look. The look. The one that says 'Daddy isn't playing and you'll get in trouble if you don't listen'. I took an hour nap and woke up to actual cookies, fresh from the oven. And a slightly more organized playroom.

There still isn't much in the way of furniture in the room. There's a tall, white dresser where Remi folds and puts away most of my Little clothes. He shows me that the bottom drawer is where he put the diapers and training pants. My cheeks flush at that, but I can't deny that I want to put one on. It's been so long. There is also one of those toy racks, with the plastic buckets on each level so you can organize toys, books, whatever. And boy do I have books now.

I smile when Remi opens that final box. It is filled to the brim. He counts them out and it comes to seventy-six. Picture books, chapter books, even a few coloring books were thrown in there. The final piece of furniture is a tiny table, where we put said coloring books and the crayons I found in the art box. There are no chairs, but it's perfect height, I can just sit on the floor and use it.

Remi leaves me to play, keeping the door open so he can see me if he leans around the kitchen door frame. He double checks that I'll be okay when he leaves to go to the store. He promises to be back in no less than thirty minutes since the store isn't far from my house.

I get myself off for a second time that day, right there in the playroom, in under twenty minutes. I hide the evidence of my orgasm by changing clothes, changing into

one of the outfits we unpacked. Including a pair of training pants. I'm still wearing them now, but Remi doesn't know that. It scares me that I kind of want him to know I'm wearing them.

During dinner, I ask him if he wants to stay again, so I can maybe wake up Little one more day. I feel like I'm being selfish, but he smiles over his tacos and agrees with ease, giving me the Daddy voice when I try to insist he take the bed.

Hours after bedtime, I'm still wide awake. I don't know what I'm going to do about my swirling thoughts. My jumbled, confusing, won't-let-me-go-to-fucking-sleep swirling thoughts. I toss around to my other side once again and stare at the clock on the bedside table. It's four AM and I'm wide awake.

I grunt and flop onto my back. I hear something thud on the floor and realize I probably knocked my phone off the bed. I didn't put it on the charger tonight because I never once used it today. It was nice to disconnect from all the outside worries for once.

"Austin?" Remi's voice is at my door. It startles me but the door opens before I can sit up. "Are you okay?"

"Oh yeah, sorry. Wow, you have good hearing." I squint when he turns the light on. He's shirtless and his chest hair is on full display. His body is a sight for my tired eyes. I can see his eyes are hooded, too. "I think I just knocked my phone off the side of the bed. No big deal."

"Why are you so awake?" He doesn't step any further into the room. "Have you slept at all?"

I shrug instead of saying anything.

“Do you want to talk about it?” This time, Remi does move into the room. He sits on the corner of my bed and reaches a hand out to squeeze my foot through the blanket. “What’s keeping you awake?”

“Just a lot of thoughts swirling around.” I make a swirling motion with my finger next to my head. “I had a lot of fun today and knowing that we tackled the boxes and it wasn’t as hard as I thought it would be was nice.”

“The room looks great,” he says. “And I may have ordered you a few things while you took your nap earlier.”

“What? Remi, that’s too-”

“It isn’t too much for me, Austin. I want to do this for you. It’s just a chair and some new curtains, nothing fancy.” He looks at me for a long moment. I concede easily but he still watches me. “Something else is on your mind, though. We’ve talked all day today, Austin. What’s still bothering you?”

I’ll have to tell him eventually, right? We still have one more morning together before he needs to go home and get ready for work Monday. And I’m hoping that maybe we could make this a weekend thing, if he’s willing. I take a deep breath and push the covers away. I’m wearing a pair of black shorts that only hit mid thigh on me. I watch Remi’s eyes track from my waist up to my eyes slowly. I ditched my shirt somewhere around one AM.

“Today felt good,” I start. I’m standing right in front of him. If he parted his legs anymore, I could slip in between them. “It felt natural, especially this evening when I was fully in my Little space.”

“I’m glad to hear that,” Remi says. I can see him swallow roughly. “But a good day isn’t what’s keeping you awake, Austin.”

“That’s just it. It felt like I had my Daddy the whole day. You and Paul are so much alike in the way you do things when it comes to rules and listening, playing, cooking, asking if I’m okay, checking in.” Now that I’m talking, I don’t think I can stop until it’s all laid out for him.

Because I realize the truth in that moment.

I want Remington Higgins to be my new Daddy.

“But you also do things your own way. You are more firm when it comes to me disagreeing with you, like with nap time. And the way you explained how you are with past Littles...” I want that.

“Austin?” Remington reaches one hand up and takes mine in his. “What are you getting at?”

We’re both consenting adults. Yes, we have a history that includes my first Daddy. But he’s not here with us anymore, hasn’t been for three years. I still miss him like crazy and will always love him and cherish our moments. But being around Remi? It’s like I can finally breathe and relax. I no longer have to do everything on my own. We already have that foundation of trust and we can build on that. I’m sure Paul would be okay with this. I know he would be, actually. Because he trusted Remington as much as I do now.

Instead of saying all of that to him in a jumbled mess of words, I direct his hand to the waistband of my shorts and hold his hand there until he gets the hint to pull them down. I watch with rapt attention as he licks his lips, eyes flicking up to me a moment before tugging just a part of the shorts down. His breath hitches in his throat.

“I put them on when you left for the store,” I say. “I’ve been thinking about it all day, Remi. You are everything I never thought I would find again. It shouldn’t surprise

me, really. You already know so much about me, but we've shared a lot today too. I feel safe doing this again. I want to explore more. With you."

It's my turn to swallow when he drops his hand and looks back up at me with so many questions behind those brown eyes. I brace myself to ask the one question that could make or break our friendship.

"Will you be my Daddy?"

"Oh, Austin." Remi says the words out of surprise. At least I hope that's what it is. "Are you sure that is something you want? It's only been two days, sweetie. You haven't had Little time in a while and I don't want you to confuse—"

I look away, tears threatening to spill. I was sure he would say yes. But he's listing off things, assuming that I'm just confused? I mean, yeah, I was confused this morning when I woke up cuddled on top of him and hard. And I was confused when I almost called him Daddy. But I got past that and saw, and felt, that we could be compatible .

"Austin. Look at me, please." Remi's voice is stern and I feel like that isn't the first time he said it since I've been fighting off the tears. I blink rapidly and raise my hand to swipe at the corner of my eye. I can feel full sobs working their way up my throat from my heart. "Baby, I'm not saying no. I'm just asking if you're sure because that's a big step. That's more than us just hanging out a couple days a week. Because if we do this—"

Remi's hands land gently on my hips and he tugs me closer, spreading his legs so I can stand between them. My hands go to his shoulders to keep myself steady. "If we do this, it's a lifestyle. I don't think I'd be satisfied with just scenes with you. I'd want to cook for you, help you relax, play, pick out clothes. But I would also want a partner when you're not in Little space."



“I want all of that too,” I say honestly. “I promise, I’ve thought this out. I know that I’m asking more than just you being my Daddy. I’m asking for dating, exclusivity. I want all of it. All of you.”

“I want that too,” he says. I can see more words are about to follow. A proposition. I let my shoulders drop when he proves my thought right. “But how about we go on a date before we make anything official? We can go grab lunch tomorrow before I head home? We’ll need to talk, really talk, about what we want.”

It’s reasonable. I know that asking Remi to be my Daddy means a lot and I’m glad he isn’t just jumping in and saying yes. It sucks in the moment, but I know we’ll be better for it. He is looking out for both of us to make sure that we will work as a team, a couple. Not just as Daddy and Little, which is what we’ve spent the majority of the weekend as. I smile and nod my agreement to the plan .

“But let’s talk about you giving yourself some naughty touches while I wasn’t here, shall we?”

“Um.” I can feel my embarrassment and since I’m not wearing a shirt, I know he can see my skin flush with the emotion. I try to step away, but his hands hold firmly to my hips. I fake a yawn. “I think I’m really tired. We should both get some sleep now.”

“You can go a few more minutes,” he says without hesitation. I fight the urge to roll my eyes and decide to get this conversation over with quickly.

“I woke up this morning cuddled next to you and hard so I may have gotten off in the shower too.” Remi smiles.

“Oh, I know that one. I was about to knock to let you know I was making breakfast, but I heard your moans. You weren’t even trying to hide it.”

“I actually was,” I say defensively. Which doesn’t help my case. “But back to the point. After that, we got to work and the more we talked, the more it came clear to me what I wanted. And then you were talking about your preferences with having fun sex and there were certain parts of my body that enjoyed hearing that.”

“We’ll talk about it more after our date,” Remi says. I know he was playing, wanting to lighten the mood by asking that question. “Right now, we both really need some sleep. Let’s get you tucked back in.”

“I know we just kind of poured our hearts out here,” I say. “But, I mean, you can always sleep in here tonight. Nothing has to happen, obviously. I kind of don’t want to be alone after all that.”

Remi smiles. It’s genuine and he shows his perfectly white teeth. His beard is a bit scraggly, probably from sleeping on the couch and not having his products at the house. “No funny business tonight, okay?”

“Scouts honor,” I say with my own genuine smile. I probably should pause to think about the fact that this will be the first time I’ve shared a bed with anyone since Paul. But I let the thought trail off without a fuss, letting Remi’s hands tuck me back in under the blanket. My eyes track him as he moves to turn the light back off. A few seconds later, I feel the other side of the bed dip. “Goodnight Remi.”

I kind of can’t wait until I can call him Daddy.

When I wake again, I’m alone in bed. But I’m in the middle, a clear sign that I rolled over and cuddled with Remi while sleeping. Did that make him uncomfortable and he went to the couch? I move my hand, noting that the sheets don’t feel cold. Maybe he left the bed recently, then?

Opening my eyes and sitting up, I rub the sleep from them. My sleep addled brain is

slower to start, but as our talk from just a couple of hours ago comes back to me, I don't know whether I want to smile or cry. I asked Remington to be my Daddy. And he hadn't said yes.

He didn't say no, either, but he didn't immediately say yes.

There's a sound of a toilet flushing moments before Remington is standing in the doorway. "You're awake." He smiles. It's easy and genuine. That's a good thing, right? I take in his soft lips, his beard that's a bit scraggly this morning and the thin pajama pants that aren't hiding much of anything. "I was just coming to wake you up for breakfast. "

Remington walks to the edge of the bed and holds his hands out. I push the blankets off my legs and swing them around, taking his hands so he can pull me to my feet. We're standing inches apart. I risk looking up at his face.

"You have some sleepies in the corners of your eyes," Remington says. His hand reaches up and swipes at the spots on the inside of my eyes. I close my lids and let him get the remnants of a good night sleep. When I open them again, he's smiling and runs his hands down my arms. I can feel myself relaxing and slipping into that familiar easy feeling I've missed so much the last three years.

Remington steps away and turns to pull a shirt from one of my drawers. It's a faded yellow, but letting him put it on reminds me that I'm wearing training pants. I shift my hips a little extra as we walk to the table, loving the feeling against my skin. The sensation against my sensitive areas is exhilarating and I feel myself stiffening up. I stop shifting my hips.

"What's that look for?" Remington asks when I sit with a bit more force than needed.

"Nothing."

“Austin.” Remington stands in the doorway of the kitchen and fixes me with a stare. That look does not help the situation rising. Literally. I sigh. Another thing Remi and Paul have in common. His stare is no-nonsense.

“I forgot I was wearing the training pants,” I answer honestly. “I like the feeling.”

Remington doesn’t say anything to me, but there’s a smirk tugging at his lips. He turns around, leaving me to my thoughts. What does that mean? Does he know that my cock is currently pressing against the fabric? I shift in the seat, the sensation turning from building pleasure to a bit uncomfortable .

“Austin?” I look up when Remi says my name. I didn’t realize I was fiddling with my hands, picking at my nail beds again. “Go potty and I’ll have breakfast ready.”

“Yes.” I rush from the chair and head to the bathroom. There’s a towel hanging on the hook where Remi took a shower last night. I should take one today. Before our date later. I relieve myself, smiling when I hear Remi remind me to wash my hands.

I wiggle my fingers at him before sitting back down. There are apple slices again. And a piece of toast cut into slices with scrambled eggs. And none of the food is touching. I smile at Remi. “Thanks.”

“Eat up and then you can play for a bit while I finish organizing the kitchen. I’ve moved some things around, but I’ll show you where all of it is.”

“Can I take Koka and Kola in there with me?” I ask the question around a bite of food. Koka, along with the other stuffies that I’ve had for years, are getting more than enough love and playtime this week. I feel bad that I was too scared something would happen to them that I kept them on a shelf all this time.

“Of course you can,” Remi says. “And please chew your food before talking.”

I nod and smile. We finish breakfast in a matter of minutes, Remi dumping the rest of my apple juice from a regular cup to one of the sippy cups unpacked yesterday. I smile at it, remembering when Paul got it for me. We'd been on a trip alone and forgot to pack my sippy. It was a last minute panic buy, but I love it. It's a pretty shade of blue.

"Go ahead and I'll be in once I clean up," Remi suggests. I thank him quietly and move to the room. Being in here yesterday while we were unpacking and going through everything was freeing. It was nice to go down memory lane with someone.

This morning? I sit down at the table and slowly pick through the coloring books. Most of them are half-filled already. I pick up one with exotic animals and smile at the different colors that pass page-by-page. Paul's signature is on a couple of the pages, signaling that he had been the one to color it.

The crayons give the same memories. Broken ones where I pressed down too hard, some with the paper peeled off when they started getting too small. I look around and let out a heavy sigh.

I miss my Daddy. The lingering memories that run through my mind of things in the past make me sad. I can feel myself relax when I think about Remi now, of him in this room and playing with me. I picture him sitting with me to color or laying in the floor to play with cars.

"Hey, you forgot someone." Remi's voice hits my ears before I see him. I look up and his face immediately falls. The smile drops and he's by my side, sitting down next to me, before the first tear slips down my cheek. "What's the matter?"

"I'm just thinking about my Daddy and you," I mumble. My chin is tucked to my chest and I can feel the drops of tears hitting my bare leg.

“Oh, sweetie. Come here.” I go easily into his lap and curl up, burying my face in his chest. His arms wrap around me and I can feel him rocking back and forth. “I know you miss him. I miss him, too. He was a great person. ”

“The best,” I say. I don’t know if he can hear me. I reach a hand up and swipe at my cheek. Then I realize what I said and sit up to look at him. “Not that you’re not great, too.”

“It’s okay,” he says with a small chuckle. He flattens a hand against the side of my head and cuddles me closer. “Do you want to maybe go to the living room and play for a bit?”

“Um.” I think about it. I glance around and look at the room from the comfort of Da-Remi’s lap. Then I look back at him. “I think I’m okay. But can you stay in here with me?”

“Of course.” Remi kisses the top of my head and I finally pull out of his lap. “Can I color with you?”

“I want the animals,” I say and grab the coloring book I was flipping through already. I turn a few pages to one that hasn’t been marked yet. It’s a lion with two cubs. I remember that Remi brought my koalas in and look over at the animals sitting behind Remi. He sees my look and reaches over for them.

“What color should my dragon be?” Remi asks. He’s sorting through the different options. “Hmm, I think we might need to refresh this stock, Aus. I don’t see a single glitter crayon. How am I supposed to color a sparkly dragon without sparkles?”

I smile at the nickname.

## Page 7

*Source Creation Date: July 18, 2025, 10:27 am*

“Is pasta okay?” I ask Austin when he slips into the passenger seat of my car. I reach over him and buckle his seat belt before turning the key and starting the car. I look over at Austin and hide the smile fighting to show. He looks absolutely adorable in the hat and scarf I made him put on before we walked out the door. The weather is chilly at best, the wind whipping around making it even colder. He doesn’t look at me and crosses his arms. “ Aus, if you’re going to pout, we’ll just stay right here.”

He spent the entire morning in the playroom. Jumping from coloring to stuffies to cars and then, finally, to the action figures and dolls he kept. It was all fun and games until I mentioned that we were going to need to clean up if we wanted to go outside.

The one thing I didn’t know about Austin Westcott is that he has a bit of a temper. I don’t know if it is something emotional on a deeper level or just how he is in his Little space, but after five minutes of corner time, he calmed down enough to help with putting the toys away. I caved and promised that he could order dessert for helping. We would definitely have to talk about it.

I know he’s going through a lot right now and reintroducing his Little side after years, there is going to be an adjustment. His question last night continues to rumble through my head the whole morning, and even now. Could I be a Daddy to Austin? I don’t know if that would be overstepping Paul’s wishes for Austin to be cared for. Austin seemed so sure of us moving forward, though.

“Pasta is good,” he finally says and I smile. The first few minutes of the ride are silent. Sunday traffic isn’t the best and we hit a long line at a red light quickly. “I’m sorry. For being rude. I shouldn’t have argued with you.”

Well, that answers that question. The temper must be him working through his feelings. I want to praise him for apologizing on his own. “You’re working through a lot of big emotions, Austin. I understand it. We’ll talk about it more after we eat.”

“Is that something you like? The bratty Littles? I’m not usually like that and I feel really bad.” He mumbles something into his chest and I glance over at him. The line is barely moving.

“What was that?” I ask. I fix him with a quick stare before inching forward in line.

“I said I like being a good boy. I don’t like getting in trouble.”

I smile and reach a hand over and place it on his leg. “I like when you’re a good boy, too, Aus. Let’s get through today, okay? And we’ll talk about more.”

“I like that name.” I pull my hand back and make a left turn. The simple restaurant isn’t too much further. It’s a pasta pit, casual, with inside or outside seating. “Aus.”

“Yeah?” I like the nickname too. “What about Aussie? You know, with the koalas. Koalas are from Australia, right?”

“They are,” Austin says. “And I like that one too. Paul called me Aus all the time, but Aussie is fun.”

“Aussie it is,” I say matter-of-factly. I make another turn and pull into the parking lot. It doesn't look busy today. It’s a bit after lunch so most of the crowds have left. After Aussie's Little time and the short tantrum, he took a shower and got dressed in a pair of jeans and a blue sweater. He scowled the whole fifteen seconds it took me to fix the hat and scarf on him. I wasn’t going to push him out of Little space just for a lunch date, but he seemed to be coming to his big headspace over the last half hour.



I step out of the car and move to the other side to open it for Austin. He gives me a quiet, “Thank you” before we start toward the building. I hold the door open for him to step through first.

“I haven’t been here in a while,” Austin says. We wait by the hostess stand to be seated.

“I’m here too much,” I say jokingly. “Which is probably not a good thing with my slowing metabolism.”

Being firmly in my forties is something I don’t want to think about. My body is definitely not what it was when I was younger. I still hit the gym semi-regularly and my job gets me out of the office from time-to-time to do some physical labor.

“I think you look great,” Austin mumbles when we follow the hostess through the restaurant. We are sat at a table beside a side window. There’s not much of a view, but it does allow us some sunlight filtering through.

I wait until the young woman leaves with our drink order before responding. “Thank you, Austin.”

I watch Austin look over the menu. There aren’t too many options, but the food here is great. The whole space is homey, a slice of homecooked Italian meals amid a constantly growing city. The whole weekend has felt so natural to me. What was supposed to be just a couple of hours on Friday turned into days together and I know that I’m already in this too deep. Caring for Aussie is natural, fun. I’ve missed having someone around long enough to cook for, wake up with in the morning, spend the day playing. The club is great for a night or two, but most unattached Littles are unattached for a reason.

Right now, though, I am seeing Austin Westcott. The Austin that is a manager at a

coffee shop, who has a house, has thirty years of life behind him filled with happy and sad moments. His hair is only a couple of inches long, just starting to curl at the ends and does this cute thing where it flops into his eyes. Blue eyes shine even with the overcast sky outside the window.

Austin looks up and catches me watching him. Instead of averting my gaze, I smile and Austin returns it easily. “Decide what you want?” I ask.

“I already know what I want,” Austin says confidently without breaking eye contact. “But as for food, I’ll probably do the Spaghetti Pomodoro.”

“Good choice,” I say. “At least I don’t have to make you eat your vegetables. ”

“I love cooked tomatoes,” Austin says. “Now, other vegetables are a different story. I’m not a big fan of spinach or carrots, unless they’re steamed. Crunchy carrots are a no-go.”

I make a mental note of all of that. Steamed veggies are a go for future meals. The waitress comes by and takes our order. I go with my usual, Mushroom Pasta Carbonara. Austin wrinkles his nose in the most adorable way when our food is brought out.

We make easy conversation between bites of food. Austin tells me more about the coffee shop and what his week is going to look like. I tell him about the business, surprised that he asks genuine follow up questions about it. He informs me that he took a business class in college.

The conversation turns to his life growing up. I only met him through Paul when they started dating and while we all hung out frequently, I don’t know a lot about his life before Paul.

"My parents are supportive enough," he starts with a one-shoulder shrug. "We don't talk a lot. When I was younger, they were a lot more hands-on and involved in mine and my sister's lives, but over the last ten years we've drifted apart. I haven't even heard from anyone since Thursday."

"I'm sorry, Austin." I say quietly. I did notice that his phone stayed in the same spot on the kitchen counter all day yesterday. Austin twirls another bite of his Spaghetti on his fork while I talk. "My parents are my role models, always will be. My dad passed away seven years ago, but my mom is still running circles around her kids and the grandkids."

"I'm sorry to hear that," he says before swallowing. His eyes widen when I look at him, silently reminding him of my directions this morning to chew before speaking. He does just that. "Sorry." At least he has the audacity to sound honest. I smile at the simple word and drop it this time.

We continue to talk about anything and everything. The conversation flows from one topic to another seamlessly. We cover basic family dynamics, school, schedules for work, favorite things. We both like cooking, which doesn't surprise me after this weekend. Austin admits that he doesn't like to cook for just himself so I promise to share dinner as much as possible.

The waitress comes by twice during our lunch to check on everything and refill our drinks. As promised, I let Austin pick out a dessert before asking for the check. To no surprise, he chooses the slice of chocolate cake.

I laugh and reach over with a napkin when he gets a smear of icing at the corner of his lips. I don't even register that we're in public, in a crowded restaurant, until Austin's cheeks flush a bright pink. "Oh, sorry. Habit, I guess. Someone is a messy eater."

“I like it,” Austin mumbles, but I do hear the words this time. Austin puts the fork down and it’s his turn to fix me with a look. A look that asks if we’re going to talk about what happened at four A.M this morning. I know what my answer is going to be. I knew it in the middle of the night.

“Let’s get to the car,” I say. I don’t want to have this conversation around strangers. I laugh at the speed at which Austin stands up. “Aussie, slow down. You can’t get in the car until I unlock it, anyway.”

Austin rolls his eyes at me but I just smile. And maybe take an extra second before I decide to stand up with him. I was kidding myself this morning. After hearing him yesterday morning in the shower and then him telling me that he got off a second time, I fought myself on the same feeling. I’d also been hard when we woke up cuddled together this morning. At some point during the night, Austin moved across the middle of the bed and was curled into my side.

It all feels natural, too.

I don't look at Austin until we are back in the car. When I do, everything clicks. His younger features are all hopeful for the talk ahead. I know I'm not getting any younger and I have no respect for people that play games and string someone along without an answer. His eyes match the blue of his sweater, arms bulging the fabric just a bit. I don’t recall him ever working out when he would come to the gym with me and Paul, but his job has to require some lifting, right?

“If we do this,” I start. I smile when he shifts in his seat, turning nearly his whole body toward me. I lose the words I meant to say. Neither of us break the silence, just look at each other. The years of knowing Paul and Austin as a couple flash through my mind rapidly. I’d been jealous of their relationship from time to time, sure, but I’d never once been jealous of Paul because of Austin. They were a packaged deal and everyone knew that. I’d been happy for them. But now?

Seeing Austin sitting there, tongue darting out to lick his bottom lip. His eyes hold mine. I'm seeing him in a totally different light now. I reach a hand up and cup the back of his head, pulling him toward me. I lean forward at the same time, slowly, giving enough time for Austin to change his mind.

Our lips meet over the console between our seats. It's a small kiss, just lips pressing against lips. I know my beard is scratching against his chin. His lips are soft, smooth. We move our lips together, not taking it any further, but I don't want to pull away just yet. Austin's hand lays against my chest, not pushing or pulling. Just touching .

It's another several moments before we both pull away. I lick my lips instinctively, tasting the remnants of sweetness from the cake he had just minutes ago. He does the same and then offers a shy smile. His cheeks are tinged pink again.

"That was..." Austin lets the sentence trail off but I nod, agreeing. "Does this mean that you'll think about my question from last night?"

"Baby." I finally move my hand from the back of his head to cup his cheek. My thumb glides over his bottom lip. "I would love to be your Daddy."

Austin's expression morphs in slow motion. It starts in his eyes when the words register. Then his nose does that excited scrunch that is absolutely adorable. Finally, his lips break out in a wide smile. Then he's leaning forward again, pressing our lips together more firmly. He parts his lips, giving me the go ahead to deepen the kiss.

Our tongues slide together, not fighting for dominance, but exploring. I let myself get lost in the feeling. Not thinking about our past or memories we shared. This is just us.

A new start for both of us.

It's Austin that pulls back first. He is smiling, but the rest of his expression is serious.

It's a mix that confuses me. "What is it?"

"I'm just happy," he says. "After everything that happened, this is honestly the last thing that I thought could come out of it, but I'm glad it has. I know it's only been a few days, Remi, but it feels good. I feel happy for the first time in a while."

"I'm glad, sweetie." I brush his hair back and smile. "I feel the same way. How about we head back to your place and we can talk a little bit before I need to go home?"

"Do you have to go home?" Austin's voice is playful and I reach over to make sure he's buckled in. I may have taken advantage of being close to him again to give him one more quick kiss.

"I do," I say. "I have a lot of stuff to get ready for the coming week. But I'll make sure that we don't have to wait until next weekend to see each other again."

The drive back to his house is quiet, but comfortable. I know that we have a lot to figure out. The main one being how Austin would get his Little time. Having time just on the weekends won't be enough. It wouldn't be enough for me to play Daddy a couple days a week. I live a good forty-five minutes from Austin, which puts a strain on things. I have toys and other things at my place, but I know that Austin is attached to his stuff. And generic toys that other Littles have played with doesn't feel like enough for him. He deserves all of his own things.

Austin leads me inside this time. The second the door closes, I'm pushed against it and Austin leans up on his tip toes to kiss me. Our bodies press together, hips aligned with each others. The weight of Austin's body against mine is something else and I can feel the blood rushing to my cock. But we need to talk first.

My hands move up his body and hold on to his shoulders. He pouts when I add just enough pressure to pull his lips from mine. If I wasn't trying to be the bigger person,

the Daddy, I would pout too. It's adorable on him, though.

“We need to talk, Austin. Lay down the ground rules and expectations first.”

## Page 8

*Source Creation Date: July 18, 2025, 10:27 am*

“You’re in a much better mood this week,” Jason remarks Wednesday morning.

It doesn’t surprise me,. I’ve had a couple of regulars, and even Tyler tell me the same thing since Monday. I am in a good mood, but it isn’t like I can announce to the general public, ‘Hey, yeah, I’m in a great mood because I finally have a Daddy again that plays with me and helps me through some big emotions’. Somehow, I don’t think people would look at me quite the same.

Remi, for what it’s worth, is constantly checking in with me. Before leaving on Sunday, he made sure to prep dinner for Monday and Tuesday. All I needed to do was put it in the oven. He also sent me funny texts throughout the day and called me on the phone to read me a story. It's nice, but I’m looking forward to him coming back to the house to stay tonight .

“It was a good weekend,” I finally answer Jason. He’s sipping on his morning coffee while I open the till. “I got to meet up with a friend and just have a relaxing weekend.”

“The old friend excuse, huh?” He raises his eyebrows over the rim of his cup. I roll my eyes.

“It’s not like that.” Okay, maybe it is exactly like that, but I’m not about to tell Jason about my life outside of work. “We just had a good time hanging out.”

“Well, whatever you millennials call it, you look happier than I’ve seen you in a while.”



I don't say anything back because I don't know what to say. I am happier. There's also a small feeling of guilt in the back of my mind. I know it's crazy to feel bad for moving on, but I know those that knew Paul and Remington might look at our new relationship dynamic as odd.

It makes sense to me. To us. I never once saw Remi in that light when I was with Paul. He was always the friend that came around and would play with me. Or, if we had company over, he would joke and be the life of the party. He worked hard at his business and helped people whenever he could.

I try my best to not overthink every moment of our weekend and compare it to how my relationship with Paul was. They are similar in a lot of ways, but Remi is definitely not the pushover Paul was. At least not yet. I'm sure I can wear him down. I didn't lie when I said I'm not typically a bratty Little. Corner time is not fun; I much prefer the praises and rewards. That doesn't mean I won't try and find Remi's soft spots and push those buttons.

The day goes by smoothly. Tyler is more comfortable with the policies for the shop and making the food on his own. I showed him on Monday how to put in for time off, then got concerned when he sent in four different requests, all listed with comments for 'doc appointment'. I don't need to know why he's taking off, but I hope everything is okay and I'm keeping an eye on him.

We stay busy enough that I don't check my phone but once. I know Remi is meeting with a family today and won't have his phone much either. By the time I'm closing up for the night, there's a single text from Remi.

Remington

Can't wait to see you tonight.

I drive home with a smile on my face. There is a large box sitting on the porch, nearly my size, but the living room light is on and Remi's car is parked in the driveway. I park behind him, smiling wider because I know he's staying tonight.

"You know there is a large package on the porch, right?" I call out when I open the door. The whole house smells amazing. I can hear music coming from the kitchen along with the smells.

Remi pokes his head around the door frame, smiling wide. He's already in his casual clothes for the evening. I can't help the returning smile at the thought of him being so comfortable in my house. "It's the chair that I ordered on Saturday. I figured once we eat and get you in your PJ's, I'll bring it in and put it together."

I finally close the distance between us and plaster my body against his back. My hands snake around his waist and squeeze him in a hug. I've missed him. It's only been two days, but call me selfish. "I missed you. "

"I missed you too," Remi says. "Do you want to go change while I finish dinner?"

I kiss the back of his shoulder and pull away. I take a couple steps away before stopping. The one thing that has been on my mind all day. I'm scared to ask, though.

"Aussie?" Remi's voice catches me off guard, but his hand on my lower back settles me. "What's going on in your brain?"

I don't turn around when I ask what is floating in my mind. I stare at the table and chairs. "Can we do bath time tonight?"

Remi turns me around and lifts my chin to meet his eyes. He's smiling. His face tilts down and our lips press together tenderly. His fingers are still holding my head tilted back and I part my lips for him. I can feel everything slipping away. No thoughts of

work or how people would see our relationship. Everything slips away but the feeling of being safe and cared for.

I've missed that feeling so much.

"We'll take one after dinner, my little messy eater." I smile at the words. And then giggle when Remi's beard brushes against my skin as he kisses down my neck. He nuzzles into my shoulder with his own chuckle. "How about you just go change into some shorts for now?"

I'm well aware that shorts aren't going to hide what is going on behind my work pants right now. But I remember the talk we had on Sunday, that I need to ask for what I want because Remi- Daddy- isn't a mind reader. Maybe I'll ask during bath time.

Dinner tonight is mashed potatoes, macaroni and cheese, and fried chicken. Healthy? Not really, but the prepped dinners Remi left for me the last two nights were filled with veggies. Steamed carrots, thankfully. Daddy promised to respect my food preferences and not make me try new things unless I ask to.

We sit in our usual seats now, on either corner so we're close but can still see each other without having to turn our bodies. My food is arranged on a plate that has the different sections so none of it is touching. I have a sippy cup of orange juice tonight. I know Remi saw my mild collection of bottles in one of the boxes, but I only use those on rare occasions, on particularly stressful days when I really need comfort. The week of Paul's passing, I drank almost exclusively out of one whenever I was alone.

"How is someone so adorable so darn messy?" Daddy asks when he's wiping my face. I grin up at him as he wipes once more over my chin. So I maybe, might have, intentionally made a bit of a mess because I love the way he always wipes my face

off for me. “Let me clear this up and we’ll go run your bath. Do you want bubbles and toys?”

“Yes, please.” I take my own plate to the sink and we wash them together. I don’t have a dishwasher in this house, but the other dishes Daddy cooked in are already clean and drying on the counter.

“Okay, Aussie.” Daddy’s hands guide me back out of the kitchen and to the bathroom. “You sit here and I’m going to run the bath and get everything ready. What do you want to wear when you get out?”

“Um.” I think about it. I try to remember everything I have now that we’ve gone through all the clothes. “I don’t know. Surprise me?”

Daddy checks the temperature on the water, sitting on the edge of the tub. He turns his head to look at me over his shoulder. “Do you want to wear a diaper tonight or training pants?”

The question is asked so nonchalantly. I think about it for a second. “Diaper. If that’s okay.”

“Of course it is, Aussie.” Daddy moves to grab the bottle of bubble bath we put under the sink and squirts some out under the running water. The scent of blueberries fills the room immediately. “Do you need help getting undressed?”

“I can do it,” I say with a smile.

“Okay, then you strip down and I’ll go get your clothes ready. I’ll be right back.”

He leaves the door open and I pull my shirt over my head. Then drop my shorts and boxer briefs to the floor. I look at myself for just a moment before I move to sit in the

tub. It's only a couple of inches deep right now, barely hitting my ankles. But the water is warm and the bubbles are building up so my lower half is hidden by the time Daddy comes back.

Well, kind of comes back. A rubber ducky lands in the water, startling me. I look up to the open door but no one is standing there. I reach for the duck when a second one plops into the tub, hitting a patch of bubbles and sending them flying in the air. This time I catch Daddy disappearing from the doorway and giggle.

"How many of these do you want?" I hear him ask. "Because I have, like, a billion."

"I don't have that many duckies!" I call out. He reappears and, admittedly, does have a whole bucket full. Without question, he dumps the contents in the water and I'm surrounded by different colored floating ducks, a toy boat, and three of those fish that squirt the water from their mouths. I grab a ducky in each hand and then look at all the others before looking back up at Daddy. "Okay, maybe I have a few."

"A few?" He laughs and gets down on the floor. I have a bath rug, but it doesn't offer much padding. "Aussie, I think you are single-handedly keeping the bath toy market in business. There's still a whole other bucket. Which one is your favorite?"

Daddy slips out of his shirt and I try not to ogle him. But how can I not? His chest is broad and muscled, solid but also the perfect shape to cuddle against. The hair isn't centered just over his pecs or down the middle, it's all over his tummy too. Soft, dark brown hair, with a trail that disappears under his pants.

"My eyes are up here, Aussie."

My whole body flushes at being caught staring at him. I look back up and then to the water. Sitting in the water, it's up to my belly now. I watch Daddy reach over and turn the water off. I pick a duck at random and hold it up. It's blue and has specks of

glitter on it.

“I like this one.”

“And does this one have a name?” Daddy’s other hand brushes up and down my back, splashing water on me. “Oh, let me guess. Is it... Quackers?”

I giggle and shake my head, thinking for a moment. “No silly. It’s Blucky.”

“Blucky?” Daddy tilts his head and squints his eyes at me.

“Yeah. Blue and ducky together.” I hold him up higher and look at Daddy. “Blucky!”

I submerge the duck into the water and continue to play. Daddy joins in, helping me build a story of Blucky and Fred — Daddy named the green one— going on an adventure together. The larger of the squirting fishes is the bad guy. I end up with bubbles on my head and nose and Daddy has some in his beard before the story is over.

“Alright messy one,” Daddy says. “The water is going to get cold soon so we need to get you cleaned up. Can you help me clear all the toys out, please?”

“Yes, Daddy.”

A silence settles over us for just a moment. That’s the first time I called him Daddy out loud. I look up at him, hoping it’s okay. The answering smile and the kiss he gives me is more than enough. I do as he asks, showing that I’m a good listener. He thanks me and gives me another kiss before helping me lean back to get my hair wet. The bubbles are almost gone so when I lean back in the tub, there’s nothing hiding the lower half of my body.

Daddy doesn't say anything and focuses on washing my hair. I close my eyes and relax into the feeling of his fingers massaging my scalp. I hum in contentment when he does it a second time with the conditioner.

"Do you want to wash your body or Daddy?" Daddy is sitting on the edge of the tub now and I tilt my head back to look up at him. His fingers are still carding through my hair.

"Can you do it?" I ask. I'm having such a fun time and Daddy's hands on me is relaxing. I like the feeling. "Please, Daddy?"

He narrows his eyes and purses his lips. I bat my eyes at him. "I hope you know that those words won't always work on me. But tonight, they will. Go ahead and stand up, baby. Let's get you squeaky clean and then dressed, okay?"

"Okay." I let him help me stand up in the tub. It's one of the simple tubs that also doubles as the shower. The house isn't fancy enough to have separate ones. The shower curtain is simply pulled to the side, out of the way.

Daddy stands up with me and grabs the wash cloth. He starts at my neck and works his way down. My whole body is thrumming with happiness as he goes lower. I know that he can see how his touches are affecting me.

"Daddy?" He's running the wash cloth over my hips and starting on my legs.

"Yes, baby?" He glances up at me but continues to clean my legs. He wraps his free hand around the back of my thigh, gesturing for me to balance my leg on the edge so he doesn't have to bend down as far. I place my hands on his shoulders and do what he asks.

"Are you going to wash all of my body?"

I giggle and jerk my leg when he cleans the bottom of my foot. I switch legs and he starts running the cloth over my other foot. His hand travels up my leg slowly. “Do you want me to wash all of you?”

“Yes, please.” Looking down at my Daddy, I can see my dick twitching. I’m already half hard. “I think it needs to be extra clean.”

“Oh, really?” He smirks and motions for me to turn around. I pout, but do as he asks. He adds more soap to the cloth before washing my back.

“Really, really.” I want to sink my body against his, but I don’t want to get him all soapy and wet. I stand still, hands by my side. But I can feel the blood rushing through my body at the thought of someone else touching me again. I’m growing harder by the second.

Daddy takes his time, but I let out a soft moan when he focuses on cleaning my cheeks. He uses both hands, making sure to be thorough. I move my hands flat against the shower wall to keep my balance. I’m growing impatient, but I don’t want to push it with him. He finally snakes his hands around to my front and wraps the wash cloth around my dick. He’s quick and efficient, not what I had in mind.

“Let’s rinse you off, shall we?” Daddy’s hands leave my body completely and I pout to myself. The water doesn’t distract me enough. Not even Daddy’s hands back on me, making sure I’m clean everywhere else. “Turn around, Aussie.”

I do as asked. I can see Daddy’s eyes look me up and down and my whole body flares with heat again. I can’t keep the noises in when the shower head is directed at my sensitive area and Daddy’s hand flattens against my tummy to make sure all the soap is off my front. I have a bit of hair at the base of my dick and Daddy makes sure that is clean too before he pulls away once more and turns the water off and opens the drain.



I watch his every move. He turns to grab the towel from the counter and unfolds it, then directs me to step out. I can see the heat in his eyes as he dries me off though, so I don't ask again. My body jerks when he wraps the towel around my cock just long enough to dry.

I try to not let out a whiny noise, but Daddy is teasing me now. I can see the smirk tugging on his lips even though he's trying really hard to keep a serious face. "Daddy." I pout the word and almost stomp my foot at being ignored.

"Aussie," he warns in his serious tone. "Go lay on the bed and we'll get you taken care of."

I don't know if he means my request or actually just getting me in bed for sleep, but I walk naked the short distance from the bathroom to my bedroom. The first thing I see is the diaper laid on top of a set of clothes at the foot of the bed. I don't know what to do, but Daddy is right behind me. He swats at my butt and it makes me giggle.

"I think I told you to lay down, Aussie." I do as instructed, laying sideways on the bed with my feet still on the floor.

"What's your safe word, Aussie?"

"Pickle." I say the word quickly. We had this conversation on Sunday. Daddy said that if I can't remember the word, nothing would happen between us. "Because pickles are disgusting."

I make a gross face and stick out my tongue, which gets a chuckle out of Daddy. "You are something else, Aussie."

Daddy, finally, leans one knee on the bed and blocks me in with his hands on either side of my head. He leans down and kisses me, softly at first. But then our tongues

touch and it's a frenzy from there. I let my hands roam Daddy's chest and stomach, moaning at the softness of his chest hair. Daddy's fingers trail down my right side and then seek out my dick. The first touch of bare skin wrapped around me sends a full body shiver through me.

"Yes, please." I beg the words when Daddy pulls away and dips his head to kiss down my neck. His beard is scratchy, but it just adds to the sensations. I wrap my left hand behind his neck and hold him close to me. "Daddy, you feel so good."

I close my eyes and let him take over everything. He shifts my body further up the bed with ease, a testament to his broad chest and arms because I'm not the lightest guy. And then his lips are exploring every inch of my body. His body rests against mine, not putting all of his weight on me though.

It isn't until his tongue flicks over my nipple that I realize he's traveling the same path as the tattoo on my body. "Pickle. Pickle, Daddy."

## Page 9

*Source Creation Date: July 18, 2025, 10:27 am*

“What’s wrong?” I pull back immediately and watch as Austin’s eyes fill with unshed tears and his hands go to the tattoo that travels down his body. I realize I’d been unconsciously traveling that same path. During the entire bath, I wanted to ask about it. I know it’s something between him and Paul. The picture in the living room tells me that much.

“I’m sorry.” His voice is quiet and I move to sit beside him, I hand over the shirt I planned on dressing him in. It’s long sleeves and a pale blue with animal patterns on it. I help him into the shirt so he isn’t completely naked.

“You have nothing to be sorry for, Aussie. Do you want to talk about it?” I keep my voice calm and quiet. I watch his hand trace down his torso again. I’m not sure he even knows that he’s doing it. His eyes flick up to me and this time, a tear does slip down.

“The tattoo,” he starts, but chokes on a sob and I’m pulling him closer to my chest and holding him. He says the words against my chest, but I can hear them clear enough. “It’s for Paul. It was the path he would always kiss down my body whenever we... Did stuff. You asked about the picture before?” He sits back up and wipes the sleeve over his eyes. “It started as a joke between us. Just a fun, little thing. I... I tend to bite when I... Feel good. He said he always wanted a reminder of that because he thought it was cute.”

That’s new information. Of course it is, because while Paul was my best friend, he never shared the intimate details of their relationship. I pull Austin in closer to me once again.

“I’m sorry, Aus. I didn’t know.” I curse myself inside. I should have known that it meant something. I wasn’t even thinking a minute ago.

“You couldn’t have known,” Austin says. “I’m sorry for safe wording because of it.”

“Absolutely not.” This time I shift my body so I’m facing him. “You use your safe word whenever you need to, for whatever reason, Austin. No apologies for it.”

I hold him close, unsure of exactly what to say. I brush my fingers through his hair, still damp from his bath. I can hear his sniffles continue for several minutes. And then, so quietly, I hear him sigh before sitting back up. “There’s no chance of going back to the moment, is there?”

“I think we could both use some cuddles tonight,” I say gently. “Do you still want me to dress you?”

“Yes, please.” The words are soft spoken and I can see the pain and grief still in his eyes. I stand up and motion for him to lay back. He’s wearing the shirt already, but his lower half is still bare.

“I’ll be right back. Don’t move,” I instruct .

My first stop, quickly, is to move the box inside from the front porch. It takes some grunting and maneuvering, but I get it inside the door at least. Then I move to the playroom and grab the lotion sitting on the dresser. I want him to relax and a good lavender lotion will do the trick. I snag the first stuffie I can reach as well, Elle. Aussie is still laying on the bed where I left him five minutes ago.

“Alright, Aussie. Let’s get you sorted and we’ll read some stories before bed, okay?”

“It’s not even nine yet,” he complains. “I don’t want what I said to ruin the rest of the

night.”

“Aussie.” I turn my eyes to him and fix him with a stare. “You did not ruin anything. I need you to repeat that back to me.”

I situate my hands under his armpits and shift him up the bed so he’s resting against one of the pillows. His legs are bent slightly, fallen open like he’s waiting for the diaper. I straighten his legs and reach for the lotion bottle. Austin is already cuddling with Elle.

“I didn’t ruin anything,” Austin says after a few seconds. “I’m still sorry for not telling you earlier.”

“It’s okay, Aussie. There are a lot of memories that you hold and you don’t ever have to tell me.” I sit down on the bed next to him and start at his feet. “Not unless you want to. And everything will come with time.”

I move from one foot to the other. Silence falls between us but glances up to Austin’s face tells me he’s not taking his eyes off me. I can see his cock fighting to get interested again the closer to his groin I get.

“That feels good,” he whispers when I lift his leg to massage the back of his thigh. “Thank you.”

“Anything you need,” I say easily. I lean down just slightly and kiss the inside of his knee. I finally let my shoulders relax when I hear his laugh again. “You’re very ticklish, Aussie.”

I stand up to reach the rest of his legs. The room smells like lavender and I smile when Austin tries to hide a yawn from me. It might be early, but I have a feeling he’s going to crash soon.

Austin lets out a moan when I finally massage my fingers into the crease of his thigh. I use my other hand to wrap around his cock, giving him just a few teasing tugs before letting him go. He is average in size with a thin patch of pubes around his base. My hands push his shirt up and I massage another dollop of lotion over his stomach and ribs.

“Alright, baby, let’s get you dressed.” I reach for the diaper before turning back to Austin. “Do you still want this?”

“Um, yes please.”

I direct Austin to lift his hips and secure the diaper in place. It’s been a minute since I’ve done this and I realize how much I miss it. I help him slip the pants on next. He looks absolutely adorable in the pajama set and I tell him so when I help him stand up. He’s cuddling Elle in one arm.

“You look adorable,” I say before pressing my lips against his. He tries to deepen the kiss and I give in for just a second before pulling back. He’s pouting out his bottom lip and it makes me smile.

“Adorable enough to possibly have some ice cream before bed?” He bounces on his heels and I’m relieved to see he’s coming back from that somber mood.

I look behind him at the clock on the nightstand. It is still early enough .

“We can have a little bit,” I say. His smile widens further. “But you have to promise that you’re going to listen to me and go to bed when I tell you it’s time, okay?”

“Double pinkie promise!” His expression is full of excitement and I’m glad that he’s back to his giggly self he was during the bath.

“Well, let’s go get you some then.” I take his hand and lead him back toward the kitchen. I park him at the table with a chaste kiss. The ice cream is plain chocolate. I limit both of us to just one decent scoop. I sit the plastic bowl down in front of Austin but don’t let go. “I need my messy eater to be careful, okay? We just got you all clean so another bath isn’t in the cards tonight.”

“Yes, Daddy. I’ll be careful.”

And he is careful. What takes me four bites to eat, it takes him double. He doesn’t make a drop of a mess. I would have changed his clothes if he did get messy, but I’m glad he kept his promise.

“Good boy,” I praise him and he beams. I rinse the bowls but leave them to clean later.

Austin is mumbling something to Koka when I walk out of the kitchen. I’m not sure where Elle went. He stops and I can see the blush on his cheeks at being caught.

“Do I get to know what you told Koka?” I ask. His hair is finally dry from his bath and I run my fingers through it to tame the curls down a little. He tilts his head back and smiles up at me. My heart definitely does not skip a beat at that happy expression on his face.

“I was just saying that I’m glad you’re here.”

I’m so far gone for this boy.

I was supposed to just stay Wednesday night but now it’s Friday morning and I’m waking up in his bed once again. Austin is curled up around me, fast asleep with his lips slightly parted. He looks peaceful and the last thing I want to do is wake him up. But he has to get up for work and I have to get to another meeting at nine.

“Wakey, wakey.” I whisper the words to Austin. It’s just before six and the sun is nowhere close to be shining. It’s the last week of October, the sun won’t be up for another hour.

“I don’t want to,” he complains, still very much asleep. I smile and run my pointer finger down the middle of his face, booping the tip of his nose.

“One more day, baby. Then we can sleep in tomorrow.”

Austin lets out a sleepy groan, but rolls onto his back, away from me. If we had time, we could snuggle a little longer, but we both need showers and I want to make us breakfast. Austin let it slip that his breakfast usually consisted of something once he got to work. I’ve seen their selection— he doesn’t need to be having sweets for breakfast every morning.

“You need to get in the shower and I’ll make us some food.” I push the blanket down, shivering slightly when the warm cocoon turns cold fast. Both of us are only wearing our underwear. He didn’t have any little time last night. Instead, I picked up Chinese take out for the both of us and we watched an action film, cuddled up on the couch. It was nice.

“Or you can shower with me,” he suggests, peeking one eye open. His smirk is contagious. “I mean, if you want to.”

I lean over the edge of the bed and give him a closed-mouth kiss. “You have to get out of bed in order to do that.”

I laugh at the speed in which he moves. I honestly don’t know if we can both fit in his shower. I’m not the smallest of guys and his tub is narrow. The bathroom back at my place is much more spacious, which is where we are staying this weekend. Five minutes later, my thoughts are proven right.



Austin's pout at the realization is absolutely adorable.

I wrap a towel around my body and step out of the bathroom. After the almost blowjob on Wednesday night, we've been more touchy but nothing has happened.

Do I want to get my hands and mouth on him again? Absolutely.

Am I okay waiting until he is comfortable with me touching him? Absolutely.

"Daddy!" The word rings around the house just as I'm about to cut up an apple for him. He might be a bit picky about his veggies, but he loves all fruit. I set the knife down and head back toward the bathroom. He doesn't sound in distress, but it's instinct to be there when I hear the word.

"What is it, Aussie?" He's completely naked, dripping wet. He's standing on the bath mat, facing me. His hands are clenched by his sides.

He doesn't say anything, but reaches out his hand toward me. Not for my hand, but the towel wrapped around my waist. Within seconds, it's on the floor and Austin is knelt before me, looking up at me.

"Austin—"

I don't get more than his name out of my mouth before his lips take my cock in his. I'm not hard, but the warmth and suction of his mouth gets me there within a minute. I hold a hand out to keep my balance. His enthusiasm is definitely there. The sensation of my cock growing as he sucks and bobs his head is mind numbing.

He pulls off and smiles up at me while his hand plays with my balls. A groan starting deep in my chest comes out in response.

“I’ve been thinking about this for two days,” Austin says. “Getting my mouth on my Daddy. Making you feel half as good as you’ve made me feel.”

“Baby,” I grunt out the word as his tongue swipes against my tip. He hums and locks eyes with me. “You don’t have to do this.”

“I want to,” Austin says. And his voice leaves no room for argument. “If you want it. Shit, I should have asked.”

I rest a hand in his hair and smile. “Yes, baby, of course I want this.”

Austin smiles before wrapping his lips around my cock again. The feeling is incredible. He hollows his cheeks and sucks, sending me into a frenzy. I do my best to refrain from bucking my hips further into his mouth. The sight of my cock disappearing into his mouth over and over is pushing me too fast to the edge.

One of Austin’s hands disappears from his body and I watch him start to jerk himself off. He moans around my dick and I have to shut my eyes before I come at the sight alone.

“Fuck, baby. You’re mouth is incredible.” I can feel my legs growing weak at the sensations. Austin’s tongue works me over, finding all the spots that send tingles up my spine and stars in my eyes. “Shit, Austin. Oh, yes, right there, baby.”

Austin, whether spurred by my words or close to his own orgasms, moans again around my cock and takes me further into his mouth. I’m not the smallest when it comes to size. I open my eyes again, not wanting to miss another moment.

“I’m so close, Austin. Baby, I’m com-” My hips jerk and I know my cock is leaking in his mouth. I growl out, “I’m coming. Fuck.” The last curse is moaned, stretched out as waves of my cum fill his mouth.

Austin takes it all. Not a single drop spills as he continues to suck me off. His tongue swipes all around, cleaning me off thoroughly. I sag against the wall, my legs close to giving out after that. I haven't had a blowjob like that in... Ever.

"Daddy, I'm so close." Austin's whine brings me back to the present. His hand is jerking himself quickly. I watch as the head of his cock disappears into his fist over and over. I need to taste him too.

We lock eyes and I haul him up to his feet, spinning both of us and pressing his back against the counter. I sink to my knees, desperate to get him in my mouth. His cock isn't thick, but he fills my mouth. I don't waste any time taking him down my throat. Austin bucks his hips out of surprise and his moans immediately fills the bathroom.

His taste and smell overtake me. My nose presses to his pubes and I hold myself there, adjusting the angle to cut down on my gag reflex. I can taste the saltiness in my mouth. "I'm so close. I'm going to come."

I do the same that he did and take him deeper. I fondle his balls, which are tight against his body. I lift one of his legs and toss it over my shoulder, continuing to bob my head, and let my hand explore further back. I press against his taint repeatedly and he cries out, emptying his load down my throat. I take all of it, closing my eyes to savor every moment until he's crying out from the sensitivity .

His legs are shaking when I pull off his softening cock. I kiss along his inner thigh before I set his foot back down and use the edge of the bathtub to stand back up. Austin's whole body is flushed, cheeks bright red, hair mussed. His eyes are shining and he's smiling.

"That was amazing," he says, sounding out of breath still. I laugh and he joins me.

"Definitely amazing," I agree. I lean forward and kiss him deeply. "We need to get

going or we're both going to be late."

## Page 10

*Source Creation Date: July 18, 2025, 10:27 am*

I meet Austin at his job after work. We're planning on going to the club tonight. It's a Halloween theme night. I pack him some clothes and a few toys to bring along before I leave for work. I try not to think about how comfortable I am at his house when he isn't there or the fact that he's more than okay with me being there.

The shop is about ten minutes from closing when I pull up in the parking lot. The front of the store is facing a side road off the main in the downtown area, but it still gets pretty good traffic. I walk around the side of the building and let myself in through the main door. The inside of the coffee shop smells amazing. The lighting and wooden accents throughout give the whole place a golden glow in the setting sun outside.

There's a short line of people standing by the coffee counter. The side wall to the left is where the simple foods are sold, pastries and sandwiches mostly. Occasionally, from what Austin has told me of his job, they sell desserts like cheesecake or pie slices.

Austin's back is to me when I spot him. I'm more than proud of all he's done for himself the last couple of years. I get in line to order a hot chocolate. Coffee this late for me, even if we are going to the club tonight, will have me wired for hours.

I take the chance to admire my boy at work. One worker is taking drinks orders while Austin is moving back and forth, making them. He's wearing one of his many pairs of black pants and I definitely admire the view until it's my turn to order.

"Welcome to Shade Grown," the guy taking the orders says. They don't wear name tags here. I've seen him here before, in the times I used to stop by. "What can I get

you to drink?”

“Can I just get a hot chocolate?” I can’t hide my laugh at the way Austin spins around when I talk. He nearly spills the coffee he’s making all over his own hand and I want to reprimand him for not being careful, but I won’t do that in public. He does look sheepish and finishes the drink before turning his attention to me.

“What are you doing here?” Austin asks. “I still have to close and everything.”

“Boss, is this mystery man?” the other guy asks. I look between the two and smile at the way Austin’s cheeks flush.

“Mystery man, huh? I think I’d like to hear more about what you tell people.”

“I don’t tell them anything,” Austin says. “Someone is just nosey and should probably go clean the coffee pots.”

“This is why no one likes the manager,” he calls out as he walks away. It’s playful. I turn my attention back to Austin once the guy is out of hearing range .

His hair is pushed back with a hairnet. The lights above reflect in his eyes and his smile is genuine and wide. I helped him pick out the shirt today, a faded red, long sleeve one that hugs his arms nicely. He has the sleeves pushed up a quarter of the way.

“Seriously, what are you doing here so early? I still have at least forty minutes before I’ll be ready.” He taps something on the register and flicks his eyes to me. “Not that I’m not happy to see you, because I am. But you’re going to be waiting for a while.”

“Oh no,” I say sarcastically. I lean over the counter and lower my voice. “I guess I’ll just have to sit at a table and watch my boy work. Maybe picture him making me

coffee with nothing but an apron on.”

Austin coughs to hide the noise that tries to escape his lips. I find it adorable. “Let me get that hot chocolate for you. Do you want anything in it?”

I stand up straight and move to pull my wallet out of my back pocket. “I’ll take dark chocolate in it. And some whipped cream if possible.”

“Was work good today?” Austin asks as he starts on my drink. I’m not ashamed to admit I sneak another glance at his ass, thinking about this morning.

“My morning was better.”

Austin looks at me over his shoulder and attempts to glare, but I’ve seen him cuddled up on the couch with his stuffies, watching cartoons. His glare is just cute to me. He doesn’t respond to my quip and I go back to watching him work.

He’s efficient, good at his job. The way he talks about running the place, I know he enjoys it. He has the days, like everyone does, where it’s harder than others, but overall he says he’s happy he got it. I’m happy he found something. His job before Paul passed away didn’t pay a lot, but it was a call center and it allowed him to finish getting his Bachelor’s degree online. Paul was so proud of him and I attended the little get together graduation party the summer before he passed.

He turns back with a smile and slides the drink over. “I steamed the milk so it’s really hot. Be careful. If you want to hang out over at the tables, I just have to close out the registers and then clean the dining area and I’ll be good.”

“Take your time,” I say. “The club is open all night and we don’t have any other plans this weekend. I’ll pass the time checking some emails or something.”

His face scrunches up for a split second. I see it before he schools his expression again. That was worry. I don't walk away from the register and we stand in silence for a second before he lets out a sigh. "I guess I'm still worried that someone is going to say something tonight. About us and... Our relationship."

"You leave that worry to me, okay? Whatever anyone says, I'll handle it. Tonight is for you to have fun, okay?" He looks over my shoulder and I note he's picking at his nails. I'm trying to break him of the habit. I reach a hand across the counter and rest it on his. "Has someone said something to you?"

He opens his mouth to say something and then closes it. I can feel my heart dropping to my toes. I didn't think he spoke with anyone from our old circle. Or that any of them would be cruel enough. "Austin, tell me."

"It's no one from the club or anything," he says quickly. His eyes go wide and I hate seeing him fight back tears. "I just got a text from my mom asking if I was going to be coming to the Halloween thing tomorrow night. My niece is old enough now to actually understand the concept of trick-or-treating. When I told her I had plans with you, she sort of brushed it off as nothing serious."

I know he doesn't have a good relationship with his family. He's mentioned them a few times, but only ever in passing. "I'm sorry, Austin. Did you want to change plans tonight?" I know he's been looking forward to going to the club tonight and the Daddy in me wants to tell him to just push it away and not worry, but I also know my boy. He's such a sweetheart and doesn't like confrontation.

"No," he says easily. "I wanna go to the club."

I smile, squeeze his hand. "Good, because I brought Koka with me."

Austin's eyes light up for a split second before he remembers he's at work. I smile at



the expression and hold my drink up. “Thanks for the drink.”

“I’ll try to get done as soon as I can.”

I settle at one of the tables and take a tentative sip of my hot chocolate. It’s delicious, but hot, so I let it cool for a few minutes. I pull my phone out, not lying to Austin when I said I had a few emails to sort through. Running your own business means the 9-5 life isn’t always doable. I have several emails waiting for me, most are just recaps for the week and calendar invites for meetings next week.

There’s one, buried among the others. It’s from a sender I don’t recognize and I almost think it’s spam. But there’s a name mentioned in the subject line that I do know.

## REFERRAL FROM MARKETING EVENT

I’m surprised that someone has reached out. I got an update from Josiah that the event went well the other day and they spoke to a handful of people that seemed interested, but they couldn’t tell if it was serious or not. There were two other, larger, names at the same event that do the same things.

I glance up when I hear Austin’s laugh. The doors are already locked and there are no other customers but me. Austin is walking toward me with a bucket in his hand. The other guy, the one that took my order, is shaking his head behind the coffee bar. They have music playing somewhere on the other side. It’s not loud, but I recognize it as a recent pop song thanks to Austin’s playlist.

“You really didn’t have to meet me here,” Austin says. “I could have met you back at the house.”

“And deprive myself of seeing you working in those pants?” I give him a wink,

knowing that the table I chose is far enough away from the other workers. His pants do fit him well. My mind supplies me with the memory of this morning for the twentieth time; my face so close to his ass, my hands on him.

Austin rolls his eyes at me and continues wiping down the tables. I go back to the email on my phone.

Remington Higgins,

I hope this email finds you well. I was given a business card with your email and wanted to reach out. I have a set of land I'd love for you to take a look at. It's about a two hour drive from the city. Couple hundred acres of land. It's a campground of sorts that hasn't had any TLC in a couple of years. I would love to meet with you and get some prices. My number and everything is included below.

Take care,

Eugene Patterson

Huh .

Remington Properties is primarily a city endeavor. We have three companies, two apartment buildings, and a handful of houses in the city limits the landlords rent out. But something outside the city and with that much land? That is a whole other ballgame when it comes to property management.

“What’s wrong?” Austin is standing next to me. I tilt my screen for him to read the email. It takes him only a minute. “Wow. Is that good?”

I tilt my head back and look up at him. His hand lands on my back, just below my neck. “It could be,” I say. “I’ll have to bring it up on Monday in our meeting. I’m not

going to worry about it this weekend.”

“Are you sure? It seems like he’s wanting—”

“Austin,” I interrupt. “I love my job and I’ve worked hard, but I like to keep work and my personal life as separate as I can. It can wait until Monday. This weekend is for us.”

I fix him with my ‘don’t argue’ stare and he concedes easily. “I just need to sweep and I’ll be good to go.”

I clear through a few more emails before Austin is ready. I make sure he puts on his coat, since the weather is getting colder by the day, and lead him around the back to the parking lot. I don’t like thinking of him walking this short path on his own when the days get dark so early. I know he’s been doing it for years, but I don’t like it. Not in the city, with the hospital just a few blocks away.

I help him buckle in before adjusting the heat in the car and heading out. The club is a good thirty minutes through the city streets, with the traffic and all the stoplights. We talk about our day and what we want to do this weekend .

The closer we get to the club, the quieter Austin becomes. His answers are a max of five words and I can see him struggling to not pick at his nails.

I find a spot to park a block away. I place a hand on Austin’s knee before he can reach for the door handle. “Talk to me.”

“About what?” Austin keeps his hands close to his stomach. I squeeze his thigh gently.

“Aussie,” I start. I don’t really know about what either, but I can tell something is on

his mind. I know he isn't going to fully enjoy himself tonight if he doesn't talk about whatever is swirling in his mind. "What's going on?"

He mumbles something against his chest and I jostle his knee lightly to get his attention. "I can't hear you, baby."

"I'm just remembering the last time I was here," he says a bit louder. When he looks at me, I can see him fighting back tears. I wish like hell I could take all his pain away, but I know that's something he'll have to work through. All I can do is help give him new memories and be there when he needs to let it all out.

"It's been a while, hasn't it?"

"Four years, I think." I lift the console between us, grateful that my truck can turn into a bench seat, and pull him closer to me. I kiss the side of his head. I reassure him once again that I'll handle anyone that says something. He lets his body sag against mine. "We came for the dance party they had."

I smile. I don't remember if I was there that night. "I'm sure you blew everyone away with your awesome dance moves."

The truck fills with Austin's guffaw and I laugh at his reaction. "My dancing is bad when I'm not in Little space. It only gets worse. "

"I don't know." I draw the words out. "I think that little elbow, booty shake thing you do is absolutely my favorite dance move, ever."

"Oh no." Austin smacks his forehead and shakes his head. He's smiling, though. "That's... I'm never doing that again. No more music."

"I beg to differ," I say quickly. He's blushing so hard I can see it in the lighting

coming from the businesses around us. I give an internal fist pump in the air when he giggles. There are no more tears or mumbling words. “Are you ready to go inside?”

He takes a second, but then nods. I tell him to wait while I grab our stuff and then walk around to open his door. I take his hand in mine and set the strap of the duffel bag on my other shoulder. I packed it full of his things for tonight, not sure what kind of headspace he would be in around others.

The club is set in a part of the city that isn’t too busy. There are other shops and businesses around, but it’s more restaurants or specific shops. Places you wouldn’t go unless you had a reason. The outside is white brick with no windows. There’s a stripe of black brick offsetting the door, giving the whole facade a modern, nondescript feel. I hold the door open for Austin, sighing when the warmth hits my face.

The lobby isn’t crowded, but we do have to wait in a line. Austin’s hand tightens in my grip as we move up in the line. “They’ve added a few things since you were here last,” I say. “They have a room dedicated to Littles now instead of just the themed nights. It’s not big, but they have a ball pit, some coloring stations, toys, and a snack station.”

He nods, but doesn’t say anything. We step up in line. I use my right hand to unzip the top of the bag and pull out Koka. Austin’s face lights up and he reaches for the stuffie quickly. I watch him bury his face in the fur between the ears. It’s a comfort thing for him, I’ve learned. He does it when falling asleep too for his naps. When we go to bed, my chest is the thing he buries his face in.

“Hi, welcome to Club Thrive. Are you a member or visiting for the night?” The lady behind the counter is at least fifty, if not older. She has soft, blue eyes and gray hair braided loosely over her shoulder. She’s wearing a complete leather suit that molds to every curve of her body. She looks amazing, even if I’m immediately wondering how hot that suit gets.

“I’m a member,” I say. I pull my ID out of my wallet and hand it over. “I’d like to add him to my account, please. Baby, can you hand her your ID?” I look back at the lady. “He’s been here before, but it’s been a couple of years.”

“We hold all of our details for five years,” she says with a smile. “Hi, honey. How are you tonight?”

Austin looks at me for reassurance. He’s sinking into his little space already. “I’m good. Thank you.”

She gives him a smile and then turns back to me. “Are you looking to play with others tonight?”

“No, ma’am. Just the two of us.”

“Any specials rooms you’d like to reserve?” The lady is typing away on the computer, most likely inputting Austin’s information. Her smile falls just a moment and her eyes dart between the two of us.

“Aussie, how about you take the bag and pick out which outfit you want to wear, okay? I’ll be right there.” He nods and moves across the room to sit in one of the chairs. The lobby is clean, well lit with fluorescent lighting. I turn back to the lady. “I know his name is listed with another caregiver. Paul passed away three years ago. Austin hasn’t been here since with anyone else. If we can, I’d like to switch him under my account.”

The lady’s face falls completely at that news. I’m not trying to play the death card or anything, but I want the lady to know the truth. They can close Paul’s account. I never thought about doing that until now. She nods and grabs a piece of paper to hand over.

“I can tell he’s already slipping into his Little side, so when he can, have him fill this out and send it back. You can email it if needed or bring it in person. Until we have that, I can’t let you reserve a special room with him, but we’ll let you go to the Dreamland room since it’s public.”

“I understand,” I say and thank her.

“Enjoy your night,” she says and moves on to the couple standing in line behind me.

Austin has an outfit sitting on top of the bag. It’s a forest green shirt and shorts combo, with designs of ivy printed all over. There are different animals printed as well: koalas, of course, kangaroos, and an animal I had to search, Quokkas. It doesn’t surprise me that he chose that one.

“Are you ready, Aussie?” I fold the sheet of paper the lady handed me and tuck it into one of the side pockets before picking up the bag. “Let’s go get you changed and play.”

“Okay.”

He takes my hand once again and we head into the main hub of the club. It’s fairly standard, with a bar in one corner, chairs and tables spread around the space, and hallways and doors that lead to specialized rooms. I tug on his hand to guide him to the right. We’re taking the second hallway. There are six private rooms, which can be reserved ahead of time, and then Dreamland, the public playroom for Littles, is at the end of the hallway. There are larger clubs within driving distance, but I love this one for their security and the other members.

“Whoa,” Austin says beside me when I let him inside the room. There aren’t many in the room right now, but it’s barely nine, so more are bound to show up. The walls are a split color, a soft yellow on the bottom and cream on top. The floor is carpeted, but

there are also those little foam pieces that hook together covering most of the space. The ball pit is exactly that, PVC pipe covered with foam noodles and net strung together. Hundreds of colorful balls fill the pit and there are two others already in it. The room has Halloween decorations strung all over the place. Streamers from wall-to-wall, purple, black, and orange balloons floating around. The usual snack table is filled with cutely spooky treats. Even the two security guys walking around have some sort of costume on. Half the Littles are dressed up while the other half are just in play clothes. "This is cool."

Three doors blend into the left wall. I direct Austin to one of them and knock, hoping that it's empty. When there is no reply, I try the handle and open it. It's a small locker room of sorts. There is an outfitted changing table, a set of lockers for personal belongings, and a rocking chair in the corner. It's a comfortable room and I can hear Aussie sigh next to me. I lock the door behind us.

"If any of this is too much for you, I need you to tell me. Do you understand, Aussie?" I don't have to make him look at me this time. He nods and smiles.

"I'm okay, Daddy. I'm sorry I got nervous."

"Nothing to be sorry for, baby. How about we get you changed and we can go play for a little bit? "

I help him out of his clothes easily and stick them in a lower locker. I wipe down the pad on the changing table before helping Aussie up on it to lay down. I look at him, in all his naked glory. My hands, on their own accord, brush over his body. I watch him tuck Koka to his side and his other hand reaches for one of mine that's traveling very close to his groin.

"Daddy, please?" His eyes are saying more than just those words. I can tell he's still a bit in his head and I want him to really sink in and enjoy his night. My right hand



travels up his thigh, fingers dancing lightly over his smooth skin. His eyes flutter and his lips part slightly when I brush against his balls.

“What would you like Daddy to do, Aussie?” I ask but I continue to rub my hands over him, giving him just a little bit of pleasure. “I need you to use your words,” I warn when he goes to grab my hand again.

“I want you to make me feel good,” he says. “I want to feel Daddy’s fingers inside me.”

I can feel the blood rushing to my cock at those words. I thought he was going to ask for a hand job, not finger fucking. His eyes and words are clear. He moves his legs, splays them out, so I have direct access to his hole. I curse myself for not packing the lube today.

I turn my head to look at the little cabinet in the opposite corner, hoping that they have some supplies. “Hold on, Aussie.”

## Page 11

*Source Creation Date: July 18, 2025, 10:27 am*

Daddy leaves me lying on the table and rushes over to the cabinet in the corner. I watch him pull out two drawers before standing back up and holding what he found. A little foil packet of lube. My dick jumps at the sight.

“Is this what you want?” Daddy moves his hand back between my legs and rubs against my hole. I close my eyes and nod. I know Daddy’s rule is that I need to talk, but I can’t bring myself to. I want to sink into Little space tonight but something is holding me back.

Daddy removes his hand and rips a corner of the packet. His eyes rake over my body. I would normally feel self conscious, knowing that no one but Paul has ever seen me this naked. Paul was my first boyfriend and my only Daddy. Until now. Seeing the way Remi, my new Daddy, looks at me gives me the same heat in my lower belly that I haven’t felt in years.

I can feel so many emotions running through my body and I don’t know what else to do other than pop two fingers from my right hand into my mouth. The first touch of Daddy’s fingers between my cheeks makes me jump, but then I immediately relax. That is exactly what I need.

“More, Daddy.” I say the words around my fingers and shift my hips off the table. Daddy smiles but places a hand on my lower stomach to make me stay still.

The breach of his first finger sends my body into overdrive. I bite down gently on my own fingers. “Are you okay?” Daddy asks. I nod, but the look he gives me says that that isn’t enough for him this time.

I take my fingers out of my mouth. “Yes.”

“And you remember what to say if you need to stop, right?”

“Yes, Daddy.” He smiles and leans over to kiss me.

“You’re such a good boy, Aussie.” My breath hitches when he pushes his finger deeper into my hole. The stretch is there and it burns just slightly, but I know I’ll adjust to it. His lips trail down my neck, his beard brushing against my skin and sending a whole new round of shivers. I can feel that he’s mindful to not follow the tattoo as he kisses down my chest. His finger pushes and pulls, sending shots of pleasure to my groin and down my legs. His lips stop just shy of my belly button and I frown.

He stands up and I see him move to add more lube to his fingers without fully pulling out of me. It’s a little cold, but when he pushes a second finger in, the temperature is the last thing on my mind.

“So good, Daddy.”

My whole body jolts when he crooks his fingers inside me. My fingers find my mouth again and I bite to stave off the pleasure building. Daddy watches me, eyes locked with mine, as he pushes his fingers as deep as he can. I can hear myself moaning, but I also feel my release building up. That final bit of thread that was keeping me from fully sinking into my Little space.

It’s like a switch in my brain and now all I can focus on is how good Daddy is making me feel and how much I want to be good for him. His free hand wraps around the base of my cock and squeezes. I’m hard, borderline painful. He isn’t teasing me or trying to draw out the pleasure. The way his fingers slide in and out of me quickly is pushing me closer and closer. When he finally starts to stroke my cock in earnest, I

can't hold back the noises anymore.

I mumble around my fingers. "I'm close, Daddy. So close."

"You're doing great, Aussie." He leans down and licks across the head of my dick. My whole body shivers and I can see a fresh bead of precum leak out. He swipes his tongue over it again and again, adding soft kisses down my shaft, before he starts jerking me again. "Are you going to come for Daddy? We can't spend all night in here."

He pulls his fingers almost all the way out and then pushes back in. The feeling is indescribable and I let out a loud moan. I can feel drool on my palm and chin but I don't move to wipe it away. Daddy will clean me up before we go play. It doesn't take more than a few more movements before I'm spilling over his fist, cum hitting my stomach and his wrist in spurts.

"Do you feel better now?" Daddy asks. He's in clean up mode immediately, grabbing a few wipes from somewhere below where I'm laying. He takes my fingers out of my mouth first and wipes them. I smile up at him and then purse my lips for a kiss. We're both smiling when he pulls back.

He diapers me and then dresses me quickly after that. I keep Koka with me the entire time and soon enough, Daddy is opening the door for me to join the others in the playroom. There are more people than when we walked in the first time. I don't know how long we were actually in the changing room.

"Come on, Aussie. I want you to meet someone."

Daddy leads me with a hand on my lower back toward the ball pit. There are two others in the balls already. Three people, two men and a woman, stand around talking. One sees my Daddy before we get close enough.

“Remington Higgins,” the man says. He’s taller than Daddy and bigger. Full of hard muscles that stretch his shirt tight across his chest. He looks younger than Daddy, though, but not by much. “Fancy meeting you here.”

The man’s eyes glance to me briefly and he smiles. I still shrink back into Daddy’s body, intimidated by his deep voice.

“It’s okay, Aussie. This is Garrett, one of my close friends.” Daddy’s hands hold me close in front of him. His beard tickles my ear. “Can you say hello?”

“Hi,” I mutter. I know I have a bad habit of mumbling.

“It’s nice to meet you, Aussie. I’m sorry if I scared you. I just got excited to see...”

“Daddy,” Daddy finishes his sentence. I glance over my shoulder and see my Daddy smiling. The other guy, Garrett, smiles again. “I wasn’t sure if I’d see you here tonight or not.”

“I had a free night,” Garrett says with a one-shoulder shrug. He starts talking with my Daddy and I take a chance to look around. There are different things to do here. The ball pit is too crowded for me, even with just two people in it. There is a TV mounted on one corner that is playing a cartoon movie. Another spot has a table with chairs around it. There looks like a bunch of coloring books. There’s a group playing on the floor with a train set and some other toys. I can hear them talking and laughing from where I stand with Daddy .

“Aussie, you can go play if you want.” I turn around and look up at Daddy. He’s smiling and drops a playful kiss to my nose. “What would you like to do first?”

I don’t remember making it home.

Or getting into the bed.

But when I wake up, I'm curled into Remi's side and I don't want to move. His arm is wrapped around me, hand resting protectively on my lower back. I take a deep breath, trying to decide if I want to move or not. Remi's body is so warm and his bare chest is too tempting to move away from.

My bladder is past just a casual warning, though. I need to pee badly. I shift, trying to stave off getting up for at least another ten minutes. A small noise escapes my lips and I can feel Remi waking up beside me.

"What is it, Aussie?" Remi's voice is deep when he's half asleep. If I wasn't already half-hard from needing to use the bathroom so bad, I would be from the way he says my name like that.

"I gotta go potty," I whisper-whine. My head is resting on his shoulder, so I know he can hear me even without speaking up. "Really bad, Daddy."

"Do you want to get up to use the potty?" He's still laying on his back, making no move to get up. I don't understand his question. Of course I'd like to get up. I'd rather not make a mess in the bed. "Aussie, baby, you're still diapered. You all but passed out the moment your head hit the pillow. "

My whole body stills at those words. I shift my hips slightly, clocking the feeling of the extra padding around me. While Daddy must have stripped down into his boxers once we got home, I am still in my clothes from the club. How tired was I before we left? Vague memories start coming back from last night.

"Aussie?" Daddy shifts and turns his body so he's looking at me.

The look alone sends shivers through my body, giving me goosebumps, and before I

know it, my bladder makes the choice for me. I can feel the warmth filling the diaper as I continue to go. The sensation spreads as I finish and I sink back down onto the bed. I feel a little embarrassed that that was so easy to do, but Daddy leans down and gives me a soft morning kiss.

“You are so perfect, Aussie.” His words send a whole new rush of want through my body.

“Daddy.” I whine the word. I know I do. But there’s a sudden burst of something and I need him now. I need him close to me, on me, in me. I shift my hips and reach my hands out to run down his chest.

He gives me another lingering kiss before pulling away and standing up and stretching his back. My eyes catch on the obvious bulge in his boxers. I move to stand on my knees, running my hands up his stomach and chest. The diaper sits heavy around me, but it isn’t uncomfortable. Not yet, at least. I don’t mind waiting a few minutes before getting changed.

“Aussie, what are you doing?” Daddy’s voice is playful and his hands rub up and down my arms.

“I’m trying to seduce you,” I say flatly. That gets a laugh out of Remi but he steps away from me. I go with my full on pout .

“You are too cute in the mornings,” Remi says. I’m not fully in my Little space, but I can still use it to my advantage if it gets me another orgasm like I had yesterday in the changing room. “Let’s get you cleaned up and eat breakfast first, okay? We have all weekend together.”

Remi motions for me to lay back on the bed. I let him maneuver me out of my clothes and then he folds up the diaper and wipes me clean. Memories from last night come

back as I let Remi dress me in some of my adult clothes.

We started at the coloring station. Daddy helped me choose the colors and decide between the Batman coloring book or the Dragons. We moved on to the toys after that. There were a lot of toys, too. The other Littles introduced themselves and I showed off Koka. I didn't recognize any of them from past visits, but they were nice and let me join in on their game. They were playing a rescue game, where one of the girls was dressed up as a princess, another was a dragon, and the rest were the knights. We played for at least an hour before moving to the ball pit and the Mommies and Daddies passed out snacks and candy.

“What are you thinking so hard about?” Remi asks. He holds my hands and pulls me until I’m standing on my feet. “Are you okay?”

“Perfect,” I say without hesitation. “I was just thinking about last night and how much fun I had.”

“I would hope so, considering I had to practically carry you to the car after.”

“I don’t remember even getting home,” I say. We're at Remi's place, which is more modern than mine and has an en suite in his room. He steps away to relieve himself and I look around his bedroom .

It's somehow exactly what I imagined but also not. The bed is a King size and the darker headboard and frame contrasts nicely against the faint green color of the walls. His dresser is a tall one, with six drawers. It matches the cherry wood color of the bed. The ceiling fan has a light but there's also a lamp sitting on the bedside table on Remi's side. I hear the water running, and in a moment I hope will pay off later, I snag a condom from the bedside table where I definitely snooped. I smile when I have to break the tape to open the box.



I move to explore the rest of his house. I've been here before, but it's been years. Another wave of regret for all but cutting him out of my life washes over me. The house is how I remember, though. The bedroom opens on the top floor. There's a short hallway with a guest room and bathroom on one side and what I think I remembered as the playroom on the other.

Downstairs, the house is split in two. The stairs are against the wall, which leaves the living room wide open. He has the same sectional that I've taken a nap or two on before. It's in the center of the living room area, facing the mounted TV above the fireplace. There are pictures hanging on the walls, some generic but a handful are of friends and family. The kitchen is set in the back half of the house, around the stairs. The house isn't huge, but it's bigger than mine. Remi did a lot of remodeling and designed everything himself.

Remi steps up behind me and wraps his arms around my waist. His body presses in close to mine and his lips touch against the back of my neck. I close my eyes. Remi presses his hips into my backside and food is definitely the last thing on my mind this morning.

“What’s the plan for today?” Remi asks .

I turn in Remi’s arms and wrap my own around his neck. “I can think of a few things.”

Butterflies flit around in my stomach with the way Remington smiles back at me. I raise up on my tip toes and kiss him deeply, parting my lips immediately for him to take over. He must have brushed his teeth because all I taste is mint.

Remington slips his hands lower, hauling my feet off the floor. I wrap my legs around him and he moves us and sets me down on the back of the couch. It is such a smooth move and my body sings at the new angle. The couch is just tall enough for us to

press our hips together. My legs are still wrapped around him.

Instead of continuing the kiss or doing more, Remi lets go of me and I topple backward onto the cushion. I know that the noise I let out and the flailing of limbs is far from graceful. Remington's laugh fills the house. I try to glare at him, but I'm stuck staring at the ceiling with my feet dangling over the back of the couch. I hear Remi walking away.

"I told you, we have all weekend. And I'm hungry."

"That was a cruel move," I say as I regain my dignity and stand up. I follow several steps behind him into the kitchen. He's partially bent over, looking in the fridge, when I walk up. I admire the view of his backside for a second. He has more defined muscles on his back, especially around his shoulders. The briefs sit snug and don't leave much to the imagination, giving me a glorious moment to admire those milky thighs on display. My brain supplies visuals of those thighs encasing my body, thrusting into me. Fuck, I haven't been this horny in a long time. Years.

Remington— god— he was the definition of a dad bod. His stomach is solid, but I can feel the softness on his edges. And he has more hair than Paul, something I didn't think I would be so into. Cuddling up next to Remi at night is like cuddling a teddy bear. I fall asleep brushing my fingers through the fur like a security blanket.

After the first year of Paul's death, I thought about getting back out there and finding someone but it scared me. I didn't know a lot of people in the scene and the few first dates I attempted, there wasn't a spark. Paul and I had happened by chance. I was stepping off the bus, heading toward the library to work on some class projects. I brushed shoulders with a stranger, much larger than me, and nearly tripped. Paul was right there, thankfully, and kept me from falling to the sidewalk.

Remi stands back up and smiles at me. I return it, genuinely. Being here, in his house

again, is bringing up old memories. Not in a comparable way, but just memories that make me realize how lucky I am that Remington came to the coffee shop that night.

"How do you feel about pancakes and bacon?" Remington asks, not privy to the thoughts and feelings swirling inside my mind.

"Sounds amazing." I push away from the doorframe and idle up next to him. "Need help with anything?"

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*Source Creation Date: July 18, 2025, 10:27 am*

I love that Austin flows in and out of Little space during the day. As much as I wanted to give in to his request first thing this morning, I really was hungry enough for my stomach to be rumbling. I didn't eat before going to the club and then Austin fell asleep on the way home. I opted for cuddling with him instead of making a late night snack. Who could blame me when he was dressed in the adorable outfit and smiling in his sleep?

After breakfast, we go back upstairs to look through the playroom. It's been unused for months and I'm sure most of the toys could use a good cleaning. I've met a handful of Littles at the club over the years, even before my best friend's death, but only one or two have lasted long enough to be invited here.

The way Austin, while in his adult headspace mostly, still lets his Little side show is adorable. He gets distracted easily and I love watching him bounce between one thing and another. He starts with the playroom, where I'm pretty sure he looks through every single item and decides that we are going to play Monopoly. For two hours, we sit at the dining room table and play. He tries to cheat giving me his money whenever he lands on one of my squares. I end up pulling him into my lap and scratching my beard against his neck until he is squirming and giggling in my arms.

I have to kick him out of my kitchen during lunch. He insists on dancing around to whatever music is playing on his phone, a playlist he insists has been curated from years of listening. He's doing some sort of rendition of the chicken dance. When he almost slips in his socks and I have to catch him, I make him go sit on the couch while I finish preparing the sandwiches and fruit tray. He regales me with stories from the coffee shop, about customers, and more about how it is to manage it. The owner is supposed to be stopping by sometime next week so they have to get

everything ready on Monday. He turns the conversation to talk about the email he saw on my phone yesterday and if I'm going to take the guy up on it.

By the time the fruit and his sandwich are gone, Austin is fully regressed. It isn't something that I think he realizes that he's doing, especially when he gets sleepy, but within a few minutes, he's curled up on the couch with a blanket and watching a cartoon. I take the dishes back to the kitchen and put them in the dishwasher. My phone vibrates with a text and I pull my phone out of my pocket to check it.

Garrett

It was nice catching up last night. Your new guy is adorable.

I smile at the text. Last night was a much better success than I could hope for. Watching Austin fully sink into that space around others and play made my heart happy. My whole body still is happy. He fit right in with the others and the Mommies and Daddies all planned to get together again in a couple of weeks. I know that Garrett is more for the Daddy / boy aspect without the age regression or at least more of a Middle, but he tagged along with one of our other friends. He has a membership too, so it isn't like he was creeping or anything, and he could usually find someone to go home with him. Afterall, he is rich and handsome.

"Daddy?" Austin's voice pulls me out of my thoughts before I can start comparing myself to a good friend. I've had a true relationship only twice in my forty-one years of life, the first when I was in my early twenties. It was my introduction to the kink scene and we ended amicably when I realized I much preferred to be the one making decisions than being cared for. The second was with James. We dated for two years. He was more of a weekend Little, which didn't bother me. I understood that everyone had their preferences, but once I started my business and was working on growing it, he started feeling like he came second. I'm mature enough to realize my mistakes with that relationship. But since, I haven't been able to find someone else I could see

myself settling down with. Until now.

"What's up, Aussie?" I round the edge of the couch and sit down one cushion away from him. Austin pouts before gathering his blanket and stuffie and moving to climb into my lap. He fits so perfectly and is careful to not plop down like last time. I smile and give him a quick kiss.

"You looked like you were thinking a lot." Austin adjusts the blanket so it's over both of us.

"I was just thinking about how awesome you are," I say honestly. "I've really liked being with you these past couple of weeks."

"I've liked it too," Austin agrees. "I didn't think I'd get to do this again after..."

He doesn't have to say it for me to know what he's talking about. I wrap my arms around him and pull him closer to me. He settles his head on my shoulder and his left hand goes straight to my chest. I'm wearing clothes now, but I smile at the memories of him running his fingers through the hair on my chest and stomach. I had my reservations about sharing the bed with him that first night, but the way he immediately cuddled up to me and didn't seem bothered by it, or any of me, put my mind at ease. Now, it was welcomed. I move my right hand to push the button on the side of the couch to pull up the recliner and we resituate with the new angle.

"You are something special, you know that Aussie?" His arms wrap around my lower back and stomach and his head nestles into my neck.

I feel lips press against the side of my neck in lieu of an answer. We stay just like that and I know he's falling asleep. I'm not sure how much time passes, but I watch the cartoon move to a new episode twice before Austin stirs again. He stretches his body and lets out an adorable noise before his body relaxes once more against me.

"Nice nap?" I ask quietly when he looks up at me. He moves one hand to swipe at his eye and smiles at me.

"You're like the perfect pillow," he says, still clearly half asleep. "I'm never sleeping without you again."

I wish more than anything that that could be true. We've spent more time together than apart after that first weekend, but we do still have our own lives, our own houses. The silence hangs between us and Austin sits up on my lap. "I'm sorry. I didn't mean that like... Moving in or anything."

"No, sweetie. I know what you meant. I like the idea of having you next to me each night too."

"Too bad we're both adults and have jobs and houses and stuff." He voices my exact thoughts. "I mean, I rent mine, but it's still the same."

"You rent your house?" That's news to me. I assumed he had bought it. I didn't mean for that to come out so surprising.

"I do," Austin says. "My credit isn't bad, really. But I didn't have a stable job at the time nor the money to pay for a down payment or anything. I started renting my place from a distant family friend. And I like the house enough, so I didn't bother trying to move."

I put the recliner back down and keep a hand on Austin to make sure he doesn't fall. When the recliner is down and my feet are on the ground, I wrap my arms around him and hug him tightly.

"What's this for? Not that I'm complaining." Austin moves within my arms to straddle my lap and wrap his arms around my neck.

"Just for being the best," I say against his neck. I'm taking my turn to be all in my feelings today. "I didn't think I would get something like this, the complete package in a perfect boy."

"I'm glad I could help with that," he mumbles and I can hear the embarrassment in his tone. I don't mean to make him nervous with that statement. I just want him to know how I feel. "And same for me, with being anyone else. No one even comes close to you, Remi. "

Austin pulls back and his eyes are bright and serious when he looks at me. We stay like that, cuddled on the couch, together. I swear my heart skips a beat when his lips twitch into a smile and I know that I'm never going to find someone like him, and something like this, again. I open my mouth to say something, but Austin stops me with his own lips. It's heated from the start and this time, I don't plan on stopping us. I lift my back off the couch, squeezing my arms tighter around him to press our bodies together.

"Remi, please." Austin begs the words against my lips, breath ghosting against my chin. His eyes are open and so, so blue.

"Let's go upstairs," I say but Austin shakes his head. "Baby, I don't have—"

"No need," he says. I'm about to object when Austin shifts and jams his hand into one of his pockets. I laugh when I see the triumphant look on his face. "I stole one from upstairs this morning."

I can't hold back the laugh and sink back onto the couch. "I guess there's nothing left to object."

"Like you would object to me," he scoffs. I raise my eyebrows and I see the moment his words register with his own brain. It's comical, but I hold back my laughter and



enjoyment of the moment.

"Move over, on your knees." I keep my voice even and hold his stare while I watch the gears in his mind turn. He's trying to decipher what I'm about to do. "Aussie, do what I say, please."

"Daddy?" His voice is wobbly and I can see the physical change in him. His eyes soften, shoulders slump, body hunches slightly. He knows that I love his Little side. I love all the sides of him, I can admit that to myself .

"This isn't a punishment, Aussie." I reassure him and caress my hands up and down his arms slowly. "But that was a smart tone, wasn't it?"

"It was. I'm sorry." He sits his butt down on my knees and I move my hands to take his. I give him a gentle smile.

"Thank you, baby." I pinch his chin between my thumb and forefinger. "Now, will you please move over here?"

This time Austin listens and I simply make sure he doesn't lose his balance. The couch isn't high off the floor and it would probably be more funny than harmful if he did fall, but I don't want to push this moment off any longer. Austin is wearing shorts and a simple tee. I start by laying a hand on his lower back and pushing until he bends forward and rests against his hands as well. His ass is right in my face and I smile. My fingers slide up his back, under his shirt, and I feel him shiver. He drops further down to his elbows and that's all I need. Without preamble, I pull his shorts and briefs down, exposing his ass to me.

"Safe word, Aussie?" If he's slipping in and out of Little space, I want to make sure he remembers what that word is. I know it's redundant asking every time, but I'm always worried that the one time I don't ask, they're not going to remember.

"Pickle," he responds dutifully. But then there's another, low noise that comes from him as I palm his cheeks and spread them.

"And if your mouth is occupied?" I ask, my breath ghosting over his exposed hole. I let my beard scratch against his ass and his whole body shivers.

"Tap somewhere on your body three times."

"Good boy, Aussie. "

I kiss along his left cheek and then his right. My hands keep him spread open and I see his rim pucker and then contract. I kiss closer and closer until I can hear him audibly begging me. "Please Daddy."

"I've got you, baby."

I finally give him what he wants and lick over his hole. He lets out a long, drawn out, " Fuck " and I repeat the motion. I don't care about cursing in any headspace. I find it cute. And sometimes, fuck is all there is to say.

His hips push back against my face, asking for more. I adjust the both of us, directing him to rest his elbows against the back of the couch and his knees spread on the cushion. I kneel on the floor behind him and continue my ministrations. I press my tongue against his rim and flick it up and down, teasing him.

"Is Daddy making you feel good, baby?" I move up to kiss along his lower back while my fingers ghost down the insides of his thighs, making sure that my beard leaves goosebumps over his skin. I've trimmed it since we agreed to be exclusive, but I know how much he loves it so it's still several inches long. Just nicer to look at, even if the gray patches are becoming more noticeable. "Did you happen to grab any lube?"

"I didn't think I could hide a whole bottle in my pocket," Austin says. "And yes, Daddy, that feels amazing. You always make me feel good."

I smile against his lower back and move down to give his ass all of my attention. I give no warning before I'm pushing my tongue in as far as I can. His body jumps. If my mouth wasn't otherwise occupied, I would have smiled at his reaction. His body is reacting to every movement, every touch. I continue to brush my hands up and down his thighs, inside and out, but avoid his cock and balls altogether. His hips continue to rock back and forth as I eat him. I know he isn't getting any friction against his cock, his hips are jutted too far out. I also know that I'll have to clean this couch later.

"Daddy." He moans my name and it just spurs me on. I pull my tongue out of him, brushing the pad of my thumb against his opening. "Oh, please. I need more."

"I'm going to make sure you're prepped, baby. Be patient. I don't want to hurt you since we don't have lube."

"I don't want to wait," Aussie says. I can hear the impatience in his voice. I see it in the way his hand moves toward his cock.

"Then get that beautiful ass to the bedroom," I say and slap one cheek as I stand up. I definitely hide a grunt from being on my knees like that. I should get a rug to put under the couch. "I'll be right behind you."

"Yes, Daddy." Austin all but takes off toward the stairs. His groin and ass are fully exposed but he's still wearing a shirt and his socks. I don't want him to repeat almost slipping like he did in the kitchen earlier.

"Austin," I say sternly. He stops in his tracks but doesn't turn around. "Walk. I don't want you slipping again."

"Sorry. I'll be careful." And he is. I watch him go up the stairs and he gives me a 'hurry up' motion when I haven't moved by the time he's at the top of the steps. I make a quick stop at the fridge to grab two bottles of water before following.

It's a sight when I walk into the bedroom. The rest of Austin's clothes have been discarded and he's on his knees in the middle of the bed, whole bottle of lube in hand. He smiles wide when his eyes meet mine.

"I'm going to teach you the joys of little bottles of this," Austin says. I watch in awe as he bounces onto his butt and rolls over to his stomach. He smirks when he looks over his shoulder and wiggles his butt. He's fucking adorable.

I start stripping out of my clothes while slowly moving across the room. "Give yourself ten more years and you won't be moving like that without popping something, baby."

Austin turns onto his back just as I reach the side of the bed. I'm down to my briefs now and climb onto the bed, hovering over him. His hands run through the hair on my chest and stomach and my dick perks right back up. I dip my head and kiss him.

When I pull back to look at him, he's smiling again, but there's mischief behind his eyes. "I know you have something to say, just say it."

He hesitates for a second before the joke is too much to keep in. "Are you sure you won't throw out a hip with all this movement?"

"You're on thin ice, Aussie." I kiss him again, distracting him enough to let my hand dig into his side where he's most ticklish. His body squirms under me, laughter and a squeal filling the room.

"Torture!" He says through shallow breaths. I let up and give him a moment to catch

his breath.

"Are you done making fun of me now?"

"I'm sorry, Daddy." He doesn't look the least bit sorry. "Will you please continue with the having of the sex?"

"The having of the— Never mind." I decide to let that drop but he's smiling and I can see the happiness in his expression and it makes my heart— and dick— swell.

Austin's hands are on me in an instant again, tugging at the band of my briefs. I shift a bit higher on the bed, kissing along his jaw while he pushes my underwear as far as he can manage. I quickly rid myself of them without breaking our lips apart. Our movements are like something straight from a movie, perfectly coordinated without saying a word. His legs lift up and wrap around my waist, pressing our groins together. I have one hand holding me up and use the other to brush through Austin's hair.

"You are so beautiful," I whisper. "So perfect."

I can see the tinge in his cheeks and smile, not resisting the urge to kiss him once more. This kiss is slow and we rock our bodies together. I feel his hand move between our bodies and wrap around my cock only. I know we're both leaking precum at this point. His lips continue to move against mine as he strokes me to full hardness again. He moves his hand down further, fingers brushing lightly against my balls. The sensation pulls me from the kiss and I have to take several deep breaths to keep this from ending way too soon.

He keeps his legs loosely wrapped around me while I sit up and grab the lube to coat my fingers. I look at his body, his smiling face, the tattoo that travels from his shoulder to hip. That simple line, the only marking he has on his body, holds so many

memories for him. I respect that, for both of us. There is history and moments that I'll never know about and that's fine. I want to create a lifetime of new memories with him. Our lips meet once again when I lean over him, adjusting my body slightly so I can get him ready.

"God, Remi." I'm up to two fingers now and I know I found the right angle when he turns his head, eyes closed, and sinks his teeth into my bicep. It's not hard and the small sting jolts through my body, spurring me on more. I add a third finger and his teeth clamp down a little harder. His whole body is moving in tandem with my fingers pushing into him, opening his hole for me. I can feel the spit running down my arm .

"Are you ready for me, baby?" I pull my fingers out of him and quickly wipe the remaining lube off on the side of the bed. I'll wash the blanket later.

"Yes, please. I need you."

Those words do something to me and I have to take a moment to recompose. I'm always needed, twenty-four/seven at work. Things need to be signed, orders placed, emails answered. I'm needed with my family. For babysitting or to help fix something around the house. But like this? No one, in all my years, has ever told me so sincerely that they need me in a physical way. I'm in deep with this boy, I know it like I know my own name. I hold back the thought from forming. The last thing I want to do is ruin this moment by saying something he isn't ready to hear.

Instead, I reach for the condom he left on the bedside table and open it. I slide it on securely and give myself a few tugs before looking back at Austin. He's smiling and lifts his legs, wrapping his hands behind his knees. His hole is right there, ready for me. I push all the deep thoughts away, wanting to enjoy this moment between us. The angsty thoughts and future wanting to montage through my mind can wait for when I'm not about to fuck my boy.

"Yes, Daddy. Fuck, yes. You feel so big." Austin continues the string of compliments as I push slowly in to him. His ass is gripping me tight, the warmth of his body makes me want to chase that feeling but I hold back. I don't want this to end too fast for either of us. And I don't want to hurt him.

"You feel incredible, Austin." We move, adjusting ourselves to a better position. He lets his legs fall open around my body and I move my hands to hold myself above him. He lets out a beautiful moan when I finally press my hips against his ass. He bites his bottom lip, but I tug at his chin until he lets his jaw go slack. I smile down at him. "Are you good?"

"More than," he says with a smile.

I dip my head to kiss him and pull my hips back at the same time. The moment I thrust my hips forward again, all bets are off. The tender moments we shared, the sweet kisses, gentle moans; all of that is gone. The room fills with grunts from both of us, skin slapping against skin, the headboard hitting the wall. And Austin's whimpers as I fuck into him over and over. "Yes, Austin. Fuck, baby, your body is perfect."

I look down between our bodies and watch his cock. It's trapped between his stomach and mine but he's leaking like crazy, pooling cum on his stomach. His ass grips tighter around me as he clinches, fighting off the orgasm that is building. "Fuck, Aussie. Come for me, baby. Let Daddy see you come on his cock."

I quicken my thrusts, dipping my head to rest against the side of his. I can feel his breaths ghosting over my shoulder with each pant. "I'm almost— Shit, I'm coming."

His breath hitches and I feel his teeth clamp around my shoulder just before his body tenses up and stars are shooting through my whole body. I don't know what kind of noise comes out of me, but it's deep and pure instinct and I still as my cum fills the

condom deep inside Austin. I can feel his ass pulsing around my cock, squeezing me. His teeth have definitely left marks. When I have enough brain power to think again, I pull out of him slowly. I see him wince but he covers it with a smile.

We're both sweaty and messy. His hair is sticking in different directions; it's adorable and hot at the same time .

"I'll be right back," I say as I climb off the bed. The cool flooring is a shock to my heated body. I move toward the en suite quickly to dispose of the condom and grab a towel to clean Austin up. Before I can do the second, though, arms snake around my body and he presses tight against my back.

"I think we need a shower," he says. "Together."



*Source Creation Date: July 18, 2025, 10:27 am*

We spend the rest of Saturday alternating between lounging around in bed and playing around the house. There's a whole level of intimacy that comes with sharing yourself with someone physically and trusting them to take care of your needs. When we finally get out of bed again, Remi is in full Daddy mode, setting me up at the table with coloring books and crayons while he prepares dinner.

"A crockpot masterpiece," he says with a wink as he gathers the supplies for a cheesy chicken noodle recipe. Once everything is in the pot, slowly cooking, Remi joins me to color for a bit. Then we move to the living room where I decide we need to have a battle to fight the dragons. Daddy finds two foam swords in the playroom for us to use.

After eating dinner, which is delicious, we make our way upstairs. Remi gives me the choice of what I want to wear to bed, since I have a bag of my own clothes here too. I go with training pants and a pair of shorts, but we both get a bit sidetracked and wind up naked in bed once more. I'm not complaining as I finally curl up against Remi and fall asleep to the sound of his breathing.

Sunday, we go out as a couple, taking a drive out of the city. The weather is cold and Remi makes me dress in an extra layer. I hate the in-between weather, where it's cold enough to snow but it doesn't actually. I'm hoping we can get some snow this winter. Remi surprises me with a roadside diner. Despite the small building and the lack of cars out front, the atmosphere inside and the staff are all incredibly warm and the food is delicious. We go to a hobby shop and then a Farmer's market as well. Mother Nature is in full Fall swing with the changing leaves and brisk weather. The Farmer's market is selling hot cider that warms me up as we walk around.

On the drive back to his place, we talk about his work some more. He tells me more about the email that he got and Garrett, his friend I met at the club Friday night. They met two years ago at the club, found out they had much the same hobbies, and Garrett invited him to his place for a cookout and the rest is an ongoing history.

Hearing Remi talk about his friends and even the people he works with, I realize once again that I've shut myself out the last three years. I didn't keep up with the other Littles I used to hang out with with Paul. All of the guys I work with are at least six years younger than me and we don't have much of anything in common outside of our jobs. We have good working relationships, but that's it. It makes me miss being around people and I'm happy when Remi tells me that the Mommies and Daddies have already planned another get together .

It's nearing dinner time again when we get back to my place. Remi has stayed with me so often over the last month that he has clothes here already. Neither of us are really hungry when we get to my place so we settle on a small version of a charcuterie board and a glass of wine each.

Remi takes his own shower and then runs me a bath while I'm folding clothes I forgot I had put in the dryer on Friday morning. Wrinkled is an understatement for those shirts and I start the dryer again for a few minutes with the hope that it would help. I don't own an iron. By the time I have them folded or hanging in the closet, Remi calls out for me and I travel through the kitchen and dining area. The laundry room is tiny, but efficient, just off the backside of the kitchen.

He put bubbles in the water but there aren't any toys, which is okay for tonight. I let him undress me and wash my hair and body. It's quiet between us, but not awkward. It's sweet. I don't want this to end, ever. Remi starts draining the water but has me laying back in the tub while he jerks my cock slowly. It's sensual and my orgasm comes on slow but intense. He uses the showerhead to clean me off and then he redresses me and we get into the bed.

Now, my alarm is going off and I think about calling in to stay in bed with Remi a little longer. Remi, though, is already moving to get out of bed.

"Noooo," I grumble. "Come back."

"You're the one that has to get to work, Aussie." His hand brushes down the side of my face and I finally open my eyes. He's in nothing but a pair of loose boxers this morning. My eyes travel up further, to see his soft eyes and smile. "Come on, baby. Up, up. "

The alarm is shut off as I sit up and rub my eyes. It's still dark outside. I don't mind the cold weather, but I hate having to drive to work when the sun hasn't even risen yet and I don't get off work until it's set.

"Austin?" Remi's voice is different, softer now. I look up at him and he's standing by the foot of the bed with his head slightly tilted. Concern is etched into his expression. "What's up?"

"I was just complaining in my head," I answer honestly. I move my legs over the side of the bed and stand up. Remi steps closer and I wrap my arms around him. He does the same. "I don't want to go to work today."

"You can do this," Remi whispers in my ear. His hands rub up and down my back.

"Sure, but I don't want to." I tilt my head back to look up at Remi. "And you have important work stuff this week and I won't be able to see you for days."

My phone dings before Remi can respond. I drop my arms from around him and move to check it. I don't get many texts or calls in general, but one this early can be only one thing.

Tyler

Hey, Austin. Sorry to do this last minute. I'm not feeling good and got an appt with my doc. I won't be coming in today.

I slump my shoulders at Tyler's text. It isn't unexpected. He was complaining about feeling unwell on Friday. I send him a quick 'feel better' text and then look up at Remi.

"And just like that, I really don't want to go in. Mondays are one of our busiest days of the week and now we're down a person."

"You'll be okay," Remi says. "I'm sure people will understand. Plus, it's getting close to the holiday season. People tend to be nice this time of year, right?"

"Oh, Remi." I lay a hand on his chest and let my fingers scratch through the soft hair. I drop my eyes and openly ogle him for a minute. "You have no idea how people are with their coffees. At least it isn't Jason calling out. I'd have to make all the coffees this morning on top of the owner coming in."

"I'm putting in my two weeks," Jason says.

I stare at him, not sure what to say. He has a folded letter in his hand and is holding it out to me. I can see the guilt in his face and I don't want him to feel like that. This is a job and he isn't contracted. I focus my attention on the letter and take it from him, not bothering to open it right now. It's been a long morning for all of us. The owner was in a mood when he came in, something about end of the year sales and needing to file the paperwork sooner than expected. With not having Tyler in, he was upset that I chose to be on the floor helping Amir and Jason instead of sitting in a meeting while the morning rush came through.

Once I was able to sit down with the owner, he let me know I put him behind schedule for the day by nearly an hour. I held my tongue from responding that he could help out as well, seeing as it is his business, but I didn't. I sat and listened to him talk about needing the reports for the month a week earlier and that it wasn't in the budget this year to give out bonuses for the employees. The health inspector is also coming next week, on top of everything else.

In short, it was not a good meeting.

Now this.

"Is everything okay?" I ask, looking up at him. The office is a glorified closet and there isn't room for another chair or I'd ask him to sit so we can talk. The shop is closed already so I know we can take a moment.

"Yeah, yeah." He folds his hands over his chest and nods. "I just—"

"You don't have to explain it to me," I say. "It's not my place to need to know. I appreciate the notice, though."

"I know I don't have to." Jason shifts his weight and looks right at me. "I just want you to know it's not because of you or this job specifically. You're, like, one of the best managers I've worked for. I just got accepted into a program and I'm going to be moving away first of the year."

"That's great news," I say, genuinely excited for him. He'd mentioned the program before. I can't recall the specifics of it but I know it's for a degree he's been working toward. "I'm happy for you. You deserve it."

"I'm happy for you too," he says, catching me off guard. "Oh, don't play coy. You have a boyfriend, don't you? That guy that came in here?"

"Maybe." I choose to neither confirm nor deny. He laughs at the vagueness.

"You suck at lying. I'll be able to work through the week of Thanksgiving," he says. "Figured since we're off that Thursday and Friday, I'll just do to Wednesday and have that be my last day."

"Well, I'm definitely going to miss you and your creations," I say. I stand up and hold my hand out to shake his. He pulls me in, on instinct, for that half-bro hug, pat on the back move. "I'll need you to write some of them down for the regulars that come through. They all ask for you on days you're not here."

We walk back out to the main floor. As I walk around, I check that everything is clean and ready to go. Amir is finishing up the last of the dishes and Jason already has everything cleaned up on the coffee side. I wave to the guys as they leave and make sure to lock the door back behind them.

I have to send an email to the owner, something I don't want to do after today's meeting, and work on some paperwork. I have a text on my phone from Remi asking if I've eaten and to let him know when I make it home. I look at the empty plate where I'd made myself a sandwich two hours ago. That is dinner enough, right?

I confirm that I have eaten and then get back to the tasks at hand. I read the resignation letter first, basic with the last day he'll work on there. It is weird to think that Thanksgiving is only two weeks away. The thought of it brings up my family and having to face them for the holidays. I've seen the pictures of my niece in her Bumblebee costume, but I haven't spoken to my parents or sister since last week.

My family isn't bad, but they don't understand. I know they didn't particularly approve of Paul when I introduced him the first time. They never said anything outright, but I got the vibe. After his death, I got texts and calls checking up on me. A few casseroles were sent. After I signed a lease with my cousin's friend's father,

someone I had met twice in my life, the calls became less and it wasn't unheard of to go a week without talking to anyone in the family.

Last holiday season, my mom asked if I was back in the dating scene yet. Then proceeded to list all the things that I should be doing since I'm in my thirties now. I needed to grow up, pretty much. None of them know about the kinkier side of my life; they didn't know it with Paul and they won't with Remi either. They wouldn't understand that it was a mental thing for me as much as a physical one.

I get through four more reports before my phone starts ringing. The clock shows that it is almost nine-thirty. I have to be up at six the next morning again. Tyler has already called out for tomorrow too. I don't have to look at the screen to know it's Remi calling in.

"Hey." I put him on speaker and set the phone on my desk so I can keep typing. I just want to get all of this in tonight so we can focus on the inspection checklist tomorrow.

"Have you left work yet? I didn't know if you forgot to text me."

"No." I sigh inwardly. "The owner is requesting these reports a week earlier than expected and we have the health inspector coming next week so I'm just trying to get this done. One of my employees put in their notice today so I'm going to have to start looking for a replacement soon."

"I'm sorry, baby." Just hearing Remi calling me baby calms a little bit of the storm raging in my mind. I let my shoulders drop a bit and sit back in my chair. "Do you want me to come over tonight?"

"No, it's okay." As much as I want that, I know he has his own business to run. "My house is way out of the way for you and you have that meeting tomorrow. I'll be

okay. "

"Aussie, I don't mind driving." Remi's voice is taking on his Daddy tone and I can feel my dick jump at it. I'm so not getting hard at work, even if I am alone. I'm grateful when he changes the subject. "I had something to run by you, though. I spoke with the guy that sent me that email Friday, the one with the land a couple of hours away. He offered for a group of us to come spend the weekend there. It has cabins, running water, a chow hall, and everything we could need. I was thinking maybe the group you played with at the club might want to take a weekend away after Thanksgiving? I'll have to do some work and talk to the owner, but I wanted to make sure there would be someone around that you could hang out with too. If you wanted to join me, that is."

"I'd love to." The words are out of my mouth before I can even think them. Having a weekend away from everything, especially with other Littles, would be nice. "And honestly, I'm okay. It was just a lot thrown at me today but I'll get it done."

"I'm proud of you, Austin." Tears sting my eyes at those words. "If you need me, just call, okay?"

"I will. I'll see you Wednesday. Be prepared for all the cuddles."

"I'm looking forward to it," Remi says with a laugh in his words. "Don't stay there too long and text me when you get home, okay? If I don't hear from you in an hour, I'm coming back."

"Yes, Daddy." I smile and pick up my phone, biting my bottom lip. He makes me so incredibly happy I have to bite back my next words.

"Good boy, Aussie. I'll see you soon."



I end the phone call and decide that I'm done for the day. I save all my progress and pack up my things. The wind is picking up when I step outside and I'm glad Remi made me put on my bigger coat today. I pull it tighter around me and click the lock on my car once I round the corner to the parking lot. I spot someone standing a ways off from my path and another couple that looks to be heading to their car from the business next door. It's a restaurant/ bar type that opens for lunch and closes at two in the morning. There's a light shining off the back of the coffee shop, but it isn't bright enough to light the whole lot. We're supposed to park further away, reserving the closer parking spaces for customers. It sucks on nights like this.

I get in the car and blast the heater. It takes a couple of minutes for it to kick in and I pull out of the space. Driving home this late, the roads aren't too busy. The idea of going home on my own after almost a whole week with Remi isn't appealing. I know that we've only been dating for a month, but I miss him when he's not around. I immediately text Remi once I pull into the driveway.

Austin

Made it home. It's cold.

I rush to get inside and hang my coat up in the closet. I feel my stomach grumble in protest from the simple turkey sandwich I made earlier. As I'm heading toward the kitchen, my phone buzzes. I wasn't expecting Remi to actually be awake.

Daddy

I'm glad you made it home, Aussie. Sweet dreams .

It's crazy to miss someone after just a couple of hours, right? Especially after we spent the entire weekend attached to each other. In all the ways. Making my own food, showering, and getting myself ready for bed is... Blah. It's boring without

Daddy here, but he has a couple of deadlines to take care of and I don't want to get in the way of his job. I get that he's going to be busy at times and he's already given me so much in the time we are together.

I'm just pulling the blanket over me when my phone chimes with an incoming video call. I reach for it where it's charging on my nightstand and smile at Daddy's face on the screen. I answer, flicking on the lamp in the process so he can see me.

"Hey, Daddy." I can't hide the grin at just seeing him. He's also laying in bed. Everything from today melts away and I settle further into my bed as he starts talking.

"You look all cozy," he says. "Did you eat something?" I nod. "Brush your teeth?" I nod again. "Did you miss me today?"

Now he's just fishing for compliments but I give them anyway. "Definitely on that last one. I miss you now."

"That's why I'm calling, baby. I assumed you were exhausted after a long day of working. I was laying here reading. Figured I could read to you until you fell asleep. If you want."

"I'd love that." I mess with propping my phone up just right so I don't have to hold it. After a few moments, it stays and I lay my head back down on the pillow. The pillow that most definitely smells like my Daddy. I'm not ashamed and I hear him laugh when I take a deep breath.

"Are you all snug as a bug?" I smile at the silly saying and close my eyes, letting his voice lull me off to sleep. I don't even know what book he's reading from, but I barely last a minute before I fall asleep.

## Page 14

*Source Creation Date: July 18, 2025, 10:27 am*

I wake up alone in bed. Which I knew was going to happen, but it still sucks not having Remi here to pull me out of bed or make breakfast together. I have a good morning text from him and a screenshot of me asleep on the video call last night. It is not an attractive photo.

By the time I get to work, I can tell the day isn't going to go well. The winds last night must have knocked something on the block and the power went out after I left. I don't know how long it was out, either. The freezers are still within the safe zone for temps, but we have to throw out almost everything in the deli fridge and half the milk in the coffee station fridge. I call in an emergency order to our supplier for just the basics to get us through the week until our usual shipment arrives on Friday.

It won't be here until nine at the earliest, leaving us with an hour after opening to hope we don't run out of things. I'm torn between helping Jason with the coffee line and making sure that Amir is good with getting everyone their pastries and breakfast sandwiches. I apologize at least a hundred times to different customers who are upset they're having to wait longer than normal.

When the order does arrive, I do my best to get everything put away as quickly as I can. Usually, we get our orders during a slower time in the day and I can pull Jason or Amir in to help me. But now, it's a rush to put the cold stuff away, jump on the espresso machine, and make sure that we are ready for the lunch rush. It's a long morning and by the time noon hits, I'm ready for the day to be over.

I take a moment to sit in the office after the lunch rush and check my emails and texts. Remi texted me back, letting me know that all but one couple is able to have a long weekend getaway. The email from the owner is less than ideal. He is upset about

having to throw so much out and sent a list of things that need to be done by Friday. He is coming back in Thursday evening to check. This means more paperwork to justify throwing out almost two hundred dollars of supplies and probably late nights the rest of the week.

All three of us are tired by the time we close up. I help both of them as much as I can and get my own chores done before I lock up behind them and go back to the office. I'm giving myself an hour and then heading home. Just one more day before seeing Remi again. I should probably analyze why I'm telling time in Remington visits, but I don't care. The thought of cuddling next to him, playing, not having to make any hard decisions, is enticing.

My phone rings and I expect it to be Remi calling me again like he did last night, but it's my boss. I pick up the phone and press it to my ear .

"Hello?" I open my mouth to ask how he is, but he cuts me off.

"I got three complaints online today," he says. His words are angry and rushed. "Some were complaining that the tables were a mess, the wait line was almost ten minutes for a single coffee. I know we had some issues this morning, but what happened?"

"Exactly that," I say. I keep my voice calm, knowing that stooping to his angry tone isn't a smart choice if I want to keep my job. "We were down an employee today and—"

"You were down an employee yesterday, too, right? Was it the same employee?"

"Yes, sir, but he has a legit—"

"I'm paying him to be there and work," the owner cuts off. I don't know where this is

all coming from. I've never had issues with the owner before. He and his wife are usually happy when they come in or when he calls on the phone. This side of him is way off and I want to ask if everything is okay but it isn't my place to do so.

"He said he'll be back in tomorrow. I'll talk to him about it." I already plan to talk to him, to make sure that everything is okay. Not to berate him or make him feel bad for feeling bad. I've had days since starting this job where I had to call out as well. Not many, but I've taken a couple days over the two years I've worked here.

"I'll be there Thursday." The line clicks dead before I can respond. I look over the list of things needing to be done and make my own list of what will take the longest or need more than one person to complete. Then, I try to plan what time during the day each task can be done. It's going to be a stretch and with the colder weather in full swing already, we're getting more traffic in the mornings especially.

"Here's to hoping tomorrow is better," I say to myself and knock my knuckles against the wooden desk. I gather my things and put on my coat and hat before heading outside.

My phone starts ringing once again while I'm walking to the car. Again, I'm disappointed that it isn't my Daddy. He did text me earlier to call him once I got home so he's probably waiting for that. I'll probably call him on my way home. This call, though, is coming from my mother. We don't talk a lot but I expected with the holidays around the corner, I'd be hearing from her sooner than later. I answer the call before it can go to voicemail.

"Hey, Mom."

"Hey Austin," she answers simply. She is never one for calling her kids by nicknames or the usual 'sweety' or 'dear' like some of my friends' moms growing up. "How are you?"

"I'm good," I say. I jump into the car and turn the key. Once the car is on, I adjust the heat and relax when it starts to warm up. The walk from the shop to the car isn't long, maybe two minutes at most, but I wouldn't be surprised if we get an early snow this winter. My thoughts go to the trip Daddy is planning for us. Hopefully there's heat in the cabins. "How are you and Dad?"

"We're good, too." The conversation is always stilted like this until one of us gets to the reason for calling. "Are you coming to the Thanksgiving dinner?"

"Yeah," I say. I turn the heat up when the car fully warms up and prop my phone in the holder before backing out of the spot. My brain is so ready to stop thinking for a couple of hours. I have a microwavable dinner waiting for me, maybe a couple episodes of a show, hopefully another video chat with my Daddy. "What time are we meeting?"

"Bea, Chandler, and their little one have to go to Chandler's parents at four so we were thinking noon?"

Bea, my older sister, has a four-year-old daughter. She is adorable and I wish that we were a closer family sometimes so I could watch her grow up more consistently. We weren't really close before Paul's death, but after, I know I distanced myself more. They didn't understand why I couldn't move on. Until now.

I overheard my mom once say in another room that my grief wasn't normal. It'd been eight months after Paul's accident, a time when I was struggling the most with finding a new job, a place to live, and not having anywhere or anyone to regress with. Paul's family was understanding in the beginning, but since I wasn't on the deed to the house and we weren't married yet, they were the ones that decided to sell the home Paul and I lived in.

Charlotte, my only niece, doesn't know all of that. She doesn't judge me for not being

around much when she was first born, doesn't care that sometimes I just sit quietly. The handful of times I've seen her over the last three years, I've become too overwhelmed with playing blocks or with stuffies that I had to stop. I know it isn't fair on her, but it was hard for me to play without wanting to slip in that space or just think of Paul.

"I'll have to double check with Remington, but that should be fine."

"Who's Remington?" My mom's voice perks up and I realize what I said. I close my eyes briefly, since I'm already driving and open them back up to watch the road. I explained who Remington was to her last time we spoke. Only a week ago. "Austin?"

"We're... dating. He's my boyfriend." It's the first time I've used the word and my stomach swoops happily at it. "I might see if he can come with me. If you're okay with it."

"Of course," she says quickly. "Oh, I'm happy for you Austin. It's been a while. I was just talking to your sister the other day—"

"I'm sorry, Mom. I have to go. I'm driving home." I don't want to get into this conversation once again. Each holiday for the past two years brought up the same questions and conversations.

Are you bringing someone with you?

Seeing anyone?

Still working at the coffee shop?

My answers have been the same and I see the light dim in their eyes when I say I'm not looking for anyone. The plus with my family is none of them care that I'm gay,

but it doesn't stop them from asking and overstepping. And not in a cute, just want the best for you way.

By the time I'm pulling into the driveway, my mind is swirling with more things I have to deal with over the next week and a half. Work, family, asking Remi if he wants to meet them, going to Remi's family to meet them. I barely remember meeting his sister before—it was a brief interaction with her at a cookout—but I'm excited to see them. The way Remi speaks about his family is warm and makes me happy for him.

He invited me to his nephew's birthday party, but they had it planned for half an hour before I got off work so I missed it.

I get inside and hang my coat up before dutifully calling Remi. He answers on the first ring .

"Hey, baby. How was work?"

"Not good," I sigh. I recount the day while I grab my frozen meal and set it in the microwave. By the time I'm done telling him everything, down to the short conversation with my mom, I'm leaning with my back against the counter and watching the timer on the microwave.

"I'm sorry, Aussie." His voice is soothing and I let out a deep sigh, letting my eyes close and my head drop back. When the timer beeps I open my eyes back up and listen to Remi continue to talk. "Are you going to your parents on Thanksgiving?"

"Probably," I say. I grab a fork and mix up the food. It's a basic chicken and rice meal, with some veggies thrown in. The container it comes in is sectioned off, so my food isn't touching. "I know we talked about it a bit on Sunday, but I was going to see if you wanted to go with me. My mom said that they planned to eat around noon."



"Only if you'll go to breakfast with me and my family," Remi responds. "We like to do something around eight and then we hang out for a bit."

"Two big meals in one day?" I look from what I'm eating now and thinking about all the yummy breakfast that Remi has made for me recently. Having his whole family making breakfast foods? "I'm in."

"Great," Remi says and he sounds genuinely excited about it. "I'll let them know you're coming. They're excited to meet you."

That surprises me. "You've told them about me?"

"Aussie, I've told everyone about you." Remi says it like it should be common knowledge but it brings a lump to my throat. "Is that okay? "

"Yeah, of course it is." I forget about the food for a second and walk toward my bedroom to change into my pajamas. Without thinking, though, I end up in the playroom. The room calms me now, instead of making me think of Paul and how much I've missed over the last three years. "I called you my boyfriend today. To my Mom. I know it's such a simple thing, but it just came out naturally."

I open the closet and look through the options. I have so many outfits here, more than I thought. I have a suspicion that Remi has added a few things in. I don't feel like slipping into my Little space alone, but it doesn't mean I can't put something comfy on and maybe read a book in the oversized chair Remi bought. When he told me he bought a chair, I expected a rocking chair or something. Not this big, fluffy thing that we can both fit on and snuggle easily. I'm not complaining, but I know that it wasn't cheap.

"You can call me whatever you want, Aussie." Remi's voice is getting deeper, letting me know that he's close to sleep. I want to ask him to read me a book again, but I

decide I can wait one more day. "I'll see you tomorrow when you get home, okay? Sweet dreams, baby."

"Goodnight, Daddy."

I hang up and change my clothes right there, kicking my adult outfit into the floor of the closet. The outfit is a t-shirt and shorts, dark blue with spaceships and stars on them. I love this outfit, even more so when I'm diapered because the extra padding can be easily seen under the thin fabric. Maybe tomorrow.

My food is cooled enough to eat quickly and I grab a bottle of water to take back to bed with me. I make a pitstop to the bathroom to brush my teeth and relieve my bladder before grabbing Koka and Kola and going back to the playroom. I pull the blanket over us and settle in with a book. It's nearly ten now and I make sure to set the alarm on my phone before snuggling in.

When I wake up the next morning to my alarm, I'm surprised. Not because I'm in the playroom or even because I'm hard. Those two things make sense.

I'm confused because my thumb is firmly in my mouth and I was sucking on it. I give myself plenty of time to wake up, but keep my thumb in my mouth. I've sucked on my fingers before, mostly when I'm shy. Like when Remi took me to the club or usually when I'm overwhelmed too, but sucking my thumb? I haven't done that in a good while. It's usually my body and mind's way of telling me that I want to regress more than I typically do.

I shake those thoughts, unsure if Remi is cool with that. We've talked about it before, but I like the dynamic we have. He cooks for me, plays, colors, even does bath time. He's okay with the diapers, but I don't know if he would be okay with me regressing to nearly nonverbal and needing a pacifier and bottle.

My morning routine is the same as it's been for a while. I shower, dress, remember to grab my clothes from the playroom and toss them into my dirty clothes hamper. Remi texts me a good morning right at six-thirty, his usual wake up time.

As I'm walking out the door, my phone starts to ring. I pray that it isn't Tyler calling out again but instead it's my sister. I can't remember the last time she's called me this early in the day and I'm immediately on edge. "Bea? Is something wrong? "

"Of course something's wrong," she says. I rush to the car, planning on breaking all the laws to get to her or my parents. "Mom told me you have a boyfriend?"

I stop in my tracks, hand on the door handle. My heart is still racing, but the adrenaline is leaving my body quickly. "I thought someone was hurt."

"Well, I am." I roll my eyes at her dramatics. "Why didn't you tell me you were dating someone?"

"It's not like we talk all the time," I say as I get in the car and turn the key.

"Seriously, Austin. Why didn't you say anything?"

Because while I've been living my most lonely life and not socializing, you and your husband are doing well for yourselves. Because every time I come to a family function, I'm asked over and over when I'm going to "put myself out there" or "stop spending all my time alone". I don't say anything like that so I sigh instead.

"It's new," I say instead. "We're still learning about each other, but he's coming to Mom's next week so you'll meet him there."

I can't remember if any of my family has met Remi and if they had, if they would remember him.

"I'm happy for you," Bea says. I open my mouth to say something but she beats me to it. "We've been wondering if you were going to date again after what happened."

After what happened?

After what—

"I have to go," I say. "I'm going to be late to work."

I hang up the phone and focus on driving before I start crying.

## Page 15

*Source Creation Date: July 18, 2025, 10:27 am*

"Someone's all chipper today," Clara says as she enters my office. She is holding a single file and I'm hoping it's what I think it is. She stops on the other side of my desk and hands it over.

I don't have much in my office as far as personal items. It's not huge, just a typical room in a three story building. The rest of our office is one large room, sectioned off for each department. My office, as much as I don't like it, is the only one with walls and a door I can close if needed.

I flip through the file and smile. It's the payment agreement from the late payment resident and she's holding up her end of the deal so far. Every fortnight, when she gets paid, she's giving a set amount on top of her monthly rent going forward. It'll take about two more months and as long as she doesn't miss a payment to us, she won't be evicted.

"I'm just ready for the holidays next week." A whole week off. I haven't told Austin I've been able to secure the whole week just yet. I'm not technically off, but I'll be working from home. Which means I'm going to try and work from Austin's home or have him come to my house. I fully plan on taking him and picking him up from work for the three days he works next week.

I'm going to be working on looking at the campground we'll be visiting, doing some research on previous owners, what the camp was used for, potential for it. I'll have to put together some spreadsheets and reports for cost to upkeep and bookers and such. All of that can be done while Austin is at work.

"Are you doing anything with that new boyfriend of yours?"

I didn't lie to Austin when I told him I've told everyone about us. Even those in my office know that I'm in a relationship. They don't know all the details, of course, like our dynamic or the fact that Austin was my best friend's fiancé at one point. They know I'm crazy about him and that's more than enough for me.

"Just doing the family thing," I say. "How about you and your family?"

"Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade in the morning. The kids go feral for Santa at the end. Then we're going to be going to my Dad's. After which, Dave will have to rummage around in our closet to find the elf so we can bring her back this holiday season."

"I never understood the concept of the elf," I say honestly. Granted, I don't have kids and I didn't have a Little long enough that I ever thought about it. Would Austin find it fun or lame? Maybe I'll ask him .

"It might be a bit manipulative, but at least my kids listen for a month out of the year." She shrugs and I can't help but laugh at the joke. "I'll let you get to it. I just wanted to bring that to you before we left for the day. She also sends her thanks to you for working with her. Says she wishes more people were like you: quote, treating her like a person and not just a dollar sign, end quote."

"I'm not in the business to knock people lower down the ladder. I was there once, struggling to build this business and just stay afloat."

"You're a good man, Remington. Have a great evening."

"You too, Clara. Thank you."

I wrap up the two tasks I planned for today and shut down my computer and turn off the work phone. I head out of the office, saying bye to those still working. The threat

of snow is growing with each day and I tuck my hands into the pockets of my jacket while I make my way to the parking garage. Working in the city is nice, except for the parking. I have to cross the street and walk half a block. It's not far and ninety percent of the time it's fine. The wind is brutal today and cold.

I check my phone as I let the car warm up. Austin has a busy day today. He texted me once this morning to let me know that and that he was looking forward to seeing me tonight. Every time he calls me Daddy, even in a text, my stomach flips happily and I can't help but smile.

It's only ten past five and I know Austin won't be home until seven. I made him promise to not stay late today. I know he's had a rough week and I'm more than happy to give him an evening to relax. I stop by the store on the way to his house and grab the ingredients to make us a proper meal of grilled chicken bites with asparagus. I know that Austin has the lemon-pepper seasoning already so I don't bother with it. I also grab a small container of ice cream, knowing that if he's in Little space up until bed time he'll ask for a bowl before bed. It's become his thing.

The house is neat when I arrive. No dishes in the sink, trash recently emptied. The only sign of anything are the stuffies and blanket laying on the chair in the playroom and his pajamas I'm assuming he wore last night. He didn't say anything about doing this while on the phone. Was his day worse than he let on or did he just want to indulge a bit?

I will definitely make sure he gets all the Little time tonight. Starting with a hot dinner when he gets home, making a blanket fort and watching a movie in the living room, and then end it with a warm bath. I pass the hour and a half until Austin gets home by preparing dinner and then going to the playroom to pick out his outfit for the night. I couldn't help myself when I bought new clothes for him. I also pick up a coloring book here and there when I go to the store.

I lay the clothes out on the chair and fold the blanket over the arm. Koka and Kola sit upright. Their names still make me laugh. I know we decided to go public with Thanksgiving, but I'll ask him what he wants to do for Christmas because I have this need to spoil my boy.

The front door opens when I'm in the kitchen finishing up dinner. I move to look and smile when I see Austin pulling off his coat and hanging it up in the closet. He turns toward me and my smile falls. I forget about dinner for a moment and rush across the space to him.

"Aussie, baby, what's wrong? "

"Daddy," he chokes the word out and buries his face into my chest as he wraps his arms around me. I can feel his whole weight sink into me and I adjust my grip to hold him up.

"It's okay, baby. I'm right here." I kiss the top of his head and hug him tighter. "Do you want to talk about it?"

Austin shakes his head against my chest but doesn't move away. I let him stand there for a couple more minutes before I move to have him look up at me. His eyes are red rimmed and there are tear streaks running down his cheeks. His bottom lip still trembles.

"Baby, you need to talk to me about it." I keep my arms around him, but maneuver him into the kitchen so I can pull the food out of the oven. Austin doesn't say anything as I set it on the stove so it doesn't burn. He glues himself to me as we move toward the playroom. I start stripping him out of his clothes and he finally takes a shuddery breath and talks.

"This week has been hard. Like, really hard and not just because I missed you.



There's so much I have to do at work before Friday and one of the employees is leaving so I have to find a replacement by next week or we're going to be too short staffed and the health inspector is coming and Tyler is still learning the procedures in the cafe. It's just a lot and I'm sleepy."

I drop his shirt and reach for the button of his pants while leaning down to kiss him gently. He gives me the lead easily and I brush my tongue against his. I can feel his hands on me while I push his pants past his hips and let them fall to his ankles. When I pull back from his lips, his cheeks are dry now, but I can see that he really is tired. There are small circles under his beautiful blue eyes and his body slumps forward, like he's looking for something else to hold him up .

I run my hands down his arms before bending to help him step out of his pants and shoes. "Come here and lay down, okay? I want you to take a little nap and then I'll come back and wake you up for dinner."

He follows my instructions without a word. I get him settled on the chair and tuck the blanket tight around him, putting Koka under one arm and propping Kola up against the arm rest. "He'll keep watch over you, baby. You sleep for a bit and I'll be back to get you for dinner and a bath afterward."

"Thank you, Daddy." His voice is just a whisper but it tugs at my heart all the same. I brush the hair from his forehead and lean down to kiss it.

"You're welcome, Aussie. Sweet dreams."

I plan on letting him sleep for no more than forty minutes. I stick the food back in the oven and turn it to the lowest setting to keep warm. I want to continually poke my head in and look at him, but I know he needs the rest. I know that my line of work is one step removed from real customer service so I don't fully understand how much work he does in a day. Having to be on your feet for close to twelve hours a day can't

be easy either. He's been putting in overtime this week and I wish he'd talk to his boss about it. Even if his boss seems like the kind of guy that doesn't listen all that well. No one needs to work in a place that's going to make them cry when they come home.

It makes me wonder if there's something else going on with Austin that he hasn't told me about. I know he's worried about me meeting his family. If that's the case, I'm more than willing to step back and let him go alone. I add it to the list of things we'll have to talk about when he's back in his big headspace. I look at the time and see it's been half an hour. I get up from the couch and head to the playroom. Austin is fast asleep, curled into a ball on the oversized chair. I have the same one at home and both have been well used over the past few weeks. His hair is falling back over his forehead and the blanket has come untucked and wraps around his legs. But what stops me in my tracks— and admittedly makes me smile— is his thumb stuck in his mouth. He isn't sucking on it, letting me know he's truly asleep.

This is something new. I don't recall ever seeing him suck his thumb, even with Paul. He's sucked on his fingers before, mostly when he's wanting something or upset, but not this. I get the feeling that his subconscious is regressing further than Austin is allowing himself when he's awake. I don't like the idea of Austin holding himself back when he's Little. I can care for him like that just as easily and he knows this. We've talked about it. Whatever he wants to do, I'll be there for him.

"Aussie?" I pull his thumb out of his mouth slowly and run my own thumb over his bottom lip. He tries to suck on it without even opening his eyes and something in me stirs. While I'm no stranger to bottles or pacifiers, I've never had a partner— relationship or scene— use me to suck on. Images of Austin curled up against my side, me holding a bottle for him or him using me to suckle and soothe himself, flashes through my mind and I'm instantly hard at the thought. I adjust myself in my jeans before attempt number two at waking him up.

When he opens his eyes and blinks up at me, I can't help but smile wider. "Did you sleep well, baby?"

He nods his head twice before his eyes flutter back closed. I give a small chuckle before pulling the blanket back and waking him up once more. "Come on, baby. We need to get some food in your tummy. Up, up. "

"Thank you, Daddy. I needed that." I'm not sure if he's fully awake still because he wraps his arms around my neck and his legs around my waist. I don't bother with his clothes just yet, knowing they'll be stripped after dinner anyway. The house is warm enough he won't be cold in just his briefs.

"I'm always here for whatever you need, Aussie." I tap his leg and get him to sit down in one of the chairs at the dining table. I make sure to lock eyes with him before I say the next words. My hand cups the side of his face. "You just need to ask."

He doesn't say anything but gives me a small nod and smile. I move to the kitchen and get our food plated. I take the time to cut his up into bite sized pieces and put it in his sectioned plate. I add a cup of juice with it and carry it to the table. I kiss the top of his head and he smiles up at me.

We eat dinner in silence. I don't make Austin say anything, even if I can see it behind his eyes. That will be a conversation for later. Tonight, I want him to forget about everything and just be. Have fun, play.

"This is good, Daddy." He has just a few more bites left of the asparagus when he talks. I know he prefers his fruits over veggies, but he doesn't complain about eating them. He really is my good boy. He'll definitely get some ice cream tonight. "Thank you."

"You're welcome, Aussie." I finish off my food and set my fork down across my

plate. "I got us some ice cream for later too, but first I thought maybe we could play a bit."

Austin's eye light up at the mention of ice cream and his grin is genuine. "I love ice cream, Daddy. What kind?"

I sit back in the chair and fold my arms over my chest, trying not to smirk. "Oh, just your favorite. "

"Chocolate mooses?" His voice takes on a higher octave and his body wiggles in his seat.

"Chocolate Moose Tracks," I correct and nod. His face splits into a huge grin and within a second he's climbing onto my lap. My dick is still half-hard from the image supplied to me earlier and I think he feels that when he sits on my lap. His eyes go wide and flick down to my lap and then back up.

"Daddy? Are you thinking naughty things?" His voice is sing-song and so fucking adorable. I was trying not to think naughty things, but now I am. I blame him and his cuteness. He leans closer to my face, scratches his fingers through my beard, and whispers, "I want to do those things too."

I don't give him much warning before I seal our lips together, wrapping my arms around his body and pulling him as close to me as I can. He parts his lips and I push my tongue against his. It's hot and frenzied. I can feel his hands between us, blindly trying to undo my jeans. It's a bit hard to do in our current position.

He lets out a small, frustrated whimper that goes straight to my cock. I scoot the chair back, giving us both more room. I move my lips to Austin's neck while he scoots back just a couple of inches, balancing on my knees, and successfully undoes my jeans.

"Daddy, I need you." His voice is full of that need. I scrape my teeth lightly against his shoulder and smile when he shivers. My hands go to his ass while his right hand reaches into my boxers and wraps around my dick. I'm already past the point of wanting to take this to the bedroom or even the couch. I know my cock is leaking precum and I move one hand around to palm his own cock. There's already a wet spot forming on his boxers .

"You're so hot, baby. Lean back against the table for me. I want to make you feel good."

Austin does as I ask and I take in his body. He doesn't have any hair on his chest and there's just a tiny bit below his bellybutton. His nipples are a faded pink and adorable. I want to lick them. His cock is surrounded by a small patch of hair when I pull his briefs down. He stands up quickly to pull them all the way off but then settles back down on my lap.

His cock is smaller than mine by a good bit. I swallow the moan that comes from his lips when I wrap my hand around both of us. I collect the precum from our cocks to make the glide easier. Austin drops his head down, lips parted, as he watches my hand move up and down our cocks.

"It feels so good, Daddy." I can feel the start of my orgasm, but Austin's cock is red and his balls are pulled tight to his body already. He's moving his hips, thrusting into my fist and giving that extra friction that sends tingles through my body. His voice goes even higher as he edges closer to his release. It's intoxicating hearing him, hearing such an innocent voice say dirty things. "I need to come, Daddy. My balls are too full. I'm going to explode."

I smile to myself at his exaggeration. In a moment's decision, I move my hand from our cocks and lift him up onto the edge of the table. I don't give him much warning before my mouth is on him and I'm taking him to the back of my throat. My other

hand cups his balls and tugs, fondling them between my fingers.

"Yes, Daddy. Yes. I'm going to come!" I pull up until just his cockhead is in my mouth and tongue around the soft head. I trace the little vein he has on the underside of his cock, angling his dick to where his slit pushes against the roof of my mouth and gives him that extra sensation. I can taste his cum on my tongue and I swallow around him.

I wrap my hand around my own cock and jerk to the same tempo I bob my head between Austin's legs. He's a mess of jumbled words and I feel his legs closing around my head as he gets closer to his orgasm. I speed up my hand, wanting to come with him.

"Daddy, fuck. Daddy, I'm coming. I'm coming."

And he does. His cum fills my mouth and I swallow it down, slurping sounds filling the space as I lick him clean. I pull off his softening cock and bury my face against the crease of his thigh as I come in my own hand. It's messy and I'll have to clean the drops off the floor, but I don't care about that right now.

When I sit back and look at him, laying on the table around our empty plates, I smile. I tuck myself back into my briefs and wipe my hand on the fabric as best I can. I stand up, helping Austin to do the same. He looks way more relaxed now. He wraps his arms around me and snuggles against my chest. I laugh when he lifts my shirt and hides his head under so his face is directly on my chest. The hairs on my stomach tickle as they move with each of his panted breaths.

"My silly boy," I say as I pull the shirt off my body, revealing his sneaky grin. His eyes are bright now, no sign of his tears or stress from earlier. "You are too cute. Do you want to go play now?"

"Yes, Daddy. Please. Can we build a blanket fort? And watch a movie and color?" His words are rushed out and I can't help but let out a small laugh. I know my boy so well.

"We can do whatever you want, baby. Do you want to put some clothes on?"

"Nope." He hops down from the table and kisses me once more before crossing the space to the living room. His butt is round and cute. I want to chase after him.

"Daddy needs to change his clothes," I announce. "I'll be right back."

## Page 16

*Source Creation Date: July 18, 2025, 10:27 am*

Playing naked in the living room is a different kind of playing altogether. It's truly freeing. I giggle and run around, crawl on the rug, wiggle my butt around Daddy. Daddy chases after me and tickles me. He gives me kisses all over my body and blows raspberries on some part of my body whenever he catches me. We pull out the dolls tonight and Daddy sits in the living room playing with me, making up a story about a princess, but the princess ends up saving the knight. Daddy promises to get me a dragon for us to add to the play and a castle playhouse too.

Daddy also feeds me bites of my Chocolate Moose ice cream when we sit to watch a movie. It's delicious, but he accidentally drops a bit on my lap and I scream from the cold and stand up quickly. Daddy apologizes and then has me put my feet on either side of where he's sitting. He uses his tongue to lick the ice cream dripping down my inner thigh, then sucks my dick into his mouth when he sees it getting hard. I end up coming in Daddy's mouth for the second time today. He pulls me down onto his lap and kisses me before he pulls a blanket off the couch and wraps me up like a burrito.

"A very tasty burrito," he whispers and it makes me giggle. I'm so happy.

It's close to ten when both of us start yawning. Daddy is sitting on the couch and I'm in his lap. The fort didn't happen tonight. We have a blanket over us and Daddy's fingers have been grazing over my thighs for the whole movie. My head is resting on his shoulder, his beard tickling my forehead and blocking half the TV from my view. I don't mind it one bit because hearing Daddy's heart beating under my ear is soothing and I'm ready for bed. I keep my hands away from my mouth though, the urge to suck on my thumb— or something— hits me at random points throughout the night. I push those thoughts away because we're having too much fun.



"Daddy?" I don't lift my head but I hear his answering, 'Yes?' through his chest. "Will you help me go potty?"

"Yeah, baby. Do you want to take a shower or bath tonight or in the morning?"

"Morning. I'm too sleepy now. Are you sleeping here?"

"Of course, baby." We stand up and he takes my hand as we walk to the bathroom. "I have a surprise for you too, but let's potty first."

He stands behind me, bodies pressed together, and helps me aim into the toilet. My bladder sings at the release and I sink back into Daddy's chest. "Thank you, Daddy. Tonight was perfect, perfect, perfect."

"You're welcome, baby." He kisses my neck and pinches my butt cheek. I giggle at the tiny pinch. "Now wash your hands while I use the potty too. "

Daddy strips out of his clothes and does his business. I watch him while I wash my hands, admiring his body. Daddy's cock is big but not scary big. Amazing big.

"Aussie?" Daddy's voice ends on a laugh and I look up, embarrassed that I got caught watching him. Of course, I've been naked for hours now. "I think your hands are clean enough, baby."

I move over for him to clean his own hands and dry mine on the towel that hangs next to the sink. "What's the surprise?" I ask excitedly.

Daddy steps closer to me and wraps his arms around me. I do the same and lean my head back to look him in the eyes. He dips his head and kisses me. "Next week, I'll be working from home Monday and Tuesday. Then I'm off the rest of the week. So I'll be able to take you to work and pick you up all week. If you want."

"Really?" I can feel my eyes widen and I hug Daddy tighter, bouncing on my toes.  
"Oh, that's amazing. We can spend so much time together."

"I figured we could split time between here and my place," Daddy says with a smile.  
"I would like to take you to work and pick you up, but only if you're okay with that, Aussie."

"Yes, Daddy. Please."

"Okay." He kisses me once more. "Now, let's get some sleep okay?"

The rest of the week is a total blur .

I can't say it's better, but I'm not staying late. Well, Remi won't let me stay late. He calls me right at closing time and stays on the phone with me until I'm in the car. He's at my house Thursday and Friday night. Each night, we get into our routine. I change out of my work clothes, he has dinner made for us, and then I get some Little time in or we watch a movie or a couple of show episodes. Friday, I have my first interview to replace Jason, but I'm not sure about the girl. She's twenty-three and has had six jobs in the past two years. Her references are okay, but I noticed that they're either family or friends. I'm planning on calling previous employers Monday, but I get an off vibe from her. I don't know what it is. I have two more interviews on Monday as well so it isn't like I have to make a decision now anyway.

Saturday morning feels like it takes forever to arrive. It's a well earned sleep in snuggled up close to Remi. My mind is used to waking up early in the morning but my body fights moving even an inch. Instead, I focus on Remi's face in the dim light. The sun still has another hour before it's up, but I'm close enough to him to see all his features. His hair is short, not to the scalp, but an inch or two long all around. His beard is trimmed and neat but there are spots of gray starting to show. I reach up and brush my fingers over the coarse hairs. His beard connects around his lips to his

mustache and my finger follows the path my eyes take. His skin is soft and clear. I've seen his facial routine. It isn't extensive, but he does have two different products that seem to work well for him.

His eyes flutter open and I smile.

"Morning," I whisper. My fingers continue to trail lightly around the line of his beard. I trace around the back of his ear and down the side of his throat. I can feel him swallow under my touch.

"Morning, baby." His voice is deep and gruff in the morning. Sexy. So fucking sexy. I move my head forward slightly and press my lips against his. I keep my mouth closed, mindful of morning breath. Remi pulls back first. "Did you sleep well?"

"Very well," I say. "Someone really wore me out last night."

Remi's low chuckle sends pleasure coursing through my body. Who knew that you could get turned on by a laugh? Apparently I can. My fingers move to card through his beard now, dipping to graze over his Adam's apple. Remi's eyes close for a brief moment and I'm just starting to think he's fallen asleep again when his hand moves between our bodies and wraps around my half hard cock. I bite my lower lip but a small moan still escapes my mouth.

I close my eyes and smile. The glide is a little rough with Remi's calloused hand, but not enough to ask him to stop. My mind flashes so many moments together. We've only been seeing each other for a month and a half but I couldn't imagine spending that time alone still. It's been a long time since I've been this happy. Intense pleasure courses through my body and I can feel tears sting my eyes. We're moving together now, Remi's cock sliding between my thighs.

"Hold on, Aussie," Remi says. His body disappears away from mine but I don't open

my eyes. In a few seconds, he's back and his hand is slick with lube now. He rubs my inner thighs first and then returns his hand to my cock. It makes everything ten times better and Remi shifts that much closer to me. His cockhead slips between my thighs and I squeeze them together. His answering groan is all I need. I lay there, letting him do most of the work .

We don't share any words and somehow, it feels more intimate that way. His lips press against mine but still I don't open my eyes. I'm fighting back tears of happiness, safety, joy. The room fills with small noises between the both of us. Mine are higher pitched, breathy. His are deeper, grunts and whispered curses as his hips continue to thrust his cock between my thighs. My legs are trembling from tensing the muscles for minutes on end, but I can tell that he's close. We both are.

Remi comes first for once. I can feel his cum against my skin, the stickiness of it mixing with the lube and feel his breath over my face. He rests his forehead against mine as he continues to jerk my cock. I'm breathing heavy, a mix of pure pleasure building and the tears fighting to fall. When I come, it's with a silent cry that Remi kisses away. His tongue finds mine in a passionate kiss and he only stops moving his hand when I lay a hand on his forearm.

We kiss and kiss until neither of us can breathe. He rolls me onto my back and his hands are on my waist. I finally open my eyes when he pulls away from my mouth. In the darkness of the room I document every detail on his face, the way his body feels against mine, how absolutely perfect the moment is. I lift a hand to trace over his glistening lips and smile.

"I love you," I whisper. All of the buildup, the feelings and thoughts that led to those three words tumble out with them. I can feel one single tear slide from the corner of my eye.

His finger brushes against my temple, wiping the tear away. His answering smile is

all I need, but then he dips his head and kisses my lips once more for just a second.

"I love you, too, Austin."

My eyes widen. I'm not expecting him to say the words back, but I can't push down the smile that splits my face. I'm sure that Remi's face mirrors my own. I move my legs, grimacing just a bit at the feeling, and wrap my arms around Remi. He hugs me back, somehow maneuvering us so he's sitting down and I'm in his lap. I bury my face in the spot where his neck meets his shoulder and stay there, being held by the man that loves me.

"How about you get in the shower and I'll get breakfast started?"

The last thing I want to do is separate from Remi, but my legs are sticky and I don't particularly like the feeling. I stand up and Remi walks with me to the bathroom. I haven't had clothes on in almost twelve hours and it's been kind of nice. Remi turns the shower on for me, making sure it's the perfect temperature. We stand side-by-side to brush our teeth while the room fills with steam. It's warm and relaxing.

"Are you going to put some clothes on today?" Remi asks like it's a real possibility I'll go naked until we have to leave the house. "You don't have to right now, if you don't want to. I figured we could pack you a bag and you could stay at my place this week?"

"I'd love that," I say. I put my toothbrush back and turn to press my body against his. I tilt my head up at him and smile. "I love you."

"I love you too, baby." He squeezes my body in a warm hug before stepping away. His body is so damn sexy, the hair across his chest, his bare legs. I admire the view when he turns around to head toward the kitchen. He has a great ass. He looks over his shoulder and catches me staring. My face flushes with embarrassment at being

caught staring. "Hurry up, okay?"

"Yes."

By the time I'm thoroughly scrubbed down and I dry my hair a bit, Remi has the bacon in the oven and a stack of pancakes on the counter. My stomach rumbles at the smell wafting through the house. He takes his turn for a quick shower. I wait for him before eating. I walk around the living room, picking up a few toys that we left scattered around from last night. I love how much Remi plays with me. It's so much fun. The picture of Paul catches my eye and I reach up for it.

"Hey," I say lowly. I run my finger over his smiling face. I thought I was going to spend my life with Paul, grow old together, start a family of our own. He is my first love. I'll always love him. The feeling I have for Remi is much the same but also so different. "I hope you're okay with this. I didn't see it coming but he was there for me. He's so good to me, Paul. It's crazy to think but I love him. So much. I know you were always worried how I'd be if something happened. It's almost like you knew you'd be taken from me too soon. I promise that I'm happy. So, so happy."

Arms snake around me and Remi's chin rests on my shoulder. His fingers reach up and trace along the line on my chest and stomach. "He loved you so much, Austin. I know you know that. I know I won't ever replace him, but I'll make sure you always feel just as loved and as safe as you did with him."

I run my finger over Paul's face once more before putting the picture back and turning to face Remi. My arms wrap around his neck. "I know you will," I say. "I still miss him but I'm happy with us. Beyond happy."

"Let's eat some breakfast, shall we? We can pack up after and head to my house."

I smile and press my lips against Remi's chest. The soft hair tickles my nose but I kiss

his skin repeatedly anyways. I can feel myself letting go of any worries, slipping a bit into a more playful side. The morning has been perfect and I want to soak up every second of it. When I finally pull back and look at Remi's face, he's smiling wide and his eyes are light. I can feel a giggle bubbling up and I don't fight it. I move my hands to cover my mouth. Remi pulls me into one more hug before we finally move from the spot.

"Can you feed me, Daddy?"

"Of course, sweetie. Let's try not to drop anything on your lap this time, though?"

My hands instinctively go to cover my cock. "Please no. That would be a sticky mess and I'd have to take another shower."

Remi laughs, moving to the kitchen while I sit at the table and wait. He always prepares our plates. I've tried to help but he just shoos me away so I let him do it without fuss. I like that he does it. Sometimes he feeds me, other times I'll feed myself, but either way, he's careful to keep my food separated.

"Do you want to do anything this weekend?" Remi asks between bites of both our plates. He takes a bite of his food and then cuts up a bite for me, alternating between. He blots the grease off a slice of bacon and hands it over to me. I hold it in both of my hands and nibble on it, giving him a minute to eat his food without interruption.

"I don't care," I say with a shrug. "Did you want to do something?"

"If it isn't too cold, I thought we could go to the Fall Festival tomorrow," Remi says. "It's supposed to have local music, games, food. Then, maybe, we could go back to the club? They have a Littles party on Tuesday for all the holidays. Arts and crafts, a meal. I got the email invite for it yesterday."

After our first night at the club, I had to sign a couple of papers to have my caregiver changed over to Remi in the system. It was bittersweet but necessary. We haven't been back, but another Littles themed night sounds good.

"I'd love to," I say with a smile. "To both of them. Do you know if anyone else is going to be at Littles' night?"

He finishes the last bite of food before taking both our empty plates and we move to the kitchen. "I think Rachel and Luke will be there and also Quinton and his Daddy. It's supposed to be a big party, so you might make some new friends as well."



## Page 17

*Source Creation Date: July 18, 2025, 10:27 am*

After pancakes and a few more cuddles, we head to my house with two bags of Austin's things. One has clothes, adult and Little, and the other has toys. I have more than enough supplies at the house if he feels like regressing to his typical mindset or younger. I can tell the holiday season is weighing on him, but he's happy and we're both riding the cloud of a beautiful morning.

Sunday is cold, but not enough to deter us from getting dressed and heading to the festival around eleven. It's beautiful, with fall foliage colors everywhere. There are vendor booths lining the parking lot-turned-festival and the two surrounding streets. They are selling things from paintings to items for the different holidays coming up. One vendor even has custom knitted or crocheted items— I'm honestly not sure the difference between the two— and I can tell Austin wants to ask for a couple of the little figures. I sneak a twenty dollar bill to the vendor when Austin goes to the next one and get a pale pink Rabbit and a black and white penguin. They fit easily in my coat pocket so I don't worry about him seeing them.

We walk hand-in-hand to all the vendors before grabbing lunch from a food truck and finding a place to sit. The wind is starting to pick up a bit and I can see Austin's nose and cheeks getting red. He denies that he's too cold and wants to stay a bit longer. We stand with the crowd when the music starts. It's some garage band of a rag-tag group of guys. I am pleasantly surprised when they start playing and singing. They're good. Austin starts out pressed next to me to share the warmth, but after a few songs he's standing about a foot away and is dancing along with the crowd. He knows a lot of the songs that are played whereas I don't, but I enjoy watching him have fun.

I love Austin Westcott.

When I first met him, when Paul introduced us, he was my best friend's Little. Austin was barely legal drinking age at twenty-two when I met him. I was always just the friend and never knew a lot about his personal life. He dived right into the kink world, and being Little with no hesitation. Paul would talk to me about things, scenes they started out with. It was never any intimate details. Just cute stories or swapping advice and ideas of things to do.

Seeing Austin at Paul's funeral, sitting behind the family, nearly broke me. Paul was head over heels for him, despite their age differences. I think that was a problem for both of their families. Paul said his family would make jabs about how young his boyfriend was while Austin's parents didn't seem too happy to see them together. They'd been engaged for only a couple of months when he passed away and Austin lost everything he'd grown to love for the past half decade. He lost his first love, the place he lived, his Daddy .

I hung around for a while, wanting to help him but not knowing how. I didn't know where the line was of giving him space and wanting to step in and help with anything and everything. It was hard to watch him grieve, to pull away from the playgroups he was part of, to bury that part of who he is.

"Daddy?" Austin's voice pulls me out of my swirling thoughts and I look down at him. He's smiling and loops his arm through mine. His coat is unzipped and the blue sweater he's wearing underneath brings out the color in his eyes. His hair is somewhat styled in a floppy curls type of way.

"Yes, Aussie?" We start walking through the crowd. It isn't packed here, most have gone back to browsing the different activities the festival has to offer as the songs continue on. No one is paying attention to us.

"Thank you." He wraps his arms around me as we continue walking. We're heading in the general direction of where I parked. It's about a two block walk, with the street

closures and all. I wrap my arm around his shoulders and kiss the top of his head. "For everything. For being you, taking care of me. Letting me have fun again."

"Of course," I say around the lump in my throat. After this morning, with the picture frame, we both must be going down memory lane.

"Can we go home now?" I can see in his eyes that he's getting tired so I agree. It's only three in the afternoon. He'll probably go for a nap and we'll have dinner and go from there. The idea of him calling my house home warms me inside. He brought it up once before, our living arrangements. I wouldn't mind sharing my home with him.

I wait until we're back in the car, warming up via heat vents, to show him what I bought. His eyes go comically wide and he leans over the console to give me a kiss. "Thank you so much. They're so cute and tiny!"

He hugs them to his chest and admires them the whole thirty minutes back to my house. Once we're inside, Austin can't hide the yawns anymore. His Little side always comes out when he gets sleepy and I end up all but carrying him inside.

"Do you want to change clothes or just strip down?" I ask as we head up the stairs. He turns into the playroom without a word and moves to lay on the bed. I take that as a sign he wants to be changed. "Any particular outfit you want?"

"Blue," Austin says simply. I smile and open the closet. It's only his clothes hanging up. I don't share clothes between the boys I'm with. He has a solid six outfits with blue as the main color. His giggle is music to my ears and I give him a funny look. He holds up his new toy, the pink Rabbit. It's no bigger than his hand from wrist to fingertip. "Rabbits?"

I look over the options again. Blue and rabbits. He doesn't have anything that matches that, but he does have one with a penguin on the front of the shirt. It isn't blue, white

instead, but I hold it up and he smiles and nods. I grab the matching pants to go with it and get to work grabbing everything. While my back is turned, he's stripped out of his clothes for me. It makes me laugh, which in turn has him letting out the sweetest, sleepest, sounding giggle in all the world.

"Lift your butt," I direct as I slide the diaper under him. He does as asked, lowering his hips once it's situated. I take a wipe and give him a quick clean before securing the tabs and helping him into the clothes. He looks so incredibly cute in the outfit. "Okay, baby. I think it's time for a nap. Lets get you all tucked in and I'll be back in a little bit. "

"Can you read me a story?" Austin asks as I tuck the blanket around his body. The bed in the playroom is no more than a twin. He's laying on his side with his knees tucked up and looks up at me. I can see he's about five minutes from conking out so I grab the first book I find and settle down next to him. I get four pages into it before looking over at Austin. His eyes are closed, features smooth. He has the rabbit tucked between his arm and chest, the ears brushing against his chin. And his thumb is in his mouth again.

I brush the hair from his face and kiss his forehead. We'll have to talk about it and soon. I don't want him hiding any part of him. I don't want to push him either and make him feel like that's what I want from him. I'm happy with whatever he feels comfortable with.

I decide to let him sleep for two hours max. We had a late night last night and then he woke up early this morning. I'm sure he'll have no problem going back to sleep for bedtime. I go downstairs and check my phone. Garrett isn't able to make it on Tuesday for Littles themed night at the club, but he is coming to the campground. He isn't in a relationship, that I know of, but he said he's bringing his dog, Riley, with him.

My phone has a text on it when I pick it up. It's my sister.

Wendy

Does Austin have any allergies? Mom wants to know, she's planning the meal.

Remington

No. But can we make sure to get the plates with the sections? He's not a fan of his food touching. I can bring his own if needed.

I read back over the text, wondering if that is too much to ask or too much information. My nephew is particular about his food too, but he's more of the picky eater, not the food touching thing. I'm about to message her again to tell her never mind but she sends one through first.

Wendy

You got it. He'll get along great with Terry. I'm excited to see him again.

I love my family and I can't wait for Austin to meet them. My mom is going to dote over him. She's in her seventies and spirited. When my dad passed away we were worried about her, but she came back to herself and started planning family dinners and insisting on hosting parties. She still lives in our childhood home. It's large for one person, but then again, she's rarely ever alone. My sister, Wendy, lives two streets away from her and the kids visit often. I try to get over there at least once a week, or at least call her every few days. The rest of the family is spread around the city and surrounding areas.

The next task at hand is preparing dinner. I've enjoyed having someone to make food for again. I don't mind cooking. I'm definitely more into baking desserts, but the act

of making something that someone else is going to enjoy is what I love about it. I browse the cabinets and freezer to see what we have. As much as I love cooking, I don't have much in the house since I've spent half the week at Austin's place. I'll have to go shopping tomorrow if we're going to be here all week .

"Looks like chicken nuggets and mac and cheese it is tonight," I mumble to myself. The food won't take but ten minutes so I go back upstairs and head to the bedroom. I can't help but peek a look into the playroom. Austin is curled up even further on the bed, still fast asleep. He's so fucking perfect and beautiful, my heart swells at the thought of a life with him. I didn't think a true relationship was in the cards for me again, but I can't imagine ever willingly leaving Austin. Not unless he asked, even then I'd probably fight it and ask why. I don't want to dwell on thoughts like that so I leave the door cracked open and head to the bedroom.

I tidy up a little bit, straighten the blankets, and put the rest of his adult clothes in the drawer I've cleared for him and the section of my closet for his work shirts so they aren't wrinkled. I double check the lube and condoms in the table on my side of the bed. I could probably grab another box of condoms tomorrow.

"Remi?" I hear Austin's voice calling from the playroom and I close the drawer and head to the hallway.

"I'm coming, baby." When I open the door, he's still laying down, but his eyes are open. It's only been an hour at most he was asleep. I sit on the edge of the bed and run my fingers through his hair. "What's up, Aussie?"

He moves so his head is in my lap and his arms wrap around my waist. His eyes flick up at me and I smile wider. He's been through so much in his life, but in moments like these he looks so innocent. "I missed you. I wake up and just wanted to give you a hug."

I look at the watch on my wrist. It's close enough to five o'clock. "Do you want to sleep a little more or come downstairs and help me make dinner? "

"What's for dinner?" He closes one eye, like my answer depends if he's going to go back to sleep or not. I smile and let out a short chuckle.

"Mac and cheese and chicken nuggets tonight," I say. "Daddy needs to go to the store and get some food tomorrow. Tonight we'll have a yummy, easy dinner."

"Chicken nuggets?" Aussie sits up and smiles. I note the imprint on his cheek from the Rabbit. "I want nuggets."

"Well then, let's get you downstairs and we'll put them in the oven."

I help him to his feet and then trail after him, watching the way his body waddles just slightly while wearing the diaper. He's barefoot and I quickly reach into one of the drawers in the playroom for a spare pair of socks before following him downstairs. "Baby, put these on your feet so they don't get cold, okay? Then you can join me in the kitchen."

"Okay," he says easily and I kiss him before I walk off. Less than a minute later, he's in the kitchen beside me, helping line the nuggets in perfect rows on the pan. He's careful to put it in the oven. I give him a kiss on his nose, making his whole face wrinkle up with happiness. I help him hop up on the counter beside me while I make the mac and cheese. He pours the noodles in once the water is boiling and between taking turns stirring it so nothing sticks, I kiss him. With him sitting on the counter, he's slightly taller than me and the change in angle is nice. His hands go to the back of my head and hold me close.

I could stay in this moment for the rest of my life and never get tired of it.

"This is awesome!" Austin says by my side. He isn't wrong.

Dreamland has been transformed into an oasis of all things Little. There are streamers of red and green, twinkle lights and colored lights hung on the walls. There's a Christmas tree and a Menorah alike to celebrate the different holidays. One side of the room has been replaced by at least four tables filled with food, drinks, and dessert. I'm honestly impressed.

"It is awesome," I agree. "Come on, let's get you changed first, okay?"

We walk into the empty changing room and I lock the door behind us. Austin walks directly to the changing table and waits for me to rummage through our bag. I brought my own clothes to change into, something more comfortable than the jeans I wore since the weather finally broke and we got some snow flurries earlier today. I strip out of my clothes quickly first, letting Austin stand there and watch. His eyes move continuously over my body but it doesn't make me self conscious. I'm not the most built or have a six-pack anymore but Austin has made it abundantly clear that he loves me, physically and emotionally.

"Austin?" He looks up into my eyes as I pull on my gray sweatpants. They're loose but my cock is starting to react under my Boy's gaze. I ignore it, adjusting myself in my boxers. He's only working a half day tomorrow and then we're both off for a long weekend. I can wait.

"Yes Daddy?" His voice is sing-song and it's so fucking cute. I can't get enough of him when he's like this. I can't get enough of him in general, but especially when he's in a good mood like this. I was worried about him over the weekend, focusing on every detail of his, looking for signs that he wasn't telling me something. I chalked it up to just work stress and made sure that I had fresh cookies for him when I picked him up on Monday.



"Can you go over the rules again with me for tonight?"

I'm aware that ninety-nine percent of Austin's time has been spent in the comfort of one of our homes. He's only been to the club once before and hasn't been around any other Littles between. While I don't care about his language when we're at home, a lot of Mommies and Daddies don't like their Littles to use bad words. I went over this with him on the way over, but I want to make sure he remembers.

"One, no bad words. Those are only for when we're at home." My dick swells a little more at his use of the word 'home' so casually. I know it's too soon to ask him to move in, but damn if I want to. He steps closer to me and holds up his fingers. "Two, I have to be nice to others and if someone is being mean, I tell my Daddy. Three, come to you if I need to go to the bathroom or if I use my diaper."

"You're such a good boy," I say and pull him in for a sweltering kiss. Our tongues brush against each other's and I tilt his chin up slightly to deepen the kiss for only a moment. "I love you, Aussie."

"I love you, too, Daddy." He steps back and puts his hands on the hem of his shirt. His eyes dart to the door. "Can I go play now?"

I grab his stuff and we get him changed into his holiday clothes quickly. He's wearing a pair of sweats as well, but his are a faded green color. The shirt is a matching green and has a koala bear wearing a Santa hat. I found it on a site while thinking of present ideas for him and decided that he had to have it tonight after he said he wanted to come. I'm glad it came in the mail on time. I put my own shirt on, a plain black one, and gather our things up to put in one of the lockers.

"Go play and have fun. I'll be over with Rachel, okay?" Aussie nods and gives me a quick kiss before heading off to join in one of the activities. I watch him, making sure he's okay with being around this many people, but he slips right in at the block

building station. I keep my eye on him once I'm settled at the couches with the others.

"Long time no see," Garrett says with a smile. "Your Boy seems to be a lot more settled since last time you came."

"He is," I say with a soft smile, looking at Aussie playing once more. I turn back to Garrett. "Who are you with tonight? You changed your mind last minute to show your ugly mug."

He's a couple years younger than me, just turned thirty-six in August, but he's been a Daddy since his college days. He owns his own business and is richer than he lets on. His house is twice the size of mine and he has the most spoiled pittie pup ever. He's about ten years from retiring and passing the business down to someone else. I'm far from that, unfortunately, but we bonded over the pains of growing and owning a business as well as our mutual kinks we enjoy. I haven't seen him with the same Boy often and I don't know if he really wants to settle down or not.

"I'm unattached tonight," Garrett says. "Someone dragged me out here."

"Hi, that's me. I'm someone." Rachel waves her hand like we can't see or hear her. I glance back to look at Austin before returning to the conversation. He's still at the building blocks and he's working with two others to build what I'm thinking is supposed to be a castle. I can't wait for him to get the castle playhouse I bought him, along with the dragon I promised too. Am I spoiling him? Yes. Do I care? Not in the slightest. "It's selfish, really. I needed someone to help us get the room ready and he happened to mention he was suddenly free tonight."

"That's her way of saying she roped me into it unknowingly."

We all laugh at that, including Rachel, because we've all been roped into something or another for the club. She isn't one of the owners but she works as the event

organizer for kink nights. She is a Mommy herself and her and her boyfriend are here often, especially on nights like these. She's thirty-eight and he— if I'm remembering correctly— is only a few months younger than her. Unlike Austin's smaller frame, Rachel's Boy is slim but muscular. He's about two inches taller than Rachel too. The few times I've met him, he was polite.

"Are you going to be able to take off this weekend, still?" I ask Rachel.

"Yeah, we'll be there. We'll have to come back early Sunday morning, though. Luke has to work the Sunday night shift, unfortunately."

We continue to talk about what we want to do over the weekend at the campground. It's going to be cold, but the owner has promised that the cabins have heating and there are plenty of places indoor to hang out during the day. I'll have to be in work mode Friday evening and most of Saturday to go over the land and numbers with the owner. It's a big client if we can make a deal and it would be amazing for the business.

I see Garrett's eyes dart behind me a few times before I'm curious enough to look. I think maybe he's just watching the others in the room, but then I spot a guy, standing by the door. He looks rail thin, even in the baggy clothes he's wearing. His eyes are scanning the room and there's no one around him. He looks... lost. "Do you know him?" I ask, turning back to Garrett.

"No, but he's been standing there for a couple minutes. He didn't come in with anyone and I've never seen him before. Rachel?"

"Not familiar to me," she says. Her voice is soft and she looks almost worried for him. "Maybe he just stepped into the wrong room?"

"I'm going to go talk to him." Garrett stands up and I reach out for his hand.

"Let me know if you need anything," I say. If the kid is regressing and meant to be here, Garrett might need help navigating that.

"I'm no stranger to Middles and Littles," Garrett says. It isn't defensive or condescending. He's just stating a fact. "I'll be okay for one conversation. He just looks..."

"Sad." Rachel finishes the sentence and thought in my own head.

Luke comes up then and Rachel walks off to take him to the bathroom. There are toilets in the changing rooms, but with how crowded the room is, chances of one being free is slim. There are more bathrooms down the hall from this room and I watch them walk out into the hallway. Garrett is standing about two feet from the younger man but they're facing each other, talking. That has to be a good sign. Maybe his friend will get lucky tonight.

"Daddy!" Aussie's voice travels to my ears just before he barrels into me and wraps his arms around my neck. "Look at what I drew. "

My Boy pulls back and hands me a piece of paper. It's a colorful hand turkey. His hand takes up most of the paper and he's colored it in with all his favorite colors: blue, green, orange, pink, and the glittery silver. There are stickers and smaller drawings all around the rest of the paper. He points to every single one. "We supposed to draw everything that we're thankful for. That's Koka and you and your house and the candle is our date nights and chicken nuggets, and ice cream."

"This is amazing, baby. Can I keep this?" I look up at him and I know my eyes are shining with unshed tears.

"Yes, Daddy. That's for you because I love you and I love everything we do together."

## Page 18

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"Are you sure this is okay?" I ask once again, standing at the mirror. I run my hands down my shirt and fidget with the bowtie around my neck. The shirt is a pale blue button down, bowtie a soft pink. Remi surprised me with yet another gift, this one a new pair of dress shoes and matching belt. The shiny brown stands out nicely against the black trousers.

"You look handsome, baby." Remi walks up behind me and lays his hands on my shoulders. He runs them down my arms and then back up before kissing the side of my head. "Everyone is going to love you. You'll most likely get pulled away the second we walk in the door."

I know he can see my eyes widen at that. He lets out a low chuckle and spins me around so I can't continue to fuss at how I look. His arms wrap around me and I melt into his warm embrace. "You are perfect, Aussie. They're going to love you."

I bite my bottom lip, still worried but trying to believe him. He's wearing a nice outfit himself. A dark blue button up with a suit jacket and black pants like mine. He's recently dyed his beard, covering his age he said, and he went to a barber yesterday. The lines are clean. He looks amazing.

"We have a long day ahead of us," Remi says. "Let's get going, okay? We'll need to stop by your place and check on everything."

"And grab my stuffies!" I call out when he's by the bedroom door. I have Koka, Kola, and Barry with me, but I want to bring Pam-da and Elle too. And Rascal and Pennie, the rabbit and penguin Daddy got me last weekend. We're going to have a whole weekend of Little time with friends. Quinton and his Daddy are coming, Rachel and

Luke, and Garrett says he's bringing his dog. Remi says he was talking to someone at the club on Tuesday, but Garrett wouldn't tell him what happened after they walked out of the room together.

"And grab your stuffies, of course. We'll need to make sure we pack everything we need this weekend because we won't be able to come back and there's no store near there."

"Yes, sir." I playfully salute him before he disappears down the hallway. I give myself one more check in the mirror before heaving a deep breath and walking after Remi.

He helps me into my coat and then opens my door for me since I'm holding the quiche that we made together. It's a twenty minute drive from his house to his mom's and we spend the time between talking and listening to the radio. It's cold outside, but the sky is clear and there's no wind. For late November, it's not a bad day.

The house Remi pulls up to is nice. It's two stories, like his, but is wider. The front lawn is mostly dead grass by now and the driveway is connected to the front porch by a stone walkway. The porch spans the whole house and has a swing on one end and a table and chairs on the other. A white railing goes all the way around to keep anyone from falling the two feet to the ground.

"It's nice," I say, glancing over at Remi. "This is where you grew up?"

"Yep," he says with a smile. A smile that tells me he's thinking of all the memories he made growing up. "I'll show you my old bedroom. Mom turned it into a craft room years ago. There are still embarrassing baby photos of me and my siblings all around the house, though."

"I can't wait to see them," I say honestly. I wait for him to come around and open the

door for me. His mom is standing on the porch when I turn back toward the house. She's petite, with silver hair and a warm smile. Her dress goes to her shins, a deep maroon color that brings out the brown in her eyes. The same eyes as Remi.

"Austin, this is my mother Gwendolyn."

"Oh Austin, look at you. You look handsome. Come in, come in." She steps aside and Remi holds the screen door open for me to step through. The house is filled with noise. Conversations, laughter, cooking, and toys. It's warm, too, and smells amazing. The front door opens to a hallway with French door to the right and a closed door to the left. There are stairs starting beside the door and I can see at least two more doors upstairs. Remi leads me further in the house. The hallway gives way to a nice sized dining room with a table large enough to fit eight people. To the left is the kitchen.

"There's a bathroom off the back of the kitchen here," Remi says. "Or there's also one upstairs if this one's occupied."

"Thanks," I whisper. His mom walks into the kitchen behind us at the same time the woman I'm assuming is his sister turns around from the stove. It smells like cinnamon in here and my tummy rumbles.

"Oh, Austin. You're here." Her smile is wide and genuine. I can see the similarities in facial features between her and Remi. They both have the dark brown hair, soft eyes that dip just the tiniest bit at the outer corners. It's been a while since the one time I met her, but her features are familiar. "I need to finish cooking these apples, but please, set the dish down wherever you can find room. How are you? Both of you?"

"Austin, this is Wendy," Remi says. He takes the dishpan from me and moves a few things around on the table to set it down. With my hands free, I shrug out of my jacket, which Remi takes as well. "I'll be right back. Just going to put these in the coat room."

"Okay." My voice is small and I know my nervousness comes out in that one word. He bends down and kisses the top of my head before walking out of the room.

"It's nice to meet you. Again," his sister says. I move slowly around the circular table in the kitchen to lean against the counter. I'm out of her way, but close enough we can talk without her having to look over her shoulder the whole time.

"You as well," I say lamely. I fold my hands together in front of me. I look around the kitchen. There are bowls and bowls of food, all breakfast items. There's also sliced ham with some sort of glaze on it. Maybe honey. It all looks delicious. I spot the plates on top of the microwave, grateful that they're sectioned.

"You're going to meet quite a few people this morning," she says. "Don't let them intimidate you, though. If you need us to bat them off, just say so. The kids will be running around and it'll be a full house soon."

I don't know what to say and I'm grateful that Remi comes back then. "I hope my sister isn't annoying you yet."

"I'm not that bad of company," she says, sending a glare to Remi. He sticks his tongue out at her like they aren't thirty-four and forty-one. It makes me smile. "I was just giving him the heads up on the fam before they all pile into the house."

"The only one you have to watch out for is her," Remi says as he moves me away from the counter and takes my spot, pulling me back against him. It's so casual and in front of his family. Like him saying 'hey, this one is mine'. I should probably not find such a caveman thought sweet, but I do. I let my head drop back against his chest. His mom walks back into the kitchen and gives us a quick glance before moving to the fridge.

"Austin, sweetie, I have all kinds of drinks in here. Tea, water, soda, juice, even Kool-



Aid if you prefer that." His mom turns around with a can of Pepsi in her hand.

"Mom, seriously? It's eight in the morning." Remi lifts a hand and motions to the soda.

"Listen here young man," she says. I smile at her tone and the way Wendy snickers. "I am seventy-two years old. I've had two cans of soda every day for the last fifteen years and my doctor says I'm as healthy as expected for my age."

I let out a small 'ooh, she told you' and his mom gives me a wink. It makes me laugh. Remi raises both hands and I take the moment to move between his mom and sister to grab my own drink. I don't want Remi to go Daddy on me in front of his family, so I stick with the orange juice. He gives me an approving nod.

"There's vodka in the freezer if you want to make that a Screwdriver," Wendy whispers. Remi's answering grunt tells me he heard that. Before I can say anything, she's already talking to Remi. She points the spatula at Remi. It's comical and I'm just standing there with the juice in my hand watching them. "If he wants a drink, he can have one."

"I actually better not," I say, to save Remi. "I have to see my family after this and I'd rather do that sober."

"Ooh, double feature with the fams." She finishes stirring the apples and Remi hands her a bowl to transfer them out of the hot pan. He hands me a plastic cup next. "Okay, that was the last bit. Now we just have to wait for the others to show up and we'll be ready to eat."

As if summoned, a commotion by the front door hits my ears and soon I'm being introduced to him and her and this cousin, that uncle. It's a lot of names and I try my best to keep them straight in my head. There are just as many kids running around as

adults. Toys get pulled out and played with in the hallway, a couple of the teenage kids are braving the cold outside on the porch. The TV is playing the Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade. It's a lot of noise, but I love it. It's family and fun.

By the time we're all gathered around the kitchen table and out into the dining room, someone gives a short toast and another passes out plates. Remi points out what each dish is. His family can definitely cook. I put enough to fill my plate and follow Remi to the table. The other seats are taken quickly and conversations pop up around bites of food.

I have two sausage balls, mini chocolate chip pancakes, two different types of quiche, glazed ham, and a spoonful of corned beef hash on my plate. I'm mindful of the lunch we're going to be eating in a couple of hours too.

"So, Austin, how did you and Remington meet?" Frank, an uncle to someone, asks when we're all mostly done with our plates. All eyes turn to me and I have to keep myself from shrinking back and hiding behind Remi.

"We, uh, met through a mutual... friend." I look at Remi, not sure how much to reveal. "I've known him for years but we only recently made things official."

Remi takes my hand under the table and squeezes. He looks at everyone around the table. They are a great family and I know they don't know our history. It's an innocent question.

"Official, huh?" The lady beside Frank says. "I don't know if you know this, Austin, but you're the first person Remington has brought home to any family function in a good while."

I didn't know that. I know Remi has past relationships and I just assumed he brought them around his family. Remi smiles at me and leans over to kiss the side of my head.

I blush under the eyes of his whole family. "He's special. Figured he should see what he's getting into if he plans on sticking with me for a while. Just watch out for Willow over there. She's a little crazy."

Some type of food gets thrown across the table and smacks Remington. The whole table erupts in uncontrolled laughter and conversations turn back to school for the kids, what the plan for Christmas and New Years is. I'm included in these future events like I've been part of the family for years instead of one day. Remington gives updates on his job, Danielle and Yvonne announce that they're going for their interviews to become foster parents. For the most part, I just sit and listen, but I'm included in most of the questions aimed at Remington.

Remi's family is great. They're warm and accepting, clearly care about each other. I finish all the food on my plate and drink all of my juice. Remi smiles at me and mouths, 'Good boy', before taking my plate to the trash. We all move to the living room. His mom has two couches on either side of the living room. There's a real log fireplace with a TV mounted on the wall above. Most of the seats are taken already but Remi pulls me down onto his lap in the recliner chair. It's an older chair and I feel like it was most likely his dad's and they never got rid of it.

"Have you had a good time?" Remi whispers in my ear as everyone's attention is on the TV. The Rockettes are dancing right now. I turn my head to face him and smile.

"The best time," I say. "Your family is great."

"I'm glad," Remi says. He pulls me closer to him and we settle in to watch as much of the parade as we can.

We hit a bit of traffic on the way to my family. I'm still full from the breakfast, but I'm looking forward to the mashed potatoes my mom makes every year. They're my favorite dish. I pull my phone out and text my sister, letting her know we'll be a few

minutes late. I don't get a response but I can feel this pit growing in my stomach as I watch the world outside passing by.

"Aussie, baby, what's up?"

"Nothing," I say with a sigh. "I'm just... anxious."

"What for?" Remi takes one hand off the steering wheel and squeezes my knee. His hand is heavy and warm on my leg and I focus on it instead of what's to come.

"My family isn't like yours," I say. "They're more... formal, I guess. It isn't multiple conversations going on at once or throwing food at each other. We don't sit in the living room together to watch a parade."

"It'll be fine, Aussie. If it becomes too much for you, though, we can leave."

"No, it'll be fine." I put my hand over his and sink back into the passenger seat. "I'm just being dramatic."

"You are so not dramatic," Remi says with a short laugh. The GPS gives more directions and after another ten minutes, we're at my Mom and Dad's. It's not our childhood home like Remi's, but I know there are still pictures of the family through the years on shelves around the living room. I take one final, deep breath before we walk up to the front door.

It's unlocked and there is sound coming from the kitchen. The house isn't big, since myself and my sister moved out and my parents downgraded. It's just my parents, sister and her husband and Charlotte, and me and Remi. It's much smaller than Remi's whole family.

"Hey, Mom." I call out when I open the front door. The front door opens immediately

to a set of enclosed stairs. To the right is the living room, the left is a hodgepodge of dining room table, my dad's office, and a nook set under a tall window over looking the backyard. The door to the bathroom is against the back of the house as well.

"We're here."

"In the kitchen."

My mom cooks the whole meal for us so we didn't need to bring anything. I take Remi's hand in mine and we walk through the dining room to get to the kitchen. The whole house is laid out in a circle, walls and empty doorways that lead from one room to the next. Upstairs has two bedrooms on either side of the landing and a bathroom between .

"Hey, Austin." She wipes her hands on her apron and holds her arms out for a hug. I drop Remi's hand to hug her back. "It's so nice to see you. It's been too long for us living in the same city. Look at you. At least you're not wearing jeans to Thanksgiving lunch today."

I ignore the comment and smile and tell her I know, that I've been busy. In my head, though, I'm thinking that cars work both ways. It's been almost a year since she came to my house. I always lock up the extra bedroom, claiming that it's simply old storage.

"Mom, this is Remington. My boyfriend." I see her expression morph from calm to slight shock but she hides it quickly and holds her hand out to shake Remington's.

"It's nice to meet you, Ma'am." Remington puts on a voice I haven't heard at all today. He's definitely trying to impress. "The food smells amazing."

"You two just came from your house, correct?" When Remington nods, Mom turns back to the stove and continues talking. I take Remi's hand again. "I hope you didn't

eat too much while you were there. I made enough for everyone to take leftovers home."

"Mom is the queen of leftovers," I say. "I put mine in a disposable muffin tin and usually eat on it the next day."

"Sounds yummy," Remington says.

"Is that my brother I hear?" My sister's voice calls through the house. It's a few seconds before she comes into view. "Sorry, this one had to use the bathroom."

I squat down to my niece's eye level. She waddles over to me, still a little unsure on her own feet. "How's my favorite girl? You're getting so big."

"Um, Austin, I think you're burying the lead here." Bea says. I pick up my niece and see my sister's eyes flick to Remington. Chandler pops around the corner as I start to introduce everyone.

"Remington, this is my older sister Bea and her husband, Chandler. Bea, this is my boyfriend." I wave a hand between all of us to symbolize introducing each other. Remington holds his hand out first and Bea shakes it and then Chandler.

"It's been, what, three years since you've brought anyone to a holiday dinner?" Bea looks back at me. I can feel myself stiffen. Remi's hand goes to my lower back. "It's nice to see you're getting back out there."

"It just kind of happened with us," I say, looking at Remi. I can't help but smile at him and lean my body into his side. "And this cutie is Charlotte. Can you say hi?"

Charlotte ducks her head onto my shoulder and I can't blame her. I am the same way when I meet someone new. New people can be scary until you get to know them.

"Okay, this kitchen is getting too crowded. Please, go sit in the living room and chat or something." My mom shoos us out of the kitchen. My dad is in the living room, watching something sports-related.

"Hey, Dad." My dad, Billy, opens his arms for Charlotte to climb into the chair with him. He looks up and smiles at me, then gives Remington a curt nod. "This is Remington."

"Nice to meet you," my dad says and he doesn't hide his lack of interest at all in his tone. I give Remi a tight-lip smile and we sit down on the opposite end of the couch. I immediately curl into Remi's side and his arm goes around my shoulder.

We don't really talk much. No one asks Remi about his life like his family did with mine. Remi's family all know I work at the coffee shop, half of them promising to stop by and see me if they're in the area. The silence is awkward here. I want them to ask questions, to talk to Remi. I'm so proud of all his work he's done to build his business. Everything he's done for me.

It's only ten more minutes until Mom is calling us back to the table. Everything is set and I sigh internally that my family loves to use actual plates instead of disposable.

"Billy, can you say grace?"

We pass the food around after Dad blesses everything. I get a scoop of each dish, still full but knowing my mom will comment if I'm not eating something. My plate is full and it's stressing me out a bit that the gravy is starting to run onto the green beans and roll.

Our conversations aren't as hectic over this meal. One meal with Remi's family and I want that, not this half silent, shallow topics only talk. Bea gives us an update on Charlotte's milestones and Dad talks about his work. He's worked the same job for

forty years, refusing to retire because, "I'll just be bored".

"Remington owns his own property business," I say with a smile when there is a lull in the conversation. "He built it himself from the ground up."

"Is that right?" My dad, at least, seems interested in that fact. I can see my mom and Bea sharing glances and it's making me uncomfortable. "How is that going in this economy?"

While Remington answers, he leans back in the chair and casually puts his arm over the back of mine. His fingers graze over the back of my shoulder. I could listen to Remi talk about his job all day long. He is such a hard worker and I really hope that the trip this weekend is successful for him.

"Austin, do you mind helping me get the dessert?" Bea asks. "I think Mom made a couple of pies. "

"Yeah." I stand and take Remi's plate this time. He thanks me quietly and goes back to talk to my dad. At least they have something to talk about, I think as I walk into the kitchen. Mom is following behind me. "What kind of pie did you make?"

"Austin." My mom's voice catches my attention. It isn't a question and I'm not sure how to read her tone. I tilt my head and look between both of them. I get the sense that I'm being cornered right now.

"Remington seems nice," Bea cuts in. "He's... older than I expected."

"Okay? He's only ten years older. It's not that bad, considering I'll be thirty-one in February." My fingers graze over the buttons of my shirt and I want to pull the bowtie from around my neck.



"But he's..." My mom starts and stops, her mouth fishing as she tries to find whatever words she thinks isn't going to hurt my feelings.

"Are older men your thing?" Bea asks outright. My mouth is gaped in disbelief that she even asked that. It didn't matter, did it? Nothing I was doing was hurting anyone. "I just mean—" She looks over at our mom, like they've had this planned and were tag teaming. "He's older than your last boyfriend."

"Fiancé," I correct. "Paul was my fiancé, not just a boyfriend. Yeah, Remi's older but I don't care. I like him." I'm not about to tell them I love him. Not when I have a sinking feeling where this conversation is going.

"Whatever he was," she dismisses and it stings. Paul was my love and now Remi is as well. I won't have them dismissing that or questioning it. It's my life, anyway. "Isn't he..."

"He's older than your sister, Austin. That isn't strange to you?"

"No, it isn't. He's my boyfriend and we're happy together." I know I'm getting defensive but I don't like them talking about myself and Remi like we're wrong for being together. I cross my arms, hoping it comes across as annoyed when really I just want to curl in on myself.

"But what happens when he gets older?" Bea asks.

"What do you mean by that?" I look over my shoulder. I can hear the guys still talking but I want to make sure Remi doesn't hear this conversation. I don't even want to hear this conversation.

"We're just concerned, Austin." Mom says. I can feel tears of frustration hitting the back of my eyes. "You need to think about what your future is going to look like."

You're so young, sweetie. Think about what's going to happen when he— When you outlive him."

"Think about it? Mom, I lived with it. For three years. This is the first time I feel happy since Paul died. I'm not going to focus on forty years from now when something could happen tomorrow. I'm learning to take joy in each day. Remi taught me that."

I don't stand up to my family. Not growing up, not even with Paul. For three years, I've heard them dismiss my past relationship. I knew they weren't a fan of the age gap between Paul and I. This is exactly what I was worried about bringing Remi over. We had such a good time this morning with this family. My mom's face says everything I need to know. Nothing I say will change her mind just because of some shallow reasons.

I turn my back on the two women and walk into the dining room. The second Remi sees me, conversation stops and he's out of his chair and holding me. I hug him back for a minute before I look up at him.

"Can we go home now?"

*Source Creation Date: July 18, 2025, 10:27 am*

I say goodbye to Billy and Chandler without another word from Austin. I can see the tears ready to spill from his eyes. I help him into his coat and zip it up before opening the door and walking down the steps. The moment the car door closes and we're alone, Austin loses it.

I pull him to my side and hold him, turning up the heat. We weren't inside for more than an hour. I don't push him to tell me what his mom and sister said. I could hear them talking, but the exact words I couldn't make out. I knew that Austin was worried about coming here, bringing me. If I had any idea that it would lead to tears, I would have told him we weren't coming. This is what I'm supposed to do; protect my Boy from things that make him cry.

"Baby, I'm sorry." I brush a hand down the back of his head, down his back, and back up.

"I should be the one apologizing," he mumbles against my chest. "I can't believe they brought up Paul like that and said... They said—" His words end with a hiccup and I squeeze him tighter. I don't want to let him go but I need to drive us home.

"It's okay, baby. We can talk about it once we're home okay?"

He sits up and I move my hand to wipe the tears off his face. His eyes are red and my happy Boy is nowhere to be seen right now. I brush my fingers down the side of his face and lean forward to kiss him. It's a comforting kiss, nothing deep.

"Get your seatbelt on and I'll drive us home." I look back toward the house and see Austin's sister standing on the porch. His mom is in the window. I want to get out and

yell at them for making Austin cry, to tell them that it's none of their business what he does with his life. He is old enough to make his own choices. He's the sweetest, cutest, sexiest man I know. I love him and no one is going to be hurting him, with words or anything else.

I back out of the driveway and then take his hand in mine until we get to my house again. He stays in the truck while I run into his house for the necessary stuffies and to make sure everything is still okay. He takes my hand when I get back in the truck, but doesn't say anything. When we get back to my place, neither of us make a move to get out.

"I'm sorry if I ruined the day," he says, looking down at his lap.

"Austin?" I make sure my voice is steady, but stern enough that he looks up at me with bright eyes. "You didn't ruin anything."

"I know they didn't like that I was dating an older man before, but I didn't think they'd use that against me today. I just wanted to show you off and show how happy you make me. "

I pull him across the seat and hold him close. "You make me so incredibly happy too, baby. I hope you know that."

"I know," he says. I can hear him sniffle but his voice is low and I can tell that it's going to take a bit for him to recover from this.

"Okay, okay. So I was going to surprise you with this tomorrow morning." I wait until he's looking at me and give him a small smile. "I was going to wake you up with your favorite hot chocolate but I think maybe we can go inside and make it together? Then get our stuff packed up for tomorrow."

"White chocolate?" His blue, blue eyes get that little sparkle back in them at the thought of the hot chocolate. I remember him saying that he prefers it over coffee. When I went to the store on Monday, I made sure to grab the ingredients to make it. The others are planning on bringing food to share over the weekend as well.

"Yes, white chocolate." I say the words playfully, hoping that it brings Austin's mood up a bit. I don't know if it works but he gives me a smile. The first one I've seen in the hour and a half since we left. "With marshmallows and whipped cream."

"You're trying to make me feel better with promises of sugar," Austin says. Then his smile widens and he looks genuinely happy now. "And it's totally working."

"Good. I don't want my Boy sad. Let's get inside."

I grab the empty breakfast dish and meet him at the front door to unlock it. I have a key to his place because it made sense, but I need to get him his own for my place. Maybe find one that has a fun design on it. Austin slips out of his shoes the second he walks through the door and hightails it up the stairs .

"Austin," I call out. He stops halfway up the stairs and turns to look at me. His eyes are still red rimmed but he's smiling. "What's the rule for going up the stairs?"

"No running," he says and at least he looks guilty for forgetting the rule. "Sorry. Do I have time to shower? I want to wash this product out of my hair."

"You can do whatever you want," I say. His smile turns to a smirk.

"Do you want to join me?" His eyebrows wiggle up and down, making me laugh. "Please, Daddy?"

He sticks his bottom lip out in a feign pout and clasps his hands in front of him. His

pouty look while he's dressed up in his bowtie and the trousers that look perfectly tailored for him is such a contradiction and for a second I consider it.

"How about you take your shower, or bath, and I'll come help you get dressed?"

"It's going to be so lonely," he says with a sigh. As much as I want to, I don't give in. I tilt my head just slightly forward and give him my best stare.

"Call for me when you're ready to get dressed, okay?"

"Fine." He turns and finishes going up the stairs. I shake my head at his petulance. I would have joined him for a shower but he just finished crying and I want to give him a bit of time to get his thoughts straight.

I move around the stairs and go to the kitchen. I warm milk up on the stove and grab the white chocolate chips to melt in. I squeeze some caramel sauce in as well and stir it. The kitchen smells great as I'm reaching for a couple of disposable cups with lids. I leave them sitting on the counter and go up to see what Austin is up to .

The water turns off just as I reach the bathroom door. I open it up and smile when Austin steps out and reaches for his towel. My bathroom is larger than his, with the washer and dryer sitting to the right and then the walk in shower beside it. The sink counter and mirror span half the wall on the left and the toilet is in the far lefthand corner. The walls are a light gray, white tiles, matching cabinets and accessories.

"Hot chocolate is ready whenever we are," I say with a smile. I take the towel from him and start at his hair to dry him off. When his face reappears from under the towel, he's smiling and I hear the faintest giggle. I knew a shower would do him well.

I work down his body, drying every inch of him. He squirms when I reach his cock. I brush my fingers over his balls and down the inside of his thighs. His muscles twitch.

I know he's sensitive on his thighs and when I finally hear him call stop, I move lower to dry his feet.

"There. Nice and dry." I stand back up and drop the towel on the floor. We'll clean it up later. "Now, what clothes do you want to wear tonight?"

"I'm feeling sweats and hoodie," Austin says as we move to my bedroom. "I just want a cozy night."

Austin's discarded clothes are scattered by the foot of the bed. I ask him to pick them up and put them in the basket. While his back is turned, I see his phone screen light up. I reach for it first and see the texts from his sister and the two missed calls from his mom .

Bea

Come on, Austin. Answer your phone. We're just worried about you.

You took what we said way out of proportion.

Mom is upset. Call her back.

"Do you want to talk about it now?" I ask. I turn his phone off, making the choice for him that he isn't talking to any of them. I set it face down on the dresser and pull out a pair of sweats for him from his drawer. I help him into one of my hoodies. I smile at the way it engulfs him and his fingers disappear in the sleeves. He flops his arms up and down and laughter fills the room from both of us.

"There's not much to talk about," Austin says with a shrug. "I'm just embarrassed that my family isn't like yours."

"Hey, no talking like that." I pull him into a bear hug and hold him tightly against my body. Austin wraps his arms around my back and holds on just as tight. "Your family is different, but not embarrassing. If you don't want to talk to them, you don't have to. I'll be right here no matter what choice you make, but baby—?"

He looks up at me and I bend my head to kiss him. My hands lift to cup his face gently as my tongue slides against his. His mouth is fresh, he must have brushed his teeth before taking a shower.

"I got upset because they compared you to Paul and started talking about how I was going to outlive you. It just... I told them that one of us could die tomorrow and then I got scared thinking about losing you."

"Baby." I pull him in for another tight embrace, breathing deep to keep my own composure. I whisper in his ear. "I'm not leaving you. Not today, not tomorrow. We're going to make every day worth it, right?"

"Right." Austin nods and I finally let him go and take his hand. Or, the sleeve where his hand should be. He laughs and pushes the sleeve up and takes my hand.

The hot chocolate is perfect temp when we make it back to the kitchen. We decide on continuing the holiday celebration with a bowl of popcorn and watching *Miracle on 34th Street*. It's been years since I've seen the movie, but I've never enjoyed it more than I do with my Boy cuddled into my side.

Even if he does fall asleep thirty minutes in.

I decide to let him sleep and go back upstairs to pack our bags. I start with our clothes, making sure to pack jeans, sweats, sweaters, and the likes. I pack myself a pair of khaki pants and a button up for when I'm meeting with the owner.



Moving to the playroom, I pull out the blue and yellow suitcase pushed in the back of the closet. I don't remember when I bought it, honestly, but it's come in handy a few times. I start with the clothes. I make sure to pack warm and light. I don't fully know what to expect of this place. I've seen photos and done research. The photos look nice. There are pictures from past years when the camp was being used and it looks like a lovely place, but as the owner says, it hasn't been used in two summers. He's looking to revamp.

I move to the changing table next and grab a little bit of everything. Handful of diapers, wipes, cream, powder. I pack up a couple of toys too, outside of his beloved stuffies. When I open the final drawer in the dresser, I pause.

Bottles and pacifiers stare back at me. Those two moments when Austin was sleeping with his thumb in his mouth flash through my mind. The way he's been regressing younger, messing up his words one time or another. My hand hovers over them before deciding to grab one of each.

Just in case.

The thought of caring for Austin with bottles, holding him while he sucks on a paci or even uses me as a paci takes over my brain. I definitely have to talk to him about it. Even if it's just a scene that we do. I'm more than content with him the way he is. He's perfect. I just can't shake the vision of it and I know I won't until we talk it out.

I zip up the suitcase and take both bags downstairs and set them by the front door. We'll be heading out around eight in the morning. It's a two hour drive and I figure we can stop and grab breakfast on the way. I'm hoping that the Friday after Thanksgiving isn't too bad traffic wise.

I look over at Austin, curled up on the couch fast asleep. I smile and walk over to brush his hair out of his face. It's close to three and he had a long morning so I'll let

him sleep for another hour. I know he's going through a lot and naps seem to be his coping mechanism. I hope that by the new year, things will settle for him.

The movie is still playing softly in the background and I sit at Austin's feet to watch it. I massage his toes, up to his ankles. He doesn't stir once as the movie finishes out. I didn't eat much at lunch and my stomach is starting to rumble so I head to the kitchen to make a couple of sandwiches. One for myself and one for Austin when he wakes up .

I'm halfway through my sandwich when Austin shuffles in. Sleepy-eyed and hair ruffled. My heart swells up again at the sight of him. I love him so much. I set the food down on the plate and open my arms for him. He walks right into me, pressing me back against the counter with a small 'oof'.

"Sorry I fell asleep," he says. "I didn't realize I was that tired."

"It's okay." I rub his back and motion my head to the plate. "I made you a sandwich. I also went ahead and packed up our stuff for this weekend."

"What time is it?" He picks up the sandwich and goes to take a big bite. I give him a single look and he changes the amount he bites off. It makes me smile.

"It's just after four," I say. "We have plenty of time before bed tonight."

He swallows his bite before answering. It's nothing fancy, just turkey and cheese. I added mayo and tomato to mine but wasn't sure how Austin preferred his.

"Can I ask you something?" Austin asks, his voice low. He's avoiding my eyes too, looking down at his sandwich.

"You can ask me anything if you look at me first," I say. I know he avoids eye

contact when he's nervous about asking or saying something. I want him to come out of that habit, to gain some confidence. He's so much stronger than he realizes.

He squares his shoulders and looks at me. It's another beat of silence, though. I can see his jaw working, like he's practicing the words in his head first. I have no clue what he's about to ask, but when he does I'm not taken aback. I'm happy. More than.

"Can I move in with you?"

"If that's what you want," I say with a smile. "I'd love for you to."

"I do," Austin says. "I was just thinking about it and my lease runs out in January. Our talk earlier, about making every day worth it had me thinking. Before I fell asleep, that is. I love you and want to spend every day with you that I can. I don't want to wait until society thinks it's appropriate or... For something to happen."

I know that he's worried. His family got into his head and with his past, he's scared of the what ifs. I can assure him over and over again, but even I can't predict the future. I'm forty-one-years-old, time isn't slowing down for myself either. I love Austin, my family loves him. I don't want to wait either.

"We'll get it all sorted when we come back from the camp, okay?" I take this as my cue to be brave and ask what I've been thinking about for weeks now. "Can I ask you a question?"

"Yeah." He takes another bite of his sandwich and I wait for him to swallow before I speak. I take his hand and give a soft smile.

"This is something serious," I say. "It involves your regression and possibly a negotiation."

His expression changes and he tilts his head slightly. "Do you not..."

"Baby, let me talk before you start jumping to conclusions, okay?" I lead him to the living room and we settle on the couch. I keep his hand in mine. "I wanted to talk to you about something that I've noticed, something that I've been thinking about for a while. Last week, when you came home and went for a nap? I came into the playroom to wake you up and you were sucking your thumb. Then, on Saturday, you did the same thing. I know that your regression is usually in the playful stage, but have you ever regressed younger? Or, is that something you would be willing to try?"

"You would want that?" Austin's question surprises me. I'm expecting some hesitance, or maybe even embarrassment about me seeing him sucking his thumb. Instead, his shoulders relax and he's smiling. Just the corner of his lips are turned up, but still.

"I want you any way that you're comfortable," I say honestly. "The thought of giving you a bottle or pacifier, or you even using me as a pacifier, has been running through my mind since then. We can talk about what that means for us, together, and if you're comfortable with that."

"I tend to regress like that when I'm really stressed out or scared." Austin moves to sit on my lap. His fingers immediately start carding through my beard. "I don't mind it every now and then, but I do prefer the playful side. I love when we play together and make up stories. In the past, I sometimes would go nonverbal or very close to it. I didn't know if that is something you would be comfortable with. You're such the perfect Daddy playing with me and making me food and snacks."

"Well, if you ever want or need that, just know that I'm open to it okay?" Austin nods and I lean forward to kiss him.

"Would you want to try a scene tonight?" Austin surprises me once again. "I mean, I don't want to spring that on you but we can if you want."

"What do you have in mind?" I ask. Austin sits up in my lap and smiles at me. I have no idea why I was worried about bringing this up to him. I can see that he's happy we're talking about this. The lack of hesitation and him suggesting a scene so soon gives me the answers I need. He needs this as much as I want it. Austin shrugs though at my question, but it's out of indecision, not worry. I decide to make a suggestion. "How about tonight, since you took this unplanned nap and I'm sure you might have a little trouble sleeping—"

"You said I would be fine, Daddy." His voice is taking on that playful nature.

"Well, I'm just thinking if you have some trouble sleeping, I could maybe fix you a bottle for bedtime and hold you until you fall asleep."

"I'd love that, Daddy." He kisses my cheek. "And if you feed me ice cream after dinner, I will definitely have trouble falling asleep."

"You and your ice cream," I say with a chuckle. Aussie giggles and kisses me once more. "We'll see if you eat all of your dinner first before we talk ice cream. If you change your mind at any point, Austin, just let me know."

"I will, Daddy. I love you."

"I love you too, baby. Now, how about we go play for a bit and I'll order us some food to the house tonight? Daddy doesn't feel like doing dishes the night before a vacation."

"Chinese!" Aussie shouts and bounces off my lap. Well, that answers that. He grabs my hand and we head back upstairs to the playroom.

*Source Creation Date: July 18, 2025, 10:27 am*

After dinner and another movie, where Austin actually stays awake, we share a shower together. I don't let Austin come, knowing that he would be fast asleep soon after that. Aussie slips right back into his Little space when we get out of the shower, deciding against clothes until bedtime. This is something new and something I definitely don't mind if he continues. Seeing him walking so confidently around the house butt naked is equal parts adorable and hot.

We do get a bowl of ice cream each and eat it in the kitchen. I take the time to show Austin pictures of the place we're going to. He immediately falls in love with the different playgrounds and the pictures of the cabin that we're going to share. He asks all kinds of questions about what it would mean if I secured the client, things that I'm surprised he is taking an interest in. I know he took a Business class in school, but it makes me happy that my partner is as invested in my work as I am .

By the time it hits ten, I can tell he is ready for bed. I know he is trying to pretend like he isn't sleepy for the sake of a scene, but I direct him to stay in the playroom and pick out what he wants to wear while I go downstairs. I know he sees me pull out a bottle from the drawer on my way out. I contemplate for a second what to put in the bottle. We had the hot chocolate earlier so I'm not sure if he would want milk again. But then that would leave the apple or orange juice I have in the fridge, which doesn't seem that appealing for bedtime. After a minute of indecision, I go with the milk. I grab a bottle of water as well, just in case.

He is sitting on the bed when I return. His smile is contagious. I see his eyes track my hand as I set the bottle down. He looks excited. "Let's get you ready for bed, shall we?"

I grab the lotion and rub him down and then grab the diaper that he'd chosen. I reach for the shorts and pull them over the diaper, patting his butt when he stands up. I look around for the shirt, but don't see anything.

"I cuddle with Daddy," he says with a toothy grin. To prove his point, he leans forward until we're chest to chest. I can't argue that logic.

"Alright, Aussie. Let's go to bed, shall we?"

He leads me to the bedroom like he's lived here his whole life. I pull the covers down and help him get settled before crawling in beside him, bottle in mind. Aussie is looking up at me with those big, blue eyes. He turns his body into mine and opens his mouth, waiting. It's a whole new experience watching his lips wrap around the small nipple of the bottle. His hand comes up and fingers trace random patterns into my chest until his fingers finally rest over my heart .

The slight tug on the bottle whenever he sucks mesmerizes me and I just stare at him. His eyes are closed and he looks so peaceful drinking from the bottle. Fuck, he looks amazing and I will my dick to not ruin this moment for us. His fingers continue to curl and relax until he falls asleep with a quarter of the bottle left. I blindly reach behind me to put it on the nightstand and pull Austin even closer to me.

"I love you, baby. Sweet dreams." I kiss his forehead before falling asleep myself.

The camp is gorgeous, even in the cold weather. It isn't snowing, which I know Austin is bummed about. Driving up north, he was hoping for something. He spent the two hours with his nose in a book. I'm only a little bit jealous that he can do that and not get car sick. I glance down at my phone for ten seconds and I can feel my head starting to spin like I'm on a rollercoaster. I keep the music low the whole drive, enjoying the small giggles and gasps coming from Austin as he reads. It must be a really good book.

"I think this is where we're supposed to meet the guy," I mutter. Austin puts his book down and looks around for the first time in forty minutes. Gravel crunches under my tires and I park in the closest spot to the house. It's a two story house that looks a bit rundown on the outside. The paint is peeling and one of the windows is missing the white shutters. "Do you want to wait in the car or come in with me?"

"Would you hate it if I waited?" His eyes glance from me to the tablet in his lap. I debated telling him to limit the screen time, but he's using it to read so I just let it be. Plus, he wouldn't need it the rest of the weekend. The others will be here after lunchtime and I know they'll find something to play together.

I want to talk to Garrett about Austin, making sure that he's okay to watch over him while I'm working. I'm only a bit worried. I trust Garrett with my life, but after everything with Austin's family and being in a new place, I don't know how his regression will go. Last night's scene, the way he so easily slipped into that role, has me on edge about leaving him if it isn't something he's never done without a person he trusts next to him.

"They just started to storm the castle and I'm pretty sure the guard is about to double cross the prince."

I leave him to it. It doesn't surprise me that he's reading something about castles. It's his go-to play when he doesn't have his stuffies.

The clouds above hide any warmth from the sun and I zip up my coat as I make my way up the sidewalk from the parking lot directly to the front door. I try the door, grateful that it's unlocked. The owner told me on the phone Monday that the bottom level of the house had been gutted and turned into a store of sorts. The shelves are empty, only a few non-perishable cans remain. The main desk sits directly in the middle of everything, with a white sign that says 'Registration and Check-Out'. There's a bell next to it and I tap it once.



"Just a second!" A voice calls out.

I smile when an older man comes from a back room. He wipes his hands on a towel and then sets it on the counter before holding it out for me to shake. "You must be Remington," he says .

His voice matches him perfectly. Deep, definitely southern. He's wearing a worn ballcap, frayed on the bill, a plaid shirt and jeans with dark stains. His work boots are scuffed. The definition of blue collar.

"That I am," I say. "I'm going to go on a limb and say you're Mister Patterson?"

"Eugene, please." The guy motions with an outstretched hand to a couple of chairs toward the back of the store. It's a cute nook with a table and a fabric chair on either side. "I can't tell you how much I appreciate you coming out here. I got this place from my daddy when he passed away about a year ago. He used to run camps here throughout the spring and summer, but I don't know anything about bookkeeping or anything like that. We didn't do any camps this year and I'm either going to have to sell it or get it running again. I'm hoping you can help with that."

"I'll see what we can do," I say honestly. "I can take a drive around and get some quotes together for you. The drive in is beautiful, with those trees lining each side."

"My great-grandma planted half those trees," Eugene says. "I never met her, but they're beautiful in the summertime. Pink and white blossoms."

"I'll have to come back when it warms up and see them."

"As far as you driving around, I won't be having that. I've got my truck we can take around the area. I know you have some people coming up with you, right?" I nod.

"They should be here in about an hour or so. I wanted to get here first and introduce myself and all."

"The kitchen, up on the hill past this house, is unlocked and good to use. Everything was just inspected last week. Feel free to use it as much as you want. If you're in the mood for pizza, there's a store about twenty minutes East of here that delivers. Tell 'em Eugene sent ya."

"Thanks for that," I say.

"Enough chit-chattin', though. Let me show you to the cabins you can use. We have different ones here. We have the communal building, then the bunk cabins. I'm going to let you all stay in the single cabins, though. They're the nicest, with their own bathroom and all."

I follow Eugene outside. The wind is whipping around, sending a cold chill through me. I take a moment to look around. There are gravel paths leading in different directions from the parking lot. A large field is across one of them. It's about three times the size of a football field. That has a lot of promising potential, but would require maintenance of the trees and lawn. I add it to my mental checklist to add to my actual checklist on my laptop. There's what I'm assuming is a fenced in pool area with a building attached to the backside. Bathrooms and changing rooms most likely. We will not be trying that out this weekend, even if it was up and running.

Austin is still engrossed in his book when I get back in behind the wheel. He looks up briefly and smiles before tucking his chin back to his chest. "Baby, you're going to have a sore neck if you stay like that. Please prop the tablet up a bit or put it away."

He does as I ask immediately and I praise him for it. He doesn't look at me but I catch the small smile on his lips.

Eugene's truck pulls around the other side of the house and I follow slowly behind him. The place is beautiful. All the cabins are set in a large circle of sorts, surrounding another field that has a playground, a sandy volleyball court, and a small putt putt area. It's impressive and even Austin is pulled from his book .

"This place looks like so much fun," he says. "Oh, look at the putt putt course. It has dragons."

I can see his eyes lighting up and his body language change the more he takes in. It never ceases to amaze me how quickly he can go from adult to Little headspace. His happiness only grows when we park outside the cabins we'll be staying in. Even though I showed him the photos, seeing it with my own eyes, I admit they look way better. "They look like teepees! Remi, this is amazing."

"It is," I say. "I'm glad you're happy with this. Let's get inside. Make sure to grab your backpack, okay? We'll come back for the rest later."

"Yes, Daddy." He powers down his tablet and hands it over to me without fuss. He's bouncing on his toes as we walk to meet Eugene at the first cabin. There are four of the individual cabins, all lined up toward the back of the field. The other cabins are larger, more like the typical log style. There's two on each side and then what I'm assuming is the communal cabin back at the entrance where we drove in. Austin dutifully introduces himself to Eugene and then slips in the cabin before me.

The inside is simple, but cozy. There's a Queen bed, loveseat, and small table in the main part. To the left, back corner is a door I'm assuming leads to the bathroom. The place is warm, both in color and temperature.

"The mattresses are fairly new, I think three years old. We haven't had any guests the last two years, outside of friends and family using the place for events. My wife came by and stripped them clean. Fresh sheets were put on this morning for you."

Austin emerges from the bathroom with a wide smile. I'm sure he's looked to see what the shower situation is. My Boy is insatiable when it comes to us showering together. I'm far from complaining about it. Saving water and all.

"Are all the individual cabins like this?" I ask, turning my brain from shower sex to work.

"They are," Eugene says. He's still standing by the door. "I have to run a few errands so I'll let you settle and look around if you like, but I'll take you around to the rest of the land a bit later. This—" He motions outside with his keys still in his hand. "Is the bulk of it though. There's a trail with a waterfall at the end and some woods with smaller clearings. I don't really know much what they'd be used for, but I wanna make sure you can get the full picture."

"Sounds good," I say. I shake his hand once more. "You've got my number. Just call when you're ready."

Eugene tips his head to Austin and then leaves. I don't shut the door until he's a good ways away. Austin is digging into his backpack when I turn back to look at him.

"What are you doing?" I ask, curious.

"Just looking for... This." He pulls out a notebook and holds it up like I'm supposed to know what it is. I've seen it at his place before, but I've never snooped. I just assumed it might be for work or something. "It's my Remi journal. I write down all my favorite things we do together and where we do them. I just wanted to add this place in real quick before everyone else gets here."

My heart swells at those words. He's already sitting on the edge of the bed scribbling on a blank page. I join him, but don't pry at what he's writing. "Have you been keeping this journal for a while?"

Austin finishes writing and then looks up at me. "I started it about three weeks ago. I wanted to remember a joke you told me so I wrote it down but then I kept writing about what we did that day. I like being able to go back and read them, remember it. I love the photos I have, but sometimes reading it is better than just remembering. Memories can fade."

His face goes all pinched and I know the thoughts swirling inside. I know he's still worried he's going to lose me. I wrap my arm around his shoulder and pull him close. "I won't let you forget about Paul either, okay? You can write all you want. About him, me, us. I can even give you a couple of stories that might make you laugh, but we'll also make a whole lifetime of memories for you to add in. You'll need about seventy-hundred of these notebooks to write it all."

"Seventy-hundred?" Austin giggles and it's music to my ears. He pulls back and looks up at me. I can see the hint of sadness in his eyes, hidden behind the smile. "I just... I've lost a lot and now with my family and not talking to them, I don't want to lose memories too. I want to have a place I can go back and read the things we did or remember the things I've done that made me happy or laugh."

"Baby, it's okay." I kiss the top of his head. "Whatever helps you. I love you and I want you to be happy. I know that what happened with your family yesterday was a lot and you haven't had much time to process it all. Just know that whatever you need, I'm right here for you. Always."

I try to convey all the words to him. Everything I mean that I don't say. We'll have to talk about what it means for his family and discuss the boundaries that need to be set. That will happen with time, when he's ready. This weekend, the outside world doesn't exist .

"Remi?" Austin moves to bend one leg up on the mattress. He's smiling when I look at him again. "Can we go play on the swings?"

"Yeah, we can. I need you to put your coat back on, though. It's chilly out."

"Yes, Daddy!" He jumps up and claps his hands, our serious talk forgotten for now. I know he's been itching to slip into his Little space all morning.

The sun is peeking out from a cloud when we get to the playground, warming us up a smidge. The wind has died down, too. Austin lets go of my hand and makes a beeline to the swings. The playground consists of the main part that is shaped like a pirate ship. There are stairs on either side and an open doorframe to walk into the bottom of the ship. It's pretty big for a playground, enough that Austin can play on it without much issue going in and out. There is a baby swing on one end, but the others are faded blue, plastic seats on chains.

"Push me, Daddy," he says excitedly, already kicking his legs. The seats are set at different heights, but it wouldn't take much for us to adjust them if the others wanted to swing too. Austin tilts his head back and looks up at me with a wide, toothy smile. He purses his lips and I bend down to give him a kiss before gently pushing him.

We make our way from swings to the pirate ship to the sand. The cold doesn't seem to be affecting Aussie at all as he plays. I'm a bit big to climb up the pirate ship, but I still play my part of the stranded person needing rescue.

A sleek sedan driving toward us catches both of our attention at the same time. I recognize Garrett's car immediately. So does Austin at his excited squeal. "Garrett said he was bringing more toys and Riley. Can we go see what he has? "

"How about we go show him where he'll be staying this weekend and then we can ask about the toys?"

"Okay!" Austin jumps up from the sand and wipes his hands on his pants. I sigh, knowing that I'll have to brush him down— or strip him— before he steps foot inside

anywhere.

Garrett is all smiles when he steps out of his car. Riley follows after, staying beside Garrett but sniffing the air. "Hey, Remington. Hey, Austin."

"Aussie!" Austin says, like he's had to remind Garrett of this a hundred times. Austin squats down to say hi to the dog and scratch behind his ear.

"Aussie, be nice," I warn him. He looks at me sheepishly.

"Sorry, Garrett," he apologizes immediately. "Can we show you where you're sleeping?"

"Lead the way."

I dig in my jean's pocket and fish out a key to hand over. Eugene handed them all to me when he gave me the one for our cabin.

"He's enjoying himself," Garrett comments as we trail behind Aussie and Riley.

"Yeah, he had a rough day yesterday with his family so I'm expecting he'll be in Little space for most the weekend. I wanted to talk to you about that, actually." We're walking a lot slower than Austin, who is halfway back to the cabins already before we even step off the grassy area. "His family brought up a bunch of stuff about his past with Paul. I know it scared him with how he's been acting today. He's been avoiding the real world since he woke up, with talking about this trip or reading a fantasy book. I'm half expecting him to regress more than he usually does. I'm actually kind of counting on it, so if it happens and I'm not around please call me. I don't care if it costs me this client."

## Page 21

*Source Creation Date: July 18, 2025, 10:27 am*

This camp is awesome!

The cabin me and Daddy are sleeping in is shaped like a teepee! And there's a playground right outside and sand we can build castles in. It's awesome. I'm having so much fun, especially when Quinton and Luke arrive. We run around together, laughing and playing games.

The only not awesome thing is when Daddy has to go with the owner to look around. I put on my bravest face for him, but not having Daddy around feels different. Garrett gives me all kinds of toys to choose from and Quinton and Luke also share theirs. We play with the building blocks first, holed up in Garrett's cabin. It's a little stuffy with all six of us in the room, but I'm not allowed to go outside without Garrett. Daddy said so. It's been over an hour since he went to work.

"Aussie, do you want a snack?" Rachel asks me. She's making Quinton and Luke something to eat. I peek up at what she has sitting on the table. It's veggies. I scrunch my nose up and shake my head.

"Daddy packed me apple slices," I say, remembering my manners. Daddy told me before that if I don't like something, I should still be nice and ask for something else. He knows what I do and don't like though, but I try to remember to be good until he gets back. "Can I have those?"

I watch Garrett move to the cooler that Daddy left before he had to leave. The longer Garrett takes to look through it, the more I can feel my heartbeat in my chest. I don't like the feeling. Did Daddy forget to pack them for me? Or maybe he didn't care and just left me anyway. I knock over the pile of blocks we are building at that thought.



Daddy promised he wasn't leaving me.

"Aussie." Quinton's Daddy, Vaughn, is sitting next to Quinton and he's looking at me. His eyes are a lot different than Daddy's. I don't like them. "Can you tell me why you knocked the tower over? You and Quinton were both working on it."

"I don't want to play with blocks now."

I look down at the rug under my legs. I can feel tears heating the back of my eyes, threatening to spill.

"Aussie?" Garrett's voice is quiet and right next to me. "Sorry it took me a minute. Your Daddy packed them way in the bottom. I got your slices and a juice. Do you want to come sit at the table and eat?"

I look up at Garrett and try to remember my manners. But he isn't Daddy and I just really want him.

I can't hold the tears back anymore and feel them falling down my cheeks before I can say another word. "I just want Daddy. "

"He'll be back in just a bit. Let's get you settled with the snack, okay?" Garrett holds out the apple slices. "I bet Riley will sit with you if you want."

I don't answer Garrett. I continue staring at the rug under me, at the space between my crisscrossed legs. I can hear Garrett and the others talking but I don't pay them any attention. I just want my Remi back. I shrug away when someone lays a hand on my shoulder. I know I'm being rude, but I... I don't like the thoughts inside my brain and the way my body feels. It's all itchy, like something bad is going to happen.

"I want Daddy," I mumble to whoever is sitting beside me.

"I know, Aussie. I'm going to call him for you, okay? How about you take this for now?" A sippy cup is put in my field of vision. I ignore the cup and start running my hand up and down the onesie that Daddy dressed me in. I'm also wearing a diaper. A thought crosses my mind.

I concentrate really hard. Daddy had me go potty before he left, but I know if I go again, he'll have to come back and clean me up. I can hear Quinton and Luke chatting at the table. The others are murmuring around me, but I still don't look up. I close my eyes and think of anything I can to make myself go potty again.

I sniffle through the tears that are still falling. I'm still clean, which should be a good thing, but it just means Daddy doesn't have a reason to come back to me. That makes me cry even harder and there's a new hand on my shoulder this time. It's Mommy Rachel. Her hand is smaller and I can feel her nails scratching my back.

"Aussie, honey, can you talk to me?" Her voice is calm and I know I'm being ugly. Daddy would tell me I need to apologize and remind me that I am a good boy. Every thought about him makes me miss him more.

"I want Daddy!" I say louder than I meant. I recoil into myself. "I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I just want my Daddy. I don't want him to leave me."

"He isn't leaving you, Aussie." Garrett is sitting in front of me now. He's younger than my Daddy but he's bigger. His muscles are big and he's taller too. His head is bald. He has a dark beard that is barely more than stubble. Not like Daddy's that I can run my fingers through. "He's coming back now, okay? I just called him."

Garrett's hands land on my knees. His hands are warm and comforting. Without a word, I climb into his lap and curl up against his chest. "I'm sorry for being mean." I mumble the words against his shirt, eyes still closed.

"It's okay, Aussie." He starts rocking us back and forth. I want to relax, but his smell is different from my Daddy. Still, I don't move. Something is slipped into my hand and I open it against my chest. It's a pacifier. I look up at Garrett who smiles down at me. "Your Daddy gave me that, just in case you needed it. See? It has an A on it, just for you."

There's a drawn on 'A' in Daddy's handwriting on the guard piece. I'm lifting it to my mouth when the door opens and my eyes flick over.

"Daddy!" I scramble from Garrett's lap and fling myself at him. He looks exactly like he did an hour ago. No scratches, bumps, booboos. "I'm sorry. I tried to be good. I just—I missed you too much. I got scared."

"I'm here now," he says. His hand runs down the side of my face and I lean into his touch. I don't bother looking back when he talks to the others in the room. "We're going to go to our cabin for a bit."

I don't pull away from Daddy as we walk from Garrett's cabin to our own. Not even once we're inside and he locks the door.

"Baby, can you look at me?" Daddy's voice is soft and I do as he asks. "What happened? I wasn't gone that long."

"I got scared that you weren't coming back," I say honestly. "Rachel had veggies and Garrett couldn't find the apple slices. I thought you didn't pack them and that you didn't care. Then my brain told me that you weren't coming back and I got really sad and scared."

"Aussie, I made you a promise that I wasn't going to leave you and I mean that. We talked about me having to work this weekend so sometimes you might have to play with the others without me, but Garrett is there to help you."

"He doesn't smell the same," I whine. I look up at Daddy and I know I'm pouting.

"How about we lay down for a bit, okay?" Daddy leads me to the side of the bed. His hoodie I took off earlier is still on the bed. He strips me of everything but the diaper and puts the hoodie back on me. It still smells like him and I can feel my brain relaxing. I realize I still have the paci in my hand when we settle under the blanket. "Do you want to use that? You can if you want, that's why I brought it, Aussie. Or..." He pauses and adjusts the blanket so half his chest is revealed. I snuggle in close to him automatically, finding comfort in laying my cheek on his shoulder. "You can use me, if you want."

I look up at him, confused.

"I'm okay with it, Aussie. I told you; whatever you need. If you want to suck your thumb or the paci or... me, that's fine. Take whatever you need, baby. I just want you to feel better and know that I'm not leaving you. Not today, tomorrow, or ever."

I blink at him, letting his words register. My eyes travel down his chest and then look at the paci. I've used a paci before, but being as close to Daddy as I can is what I want. I throw the piece of plastic over my shoulder and kiss him. "I want you, Daddy."

Daddy shifts to adjust our position slightly. I hesitate for just a moment before I cuddle against his body, my face on his chest. I part my lips just slightly and wrap them around his nipple. My tongue lathes around the bud, relaxing at the feeling of it. Daddy's one arm holds me close and his other hand brushes the hair off my forehead.

"I love you so much, Aussie." Daddy whispers the word, his breath hitching when I suck on his chest. His arm squeezes me a little tighter. "Good boy. Take what you need, baby."

My body finally relaxes. I'm here, with Daddy, closer to him than even when we have sex. I can hear each of his heartbeats with my ear pressed to his chest, feel the rise of fall of his breathing. I slot my leg over his and run my hand not trapped between our bodies through the hair on the rest of his body. It's perfect.

I fall asleep like that shortly after.

When I wake up, the windows are much darker. I'm still cuddled up to Remi, my head on his chest. His fingers carding through my hair is what woke me up. I shift, turning slowly to face Remi. He smiles lazily at me. "Good nap?" He asks like he does every time I wake up from a nap.

"The best," I say. Memories come flooding back to me about how I acted while Remi was trying to work. I feel bad and I know I'll need to apologize to the others. The memories of suckling on Remi's chest comes back too and that is a whole other feeling that sends waves of heat over me. "Um, did we...?"

"Yes, Aussie." Remi's smile is even wider now. "How do you feel about that?"

"I..." I loved it. It was exactly what I needed and the fact that Daddy was the one that offered and helped me calm down and knew what I needed is overwhelming in all the best ways. "I really liked it. How did you know?"

Daddy brushes my hair back off my forehead. "After last night, I figured there was a chance you might need something like that again. I made sure that Garrett was prepared. I told him where the pacifier was just in case. I know you got scared, baby, but I promise that even if I'm not right there with you, I will always make sure you're taken care of."

"But I was still mean to them," I say, remembering how I knocked over the toys and made that face at Rachel's food. "I need to apologize."

"You will," Remi says. "But they also understand. I wasn't leaving you with someone that didn't know what was going on, baby."

"You're the best," I say, overwhelmed with emotions once again. Good emotions this time. I kiss across his chest and then scoot myself up to meet his lips with mine. "I didn't mess up your work stuff, did I? "

"Not a bit," he says. "We walked around the field and I took some measurements and then made our way through a few of the other cabins before Garrett called me. I was just on the other side of the field and told Eugene I needed to go help find something I had packed away. He decided to go home for the evening, so we'll explore the rest tomorrow."

"I promise I'll be good tomorrow," I say earnestly. I sit up and Remi mirrors my position, our backs against the headboard. I reach over to the bedside table where I left my notebook earlier. I flip to a page labeled 'Daddy's Promises' and tilt the page so he can read it. I smile when he starts laughing at the mix of random and serious promises he's told me since I started this journal. They range from 'I promise to never leave you' to 'I promise you can have ice cream after dinner if you pick up your toys now'.

I drop the notebook to the bed and turn my head to kiss Remi.

"I love you too, Aussie. My sweet Boy." Remi deepens the kiss until we break apart for air. "No matter what happens, I'll always be right here for you."

I open my mouth to say something equally as cheesy to him, like I know he can't promise me that because no one can predict the future, but my stomach chooses that moment to growl at me for refusing a snack earlier. Our bubble of shared feelings is broken by Remi's laughter and me poking my stomach and admonishing it for ruining the moment.

"Let's go see if the others are ready for dinner, okay? Do you want to stay in these clothes or change?"

From an outsider, it looks like I'm only wearing pajamas. It's comfy, too. I decide to stay in the outfit for now and we head outside. The others are running around on the playground and Daddy lets me run to join them.

I give them each an apology before we all start playing Pirates. Daddy only lets us play for a few minutes, though, before we get into our cars and head to the kitchen. Garrett brought dinner for us to share tonight, which ends up being cheeseburgers and fries. I know my Daddy is cooking tacos tomorrow night. Rachel is set to make breakfast tomorrow morning and Vaughn has lunch covered.

We spend the whole time eating talking about what we can do tomorrow. I know I'm going to miss having Daddy while he's working, but I'm learning to be brave. I have a lot of stuff to be brave about when we go back home, from family to work.

Knowing that I no longer have to do all of that alone, though, is the best part.

I turn to the side and smile at Remi, my heart so full and happy that I imagine it's inside my chest doing my famous butt-wiggle dance.

*Source Creation Date: July 18, 2025, 10:27 am*

"Order for Wendy!" I call out with a smile. She steps up to the counter and I slide over her drink. "I should have known that was yours when it said extra hot."

"Careful, Austin, my brother might think you're flirting with me." She winks and steps out of the way with her coffee. The next one I call out is for Remington himself. I hold his cup hostage until he leans over the counter and gives me a quick kiss. We're not super busy right now, being close to closing time, but there is still a round of applause and 'Get 'em boss' coming from behind me.

The new hire, Orion.

He started working here five weeks ago and it's been a perfect fit so far. He caught on to the coffee making and specialty drinks quick and has a magnetic personality that the customers have raved about. While I don't know his home life or much of anything personal about him, he shows up on time, hasn't called out once, offers to work overtime, and is just an overall great guy.

"I'll see you at home in an hour, right?"

"Yes," I say. I fight back rolling my eyes. Remi has made it a point to make sure that I don't work more than I have to. I'm back down to just a typical eight hours a day. Another thing that Orion is amazing for. He comes in right at opening, which means he can stay past closing to count his drawer and do the last minute sweeping and mopping of the floors.

"Good, because I have a surprise for you."



He leaves me standing by the counter. His sister waves as they walk out the door. I don't know what the surprise could possibly be. We're in the process of moving my things over to his house still, but the new year is in a couple of days, so who knows what he has planned. He spoiled me already for the holiday. We shared presents at home between the two of us before going to his family's for a huge celebration. His mom's living room was half presents for and from the whole family.

He gave me a playhouse castle, with all the noises and lights working. There were two new dragons as well. He also got me new work shoes since I'd been complaining of mine wearing out, and clothes for both playtime and date nights. We went to the club again the day after the holiday and I had so much fun with all my friends. That's another thing; I have regular playdates now with other Littles. We split it between houses or meet up at the club. It's only been twice so far, but Remi says they're working on coordinating schedules.

When I pull into the driveway forty minutes later, all but one of the lights are out in the house. I lock my car door and step into the doorway. There's soft music playing from somewhere and the whole house smells like warm cookies .

"Remi? Is this something I should probably change out of my work uniform first?" I call out into the house and wait a few seconds for an answer. I'm met with only the music.

I follow the sound up the stairs. The light I saw on is our bedroom so I head there. I happen to look down and see red and pink rose petals on the floor. I'm grateful I kicked my shoes off at the door. I continue down the hallway and push open the door slowly. Remi is standing at the foot of the bed, dressed in my favorite button up shirt of his and black slacks. His hair is styled and the beard looks freshly shaped. He looks wonderful.

"What's all this?" I look around the room. The petals continue into the room and surround Remi in a heart shape. There is a single lamp on and candles flickering

shadows over the walls. It's romantic as can be.

"I'm not proposing," he says, which makes me laugh. My mind was definitely going there. While I would of course say yes, we both talked and agreed that I needed to work through some stuff with a professional before we make that type of commitment to each other. I mean, other than moving in together. "I am, however, giving you the next best thing to start the new year off right."

He pulls his hands from behind his back and holds out several pieces of paper to me. I step close enough to take them and look over the front page. I don't focus on many of the words, but I know what this is. It's a document. Adding my name to this house. I look back up at Remi and smile wide. "Are you serious?"

"Yes, baby. I want this house to be yours as much as it is mine. Legally. You just need to sign it and I'll send it back to the lawyer." He takes my other hand and pulls me flush against his body. I let the papers fall behind me. "I know what you went through the last time and I don't want that to be a worry for you. This has been my house for years, but I want it to become our home."

I nod, at a total loss for words. I flip to the last page of the document and see where Remi has already signed his name. He's really serious about this. I look up at him, his gorgeous brown eyes silently promising me that everything is going to be okay. We're more than okay.

"And right now, I want you to be naked and on that bed in two minutes. Please."

I don't have to be told twice. We undress together, racing to see who can shed their clothes the fastest. Remi cheats and stops me when I'm down to just the cartoon themed briefs he bought me. They are comforting to wear when I'm at work or missing Remi.

"Daddy, you cheated!" I try to fake petulance when his hand cups my growing

erection inside my underwear. I swallow back the moan that rises in my throat.