



BJ's Lost Crayons (Found by Daddy #13)

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Category: LGBT+

Description: BJ lost his crayons and found his new daddy.

I collect crayons. Not just any crayons, either. I collect retired colors, violet-blue being my favorite. They remind me of myself—once loved and cherished and now long forgotten. Only I refuse to let them be, either. Instead, I dig through every yard sale and thrift store box of random colors, hoping to find one.

Moving into my new apartment is stressful enough without discovering a box is missing, the one containing my prized collection. I call the moving company, my old landlord, and my new building manager. None of them have seen it. They are gone. As a last-ditch effort, I post on the local community social media pages in the hopes that someone has seen it.

When someone replies they have, it's all I can do not to say, "Thank you, Daddy."

Total Pages (Source): 18

Page 1

Source Creation Date: July 16, 2025, 6:26 am

BJ

I pulled the envelope off my apartment door and went inside. I already knew what the letter inside it said. My neighbor, Betty, had called crying about it when she found hers this morning.

Our apartment building had been sold. We didn't even know it was up for sale.

One day, everything was fine and dandy in the land of renters and the next, everything fell to shit.

I wasn't sure how legal it was, but, according to the official statement, we all had to be out within the next sixty days.

Not six months or even three. Nope, we had to be gone at record speed.

I had no love lost for the owner or the building. Sure, the rent had been decent and most things worked. It was hardly what anyone would call magnificent. To top it off, he was absent most of the time, so, when issues arose, it was always a struggle. But none of that made this any easier.

Why couldn't he have sold it to someone who wanted a turnkey real estate investment?

That would've been so much easier for every resident in this place.

I'd had that happen before, back in college.

It meant paying more in the short run, but it gave me the time I needed to think and decide what to do next.

We didn't have that luxury now. The new owners were tearing this entire thing down and beginning again—building condos, of all things—exactly what this town didn't need.

But it wasn't my money, and none of this was my decision. The only thing I could do was figure out my next plan stat.

I shut the door behind me, barely clicking closed before I pulled the letter from the envelope. Sure enough, it was exactly as Betty had told me. Why couldn't it have been a just kidding, the sale fell through letter?

The only upside was that we would get 100 percent of our security deposit back as long as we were out by the correct time.

I had a feeling that this was their way of preventing us from fighting and possibly a loophole to the timeline.

Nothing about that felt like it was within the laws of our city.

But I didn't see how any of us had a choice.

Fighting cost money and if...not when we lost, we wouldn't have enough time to find a new place.

And you couldn't exactly squat in a building that had a wrecking ball coming at it.

“Ugh. This is not what we need, Stu.” I walked over to my support cactus.

Why he was named Stu, I didn't know. There was a little sticker on his pot when I got him at the yard sale a couple years ago that said, "Please take care of Stu." I wasn't looking for a house plant of any kind, but with that sticker and him being in the free box, what choice did I have? He had to come home with me.

That had been a good yard-sale day. I found quite a few things to add to my collection.

My collection of retired crayons. It was such a silly thing to amass.

Crayons were crayons, and the colors were always kind of the same, even if they had various names or slightly different hues.

It wasn't like I was an artist creating masterpieces out of them where I needed the colors to be spot-on.

One day, at a thrift store, I'd found a box holding not one but three of my favorite violet-blue shade.

I did the only rational thing—bought the box of broken crayons.

It had been such a hodgepodge, with a few broken colored pencils in the mix.

There were all different brands, including the ones that didn't actually draw on things but were really cheap at back-to-school time.

Giddy, I skipped my other errands and went straight home. I sat on my floor, dumped them out, and sorted. It was like a treasure hunt. I found ones I liked, ones I loved, and a bunch for the trash. Then came the fun part—using them in my favorite coloring book.

After that, it was game on. I kept chasing that dopamine—yard sale after yard sale, thrift store after thrift store. I even found some at a dead stock store once. As hobbies went, it was inexpensive and it didn't hurt anyone. I didn't see any reason to change it. Besides, yard sales were fun.

I rarely got much else at them—maybe a shirt for work, and one time, I found the little nightstand I placed by the window with my remotes on it.

And, of course, Stu. He'd been on my crayon journey with me ever since, the perfect plant for me.

Stu was just the right amount of responsibility.

I didn't need to remember to water him often.

I didn't need to prune him. Just kind of let him be, talked to him, made sure he got sun. That was that.

“We're gonna have to find a new place, Stu. Maybe it's time to buy.”

My stomach clenched at the thought. I wasn't ready for a house yet.

Sure, I had a good job, and the money was there, but I didn't want to come home and have to worry about maintenance projects or fixing things that went awry.

I had a hard time taking care of myself some days.

I didn't need to add a real estate portfolio to my list of responsibilities.

I thought about pulling up the listings for apartments nearby and getting down to business, but instead, I opted to take a bath with my little rubber monsters that were

just like rubber duckies, but way cuter.

The bath did a world of good, telling me I'd made the right choice. Tonight was a little kind of night.

After drying off, I slipped into my training pants and my favorite pajamas. They, too, were covered with monsters of all different colors. They weren't the same ones as my bath toys, but I figured I might as well go with a happy adorable theme if I wanted to let go.

My stomach rumbled, so I nuked a frozen meal of chicken nuggies and fries. Hardly the dinner of champions, but they were shaped like smiley faces and were easy to make. Ordering or cooking a real meal would've meant being big, fully big, and after the day I had, that was a hard pass for me.

I sat on the floor by my coffee table and pulled out my new coloring book and box of "special" crayons. Because, yes, I had multiple containers of crayons throughout my apartment, each with its purpose.

I only took these out when I was little.

They were stored in an old box that at one time had a gift from my boss in it—a huge mug that wished me a Happy New Year.

It likely originated at the dollar store but still managed to hold up over the years.

I'd taped it up more times than I could count, and the confetti printed on it was missing in spots. But it was perfect.

The crayons were used. Very used. They had to be well worn and loved. Not sure how that became the rule. Even on the rare occasions when I played with another

little or daddy, I wouldn't use new crayons. It felt wrong.

Each of these had been with me through many, many drawings, color sheets, mazes, and connect-the-dots.

Their history brought me comfort. I dug inside and found my violet-blue and colored the house on the page I opened up to.

This was one of my favorite kinds of books to color.

The spaces were large, the paper like the kind they used for comic books, and the pages opened flat.

I let my worry slip away as I relaxed into the pretty world I'd created with my crayon, the paper, and I—one that didn't have landlords that sold buildings out from under you. No bills to be paid or little old ladies calling me, crying in the middle of the day, making me feel helpless.

A world perfect, colorful, and filled with love.

One I wished existed.

Page 2

Source Creation Date: July 16, 2025, 6:26 am

Glenn

“I’ve got to get going pretty soon.” It wasn’t often I even found time to come to the club lately. With all the changes in the city, my business was booming. “But it’s been nice to have an evening off and a chance to catch up.”

“Really, Glenn, isn’t your bunny asleep by now?

” Bridger set down the animal he was crocheting.

Few people who saw him at the club realized he was an award-winning crochet-pattern creator.

He made it look so easy and fun, as if it was never more than an entertaining hobby, but those of us who’d known him for a while recognized that each item that his hook produced would soon be available as a pattern for his customers to purchase.

“I’m just not sure about this scarf color on the badger.

Before, I didn’t worry so much, but since we’re selling kits now, the customers are going to be stuck with my color choices.

Do you like it?” He held up his work in progress.

“I do.” Hudson, Bridger’s little, popped up from where he was playing on the floor with some of the other boys and girls. “Badger is my favorite on the show.”

I glanced at Bridger, who filled in, “There is a new cartoon from the UK with all sorts of animals in the countryside. Badger is sort of an antihero, but Hudson loves him.”

Hudson’s head bobbed. “He’s striped.”

I could imagine that the fierce little animal could be an antihero. “Maybe he’s misunderstood.”

Austin, another of the littles, was pushing a fire truck around, but he looked up with a frown.

“Badger is always in trouble. I like Hedgehog.” His daddy, Clark, was another one of our small crowd who met here in the conversation area to visit and relax, share our lives.

It was great to have friends who understood our experiences.

“Daddy, can we go to the little room? I want to build with bricks.”

“Me too!” Hudson hopped up and linked hands with his friend, tugging him to his feet. The two of them were super cute in their little shorts and T-shirts. Hudson’s had a duckie on it and Austin a fire truck, their favorite things in the whole world, as we all knew. “Daddy, can we?”

Clark smiled at his little. “I’ll take them both, if you want to stay and chat, Bridger.”

“I did just order something to eat, so I’ll take you up on your kind offer. Also, I’d like to catch up with Glenn. Find out what’s kept him so busy that he’s left us in the lurch.”

Clark took each of the boys by the hand, and together, they disappeared into the

crowd in the main area on their way to the little room. There would be single littles there as well, hoping for a daddy to play with, and, if I didn't have to leave soon, I would have joined them.

"It's been too long, friend." Bridger fixed me with his stern daddy stare. "Are you cheating on us with another club?"

I laughed, unable to help myself. "Never, oh maybe Collared if I am up that way, but otherwise I'm loyal to Chained.

It's just been really busy at the office.

Seems like everyone in town is moving somewhere.

Not that I'm complaining, but by the time I'm done, I go home, eat a sandwich, and fall into bed. "

"Life needs balance, and meals besides sandwiches. Your success is admirable, but you've been alone too long."

"I'm almost never alone."

"You know what I mean. A pet rabbit, no matter how personable, is not a substitute for someone special in your life. No matter how adorable."

"Since he was the model for your first kit release last winter, he would not want to hear that he's not special." I was joking, but at the same time trying to get him to back off. "I'm doing all right."

"I hope so. It's been five years since Sally passed, and she wouldn't want you to be on your own without someone special to come home to."

“I miss her still.” My late wife had been ten years older than me, but her sudden illness had caught us both off guard. “I’ll find someone when I’m ready. And, for now, I’ll find more time to come and play. Just to make you happy.”

“If that’s what it takes to make you be kind to yourself, I’ll gladly accept that responsibility.”

“Better get home and take care of my roommate.” My bunny.

We said goodbye, and he sat back to enjoy his Hawaiian wings while I headed for home.

I’d had every bit as long a day as any other, but for some reason had felt the need to see my friends.

They might nag and think they knew what was best for me, but without my little, I needed the energy that Chained had to offer.

My friends were all happily settled down with littles who fulfilled them, and I was so happy for them.

But I’d thought Sally and I had a lifetime together as well.

I’d have bet my heart and soul on that. While the daddy in me enjoyed being with littles at Chained, I couldn’t imagine forming such a soul-deep bond with anyone else.

I parked in the garage and went inside the house where my big fluffy white bunny Carrot waited for me. He didn’t need to be fed or anything; I’d taken care of that before I left, but having a pet made a great excuse for leaving anywhere when I wanted to get home.

He was in his play yard on one side of the living room, sound asleep.

Bridger was right about that. And he didn't even wake up when I came in, the ungrateful fluff ball.

I paused beside him. "I still don't know how your former owners could just leave you like that.

" When our crew was loading up the truck, the people hadn't wanted to take him with them and offered him to whoever might want him.

They were considering letting him go to fend for himself.

The bastards.

When the guys called to tell me, I ordered the customer charged for every extra their trip required, although I usually allowed some leeway for weight or oddly shaped items. And I had the shaking little fluffer brought to my office where he spent the day before coming home with me to stay.

I'd always believed there was a special punishment waiting for cruel pet owners after they left this life.

But their loss was my gain because Carrot was great company.

We had dinner together in front of the TV, he listened to anything I had to say, pink nose twitching in full attention, and he gave me a reason to go home every night. Someone to care for.

I sure had missed that. I got him out of his yard, and he followed me into the kitchen.

“Carrot, you remember Bridger?”

Carrot’s nose twitched.

“He thinks we need a new little in our lives. What do you think of that?” I stuck my plate of leftover Chinese food in the microwave and leaned against the counter. “It’s too soon, right?”

This time, all I got was a steady stare.

“Sure. Take his side. Just because he’s got someone like Hudson doesn’t mean I would have that kind of luck. Besides, I don’t think I could take someone else leaving me like Sally did.”

After dinner, I carried Carrot upstairs, past the door I never opened and to his “bedroom” inside mine.

I showered and put on a pair of cotton PJ pants then flopped on the bed.

On the other side of the wall behind me lay the nursery.

My very understanding weekly house cleaner kept the dust from taking over in there, I supposed.

I’d never told her not to clean it, but I never checked.

Every now and then I came close, approached the door, even grasped the knob, but I’d never actually gone in.

Or looked. It would only tear the scab from a barely healing wound.

Sally was the only woman I'd ever been with, most of my relationships with men.

But she'd been a truly special person who made me feel needed and loved, and I'd always be grateful for our years together.

She'd made me swear I wouldn't live alone, and I suspected Carrot was not what she'd had in mind for a companion. I picked up the framed photo from the nightstand and looked at the beloved face. "Sally, my love, I'll try..."

Of course, I'd promised to move on before.

Page 3

Source Creation Date: July 16, 2025, 6:26 am

BJ

Moving sucked under the very best of circumstances.

Even when I came to this city, starting my brand-new job, living in a place where, for the first time, I could be little whenever I wanted to and didn't have to hide—even then, it sucked.

And that was a move I wanted to make. This was far from that.

There was something about the place that created a safe environment and my new location, and I could set them up again, but it wouldn't be the same. It never would come close. Each place had its own personality, its own character, its own history.

I wouldn't have the same people saying hello to me as I walked in.

I wouldn't have the one spot that was always just a little bit warmer in the kitchen, where I could go and stand on days that I was chilled from the winter weather.

I wouldn't even know how to set the shower right without looking for a while.

It was all gonna be different.

And I told myself that it was fine. That I could do this.

That I could handle it. I was lucky, after all.

I had the means to find a new place. I was far from well off, but I had enough for first, last, and deposit while having enough to pay the movers and put all the deposits on my utilities. I was much better off than most.

I found one that would suit me without too much trouble. Better yet, as far as I knew, everybody in my building had figured out something. No one was going to be homeless or distraught, which, given the fact I was one of the youngest in the building by decades, was no big feat.

It still sucked.

Could I have saved money and recruited some help from my coworkers?

Sure. But I'd been to more than my share of quote, "moving parties," and I hated them.

Moreover, everyone else hated them too. And honestly, I wasn't in the mood to be on edge, worried that maybe a box would open that shouldn't, or that I'd forgotten to pack something that might show them my little side.

I was fully cognizant of the fact that I shouldn't be embarrassed by who and what I was. I wasn't, not really, but the people around me wouldn't understand. Some things were just best not dealt with. This was one of them.

I taped up the last of the boxes, stacked and labeled them based on the room they were going in.

I could hardly say Onesies on the one with the little clothes, but Bedroom would do the job.

That was one of the nice things about moving to some place with the same number of

rooms my old place had.

It was pretty easy to label what went where.

The moving company came exactly on time.

They seemed nice enough, and I immediately got out of their way and drank coffee with Betty.

We sat in the hallway, pretending we were just chatting, but also kind of keeping an eye on the movers in case they had questions.

It was much better than standing in the apartment and dodging them every time they came through with a box or a dresser.

Betty was moving out at the end of the week.

She'd bought a house near her granddaughter and was going to get to spend time with her great grandbabies.

She said this actually turned out to be the best thing that could have happened to her.

And I was glad for her. It was going to be weird not having her close by.

The buzz came over all our phones at once, indicating severe weather was coming in thirty minutes. Excellent.

The movers rushed, getting everything outside and into the truck quickly before coming back inside, where we waited it out. Betty made them tea and chatted their ears off. I was pretty sure they were having a decent time, but I was equally sure my bill was growing by the minute.

The storm left as quickly as it came and, less than an hour later, we were driving to my new place.

I'd been there early that morning and cleaned as best I could with the time I had. The landlord had broom swept it, but not much more. I told myself it was fine, that it would be all dirty and dusty again when all the boxes came, anyway. I still wished I had felt accomplished.

Moving it into the new place was faster than getting everything loaded into the truck. The stairs were not as narrow. The parking was much easier. And there weren't three other people moving at the same time. I was relieved when it was all in.

"Thank you." I signed off on the paperwork and headed inside with Stu. He'd been sitting in the cup holder of my car for longer than I'd liked, but he looked no worse for it.

"Let's find you your home first. There's a spot in the kitchen where the light hits that I think you will like." It wouldn't be good long-term—too much humidity with the cooking, but it was perfect for now.

"You stay here, and I'm going to unpack."

I started with the clothes, figuring that would be the easiest and would make me feel accomplished. It did. Those boxes were put away quickly and easily.

But, as I looked around the bedroom, I realized that the box holding my crayons wasn't there.

My heart thumped in my chest. I was worrying for nothing. Or so I told myself. It was probably in the other room. It wasn't like it could get lost. Right? Wrong.

I opened every box in the living room, but they were all exactly as labeled. Same with the kitchen. Same with my office.

The box was gone. The only one that mattered, nowhere to be found.

Tears built in my eyes. If ever there was a time I needed Daddy to wrap his arms around me, this was it, because inhaling was hard, everything tight, every breath aching.

They were gone.

I called the moving company and left a message. I sent an email, too, probably sounded like I'd lost my mind, given my erratic breathing and poorly covered-up sobbing.

I didn't care what they thought. It was my box.

Grabbing my keys, I raced back to my old place, glad that the landlord was there dealing with another tenant. He helped me check my former home, but it was just as empty as I remembered.

And then, because I was throwing spaghetti at the wall, I pulled out my phone and mentioned it in multiple groups on social media—just seeing if anybody from my old place had found it, or my new place, or the new-to-town people.

Because, heck, maybe someone used the same moving company and they got my box by accident. Stranger things had happened.

Betty even helped me print out fliers and put on the community board both here and my apartment building. Heck, I even put one up at the grocery store when I grabbed a few frozen meals to tide me over until my kitchen was fully set up.

It had to be out there.

There was no way it wasn't.

And I needed to get it back.

Page 4

Source Creation Date: July 16, 2025, 6:26 am

Glenn

I had just checked out at the grocery store when a notice on the community cork board caught my eye.

The guy had lost something clearly important to him and was hoping someone might have found it.

If not for the brilliantly colored letters, I wouldn't have even stopped to read it because there were always lots of things on there that didn't pertain to me.

Rooms for rent. Bikes for sale. Free puppies and kittens—neither of which Carrot would welcome into our home.

Housekeeping services. And sometimes things that were lost or found.

But this one had something about it that made me continue reading after admiring the colors.

The name of the person to contact if their item was found.

I pulled out my cell phone and called the office to confirm and, yes...

this person who lost something in their move was our client.

I told my assistant to see who had been on the moving crew for this job and have them wait for me when they got back.

I trusted my guys implicitly. You couldn't stay in the business of handling other people's belongings if you stole them or carelessly lost them, and I wanted to know what happened to the box the man was looking for.

Tossing my bag of groceries in the back seat, I turned the car toward the warehouse again.

The dinner I planned to cook would have to wait.

"Hi, boss." Carmel was waiting in the front office, her purse on her shoulder and jacket over her arm. "The crew is waiting for you in the break room. They got back right after you called."

"Thanks."

"Mind if I ask what this is all about? Did something get damaged?"

That happened occasionally even though the guys were careful. We carried insurance for anything big, but usually it was something we could just take off the customer's bill. "No. Just go on home, and I'll tell you in the morning."

"All right." She waved and left, and I headed for the break room, hoping I could get this resolved and go home.

I didn't cook all that often, at least not anything that didn't come in a frozen tray or, of course, sandwiches.

Grilled cheese was cooked! I really wanted the steak and salad makings waiting in the car.

One of the things I had been neglectful about in the years on my own was the

preparation of nutritious meals, and after my chat with Bridger, I had decided to start picking up the pieces. Finally.

Sally would be horrified to see me living on frozen dinners and fast food.

If for no other reason than all the care we had for one another, I was going to do better.

Funny thing was...she hadn't even been the family cook.

It had been me, and part of how I showed my love and concern for her.

Always, but once she fell ill, I tried to make sure everything she ate or drank was fuel for healing.

Then, when I failed to keep her with me, I didn't have the heart for it anymore.

The crew who had moved our customer waited around the break room table, cups of coffee in front of them. They were talking in low tones that cut off as soon as I came in.

“Good afternoon, gentlemen. Thank you for waiting to speak with me.”

They all offered me tentative smiles, but only Barney spoke up. “What’s going on? We didn’t break anything. We always report it if we do.” And it wasn’t very often to be sure.

“No, not at all. But I have learned that your customer from the other day is missing something from his move. A box of some kind? Did anyone find anything left behind in the truck?”

All three shook their heads. “No, boss,” Arty said. “Want us to go out and check, though? Make sure it didn’t end up tucked under a moving blanket or something?”

“Good idea. I’ll meet you out there.”

They left their coffee behind, and I followed them as far as my office, where I stopped to look up the customer’s information and download it on my phone before joining them in the parking lot.

We were very particular about our vehicles and equipment; meaning, after every job, the crew would empty the handcarts and blankets, etc.

, and sweep the truck clean, mop if necessary, making the odds of something getting left behind basically nil.

But, where else could we look? Arty, Barney, and Jeb had been with me for years, and I’d bet my best moving van they wouldn’t steal.

Most likely the client had lost his box himself while packing or misplaced it at his new home.

After giving the guys a twenty each to stop for a snack on the way home as thanks for waiting, I climbed into my car and started for my house.

After a few blocks, I parked and pulled up the client info, noting that the location where we’d loaded everything was just a few blocks out of my way.

What could it hurt to scoot by and look for...

well, I wasn’t sure beyond a box. The logical thing to do would be to email an insurance form to the guy and let him fill it out.

If it wasn't too much, I'd refund him the difference, and if it was something valuable, I'd just turn it in and let my insurance deal.

When I arrived, I was fairly certain we weren't going to be talking the Hope Diamond.

Or anything worth too much. The apartment building was eerily quiet and, judging from the empty parking lot, deserted.

I climbed out, wondering if there was going to be anyone to let me in to could look around.

The gate leading into a central courtyard hung on one hinge, though, so getting into the building itself was not an issue.

And a sign posted next to it gave information about upcoming demolition.

I'd noted a lot of that in this area. Older places that had been allowed to run down were being removed in favor of new and expensive townhouses.

Multiuse structures with shops, restaurants, and gyms on the first floor and fancy living units above.

Gentrification on a large scale. It was hard for people, especially older folks who'd lived somewhere a long time, to move to a new apartment.

Without rent control, they were probably going to have to pay two or even three times their old rate.

It made me angry, and I hoped our client wasn't one of those who was so harmed by the process.

Spotting a row of mailboxes with junk mail and envelopes of all sizes and shapes sticking out of them, I wondered why the former residents hadn't bothered to put in a forwarding order for the bills and letters mixed in with the throwaways.

Or maybe they had and the post office hadn't handled it yet.

It had been known to happen, according to my crews.

Sometimes it seemed to take a while. But, in this case, a couple of baskets below the built-in boxes held an assortment of packages, and some people were going to be looking for their deliveries.

Tsking, I was about to turn away when I saw one box that was neither neatly taped closed nor addressed to anyone. It looked like the one described in the flyer, and I picked it up and gave it a gentle shake.

It rattled. Maybe he had some kind of collection here, but to be sure I had the right box, I found his number in my phone and dialed. I wanted to let the client know I had found his lost items—probably—and would bring them right over.

The call went to voice mail.

I could do the logical thing, toss it in the back seat and leave a message telling the client that he could come by the office tomorrow and pick it up.

Or I could continue my knight-in-shining-armor routine and take it over to the poor old guy.

In my mind, he was one of those old people being displaced, and for all I knew, he wasn't even driving anymore.

After what he'd been through, having his dwelling place slated for destruction, it was the least I could do.

Page 5

Source Creation Date: July 16, 2025, 6:26 am

BJ

I had broken down boxes, everything put away with the exception of a couple of kitchen ones I wasn't ready to deal with—especially the one with my junk drawer contents.

Most everything else was in its place. The fridge even stocked with food.

But it still wasn't home. That was going to take a while.

What I lost never reappeared. I knew going in that the odds of getting the box I lost back were slim to none.

That didn't stop me from trying my best. I answered every unknown call, checked back on my social media posts, and had replaced the flyer downstairs twice already.

Was it healthy to hold on like this? Of course it wasn't. But it was what it was.

“So, Stu, this new box is gonna have to do.” I'd moved him over to the window so I could see him while hanging out in the living room. It was safer for him than the kitchen and got more light than my bedroom. I'd probably spend most of my awake time here anyway.

I'd found the new container at the dollar store. It was similar-ish in size and shape to my favorite crayon box, but it was shiny and new. The birthday theme with balloons and little party hats wasn't exactly the same as the New Year's vibe, but close enough. Or so I kept telling myself.

It was time to move on.

I laid all my crayons and coloring books out on the floor, along with pretty much the rest of my little things.

Originally, I'd planned to keep them in a closet in plastic totes.

It had worked in the past, but this closet was smaller.

Instead, I found a small chest of drawers online.

It would be there within the next couple of days and when it arrived, everything was ready to do.

Compared to some I'd known over the years, I didn't have a ton of little things. I had a few toys, a handful of onesies, shorts, socks, different underwear and diapers, and, of course, pajamas. The jam-jams were my favorite, probably because they could be both little and big.

Once they were laid out, I realized there was a lot more than I thought.

It was hardly enough to make a nursery—the ultimate dream for many littles.

I probably did want the nursery, too. But it wasn't just about the space.

It was about what the nursery represented, which to me was having a daddy to take care of me.

I dumped out a box of crayons I'd picked up at the thrift store earlier in the day.

It was one of those containers they taped up so you didn't really know what all was

inside.

I wasn't able to look through it, which I both loved and hated.

It made this part more fun but also often meant that it was half filled with the crayons you couldn't actually color with.

For all I knew, it was gonna have nothing of any great worth, but there was always hope.

And I took finding it as a sign that things were gonna turn around.

I needed to quit moping over my lost box.

Sure, there were lots of things I loved in there, but at the end of the day, they were just things.

I put the blues of all sorts into one pile, the reds in another, the greens in yet another, and on and on, and had about half of it done when there was a knock at the door.

I wanted to ignore it. The few times I'd had people stop by, it was either someone looking for Frank, who used to live here, or one of the people on the floor wanting to introduce themselves.

And while it was wonderful that they wanted to get to know me, I was not in the mood.

Not tonight. Things were starting to settle, and the energy that came with moving was dwindling, allowing the feelings to settle in. I wanted to be alone.

But, begrudgingly, I got up and crossed over to the door, opening it without looking

and then finding myself face-to-face with the most gorgeous man I'd ever seen—so gorgeous that I was so busy looking at his eyes, I didn't see what he was holding in front of him.

“Are you Brian James?”

“BJ. My friends call me BJ.” I still didn't break eye contact. No man had any right to be this gorgeous.

“Hi, BJ. I'm Glenn. I'm from the moving company. I found your box, I think.”

That had me snapping my attention toward his arms.

“It is!” I jumped up and down, and he broke out into a smile. Somehow, that made him even more attractive.

“Thank you!” I went to grab it, but he shook his head.

“Nonsense. I'll bring it in.”

I stepped out of his way to let him—realizing too late that all of my little things were on the floor directly where he was heading.

“No, I got it! I got it!”

Glenn stopped and turned toward me. “But aren't you adorable? Your face all red.”

Of course it was red. He had just seen my secret. I didn't share that with most people, and definitely not with strangers at anything other than kinky-type affairs.

“You can put it down. Thank you.” Gods, I sounded bossy, not grateful.

He did set it down, but then, instead of leaving, he walked toward me and said, really low, “You shouldn’t be embarrassed. There’s nothing wrong with being little.”

I swallowed. “I know.” Because I did know. There was absolutely nothing wrong with it. But still...

“I had a little once, too.”

My jaw dropped. This gorgeous specimen of a man was a daddy. How did I respond to that? It wasn’t like I could ask him to color with me? Could I?

“Thank you.” The words slipped out while I was attempting to find a better solution. Why thank you? I didn’t know. It wasn’t even close to an appropriate response.

He took a step toward the door, and I blurted out, “Oh—your little, did you leave them too?”

What was wrong with me? I was so rude and the question was completely irrelevant to anything that was happening in this space.

I had this weird rule in my head that if a daddy left their little, they would leave other littles, which—that was not how relationships worked.

But I had so many people leave me over the years that it was exactly where my brain went.

But even so, he was from the moving company.

It wasn’t like we were at Chained or a munch.

“No. She left me.” There was a sadness in his voice, the glint in his eyes going down

slightly.

“Her loss.” I gave him the line everybody gave me every time I’d been hurt.

When my mom walked out on us. When my brother decided he didn’t want to be guardian anymore and I was left alone at sixteen to fend for my little brother. And then my little brother went off to college and never came back.

Their loss.

They could’ve had you as a brother, you as a son. And then, when it came to dating, They could have had you as a boyfriend.

It just came out of my mouth automatically, and I’d have done anything to suck it back in.

When he said, “She didn’t leave on purpose. She had a heart attack. And we were married, as well.”

I was an ass. I covered my face, mortified less at my little clothes and more at my big freaking mouth. “Can you pretend you’ve never met me?”

“You... No. I can’t do that.” His hand landed on my head. He ruffled my hair. It was affectionate and sweet and not at all holding the anger I’d have expected after my show of awfulness.

“It’s okay. You didn’t know. How could you have? I only brought Sally up because I wanted you to know that there’s nothing to be ashamed of. Not in front of anybody—but especially not in front of me. I understand why you have these things. And I don’t judge you for it. Do me a favor?”

I nodded, afraid I was going to say something wretched again without even trying.

“If anything’s broken in that box, let me know so I can replace it.”

I agreed, and after he asked me about my phone and if it was lost in the move, too, I watched as he walked out of my life as quickly as he entered it. At least I got my box back.

Page 6

Source Creation Date: July 16, 2025, 6:26 am

Glenn

I had to sit in the car for a few minutes before I turned on the engine and pointed the vehicle toward home.

I was prepared to see littles in all their glory at Chained, and while I had enjoyed playing with them, and they were adorable, that was as far as it went since I lost my wife.

Once I left the little room, I didn't think much more about them.

Nothing could be further from the case in this situation.

It should have been so easy. Knock on door, hand over box, apologize for the mix-up, and go home.

But BJ, as he said his friends called him, was, first, not an old person who had lost their home of fifty years.

He was several years younger than me, and was indeed displaced, but he'd only lived in the building a few years, I gathered.

Not that it made it easier to find a new home and one that was affordable, but his new apartment seemed nicer than the last, so he'd landed on his feet.

And I was glad of that, and none of that was unsettling.

What was a bit was the array of little clothing and other items laid out behind him in the living room.

He was so excited to get his treasures back, he must have forgotten about them for a moment because when he realized, his cheeks burned with rosy color, and I reacted in a way I hadn't for years.

It was all I could do not to offer to help him get everything organized and put away so we could sit down and have chickie nuggies and mac and cheese for dinner.

Actually, Sally hadn't been that into little food unless she was really in the headspace, but seeing the onesies and sippy cups and adorable T-shirts threw me right into daddy space.

And, of course, this daddy wanted him to realize there was no reason to be embarrassed, leading to my opening up to a total stranger who I had only a small business connection with about my little and her tragic passing.

It was a lot, and I lay awake most of the night trying to sort out my thoughts.

"I blame you." I stared down into my salad as if it held the answers to all my questions. "Just so you know." Sitting on the outside patio of a restaurant not far from my warehouse, we had met for lunch. I needed advice from another daddy—or at least a listening ear.

"Blame whomever you want, but it was bound to happen. You are too good a daddy to be alone forever." Bridger lifted his iced tea and took a sip. "What a coincidence that you'd get there and see all his little items in plain sight. Sounds a little like fate."

"Sounds like he wasn't expecting company. I called to let him know I was coming, but he didn't pick up. Turned out, he hadn't found his charger yet, and his phone was

dead.”

“Did he think that was lost in the move, too?”

“No, he was pretty sure it was in one of the kitchen boxes. But I told him if it didn’t turn up, we’d pay for it.”

“Of course. That’s how you roll. But tell me more about what happened next. You did tell him you’re a daddy?”

“I normally wouldn’t have that kind of discussion with a business contact, but he was so red, and I couldn’t just let him die of embarrassment. I did admit I’d had a little before, and he asked me if I’d left them behind. Bridger, he is so cute and so nice, and I hate that he was hurt.”

“Yes, but if his previous daddy didn’t leave, how would he be single so you can ask him out?” Bridger’s sandwich arrived, and he waited until the server left before continuing. “That didn’t come out right. I never like to see a little hurt.”

“I know what you meant, and I appreciate your loyalty. But I’m not so sure I can ask him out. I only know him through my business, and I’ve always tried to avoid mixing that with my personal life.”

Bridger ate a few bites of his sandwich, and I managed one of salad before he answered me. “I would say that your business with this customer is concluded. It’s not likely that he will be needing you to move him on a regular basis, is it?”

“No. At least, he didn’t say so.”

“Then, you should be able to ask him out with no qualms. That is, if you still want to after all this talking about it.”

“So, you don’t think he’d consider it weird if I did?”

Bridger finished his sandwich and pushed the plate aside. He reached into his pouch and pulled out his crocheting. “I can’t get this badger just right. The striping is eluding me.”

“Looks good to me.”

He shrugged. “It will eventually. I have no way of knowing what the little will think when you ask him out, but there’s only one way to learn the answer.

Ask him out and see how he reacts. Worst case, he says no and you’re no worse off than you are now.

But best-case scenario...” He didn’t need to finish.

We both knew what could happen if it went well. But was I ready for it?

Bridger pulled out his wallet and tossed a few bills on the table. “Don’t overthink it. You were caught off guard by the whole situation, and you can let it simmer and see how you feel.”

“You’re right.” Bridger generally was. “But the situation stirred up a lot of feelings. Until now, nobody has made much of a dent in my barricades.”

“At least you’re recognizing that they’re there.” He stood up. “I have an appointment with a new dying company. Some of the colors we’re using in the kits aren’t as vivid as I’d like, and these people claim they can do better with natural dyes instead of those petroleum-based ones.”

“That sounds wonderful.” I forked up some lettuce. “Can they do that?”

He shrugged. "I'm hoping so. But we'll see. Enjoy the rest of your lunch."

"Thanks. And thanks for listening. I'm sure I'm boring you to tears."

"Anything but, friend." He took a step away then stopped and turned back. "And while I've got you, I want to invite you to the silent auction at Chained on Friday. It's for a good cause."

"Oh, sure. I guess." I would show up for sweet charity. "I'll see you then."

After he left, I continued eating, and overthinking the whole little situation. I had to get past feeling disloyal to my late wife. She would want me to be happy. Had made such a point of it. And then I realized something.

A high likelihood existed that, rather than guilt over her, I was allowing myself to be held back by another emotion entirely.

One no less useful but a bit more embarrassing.

Anyone might understand a widower not wanting to remarry because they felt disloyal, despite what their late love said, but some might judge me for not moving on into a new relationship out of fear.

Her heart attack had come out of nowhere, at a time when we were discussing having a child.

She was at the high end of the time to do that and didn't want to miss out on the experience.

As for me...I was okay either way, but her joy was mine.

And then, she was gone, taking with her, all the plans we had for a future with or without children.

I'd have been fine going along exactly as we were for the rest of our lives.

And I wasn't sure I was strong enough to survive that kind of loss again. But I did know that the way I lived now was seriously lacking. Carrot did the best he could, but he was a rabbit and I needed human companionship.

Was I brave enough to let down the wall and try again?

Page 7

Source Creation Date: July 16, 2025, 6:26 am

BJ

I didn't have a lot of little friends, and that was on me. Aside from hitting up a few munches when I first moved into town and checking out a couple of little-only events at Chained, I hadn't played much outside of my own space. Little days gave me an opportunity to let go around others like me.

That was one of the many things I loved about the little-only events at Chained.

They were for members, sure, but they also opened them to people with day passes, making them accessible to people like me who couldn't really afford to get a full membership.

A few activities were invite-only for people who'd been to a specific one in the past, and I didn't even need a day pass for those.

They were doubly fun because everyone there had already met.

Derek was one of my only little friends here.

I'd met him at a munch at a local coffee shop my first month in the city.

I didn't love the munch. It was fine, but if I wanted to hang out with people who had similar interests to me, I'd prefer doing so in a onesie or my pajamas and not while sipping coffee.

But meeting Derek there had made it worth it.

We didn't play a ton, but I'd been to his place and he'd been to mine quite a few times to be little together.

We'd also been to a couple of craft days at Chained.

Mostly, though, when we got together, we just grabbed something to eat or caught a movie—or, on quite a few occasions, played Pokémon Go, his favorite pastime.

But tonight, we were going to do something different. Something I'd never done before. We were going to go to Chained for one of their fundraisers.

I wasn't opposed to going to fundraisers.

I thought it was great the way they gave back to their community.

But fundraisers weren't just about littles—heck, they weren't even about littles and daddies.

They were filled with people who liked all sorts of different kinks.

There might be some who were as vanilla as the ice cream in my freezer, too. I didn't know.

But one thing was for sure—there were going to be a lot of people at tonight's event.

A lot of people in a space where everyone knew exactly why you came there—or at least they would know why I was there.

It wasn't like I was going to wear my business suit, although I guess I could.

It wasn't like I was planning on playing, although it wasn't off the table. It just wasn't

my reason to attend.

The big draw was that this was an auction.

And when I looked at all of the items they posted online, unsurprisingly, most of them didn't interest me.

There were multiple vacations or rental places, car detailings, a gift certificate for ballroom dancing, some very specific furniture for people who were into things that I wasn't into—some of which I didn't even understand how you would use them.

Not that it mattered. They weren't for me.

And the people they were there for were going to be thrilled to bid on them.

There was a crib, and that interested me...if I had space, I might even consider bidding on them. But also—was it really worth it? What was the point in having a crib if you had no one to tuck you in at night?

But all of that aside, someone had hand made a display case.

It was carved out of wood but had elements of stained glass built into it.

It was absolutely stunning. Based on the dimensions, I had a feeling that I would be able to display my different collectibles related to my crayons—the specialty boxes, the random “perfect-looking” retired ones, and even the little kids’ meal toys from a couple of years back.

It was everything I didn't know I needed, and I'd become a little too obsessed with it.

When Derek called, I knew instantly he wasn't going to be able to come. He sounded

absolutely dreadful.

“I’m so sorry,” he said between coughs. And not little I can fight them off coughs—these were the kind that I wondered if he should be i getting some sort of inhaler or breathing treatment for.

“Why don’t I come and take you to urgent care?” I’d feel triply awful if he backed out and I left him on his own, only to find out that he didn’t get the care he needed because I wanted a stupid display case.

“My sister’s already on her way.” More coughing, more hacking.

“How about you leave me on speaker until she gets there?”

“Yes, Daddy.” If we’d been on video chat, I was sure his tongue would be sticking out.

“Don’t even try it,” I laughed.

“You know what happens.” This time, I envisioned him rolling his eyes.

One time, we thought it would be a good idea that I would go to a playdate at his house and be the daddy.

And then, the next time, we’d do the same thing in reverse.

It did not work. Neither of us had it in us to be a daddy.

Both times, we just ended up being little together. And now, it was a running joke.

His sister, Martha, came by only minutes later, and before he told her I was on the

phone, I heard her scolding him, letting him know how worried she was.

“Hey—make sure to let me know he’s okay,” I called out.

“He is. This is just him waiting too long to get a breathing treatment.”

And then she started chastising him, and I hung up. Let them have their family business without my listening ears. I often wondered if Derek and I got along because we both came from parent-less families. In his case, his sister became his mom figure and still kept that role all these years later.

Unlike me, who ended up alone.

For a few minutes, I contemplated staying home, hanging out with Stu. He was decent company, never even talked back. But then I decided to risk it. I was going to go to Chained. What was the worst that could happen?

Chained protected their guests, and if I asked for someone to walk me to the car, they would. Not that I’d ever felt the need, but again, this was a different crowd. It was nice to know the fail-safe was there.

And besides, I wasn’t going to be drinking.

I never drank at the club. I wanted to know everything that was going on.

And littles don’t drink. Mostly. I was sure some did, but when I was in that little space, I didn’t need to be confused by how much alcohol I’d drunk.

I saved my drinking for my big times. Being sober had an element of safety to it.

The only things I had to worry about was whether the display case was as beautiful in

person as it was online—and if it was, if I could afford it.

Moving took a lot more out of my savings than I had planned. A lot more.

Please don't let this landlord sell too. I don't think I can afford it twice.

Before I could change my mind, I grabbed my backpack with my change of clothes and headed to Chained. If all went well, I'd be coming home with a beautiful display case. And if they went amazingly, I might even get to play with a hot daddy.

The image of Glenn flickered through my mind. I knew better than to have crushes on straight daddies. But knowing better and being able to turn it off didn't always go together. Oh well. It wasn't like he was going to be there, anyway.

Page 8

Source Creation Date: July 16, 2025, 6:26 am

Glenn

I arrived at Chained shortly after the auction began, later than I'd planned.

With so many buildings being demolished, there were a lot of people moving, and while not everyone would have been able to afford a professional moving company, enough did to keep us busier than usual.

Financially, it was great, but it did make it harder to act on my decision to try to be more social.

But I wasn't the last person to arrive. As I found my way to the conversation area to find Bridger, other members and guests streamed past me onto the main floor.

The auction was set up there, with most of the equipment and dungeon furniture moved against the walls to make room for long tables of donated items.

From the sofas where we liked to sit, we had an unobstructed view of the floor, but it was too crowded to get a good look at any of tables or their contents. "Glenn!" Bridger stood up. "I was afraid you might not make it."

"Sorry. Work stuff." He had heard that often enough. "Did I miss anything good?"

"No. There's still time to place your bids on anything you like. Want to have a drink first?"

I looked at the comfy sofa and shook my head. "I've been at work since six this

morning. If I sit down, I won't have the energy to make any bids. So, might be better to go and check it all out now. I want to be sure and contribute. If I don't win anything, I'll just write a check."

Bridger sat again. "I'm waiting for Hudson. He had an appointment late this afternoon, so go ahead, and I'll see you in there. Watch for anything you think I might like."

"You got it." The couch still called to me, but I felt like I should at least take a circuit of the room and see it all.

The brochure I got when I came in had a long list of contributions people had donated in order to help out the charity.

Leaving my friend behind, I pulled the brochure out of my pocket and traced down the list. I saw a trip to Hawaii that sounded fun, a few art pieces, a sauna...

The attendees moved along the tables, examining things that were actually present or reading the description of the more ephemeral.

Trips, classes, gym memberships, floggers, custom leatherwear.

So many choices. As a daddy, I didn't wear a lot of leather, although I knew a couple who did.

I preferred more conservative slacks, button-down shirts, and sneakers or, for more formal occasions, loafers.

And there was a custom pair of Italian leather shoes I made a bid on.

Also, a Hawaiian Islands cruise that sounded fun.

I was blown away by the generosity of the donors to this event.

“Wow, Hawaii.” I turned to see who spoke and found a familiar face.

It was the crayon guy, my customer, and he was studying the description of the trip.

“I bet it’s going to go for a very high price.

” He wore jeans and a youngish shirt, although nothing that screamed little. He must not be planning to play.

“I’m not sure.” I looked at the row of bids leading up to mine. “Does look popular.”

“I am looking for a display box that was listed, but I haven’t found it yet.

” We were talking like we’d planned to meet up there, but of course that wasn’t the case.

I probably should have been less surprised since he was a little, and Chained was the only club of any size in town with an area and a variety of events geared just to daddies and littles.

But I had never run into him there. Was it his first time?

“Let’s go look for it.” We continued along with everyone else moving from one item to the next, marveling at the variety of things and the rapidly rising bids noted on the tablet by each.

The charity was going to get a very nice boost from this evening.

After a while, I was starting to think the box he wanted hadn’t made it here.

“There’s not much left,” BJ said. “Maybe it’s not here.”

“I was just wondering that, too.” We were coming to the end of the last table in the last row. “Perhaps the owner got delayed or decided they wanted to keep it.”

“It sounded very nice.” He sighed. “Perfect size for my collection.”

“Don’t give up hope yet,” I chided. “We have a little bit more to go.” And, sure enough, right at the end of the last table, there it sat. And, even better, there were no bids on it, yet.

BJ was so excited, examining the satiny wood and holding it up into the light. “Oh yes, this is just what I want. How much do you think I should bid?”

“I don’t know.” But it made me feel kind of good that he wanted my advice. “What will your budget allow?”

He chewed on his lower lip and picked up the tablet, adding an amount about twice what it was worth. “I want to make sure that the charity gets a benefit.”

I assured him that it was a good price, and he crossed his fingers that it would hold.

“Would you like to sit down and talk while we wait for the winners to be called?”

“All right.” He followed me to a couple of chairs closest to the table that held his wished-for display box. “I hope I get it.”

“Me too.” I settled in the comfortable upholstered seat and reached for the laminated cocktail/appetizer menu on the small round table between us. “How about a snack while we wait?”

“I’m not very hungry.” But his gaze was fixed on the color images of the tasty treats available. “But you go ahead.”

Although the omega was here at Chained and likely a member, that didn’t mean he had a lot of ready cash.

The building he’d lived in had been in bad shape, and his new home was better but not in a wealthy area.

One of the nice things about Chained was the scholarship program members contributed to.

People who were a good fit, who shared the many lifestyles embraced there, weren’t always able to pay the fees, but those who had more paid into a fund to help them out.

Was BJ one of those? It didn’t matter because whether he was or not, as a daddy, I preferred to pick up the tab on dates.

I had been called old-fashioned before, but I didn’t care.

A little who didn’t like it probably wouldn’t like me.

“I want to get a mixed platter, and it’s more than I can manage. Would you maybe eat a little just to keep me company?” Yeah, I liked to make sure the littles I cared for didn’t miss meals. “I’d appreciate it.”

He smiled, revealing a dimple in his cheek I hadn’t seen before. Even in street clothes and clearly not in his little headspace, he was more adorable than any little I’d ever met. “Okay, I can probably eat a little something.”

And since I ordered the big/little combo, he would be able to do just that.

We both ordered sparkling waters with fruit juice and settled in to watch the action.

Quite a different view from the normal stations where kink happened every night of the week, but interesting nonetheless.

Since my play space was the little room, I didn't partake in the usual impact, bondage, and other activities, but they were fun to watch.

Our order arrived, and we sat back and watched people making their bids and talked.

"Thanks for inviting me to sit with you," he said, a dino nuggie in his hand. He dipped it in ranch and took a big bite. "These are house made, you know. It's my favorite thing."

"Dinosaurs?" I trailed a wedge fry through a puddle of aioli.

"No, although they are cute. Nuggies. They do different shapes, and I always wait to see which it will be."

"I see."

"I was supposed to come with someone tonight, but he couldn't make it, got the flu. Normally, I'm not that comfortable coming alone, but I really wanted to see if I could win the box."

"A friend or a daddy?" It was a daring ask, but I wanted to know where we were starting out. If he had a daddy or mommy, friend zone it was.

"I don't have...no, just a friend."

"That's good. I mean, I'm sorry about your friend." I sipped my drink, enjoying the

refreshing seltzer with blackberries and a lime wedge. “I hope he’ll be better soon.”

“He will. But thanks.” BJ picked up a square deep-fried mac ’n cheese cube and popped it in his mouth. “Oh my gods. This may be my favorite. I think it’s new. Try one.” He held it out and instead of taking it with my hands, I let him feed it to me. “Well?”

It had a crunch and subtle spice, the inside creamy. “I think this one will be popular with big and little alike.”

“Me too. Oh no!” They had just announced the last five minutes of bidding time, and we’d both thought the box was a win, but a man in a suit that cost more than most people’s whole wardrobe had paused next to the item.

We both held our breath. I didn’t care much about my bids. If I lost, I’d just donate money anyway. Please don’t let him... But, of course, he did.

“Well, that’s that. I’m sure he bid more than I can top. Did you see those shoes?” BJ sounded so despondent, I had to do something about it.

“No, but if they were anything like the suit, I’m sure they were expensive.”

The man walked away from the wooden box and stopped next to several other items to make bids.

“And I bet he doesn’t even care about it,” BJ moaned. “Oh, never mind.”

“Don’t give up yet. We don’t know what he bid.”

“It’s sure to be a fortune. I guess it wasn’t meant to be.”

“You keep our spot, and I’ll go look.” Without giving him a chance to argue, I hopped up and moved over the tablet.

Sure enough, it had been a donation effort because nobody would pay that much for the little box, no matter how cute.

I grabbed the stylus and topped him by a hundred dollars before returning to the seats.

“What did you do?” BJ had a crinkle between his brows. I fisted my hand to avoid reaching to smooth it out. “Did you bid?”

“I did.” I grabbed a dino nuggie. “These are good, you said?”

“You’re changing the subject. I hope you didn’t spend a lot of money.” He moved to stand, but I laid my hand on his arm.

“Not too much. Let’s call it a gift from my company to make up for losing your things in moving.”

“You found them, and I was probably at fault anyway.” But he subsided. “Thank you. I really want it, but I’d never have asked you to do that.”

“I wouldn’t expect you to. So, about the dino nuggies? What should I dip them in?”

The bids began to be awarded and when they got to the box, he turned to me with a look of shock. “That was so much.”

“It was not only an apology from your friendly moving company, but about the amount I intended to donate.”

“I did want to give, too. I’ll give some cash.” He nodded and slurped the last of his

drink, tapping it to free the blackberry blocking the straw. “But I owe you.”

“Okay, you can pay me back by having dinner with me sometime.” Before he could argue, some of my friends came over, talking about their wins. The night was over entirely too fast.

Page 9

Source Creation Date: July 16, 2025, 6:26 am

BJ

My phone buzzed in my pocket during my meeting, but I ignored it. It wasn't a really important meeting—we were just discussing how far along we were on our current project, and if we thought the timeline needed to be adjusted.

Our current project manager, Callie, wasn't exactly good at the whole managing part. She was nice, though, and treated us like people, not robots, so there was that. And I was getting paid. Still, an email would have been so much easier.

I was surprised by how late it was when I got back to my desk. Nearly lunchtime, and I still had most of my to-do list to tackle. I took out my phone to place my order at the deli across the street to avoid waiting in their long line and saw the notification.

It was from Glenn—or, as my phone put it, Hot Moving Daddy .

Are you free for dinner tomorrow? My treat.

And fuck it—I wasn't.

No. I punctuated it with a sad face emoji. I have a work thing. Stupid work.

To my surprise, he answered almost instantly with, Is there a day that works better for you?

He wasn't playing games, like most guys I'd dated. I wasn't going to be punished for turning him down. I didn't need to wait hours for him to reply. This guy was such a

green flag, minus the he-might-be-straight part.

And because I was me, I typed back, I'm free tonight .

So much for playing hard to get, but why should I. He wasn't playing games with me as far as I could tell. There was no need for any cat-and-mouse action.

If this was even a date. He did have a little who was a woman, so maybe it wasn't a date. Maybe he just wanted to be friends. Although, at the club he acted like he was possibly interested in more, didn't he? Maybe I should just man up and ask him.

Does seven work for you? I can pick you up.

It did work for me, and I let him know. I nearly forgot to order my lunch in the process, only remembering when my cubical mate asked me if I was heading down to grab food.

I was going out with the hot daddy on a maybe date. A probably date. I wasn't sure. Why was communicating so hard?

The rest of my day dragged on.

Every task I had seemed to take forever. Every conversation on the phone lasted a lifetime. And, finally, it was time for me to go home.

I was barely in the door when I had Derek's number pulled up, and I called him, putting him on speaker.

"You're call-calling. Why?" He wasn't playing games, a text me if you need to call me kind of guy.

“Because I need to get ready, but I also need to talk to you. You sound better.”

His sister had messaged me before I even got to the club to let me know that he’d gotten his breathing treatment, so I’d already known he was on the mend, but it was nice to hear his voice.

He was kind of irresponsible when it came to his asthma, and I hated that for him.

He was going to need a pretty strict daddy if he ever put himself out there to get one.

“I am. Now, did you think you could just skip over what you are getting ready for?”

“I’m going on a date. Maybe. That’s what I wanted to ask you about.”

And so I told him everything, and he concluded that it was a date. I had to agree, or maybe it was wishful thinking. In the end, nothing changed. I still needed to just ask Glenn. It was as easy and as difficult as that.

Ask him I did, as I opened the door, before I even saw his face. “Is-this-a-date?” It came out as all one word.

He chuckled. “That was kind of what I was going for, yeah. Does that work for you?”

And suddenly I was no longer nervous. There was warmth to his voice, kindness, and not at all any indication that he was upset that I was confused, or that I had blurted anything out.

“Yeah, that works for me.” I grabbed my keys. “Ready?”

“Ready.”

He gave me his arm, and we walked that way to the car, where he was ever the gentleman—opening the door for me, shutting it once I was safely inside, and going around to his side to drive.

We ended up at a Mexican restaurant I'd been wanting to try. He hadn't known that. It was nothing we'd discussed, and I took it as a good sign. But, then again, I was willing to look at anything that was happening in a positive light—because we might have only just met, but I really liked this guy.

We ordered dinner, and, as I dipped my fifty-seven-millionth chip into salsa, I just straight out asked him. "If this is a date, that means..."

"I'm interested?" He attempted to fill in my blank.

"No, I mean—you had Sally. So are you interested...like, just to play? You called this a date, and now I'm extra confused."

"It is a date, but I would love to play sometime, too."

I leaned in and spoke in hushed tones.

"What I mean is...do you like men?" The date should've been a huge-ass sign that he wasn't playing games, but for some reason, I needed to hear it. Obviously, bisexual people existed, but that didn't mean Glenn was one.

"Yes."

Such a beautiful word.

"But, more importantly, I like you."

We went on to discuss how he had identified as bi for as long as he could remember, and that Sally had been his one big love, but that he had mostly dated men before her.

And how he was a little bit worried about starting again, and that he hoped that her being part of his life wasn't a dealbreaker for me.

I'd never spoken to a man who was so free with his emotions, not anyone I dated.

He shared everything I asked of him and more.

I felt not only seen and heard but also... valuable.

"Why would it be a dealbreaker?" I reached over and put my hand on his. "We love who we love. And you loved her."

"Yeah. I really did. I still do."

"And I'm sure somewhere she's looking down at you and feeling the same." People believe a lot of different things about what happens next, after we take our last breath. But it always felt like our loved ones never truly left us.

Our dinner came, and I ate a ton, enjoying every last bite and listening to Glenn talk about Sally—but also about his career, about his friends.

We didn't talk a lot about being a daddy or a little.

This wasn't the place to have that conversation.

But everything else, from how I moved here, about my job, how I'd only ever been with men, but that didn't mean I wasn't accepting of his bi-ness.

And by the time we left and went for a walk through the park across the street, we decided that we were going to see if maybe we were compatible as both dating partners and playmates.

We also decided to take it slow.

My body wasn't wanting the slowness. I was so attracted to him. It was hard not to lean over and kiss his cheek as we walked hand in hand along the river. But if we were going to try to make something of this, slow was probably the way to go.

At least that's what I was trying to convince myself.

Full speed ahead was more what I wanted to do.

That was a lie. It was Glenn I wanted to do. Why did he have to be hot and nice and daddy all wrapped up into one?

Page 10

Source Creation Date: July 16, 2025, 6:26 am

Glenn

BJ was a lot of things, all of which ticked boxes for me. He was good-looking, had that amazing dimple, and hips I wanted my hands on every time we stood close together. We'd had a very enjoyable date with lots of good conversation, and every moment I spent with him made me want to see him again.

Or for longer tonight.

A simmering heat had grown all evening, coming to a boil as I walked him to the door. I wanted to kiss him good night but was afraid that might lead to more, and we'd decided to take it slow.

He paused, keys in hand. "Do you want to come in?"

"That's not the way to take it slow, BJ. Maybe we should say good night here."

"But do you...want to come in? And spend the night?"

I groaned. Aloud. "What do you think?" My cock was tenting my pants in a big way, hard to miss.

"Then come in. Just for coffee. Or sex?" He arched a brow and opened the door. "Unless you prefer tea."

Would he be this naughty when he was little? In a different way of course, but still, I was intrigued.

“I don’t want coffee or tea.” I leaned in and brushed my lips over his, speaking close to his ear, “Until morning.”

When we stepped inside, none of the little things I’d seen before were visible, which made sense since he’d been here long enough to unpack.

I didn’t look around more than that because my attention was focused on the moist swollen lips of the man before me.

He’d worn a gray button-down, tucked into the front of jeans that cupped his ass in a way that had me wanting to take him right back into the house and to bed.

Of course, I was not going to behave like an animal, but the urge was there.

Every time our hands brushed or thighs touched, I got harder, but he’d have to let me know he was ready for more. If he wanted more.

As we kissed our way down the hall, his nice clothes and mine were scattered all over the floor.

Not that we cared. Well, I didn’t, but from his actions, neither did BJ.

We were naked before we fell through the bedroom door and onto the bed.

Our kisses deepened, tongues tangling together and hands going in every direction.

I wanted to know his body as I’d already begun to know his mind.

He was sexy fully clothed but naked? Incredible, and I was just glad there was a night-light in the room that let me see at least the planes and shadows of his sexy form.

I stroked down his stomach to find his cock hard.

Nuzzling the base of his throat, I asked, “Lube?”

“In the drawer,” he muttered, reaching blindly out to the nightstand and pulling the drawer open. “I need you inside me, please.” He tossed a tube onto the bed and lay back, stroking himself while I opened it and coated my cock.

“You look pretty sexy there, BJ. Want to show me how you like to be touched?”

“Can I show you while you put that thing inside me? I can’t wait for you. I’ve been imagining what you’d feel like inside me since the first time we met.”

“If you like.” I leaned back for a moment though, watching him stroke and squeeze his cock. “You’re going to make me come just watching.”

“Then please!” He held out his free arm and pulled me closer. “I need you.”

Squeezing more lube onto my fingers, I knitted them with his, slicking up his dick before reaching between his cheeks and finding his hole.

Even with my fingers so slippery, it was a tight fit for two of them, and since I was larger than average, I spent some time prepping him, finger fucking him, scissoring my fingers apart, stretching, before withdrawing and fitting my cockhead to his hole.

“Yes, please,” he begged. “Ohhh.”

I pressed past the tight muscles, easing in and then retreating a bit at a time until I was buried deep in his tight, hot body.

The sound of his lubed-up fingers working his cock drove me to thrust deeper and

harder as he relaxed, accommodating me.

His hips writhed, his arm moved faster, and I thrust in again and again, faster, setting a rhythm he copied until the spurt of his cum splashed my belly, sending me over the edge as well.

My balls tightened and cum poured from my cock into him.

Then I fell to the side and cuddled him against me, spooning while our heart rates returned to normal.

BJ

“Our taking it slow didn’t really work out, did it?” I was snuggled against Glenn’s chest, warm and still sleep-heavy from the night before, not really wanting to move.

His steady heartbeat thudded under my cheek, and part of me wanted to stay like this forever, tucked safe in this soft, quiet space. But the other part—the part that remembered all the little things I wanted to show him, was already buzzing and ready to go.

Not that I was going to admit how excited I was. Yet.

“To be fair...” He kissed the top of my head.

I nuzzled a little closer. “Yes?”

“This is still slower than I wanted.” He chuckled, kissed my shoulder.

Snugly, sweet, affectionate Glenn was a keeper.

“I didn’t really want to leave, either,” he continued, “The first time I stopped by with your box, it...it kind of sparked something in me. I didn’t want to go then.

I wanted to see what was so important that you were trying so hard to find it, but also, I wanted to see more of that smile. ”

I lifted my head just enough to look at him. “You really want to see what’s in it? I’d

love to show you, but I don't want to push."

"Of course I do, sweet boy. It's important to you."

He had no idea how true that was, but I was about to show him. I bounded out of bed like a kid on Christmas morning, practically skipping to the bathroom. "I'm gonna go get ready!" I called over my shoulder and heard him laugh behind me.

The world's fastest shower followed. I barely even gave the water time to warm up, just lathered and rinsed. I had more important things to do than waste my time getting ready.

My skin was still damp when I dashed back into the bedroom to grab a pair of sweat pants and a tee, one of my favorite ones decorated with clouds and tiny blue bears. Technically, it wasn't little, but it was little adjacent, and that worked as a nice in-between.

Glenn was still in bed, propped up on one elbow, watching me with a sleepy smile. He looked so good like that, all ruffled and relaxed, like he belonged in my bed. Like he'd always been here. Who was I fooling? He looked good every which way.

He made a move to get up, but I waved a hand to stop him.

"Stay. It's okay."

"Just need the bathroom for a minute, sweet boy," he said and padded off. I tried not to watch his backside but failed. Damn, his ass was squeezable.

I attempted not to read too much into the sweet-boy comment. He wasn't my daddy, and it was simply a turn of phrase. But also...I wanted it to mean he saw me that way.

By the time he came back, I had my special crayon box perched carefully on my lap. The box was well loved—creased edges, worn tape holding parts of the lid together, and faded streamers on the sides from where the design had rubbed off over time. But inside...inside was the magic.

“This,” I said, grinning up at him as he climbed in beside me. “This is what was in the box you brought me. My special treasure.”

He smelled like soap and warm skin and something entirely Glenn. I gave his chest a little playful nibble, earning a smile from him. “You smell delicious.”

“Thank you. But we aren’t here to talk about hygiene, we are here to see your collection.”

I bounced a little. The bed jostled under me. If it were anyone else, I would’ve been embarrassed by the energy, the excitement exuding from me, but not with Glenn. Not this time. He wanted to see my crayons. Actually wanted to.

“I have lots of crayons,” I explained as I lifted the lid, “but these are the treasured ones.”

One by one, I picked them up, explaining each color, each memory.

Some still had their paper wrappers—slightly torn, faded—but most didn’t.

It didn’t matter. I could tell you exactly what each color was, even without labels.

I could tell you when I got most of them, too.

The brick-red one that had a sharp point?

From a sidewalk sale at a church in my old neighborhood.

The midnight blue with stars drawn on the wrapper?

My very first yard-sale find. The chubby blue-violet stub, not to be confused with violet blue?

A gift from a friend I hadn't seen in years.

I talked more than I'd intended. Way more. But he kept listening, asking thoughtful questions—like he genuinely cared about my answers. Like I was presenting something important. And maybe I was. Maybe this was important, not just to me but to him because it was mine.

“What do you like to color?” he asked after a while.

“Oh!” No one had ever asked me before...ever. “So, I don't like the adult coloring books. The paper's all wrong. It doesn't take the wax right. It feels naughty, too, like I'm drawing in a book I shouldn't.” I'd gotten in enough trouble for that when I was young.

He nodded like he understood.

“My favorites are the kids' kind. You know, fat lines, wide spaces to really play with the color. I also really mazes—like the ones you do with your finger or a crayon. But only if the paths are wide enough for a crayon. If it's too narrow, it's not fun.”

“You stick with wax?” he asked.

“Yeah. I mean, pencils are fine, but they're not the same. I like wax. I like the way it glides. And the smell. You know, that crayon smell?”

He smiled. “Yeah. I do.”

I went on and on, rambling about my favorite kinds of activity books—color-by-number, simple dot-to-dots, and those fun ones where you circle the differences between two pictures. It all came pouring out, like a dam had burst. Like I finally had someone who wanted to know.

Then he asked the best question I’d ever heard in my whole life.

“After breakfast,” he said, “can I color with you?”

I blinked at him, surprised. Even Derek didn’t want to color with me. He always did and pretended like it was the most fun thing ever, but it was his way of being nice, just like my playing with his dump trucks was my way. “Really?”

He nodded, serious. “And I don’t even have to use your special crayons. I can just use your regular ones.”

“No,” I said probably too quickly. “We’ll use the special ones. My special ones—together.”

Breakfast was nothing fancy—scrambled eggs and toast. I hadn’t had time to grocery shop properly, and it showed.

No bacon. No sausage. Not even yogurt. I made a mental note to fix that.

If there was a chance Glenn would be staying over again, I needed to stock up properly.

I wanted him to be well-fed when he left. I wanted him to want to come back.

After we ate, we sat at the table, coloring together.

He chose a book with smiling farm animals, and I flipped to a page with a castle and dragons.

It was the kind of silence that wasn't really silent at all—just full of soft sounds.

The quiet scratch of crayon on paper. The occasional sip of juice.

Our knees bumping beneath the table, not so much on accident as much as me wanting to be touching him.

It was...comfortable. Comforting, even. The kind of moment that I could so easily have slipped into little space. In fact, I had to pull myself back a few times. We hadn't talked about that yet, not really, and it wouldn't be fair to assume he was ready to step into that dynamic. Not yet. Maybe soon.

Eventually, he stood with a sigh and said he needed to go. "My bunny's probably hungry."

I pouted a little, but I loved how he cared for his pet. I loved that he was the kind of person who didn't leave a bunny waiting too long for food because his dick was ready to go for another round. There were enough jerks like that out there already.

"That was fun," he said at the door, brushing a kiss to the tip of my nose.

"Which part?"

He gave me a look. "I was talking about coloring. But the rest was pretty fun too."

"Agreed," I said, cheeks burning.

He leaned in for a kiss—a real one, slow and lingering. The kind that felt less like a goodbye and more like a hello. Had it not been for his bunny, I'd have asked him to stay, to finish what we were starting.

"I'll call you," he said, and I knew he didn't mean someday. He meant soon. Maybe even today. "You can meet Carrot."

"I'd like that, Daddy," I whispered, watching for his approval, approval he gave in the form of another searing kiss before one final goodbye.

I was already missing him the second he walked away.

Page 12

Source Creation Date: July 16, 2025, 6:26 am

Glenn

Carrot was in love with BJ. I can't explain how I knew that for certain, but my bunny and I had spent an awful lot of time together.

I liked to think we'd developed a kind of language or at least a method of communication.

He would let me know when he was hungry or wanted attention, and when I needed a listening ear, he'd sit on my lap and tilt his head up at me, long ears twitching while he let me vent about the world or share a success.

And he never told me I was wrong about anything.

That was the difference between humans and bunnies. One I'd thought was a plus for a while. I had plenty of humans at work who I encouraged not to hold back on expressing their thoughts. They were courteous, but if they thought I was wrong, they would say so.

I hadn't had that element in my personal life in a long time.

"Well, Carrot, BJ is coming over."

He was in his play area, at the moment, enjoying some raw vegetables for lunch, but he lifted his head at my words and twitched his nose.

"I knew you'd be pleased. He'll be here shortly."

While my rabbit went back to his snack, I headed into the kitchen to get the lunch I'd planned, ready for BJ's first afternoon playdate with Daddy.

I hadn't been with a little outside of the club in a long time, since I lost my wife, and I had packed her things away then donated what I could and kept only a few mementoes.

So, I had taken advantage of the opportunity to pick up a few of the items I thought BJ might enjoy.

He had said he'd bring his backpack that he usually took to the club with a change of clothes, a few toys, and things, but I wanted to give him a warm welcome.

His little side. I opened the freezer and poured some frozen nuggies on a baking sheet.

They were not house made like those at Chained, but they were reputed to be tasty.

At least, I'd heard the brand mentioned in the little room.

And I set the water to boil for mac 'n cheese.

Baby carrots with ranch for dipping and animal crackers—the frosted kind with sprinkles—filled out the menu.

Once we knew one another better, I'd have more ideas what to prepare, but I based my selections on what he enjoyed at the club that first night. If I'd gone more often, I'd probably have run into him sooner. But I couldn't regret it because I'd met BJ now.

I slid the tray into the oven just as the doorbell rang, and I wiped my hands on a dish

towel and started for the living room. I was as nervous as a first-time daddy. Last time someone was little in this house, it had been part of a long, comfortable relationship.

Now, we were embarking on what I hoped would be a different but equally fulfilling one.

I reached the door and opened it. BJ wore shorts—not the little kind, just ordinary khaki cargo shorts—and a T-shirt emblazoned with a cartoon monster I had seen on a movie billboard recently.

He had a backpack slung over one shoulder and a shy smile on his lips.

“Hi, Daddy.”

The words, so simple, meant so much. “Hi, BJ. I’m glad to see you.” I reached for the backpack, hiding a grin. “What would you like to do first? Shall we get you changed?” I held out my free hand, and he slipped his into it, already halfway into little space.

“Yes, Daddy.”

I led him up the stairs to my bedroom, where, with his nod of agreement, I laid out the clothes he’d brought, making a mental note of his sizes. “I like your sneakers.”

He sat on the edge of the bed and held out his foot so I could start to undress him.

His demeanor had softened, his eyes holding a whole different sparkle as I changed him into the training pants, tiny shorts, and fitted tee.

He could have gone without shoes in the house, but the ones he’d brought were made

to look like monsters with light-up eyes, and I wouldn't deny either of us the pleasure of them.

He bounced his heels against the mattress, showing me how the eyes flashed.

"Those are nice." I helped him stand up and took his hand again. "Ready for lunch?"

"Yes, Daddy. I'm hungry." But first, he dug in his backpack and pulled out a box of crayons and a coloring book. "Can I color too?"

"Yes, while I finish making lunch." I sat him at the counter in the kitchen and added the macaroni to the boiling water. "I have apple juice and chocolate milk. Which would you like?"

"Choco milk." He clapped his hands when I brought out the sippy cup I'd bought. It had rainbow stripes. "Oh pretty! It's colors like mine." He opened the box and compared the well-used crayons to each of the hues on the cup then lined the crayons up in the same order on the counter. "Look, Daddy."

"I see!" I scooped mac 'n cheese into one section of the divided plate, added some of the nuggies into another, and the carrots in the third. "You have all the colors of the cup."

"All of them." He gave a determined nod. "I want to use them to color you a picture."

"I'd love that." I set the plate in front of him, though. "After you eat all your lunch." I set a small bowl of ranch beside the carrots. "Deal?"

"Deal." He picked up a dino in each hand, and a war broke out between the two whateverasauruses.

They were different from one another but not detailed enough for me to be sure which was which.

I popped a can of sparkling water and sat on another stool with a few dinos to eat and enjoyed the show.

At first, I wasn't sure which of the nuggies was going to win, but after some fancy jousting with carrots chewed into lance shapes, one of the dinos lost his head and the battle.

Lunchtime was much more fun with a little.

When he'd cleaned his plate, I set out some cookies and refilled his cup with plain milk this time. Then settled beside him to watch him color. But to my surprise and pleasure, he opened the book wide and smoothed it down. "Daddy, color with me?"

"We can, but I have a surprise for you." I knew his crayons and coloring book were very important to him, and I hoped what I'd picked out would be a winner and not a dud. "A surprise."

His lower lip thrust out and he set down the crayon he held. A red one. "You don't want to color with me?"

"Of course I'd love to." I studied the page that would be mine. "And I know these are your best crayons, but I saw some I thought you might like and if you do, we can use them today?"

"You bought me crayons?" One of his brows rose toward his hairline. "Can I see?"

I pulled them from the cabinet next to the stove and brought them over. "They have glitter."

His eyes sparkled more than the crayons as he laid them out and looked at each one.
“Glitter crayons. We have to try them out.”

“I have a new coloring book too, if you want to see it? It has dressed-up animals.”

Five minutes later, we were both coloring away, using both sets.

“What color do you think I should use for the cat’s hat? And his feather?”

“Here, Daddy.” He handed me a purple one. “For the feather.”

My heart squeezed. I’d had a lot of plans, ideas for what we might do together, like a bubble bath or putting together the train set, but we ended up spending the next couple of hours coloring, and it was pure magic. And as glitter went? Not messy at all.

Then I led him upstairs to my bedroom and took off his shoes. I tucked him under the covers for a nap. He wanted three stories, books from his backpack, and then fell asleep, sweet, adorable, soft breaths while I watched over him, happy just to be there.

Source Creation Date: July 16, 2025, 6:26 am

BJ

Daddy and I had been together for a while now, and it was going great. Daddy. Gods, I loved the sound of that. The first time I said it, it had slipped out. And now that's who he was, my daddy.

There were days when I woke up and wondered how this was in my life, how I could've found such an amazing daddy. And while it made no sense, it was starting to make me anxious. It was going too well. Too easy. Too safe.

Glenn gave me what I needed—attention, space, little time, big time, a listening ear, an amazing time when our mouths were doing things other than talking; name it and he gave it to me. That should've felt amazing. And it did. But it also scared the crap out of me.

We got along in the bedroom and out of the bedroom, too.

We could play together, soft and silly and sweet, when he was my daddy.

And we could be regular grown-ups going on errands or cleaning out Carrot's space.

The man was a walking green flag. Kind, funny, considerate.

He let me be who I was, fully, without ever making me feel small—unless I wanted to feel little, but that was a different story.

This relationship was turning into everything I'd ever wanted.

And that terrified me.

“I don’t get it.” Derek handed me my coffee.

I led the way to one of the patio tables farthest from the street, ignoring his comment. The café was packed inside, the clouds looking like they would open up any minute. I’d rather chance the rain over hovering in the hopes of getting a table.

When we finally sat down, he repeated his statement. It looked like Derek wasn’t going to let it go. It was probably for the best because I did need to talk to him today before I let my brain get too far ahead of itself.

“What don’t you get?”

He raised an eyebrow. “You have a smoking-hot daddy who takes you nice places, treats you like a literal prince, lets you have your own life, and makes googly eyes at you like you’re a walking cupcake—and you’re here, with me, acting like you’re about to get evicted again.”

Whoa, Derek really did see everything.

“You’re being a tad over dramatic there, Derek.” Even if he was accurate.

“Nope,” he said. “Not over dramatic at all. Tell me I’m wrong, jackass.”

Of course, I couldn’t tell him he was wrong. He wasn’t.

I sighed. “Fine. Maybe I’m messed up. Or overthinking things. Or both.”

He sipped his coffee and waited.

“Have you ever been in a relationship that was just...too good?”

“There’s no such thing.” He set his cup down. “If anything, all relationships can be improved.”

“True, but also...it’s like... I keep thinking any day now, something’s going to happen. And I’m going to be left alone, trying to scoop up the pieces of my heart from the floor with a dustpan.

He paused, leaned back, and blinked. “Okay. Shall we circle back to your over-dramatic comment from earlier?”

I groaned. “Don’t start.”

“I mean, you’re practically halfway through the script of a Lifetime movie right now.”

I wanted to argue that I wasn’t, that they didn’t do kink movies, but that would further this conversation not at all. “You’re such a jerk.”

“A jerk who’s right. You’re scared, and I get that. It’s normal. You’ve had a rough history. But if you’re always waiting for the sky to fall, you’re going to miss the sunshine and will manifest the sky actually falling.”

I frowned. “That sounded weirdly poetic and also creepy.”

“Thank you, I’m very wise.” He mouthed, “And not at all creepy.”

“Wrong.”

“Right.” He stuck his tongue out. “You know what you need to do, right?”

“What?”

“Talk to Glenn. You need to tell him how you feel.” Stupid, valid advice.

“What if he thinks I’m clingy or messed up or—”

“Then he’s not your daddy.”

That shut me up.

“Look,” he went on, “I’m not saying it won’t be scary.

But, right now, you’re spiraling in your own head, and you’re already starting to pull away.

This”—he circled the air in front of me with his finger—“this isn’t it.

If you keep living like the breakup has already happened, you’re gonna create the thing you’re afraid of. That’s self-sabotage, babe.”

I groaned. “I hate that you’re right.”

“I know. It’s exhausting, being this brilliant.”

I threw a napkin at him.

Still, I took his advice. After our coffee outing, I texted Glenn. Want to come over for dinner?

Wouldn’t miss it. With a smiley emoji.

That little emoji made me feel like I could breathe again.

I didn't want to make anything fancy—just something easy and quick, so we'd have time to talk. I settled on a shrimp and pasta dish I could throw together in under thirty minutes. Simple. Comforting. Delicious. Just like him.

He arrived just as I was pulling the shrimp from the fridge, and dinner was on the table in ten minutes flat.

“You have to at least let me do the dishes,” he said, taking another bite. “This is delicious. Like, unfairly good. You can't be doing all the work.”

“There's one pan,” I pointed out. “One bowl. One spatula. It's hardly a disaster of a kitchen.” I didn't get into the fact that he was usually the one taking on “all the work” when it came to meal time. He loved feeding me, and I loved being fed.

“Still...”

“I'm just going to throw them all in the dishwasher anyway.”

“I could be your dishwasher.” He grinned.

“Fine,” I relented, trying to pout and failing.

“You invited me for dinner, and I'm eating it. That's the deal.”

“And what does Stu think?” I asked, nodding toward my cactus on the windowsill.

“Stu agrees with me,” he said solemnly, raising his glass. “Great dinner, great company, I'll take the dishes, and I will call this date a success.”

Gods, I loved how he treated Stu like a real guest. Like a little part of me he respected instead of something weird or childish and very not human.

Afterward, we curled up on the couch with some movie neither of us cared about. It was more background noise than anything, and I kept glancing sideways at him, trying to work up the nerve to say something.

“Are you feeling okay, sweet boy?”

“Yeah. Yeah, I’m fine. It’s just...”

I shifted, turned toward him, sat cross-legged on the couch. “There’s something we need to talk about.”

His brows lifted slightly. “Okay. I’m listening.”

“This is gonna make me sound ungrateful or...needy or something, but...I like you.”

He smiled. “I’m still waiting for the downside here.”

“I mean, I really like you. Like, full stop like you. And I’m scared.”

I took a deep breath.

“Every time I open myself up, it backfires. And it’s not that I think you’re going to hurt me, but I’m scared you could. I’m scared of how much I want this and how much it will destroy me.” I didn’t simply open the door to a discussion. Nope. I ripped that door off.

He didn’t rush in with reassurances. He just listened. And then he took my hands in his.

“I’m never going to promise you that life won’t hurt you,” he said. “Even the people who love us the most can cause pain. Not because they want to. Not because they mean to. But because...life happens. And people aren’t perfect.”

I nodded. My throat was tight.

“But I can promise you this”—he brought my hands up to his mouth and kissed each—“I love you.”

I froze.

“You...what?”

“I love you,” he said again, forehead resting against mine. “You’re kind of impossible not to love.”

Tears pricked the corners of my eyes, but not sad tears. Quite the opposite. “I love you, too, Daddy.”

I climbed into his lap, tucked my head beneath his chin, and held on like I meant it. Because I did.

“I’m gonna try,” I whispered. “Try not to let my past dictate my future. I know you’re not like them. You’re not like my family. Not like the ones who left. You’re Glenn. And that’s the man I fell in love with.”

He kissed the top of my head.

“I’m not going anywhere,” he promised.

And, this time, I let myself believe it.

Glenn

BJ had a business trip to make, and he invited me to go.

It was just one day of meetings, and he wanted to fly out the night before then head back the following night.

“So it probably will be boring for you,” he said after blurting out the invitation while we were having dinner in my kitchen.

“Never mind. I was being selfish, just wanting your company.”

“That’s not selfish,” I said, pulling him onto my lap, balancing us both on the stool. “I’m glad to come and keep you company.”

“I just didn’t like the idea of going all the way to New Jersey without you. Silly, huh?” He leaned his head on my shoulder. “It won’t be much fun.”

“Did you say New Jersey?” I gave him a big squeeze, thanking my prior self for some research I’d done with him in mind. “Why, that’s where the crayon museum is. What town are we flying into?”

“The crayon museum?” His jaw dropped. “I’ve always wanted to go there, but it’s so far away from here...I forgot it was in New Jersey.”

Turned out, it was just an hour’s drive from the hotel where we’d be staying for his meetings, so we added a day to the trip and planned our first out-of-town adventure

together.

I had never been crazy about flying, and my work didn't require it, but I did have points from various trips to visit family and such, and we were able to upgrade to business class without any additional cost that his company might have frowned on.

We'd spent time together on dates and daddy/little playing, and he'd seen me in work mode, but this was my first experience with BJ as a businessperson, and he was...

hot. On the plane, he dressed comfortably, as did I, but the next morning while I sipped room service coffee in bed and he got ready for his meetings, he transformed into someone I hadn't met yet.

Someone I wanted to call back to bed, unzip those neatly creased slacks, pull out his cock, and...

"I have to go now, Glenn. I'll be back in time for dinner. Sure you won't be bored?"

"No. I am going to lie around here until I get tired of that then go lie by the pool for the rest of the day." I lifted my face for his kiss then slumped back down. "Have a good day, BJ."

Honestly, I was usually on the run for my own job, and at BJ's urging, I'd told my staff that I was not available unless something was on fire or they damaged a Picasso, and it was the first day in a long time where I wasn't trying to put out figurative fires and dealing with employees and contracts and all sorts of things.

I had been worried about boredom, but by the time he came back for dinner, I was relaxed, a little sunburned, and starving. It was a good day.

The next morning, after I'd had a chance to show him just how sexy I found BJ the

business guy, I woke to find the BJ who loved crayons leaning over me, wearing a shirt emblazoned with crayons and bouncing on the edge of the mattress. “Daddy, are you awake?”

He wasn’t in full little headspace, but close enough for his enthusiasm to spill over and have me up and getting dressed much faster than my usual morning persona would allow. The museum didn’t open until nine, and it was only seven, but we decided to eat along the road to kill a little time.

I drove the rental car while BJ watched for somewhere good to have pancakes. “When I was little, and we went on trips, my dad always found the best pancake houses,” he explained. “And I still like to do that if I can.”

“I don’t suppose your dad ever brought you to New Jersey, to this area?”

” I asked. We’d been driving for a while, and the only things we’d seen were the typical chain places off the highway.

I didn’t want him to have to settle for fast-food hotcakes.

Not that they were bad, but they didn’t have the atmosphere of the diners and roadside dives he described to me.

“No.” He seemed downcast, and I was worried but then he brightened. “But lots of times, we had to leave the highway to find them.”

“Do you want to risk not being at the museum when they open?” There was no telling how far we’d have to go.

“Yes,” he decided. “But I think we’ll get lucky if we get off...here!”

I barely had time to change lanes safely and exit the highway where a sign held the international symbol for food available.

At least I thought it was international.

We followed the arrow to the right and drove past three fast-food places, the ones the sign likely referred to, before coming to an empty stretch of highway.

Farms on either side of the road. Sometimes I forgot New Jersey had farmland.

BJ had been so sure we'd find a place to eat, but it wasn't looking good.

Then, as I was about to suggest we return to the highway and try somewhere else, he shouted, "There it is!"

Sure enough, in the distance, there was a sign with a picture of pancakes drenched in syrup, with big pats of butter melting into the golden-brown stack.

It took another minute before we were close enough to see what the letters said, but then we knew that it was an ad for The Pancake Shack only a mile away.

Shack? I had my doubts, but BJ was bouncing again, and when we pulled up to a place that was not strictly a shack but not that much different from one.

The wooden board walls were sun-bleached, the windows could use a scrubbing, but there were cars parked up and down the road on both sides.

Truckers, cops, a small tour bus...all the people whose presence indicated either really good food or cheap prices or both.

And we hadn't taken two steps inside before we knew at least one of those things

were true. The scent of melted butter and maple syrup hung heavy in the air. Bacon, sausages, fried eggs... As we seated ourselves at one of the few empty tables, we breathed in the deliciousness.

BJ ordered the endless stack and, at my urging, a couple of eggs for more protein. I got pigs in a blanket, something my dad loved, and together, we filled up on the sweet and savory taste of nostalgia, reveling in our first trip together.

We took a couple of selfies of us holding up our plates with their mountains of carbs and fat and awesomeness. Joking that they'd make a great Christmas card, I paid the bill and we left the table for some of those who were now lined up out the door.

"Can you believe there were so many people there in the middle of nowhere?" I mused when we finally got back to the highway. "Who'd have thought it?"

"Me." BJ leaned back in the seat and rubbed his food-baby tummy. "Seems to me, those places Dad found were often way more crowded than the location would lead you to expect. If you make the great food..."

"Diners will come?"

"Right." He chuckled. "Now to the crayon museum. Are we there yet?"

"Almost."

The museum was wonderful, for sure. BJ loved the giant crayons lining the pathway to the front door and the historical display of different styles of crayons and their packaging over the years.

There was a coloring page that took up the entire floor and walls of one room, one that could be cleaned off every night and refreshed for the next day's visitors.

BJ and I were not the only adults who took advantage of the opportunity to color there.

In fact, I didn't see anyone old or young who wasn't enjoying it.

The entire facility was bright, colorful, and it was impossible not to smile while crossing the bridge over the indoor stream with its multicolored waters.

How they made that happen, I'd never know.

They even had a garden of flowers in the colors of over a hundred different crayons.

Finally, we stopped in the gift shop for a souvenir to remember the day. BJ chose a single crayon from the glass display case. "I have all the others," he explained when I offered to treat him to more. "This is the one in that set I need."

We skipped lunch, still stuffed from our breakfast, but by the time we were headed back to the hotel, we were hungry again, and we might have stopped at The Pancake Shack for dinner. Okay, we did.

BJ

I grabbed the pet store bag from the seat beside me and ran up to Daddy's doorstep, knocking only once before he opened it.

"How did I know my boy would be here early?" he asked, pulling me in for a hug, kissing my cheek as his arms tightened around me.

"Because you said we were having my favorite dinner," I replied.

He gave me one final squeeze and then stepped back, allowing me into the house.

"I come bearing gifts," I said, handing him the bag with Carrot's present. "According to the lady, these are the world's best bunny treats."

He reached inside the bag and pulled them out. "They actually are," he chuckled when he saw the label, World's Best Bunny Treats . "Be sure to give him some so he knows they are from you."

He was 100 percent Daddy's bunny. I could give her the world, but at the end of the day, it was all about Glenn. I understood where he was coming from. I felt the same. He insisted he adored me, but I knew better.

"Now come," he said, dragging me through the house, straight out to the backyard, where the grill was already smoking.

"You started cooking without me?"

“Nah, just warming up the grill. But everything’s ready to go.”

I had told him once—just in passing—that one of my favorite dinners ever was from a restaurant where I used to live that did everything on the grill, even the corn on the cob.

Just a random factoid, but he remembered it.

And now he was making it for me. It was so on-brand for him. I loved it—and Daddy.

“Tell me what I can do to help.”

“I don’t know.” He watched as I shook my head. “Fine. I really need someone to sit over there looking hot.”

I rolled my eyes. When I was little, I let Daddy do everything. Heck, I wanted him to. But tonight was a big night, and at times like these, we were equal and I wanted to do my share.

“You could bring out the dishes for when we eat,” he offered.

“That’s better, Daddy.” I rewarded him with a kiss. Fine, I rewarded myself, too. But regardless, kissing happened.

I set the table as he put the food on the grill.

He flipped the steaks for the first time and gave me an approximate eating time.

I remembered him telling me how the perfect steak was flipped exactly one time on the grill.

Which meant he really didn't want me cooking the steaks, because I was the king of the flipper...

one side then the other then the other. I don't even know where I got that method.

I supposed it worked. The meat got cooked.

But I'd never had anyone request my grilling, so there was that to consider.

I loved times like this, where it was just the two of us hanging out, having a nice meal. We weren't going to stay here long, though. Tonight was munch night. And while my first experience with a local munch hadn't been ideal, Glenn's friend Bridger was really big into going and had invited us.

I had a feeling this time it wouldn't be as bad—because I was going to know some people there. I wasn't going to meet strangers who potentially liked the same things I did. I was going to hang out with people I knew who happened to like the same things I did.

I was kind of looking forward to it.

“This corn is amazing.”

I was halfway through my first piece and already wishing I'd asked him to make only corn for me—because there was no way the steak would be as good as this.

Although that proved to be a false assessment when I cut into my steak and took the first bite.

“I swear, you're good at everything, Daddy.”

“Hardly. But I try to be good at everything—for you.”

On some people, that might’ve looked like sweet talk for the sake of sweet talk—flattery with a goal. But I don’t think there was any of that going on in his head. That was just how he felt. So he said it.

We cleaned up together. Such a domestic thing, but I kind of loved it.

“Are you smiling at something in particular?” he asked, rubbing his thumb across my cheekbone.

“I was just thinking how happy I am.”

“I’m happy, too.” He kissed me.

The kiss was intended to be a peck. Or at least that was my impression. But I didn’t let it stay just a peck. I wanted more. I wanted everything.

I kissed him a second time, this time slow and deep.

“Daddy,” I murmured, brushing my lips across his jaw, “can I have dessert before we go?”

“I didn’t make any dessert,” he said with a shrug. “I’ll get you a muffin or a cookie at the coffee shop.”

I reached over and cupped him through his jeans, smiling up at him. “I didn’t mean that kind of dessert.”

He groaned—low, warm, and need filled. “My sweet boy...”

I dropped to my knees right there in the kitchen, not wanting to wait for an answer.

I nuzzled him as I undid his belt and buttons.

Normally, I loved his button flies. They were hot as the sun, but today, they were thwarting what I wanted most. But soon enough, I had them open and pulled his jeans down just far enough to expose his underwear-covered cock.

He was already getting hard. I kissed the head through his boxer briefs, slow and teasing, then tugged them down to free him.

I didn't rush. The munch could wait. It wasn't an everyone arrived at the same time kind of thing , anyway.

I wrapped one hand around the base then leaned in and kissed the tip.

I learned early on that he loved the simple gesture, and that's what this was all about—giving Daddy what he loved.

He lived his life to do that for me and it turned me on to give the same thing back.

At first, it was just a gentle press of lips, a promise.

But then his hand slid into my hair, and all bets were off.

He didn't guide me. He never pushed like that. He just held on.

I flattened my tongue against the underside, licking a long stripe from base to tip, making mmm sounds, looking up at him the entire time.

When a groan escaped his lips, I took him into my mouth slowly.

My lips sealed around him, and I started to suck, lightly at first then deeper, finding a rhythm that had him holding on harder, and swallowing as he came closer and closer to the back of my throat with each trip.

He murmured my name, called me his sweet boy and his naughty boy and his sexy boy. I'd take all of those. As long as I was his boy, I didn't care what came first.

"Fuck, BJ...you're so good at..." From anyone else, saying my name while complimenting my oral skills would probably have irked me. I'd had enough teasing about my name as a teen. But from Daddy? I loved it.

I hummed around him and took him deeper still. I wouldn't be able to take him all the way in—he was too big for that, but I always gave it my all. My hands gripped his hips to steady myself as I let him slide in as far as I could. He let out a broken sound and swore under his breath.

I loved doing this. Loved the way he unraveled for me. Loved knowing I could make him feel this good...me. His sweet boy, the one who had felt insecure for far too long.

It didn't take long. He was already so close, and I didn't let up—not once. His grip in my hair tightened, and he gasped my name again, thighs trembling.

"Gonna come," he warned...or was it a promise.

I didn't stop. I wanted it. Every bit of it.

He came with my name on his lips, his cum shooting to the back of my throat. I swallowed it greedily, licking him clean, and kissed his hip before looking up at him, waiting for my praise.

He blinked down at me, completely undone.

“You are trouble,” he said, voice rough.

“I’m your trouble,” I said sweetly, standing up and kissing him slow.

“Only mine.”

We were late to the munch, but I didn’t care. Watching my daddy come undone by me was better than any social time with our friends.

I did have fun once we got there, though: talking to some of the littles, meeting a few new daddies, along with an array of other people.

I didn’t know what about them made a munch their idea of a good time, and it wasn’t the place to ask.

There were some beautiful collars, many loving couples, and single people too.

It was a really cool mix and far larger than I expected it to be. We basically took over the entire shop.

Daddy had been right to suggest I come. This was so much better than the first time I’d ventured to one.

Next time, I was going to have to bring Derek. That was all there was to it.

Page 16

Source Creation Date: July 16, 2025, 6:26 am

Glenn

We had met at the club, but we'd been spending our time together getting to know one another and hadn't been back since.

But with a little event coming up, I thought it might be time for a night at Chained.

And I had some surprises for my little. After learning his sizes and how much he loved his little monsters, I had placed a very special order for our first night playing at our club.

I parked at Chained, more excited than I had been any other time to go to an event at Chained. This one was for littles and invited caregivers only. So, essentially a couples' event. It was a themed evening but the theme was a secret.

If I was excited, my little was glowing. Ms. Lily who set up the special events never missed, but usually we knew what it would be going in. The element of surprise was new and thrilling. Ms. Lily's imagination had never let us down.

"Ready?" I got out and came around to open BJ's door. "Any guesses as to the theme?"

"No, I mean yes. I have guesses. Could be dinosaurs or circus or zoo or glitter."

"Glitter?" I reached into the back seat for the backpack I'd filled for the evening. "Maybe not."

We stopped to drop off our phones at the front desk on the way to the dressing rooms. BJ started for the group rooms, but I grabbed his hand. “We have a private room,” I told him, “and it’s right here.”

“You do? I mean we do?” BJ’s eyes grew wide. “I’ve never been in any of them.”

“Well, I hope you’ll enjoy this one.” I unlocked the door and opened it. “Check it out.”

“It’s all colors!” BJ’s delight was everything. “Daddy!”

I stood back while he walked around, pointing to all the different pieces of furniture and artwork that filled the room.

There was a sofa with a rainbow effect from violet to red and a mural of a real rainbow.

This room was not one with things like a crib, but I’d given up some of the little features in favor of the bright hues when I toured them all to select one.

After a while, I pushed off the frame and let the door close behind me, setting the backpack next to the sofa.

“BJ, it’s time to get ready, unless you’d like to stay in here a while?

” Although I was looking forward to seeing what Ms. Lily had for us, I couldn’t hate the idea of remaining here alone with my little.

“I think I want to go to the party, but maybe we can come back here later and be in the colors?”

“Deal.” BJ had the best ideas. I’d always been more of a neutral person, in my clothes, in decorating, but the more time I spent with my crayon-collecting little, the more I recognized what I’d been missing.

He was not only into the brightest colors but also knew a lot about how colors worked. How they could affect mood. Soothing or exhilarating. My little had taught me about how to cheer up on a gloomy day by coloring a sunny one.

I unzipped the backpack and pulled out a onesie that was very close to the color scheme of the room, except the blobs of color were kind of cloud monsters.

Puffy, with smiling faces, sailing through a blue-sky background.

I’d found it on a website recommended by some of my daddy friends, a relatively new shopping site. “What do you think?”

He sat down on the couch and held out his feet. “Undress me, please! I want to try it on.”

I unlaced his running shoes and pulled off his socks. “Lift your hips.” I’d changed him so many times, but there was something different about doing it here, and as I pulled up his white training pants, I could see that he also had a reaction to the environment, to our plans for the evening.

“Daddy, my pants don’t fit.”

“BJ, my best boy, do you want Daddy to help you?”

“Rub it, Daddy. Make it better. We have to go to the party.”

“Daddy will fix it.” I sat down and pulled him onto my lap, closing my fist around his

stiff cock. Rubbing it up and down, I told him what a good boy he was and how proud I was of him for telling me what he needed. He rested back against me, his gaze pointed downward to where I was stroking him.

Much more quickly than I expected, he was spurting over my hand, groaning in relief as he shrank to the size that would fit in his training pants.

His new onesie looked great on him, as did the shoes that matched.

And off we went to the little room, marching through the main room of the club where people hung suspended on the spider web or were fastened to the St. Andrew's cross.

Sparks came from the electric play, but that wasn't what we were about. Our destination was the little room.

Above the door hung a banner saying, Welcome to Art Class .

Ms. Lily was right inside, handing out smocks to all the littles, and mine accepted one in a dark blue and buttoned it all the way up to his neck. "Welcome, BJ. Is this your daddy with you tonight?"

"This is Daddy Glenn." He patted me on the arm and gave me a dimpled smile. "My Daddy Glenn."

Ms. Lily did know me by name, but she was seeing where things stood. For future invitations probably, but she was a romantic who always loved seeing her people happy. Probably why she was so intuitive about what would be a hit in the afternoon or evening events she set up.

"Ms. Lily, I think this is going to be fun. An art class!"

“We have paints and pastels, some sculptures and clay...and crayons.”

“Something for everyone, then.” Bridger had come up behind us, and Hudson was donning a red smock. “What are you going to do, Hudson?”

“Paint.” He darted off to a station where easels were set up.

“Do you want to go with Hudson?” I asked BJ. “It looks fun.”

“Daddy, come play with me?” He held out a hand and I took it.

“Of course. What shall we do first?”

“Color,” he said. “First crayons.”

That wasn’t a surprise to me, but after we each worked on a coloring page, he decided to branch out.

In fact, we moved from table to table, and he worked in every medium.

At most of the stations, there was someone to help with technique, making it a true art class, and with the wide variety of materials, even the littlest of the littles could find something to do.

We ended the evening on a giant sheet of paper where I was grateful the paint was washable as the littles rolled all around and did something the instructor was calling body arts but which was more about giggling than anything.

So it was good. At the end of the evening, we did spend some time in the dressing room, where my tired little took a nap with his head in my lap. Another Ms. Lily triumph. I still liked our time alone together best, but we’d be back for sure.

Source Creation Date: July 16, 2025, 6:26 am

BJ

I'd always thought that all moving sucked—that there was no version of it that wasn't stressful, sweaty, shittastic. That there was no time when moving would actually be filled with far more excitement and joy than torment.

I'd been wrong. So very wrong.

What I hadn't taken into consideration was the most important thing.

I'd been focused on the place, the logistics, the endless boxes and damaged furniture and whether the couch would fit through the front door or up the stairs.

I'd been thinking about the hassle, the way a new place never felt like home, the sense of loss.

And at the end of the day, none of that mattered, not when you were moving home.

And I was moving home for the very first time. Daddy was that home and the location, nothing more than a detail.

In that light, none of the rest mattered. It didn't matter if I had to carry each item, one at a time, across the city by foot, barefoot in the snow. I would have done it without complaining. Happily, even.

This was going to be the most amazing move ever.

Thankfully, I didn't have to make that barefoot snow trek. Because Daddy had a moving company.

And unlike hosting a "moving party" with coworkers and casual friends who only came for the promise of pizza and beer, this crew was made up of paid professionals.

I didn't feel guilty asking them to carry heavy boxes or make a bazillion trips to their truck.

They were efficient and careful and didn't ask a single annoying question about what was in each box or if we were almost done.

It was why I'd spent the money to use the company last time.

After going through everything, we opted to donate most of my furniture.

It had served me well, but I wasn't attached to most of it and the few pieces I was came with me.

Daddy's place had a larger bed, a kitchen table big enough for actual dinners with guests, and living room furniture we'd picked out together only a few weeks earlier.

I hadn't thought much of it at the time. He'd wanted my opinion, and I'd given it. And that was that. I hadn't anticipated it being any sort of game changer, but it was.

When the living room set arrived, I finally felt it fully. Like it clicked into place. This was my house too. That simple fact made my chest ache in the best way. Now, all the rest coming was simply details.

We did combine kitchen goods. I had my favorite little dishes, plus a few of my grandmother's cast-iron pots and pans that would work nicely. I also had a far

superior toaster, one that handled bagels like a boss.

But overall, it was just my things that were coming with. Clothes, books, little items, etc.

And the house already felt like it was mine—like it had been waiting for me to come home. Was that sappy? Probably, but so be it.

I ordered pizza for the movers after they brought in the last of everything.

They'd worked hard, and feeding people was just what you did at moving parties, even if this technically wasn't that.

They were coworkers of my daddy, so it only seemed right, even if by coworker, I meant employees who were getting paid.

A couple of the guys stuck around for a bit.

Not surprisingly, the two of them had also worked the job that indirectly led me to meet Daddy.

One of them tried to apologize for that day.

Had they been feeling guilty this entire time?

Had they not seen the result of what had happened, thanks to that missing box?

I shook my head. "Never apologize for helping me find this guy."

"Fine. I take it back. I'm glad it went missing. But real talk, this time, we got everything right."

Whether they had or hadn't didn't really matter. The most important thing I owned—my crayons—were already here. They were irreplaceable. Technically, sure, I could go buy a new set. I'd even tried once before, after thinking it had been lost forever.

These crayons had led me to the man I loved. The man who loved me back. And I hadn't been willing to risk them in another move, transporting them over when I brought Stu.

Just like with every move I'd made before, we started by unpacking my clothes.

It was easy. Low stakes. Fast results. Open one box and have a whole drawer done, and suddenly it feels like accomplishing something major.

After that, I unpacked my smaller things—my books, some photos, my computer—but Daddy stopped me as I opened a box marked little .

"I think we should put these somewhere else," he said, lifting the box in his arms and walking away with zero explanation.

I called to him, "Okay? Where?"

He didn't answer. He just kept walking, and I followed. Glenn led me to the room that, last time I saw it, had an old piece of exercise equipment leaning sideways in one corner, and a couple of totes filled with who-knew-what. Not much else.

I hesitated at the doorway. "Isn't this gonna be a pain?" I didn't want to come dig out my little items every time we wanted to play.

"Nope," he said, turning toward me with a sparkle in his eye. "This is perfect. Can you open the door?"

When I did, I froze.

The room was completely transformed.

Somewhere along the line—somewhere between my saying yes to moving in and today—he had not only cleaned it out, he had painted the walls in the exact violet-blue color I loved most. On the floor was a new carpet that looked like it was for a classroom, covered in images of crayons.

On the wall was my display case, the one that started it all.

That wasn't even the best of it. There was a crib. A crib. In my size. Along with a matching dresser that looked like it had been built from an actual crayon box.

In the back corner sat a little table with two chairs, and in the center of the table was a clever storage caddy filled with crayons. Not just any crayons. My crayons. The ones from my old place. The ones I'd thought I'd unpack later.

The whole space felt like a dream.

“When did you have time for this?” I asked, half whispering, afraid if I spoke too loudly I might wake myself up.

He just smiled. “I’m the boss. I make time. Do you like it?”

“Do I like it?” I stared at him in disbelief. “No. Of course I don’t.”

His smile faltered for half a second before I took the box from him, set it down, launched myself into his arms.

“I love it. It’s the most amazing room I’ve ever seen.”

I held him tighter than I ever had. “Thank you. Thank you. Thank you,” I murmured against his neck, probably a thousand times. “Thank you.”

I’d always wanted a crib. I’d never really said it out loud, not seriously, but something in me had always been drawn to it. The safety. The softness. The permission to rest.

“I saw you eyeing one that day at the auction,” he said.

I hadn’t realized I’d done that. But it made sense. It had caught my attention online, so I’d have been shocked if I hadn’t been drawn to it in person, as well.

“How about we get you ready for a nap?”

I didn’t even pretend to argue.

He helped me dig through a box until I found my pajamas—the ones with the cartoon monsters in crayon colors—and helped me get changed. He was so careful. Every button, every tug of fabric, was full of affection.

He scooped me up and carried me to the crib, setting me down gently first, so he could lower the side rail—it was on a sliding track and moved silently.

I wasn’t sure I’d ever even want that fourth side up.

Three sides were plenty. I wasn’t a baby, and I definitely couldn’t be lifted easily over the bars the way they were, and I wanted that, for Daddy to carry me to bed.

It wasn’t something I’d ever even had a passing thought of until he carried me over here, and now? Now, I longed for it.

“Put me in bed?” I’d been getting much better about asking for what I wanted.

Once again, he picked me up, this time setting me down on the mattress and pulling the sheets over me.

“Daddy,” I squeed. “Are these...are these crayon sheets too?”

He grinned. “You noticed.” As if there was a way for anyone not to.

“You outdid yourself on the theme.”

He smoothed the blanket over me, tucking it just right. Then he sat on the edge of the crib and brushed my hair away from my face with one hand.

“It still needs a little work,” he said. “But not too bad for a first attempt at a themed room.”

“How did you get the paint color so exact?” I asked, running my fingers over it. “It’s...it’s perfect.”

“Oh, that’s a secret, but I can tell you,” he said with a wink. “It’s magic.”

“Magic?”

“Magic. Color-matching technology. Same thing. I knew you’d recognize it.” He bent down and kissed my forehead.

“Now close your eyes,” he murmured, “and let Daddy tell you a story. About a little boy and his missing crayon.”

I closed my eyes, curled under the blanket, and listened as he told me the story of us.

Source Creation Date: July 16, 2025, 6:26 am

Glenn

Sometimes, I felt like BJ had lived here forever, and other times, it felt like a moment, but we had fallen into a rhythm of life that made me wake up smiling every morning, even before coffee.

We went to Chained every week or two, to see friends and play in the little room, but mostly we spent our evenings at home after work.

Having dinner together. Watching TV on the sofa.

In the nursery where I tucked my little into his crib and read him stories.

Carrot and Stu weren't exactly friends, especially after the bunny attempted to nibble the cactus and learned it was a mistake, but I'd say they understood one another now. Bridger said we had the oddest choice in pets, but I thought they were perfect.

Just like my little.

Turned out, I hadn't been just fine before I met him. And I'd been done mourning, just afraid to let someone in. BJ also had some issues, but together, we'd worked through them. That was how the best relationships worked, in my opinion. We were friends, lovers, and a daddy and his little.

I'd kept my word to my late wife and moved on. Wherever she was, I felt like she'd be proud of me. Not many men were lucky enough to have two great loves. And I planned never to forget how fortunate I was or to stop showing BJ how much I loved

him.