



Cherry Ice

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Category: LGBT+

Description: Levi

Ive never been anything special. Im just your typical nerd, happy with myself, but inexperienced in every way. That is until the king of college football asks me out on a date and my clueless self has no idea what to do. So, I turn to the only person whos always been able to help me through anything.

Mav is just like me. A nerd deep to the core. When faced with problems we dont understand, research is always the best option, right?

All it will take to win over my dream guy is Mavs help, some instructional videos, and a lot of cherry slushies.

Mav

My best friend and I arent exactly what youd consider cool. We like video games, studying, and doing well in school. That all changes when the most popular guy on campus asks Levi out on a date. Now he wants my help in making sure hes ready for his first time which means giving him mine too.

What happens when first times lead me to having forever-eyes for my best friend? The same best friend who only sees me as a research partner?

But Levi has always been mine and Im going to make sure he sees that.

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CHAPTER ONE

Levi

“I’m sorry, can you say that again?”

I must be dreaming. Literally in a waking dream. I’m surprised there aren’t butterflies and unicorns circling me at the moment. I pinch myself, wincing after, and dropping my jaw because this is real life.

But this can’t be real life because there’s no way that Asher Rashford—king of UA’s college football team, total dream hunk, a walking porno—just asked me out.

Me .

Asher chuckles, running his gigantic hand through his short brown hair, his blue eyes twinkling with amusement as he points at the ground. “You dropped your slushy.”

Yeah, my daily dose of cherry sugar coma can wait. I can feel the sticky red liquid pooling between my flip-flops, but I don’t give a crap.

Asher Rashford just asked me out.

“You want to—” I cough, choking on nothing but my own spit as I try to get my words together. “You want to go out with me?”

“Well, yeah,” he says, like it’s totally obvious and we’re not caught in the Twilight

Zone. “I was thinking maybe we could go to dinner or something?”

“Um...” I squish my toes together, the slushy in between them making a near-pornographic squelch as I do. “You sure you’re not confusing me for someone else?”

He furrows his brows. “We take chem together, Levi. You corrected Professor Hertz the other day when we were talking about organic equations.”

“Well, he skipped a step.”

“I know, and I thought it was cute that you pointed it out.”

Asher Rashford just called me cute.

My cheeks flame as I remember that. I had gotten a few ugly snickers from my classmates after it happened but, now that I think of it, Asher wasn’t one of them. Lord, I practically need to fan myself at the reminder that this six-foot-three linebacker is getting his degree in biochemistry. It’s so fucking hot.

Do not get a boner. Do not get a boner. Do not get a boner.

“So? What do you think?” he asks, rubbing the back of his neck sheepishly. “Go out with me?”

Right. He needs an answer. Why am I still standing here like an idiot?

“O—Of course,” I sputter out. I’m sure I’m sporting the dorkiest smile ever, but can you blame me? I just won the lottery. “We can totally go out.”

His beautifully blinding grin nearly knocks me on my ass. How can he look so happy when he’s perfect enough for creme brulee and settling for an almond joy? “Great.

Let me give you my number, and we'll set a date."

I hand him my phone with trembling fingers when he reaches for it. I'm still a bit dazed when he puts his number in and leaves to head off to practice.

Now, don't get me wrong, I don't like, hate myself. I think I'm a pretty cool dude, but I'm nowhere near cool enough for something like this to happen to me. I'm what you would call a little below average. I like to play fantasy role-play games all night long, I spend most of my time studying, and when I'm not nerding out over the new superhero movie in theaters, I'm hanging out with my best friend.

Speaking of which, Mav is going to freak the fuck out when I tell him about this. Things like this just don't happen to guys like us.

I hop on my scooter and leave the gas station, passing the quiet little downtown stores and making my way to my neighborhood. Arborville isn't like most college towns. There's not a huge party scene, and the only people here besides college kids are the elderly. I make it back to the little townhome I share with Mav. When I get there, I unceremoniously dump my scooter and race toward the door. I barrel through it, nearly tripping over my sticky flip-flops as I crash into our living room.

Mav doesn't even notice me come in. He's too busy with his fantasy RPG, so close to our flat-screen that his nose touches his Elven maid. His red hair is sticking up in every direction like he's been pulling at it out of frustration, his glasses nearly falling off his face as he plays. Mav's always very intense about his games. I'd think it was weird if I wasn't the same way.

"M-Mav!" I shout, hunching over on my knees as I try to catch my breath. "Mav, pause the game."

He doesn't bother looking at me as he continues to play. "I'm in the middle of a

quest, Levi. I'm just about to collect the final Ogger Stone."

"Ignore the Ogger Stone for now. This is important."

"And what's important enough for me to forsake the clan?"

"Asher Rashford just asked me out."

The controller falls to the floor. Mav whips his head at me, his jaw hanging slack.

"Repeat yourself."

"I said, Asher Rashford asked me out."

"Where's your slushy?" he asks, eyes narrowing as he looks at my empty hands.

"Where's mine?"

"That's all you have to say?" I yell. "Did you not just hear what I said?"

"Oh, I heard you. I was just wondering if your blood sugar is low. Remember what happened last time?"

I roll my eyes, but I get it. Last time I missed my daily slushy, I thought I saw a popular fantasy writer at the grocery store. Turns out, following a random man around for twenty minutes is grounds for a restraining order. "I dropped the slushy when Asher Rashford asked me out."

He chuckles, but his smile dies down and morphs into incredulity when he sees my face. "You're being serious. You're not joking?"

"Why would I joke about this?"

“Because you have a terrible sense of humor.”

“Fuck you.”

“Fuck you, too.” He chews on his bottom lip and then cocks his head. “He really asked you out?”

I take out my phone and wave it in the air. “And I have the proof to show for it.”

“Holy shit!” he shouts, finally giving me the reaction I was expecting. He rushes toward me, both hands on my arms as he shakes the living shit out of me. “This is insane! What did you say?”

“Well, I’m not an idiot, so I said yes!” But then I furrow my brows. “What’s the face for?”

Mav’s always been an overthinker, and I can see the gears churning away in his head. He pushes wire-rimmed glasses up his nose with his forefinger and takes a step back, tapping his foot as he looks at me. “Have you considered that he might have nefarious intentions?”

“Um, well, yeah,” I admit weakly, fiddling with my superhero watch, a nervous habit of mine. “But he seemed sincere?”

“Did he seem sincere or was he sincere?”

“I don’t know! It all happened so fast!”

I start to sour a bit. I mean...Asher was sincere, wasn’t he? It seemed like he actually wanted to go out on a date with me. It’s not like there was a hoard of mean girls standing over his shoulder giggling the entire time. He had seemed confused when I

didn't quite understand him, and overjoyed when I said yes.

But... it could just be a big joke.

Mav must notice the look on my face because he curses and reaches for my hand. "Shit, I'm sorry, Levi. I just...I'm looking out for you. That's my job, right?"

I have to smile at that. Mav and I have been best friends since we were five, both of us getting picked on by the same bully on the playground. We bonded with our mutual awkwardness and love of all things dorky. We've been inseparable ever since, even deciding to go to the same college so we wouldn't be apart.

"Yeah, I know," I say softly, giving his hand a squeeze. "I guess I just got a little excited. I don't need to text him?—"

"What? Of course you're going to text him," he rushes out, yanking my phone out of my hand.

My eyes widen as I see him unlock my phone. Fuck, why did I ever think it was a good idea to give him my password. "Wait, Mav! Don't!"

"If you're not going to do it, I will," he says, running away from me when I try to rush him. He manages to get away from me by leaping over the couch like some sort of uncoordinated ballerina. "Oh my God , he put his name in as 'Ash'."

Damn my sticky flip-flops, they're not fast enough to catch up with him as he races up the stairs. "Give me back my phone!"

"What's better, 'Hey, it's Levi!' or 'What's up, it's Levi!'?"

"I'm going to kill you!"

“Not if you can’t catch me—Oomph!”

I tackle him face-first onto his bed and straddle his butt, reaching over his body for my phone. “Give it back!”

“Too late!” his voice muffled by the pillow. “I already hit send!”

I slap his butt for good measure before I hop off, scrambling through my phone to see what he sent. Turns out, he settled for ‘Hey, Ash. It’s Levi’. Not bad, I guess. I sit on my haunches, chewing at my thumbnail as I wait for those three little magic dots to appear, but they don’t.

“It’s not like he’s going to respond two seconds after you text him,” Mav says, flipping over onto his back and kicking me with his foot. “You have to give him time.”

I cock a brow at him and set my lips in a tight line. “And how would you know? You’ve never texted a guy before.”

“I watch movies,” he whines, kicking me again.

I sigh as I flop down next to him. Immediately, he hitches a leg around my hip and pulls me flush against him. It’s not weird. We’re a very touchy duo after being friends for so long. I turn my head and bite at my lip. “What if he doesn’t text back?”

Mav sighs along with me. He presses his forehead against mine and I can feel his shrug. “You’re awesome, Levi. He’d be lucky to have you.”

I nod, but I don’t feel that awesome. At least not awesome enough for someone as cool as Asher. But Mav has always been able to see something in me that I couldn’t see in myself. To him, I’m cool. I’m unique. I’m worthy, and I cling to that.

“You’ll see,” he whispers, giving me a quick peck on the cheek. “He’ll text back.”

And I can only hope that Mav just spoke that shit into truth.

CHAPTER TWO

Levi

“So, you realize you’re going to have to kiss him, right?”

I drop my fork in my lap and blush. I look over at Mav who’s serving himself another helping of our spaghetti tacos—courtesy of our favorite kid’s sitcom that we’re far too old to watch—and hand him my plate.

When I don’t respond, he snickers. “Don’t tell me you haven’t thought of it.”

“Well, of course, I have,” I snap back, wrenching my full plate away from him. I’m a healthy twenty-year-old. Of course, I’ve had fantasies about kissing the hottest guy on our small college campus. Asher, with his plump pink lips and sparkling blue eyes. That little dimple in his chin he gets when he smiles. Yum. “You mean to tell me you’ve never thought of kissing Asher?”

Mav freezes, and I can see his flush spread down his freckled-covered neck. He gets all fidgety and mumbles, “He’s not really my type.”

I scoff right back at him. Asher? Not his type? He’s everybody’s type, men and women alike. “Who’s your type then?”

Mav ignores me and digs into his food. He’s being weird and slightly sketchy, but I don’t have the chance to interrogate him when my phone beeps. I nearly hop out of my seat as I grab it with twitchy fingers. I end up pouting when I see it’s just a text

from my mom asking if I've cleaned my toilet recently.

Mav looks at me over his plate, a string of spaghetti hanging out of his mouth. "Still no text?"

"No," I say sadly, slumping in my seat.

"He'll text back."

"How can you be so sure?"

"I told you, Levi. You're awesome."

Sure, I believe that. I push my spaghetti around with my tortilla and reach for my cherry ice slushy. Yes, I went back to the gas station to get another one. I needed a fix after the day I had. "So, he's going to kiss me?"

"Well...yeah?" Mav chuckles, slurping up his noodle. "Isn't that the point behind a first date? Don't they traditionally end with a kiss?"

"I've never been on a first date."

"Me neither, but we're smart enough to guess what's going to happen."

I bite at my straw. I've never kissed anyone before. Neither has Mav. We're completely and pathetically inexperienced for our age, but can you blame us? We spent our teenage years hiding out in each other's bedrooms building Legos and playing fantasy games instead of living in the real world. But that's what college was supposed to be about. We were supposed to come out of our codependent shells and make new friends. Party and shit.

Still, I might be terrible at this whole kissing thing. Asher is probably very experienced and my amateur lips could turn him off. This is a once-in-a-lifetime chance I've been given here, and I refuse to mess it up.

"We should kiss," I blurt out.

Mav—who was in the middle of taking a bite—drops his taco. The noodles go everywhere and I wipe at the sauce that lands on my cheek. He just stares at me, slack-jawed and like I just asked him to sell his firstborn to the Devil.

"Or not?" I ask, suddenly feeling like an idiot. "We totally don't have to."

"Why do you want to kiss me?" he asks, almost suspiciously.

"Because I need practice!" I argue, throwing my hands up in the air in frustration. I nearly whine as I look at my phone and turn back to Mav. "I don't know what I'm doing, Mav."

Something in him morphs, and his face softens. He stares down at the table for too long, then at his tacos, and finally his gaze lands on me. Or, more specifically, my lips. "Okay."

"Okay?" I ask, almost hopefully.

"Yeah we can..." he trails off, letting out a deep breath before he nods. "We can kiss."

"Now?"

"You want to kiss now?" he sputters.

I nod. “I want to get it over with.”

“Well, isn’t that the most romantic thing I’ve ever heard,” he says with a roll of his eyes.

I narrow my eyes. “It’s not meant to be romantic.”

“Fine,” he huffs, standing up and taking both of our plates. “Let me just clean up and I’ll meet you in the living room.”

Thrilled, I hop out of my seat and head to the other room. A few minutes later, Mav joins me and sits down awkwardly on the other side of the couch. I stare at the mountain of space between us and scoot closer. “I don’t have cooties.”

“You better hope you don’t since I’m actually about to kiss you,” he mumbles, looking almost reluctant as he closes the distance just a bit. “So... what do we do?”

This is the point where I flush. I’m just as lost as he is. I have no idea how to kiss someone. Neither does he. We’re just two awkward virgins fumbling through this together. So, I do the only thing I can think of.

“YouTube.”

Mav chuckles as I pick up the TV controller and flip over to the apps section. Turns out typing ‘How to Kiss’ brings up multiple very interesting videos. I click on the one that seems the most legit, and we both watch in rapt attention as the lady on the screen gives some very detailed instructions.

“So, we just kinda like, open our mouths and smash them together?” Mav asks, tilting his head to the side as he watches the lady make out with a mannequin. “I don’t think I’m ready for tongue.”

“Okay. We got this,” I say, hyping us up. “You’re double majoring in biochemistry and theoretical math, and I’m a physics major. We’re smart. We can figure it out.”

Mav nods, cracking his neck side to side like he does before he starts a quest. We both turn to each other at the same time and lean in and?—

“Ow!” he shouts, rubbing at his nose. It seems that we were clumsy enough to smash our noses together instead of our lips. “That hurt!”

“Sorry,” I squeak, fidgeting with my superhero watch. “Um, maybe I should grab your face?”

He narrows his eyes. “You’re liable to rip it off at this point.”

I roll my eyes and reach for him, cupping his cheeks as I move closer. “Shut up. Let’s try it.”

“I just open my mouth like this?”

I can’t help it. I cackle. He’s doing this weird thing that makes him look like he’s birthing a baby from his mouth. It’s like he’s trying to be a sperm whale and ring out a mating call. “What is that?”

“It’s supposed to be sexy,” he complains with a frown. “Was it not sexy?”

“Um, no?” I chuckle, laughing when he does it again. “Okay. Okay. Be serious, Mav.”

He sobers and gulps. I can see the way his Adam’s apple bobs as he tries to figure out where to put his hands. He settles for awkwardly placing them on my hips. “Let’s try this again.”

Very carefully , we lean toward each other, and I hiss when he catches my bottom lip. “You’re using too much teeth.”

“You’re not any better,” he snarks back, tightening his grip on my hips. “You have to open your mouth to kiss me.”

“Says who?”

“Says the lady from YouTube.”

“Fine,” I huff. Crap, why is this so hard? “Maybe...let’s just do what comes naturally. Okay?”

He nods. This time when we lean into each other, it’s a lot less clumsy. The second my lips properly settle on his, it’s like it all clicks into place. Our lips brush against each other, and he opens up just a bit so I can slot my mouth against his. He tastes like marinara sauce and Mexican seasoning, but it’s actually not that unpleasant. I have a feeling there’s too much saliva being exchanged right now, I can feel it pooling on the corner of my lips, but fuck me it’s my first time.

“You taste like cherries,” he mumbles against my lips, his hands wandering up to settle on my back.

“Keep going,” I say, capturing his lips once more.

We kiss for a few more minutes, growing more confident by the second. What started out as a bit awkward and mechanical, slowly morphs into something natural and thrilling.

I actually like kissing.

Like a lot.

Mav seems to be enjoying it too because he pulls me closer as I brush my thumb against his jaw. We're so close I'm practically on his lap, but I don't think either of us care.

When we pull back, there's a bit of saliva that connects our lips, and we both chuckle as I wipe it away. Mav looks like he's caught in a bit of a daze, something unreadable in his green eyes that makes my stomach churn pleasantly. He looks really fucking hazy and satisfied, and a bolt of pride courses through me at the idea that I put that look on his face.

"Levi..." he whispers, resting his forehead against mine, a goofy smile on his lips. "That was?—"

Ping!

I throw myself across the couch and reach for my phone. I jump and squeal when I see that Asher Rashford texted me back.

Ash: Hi, Levi :)

"It's Asher!" I yell, hopping up and down as I wave the phone in front of Mav's face. "He got back to me!"

For a split second, something passes over Mav's face. His eyes widen a tad and his lips quirk downward, but that quickly disappears as he smiles softly at me. "I told you he would."

I cock my head and study him. "Are you okay?"

“Oh, me? Yeah,” he says, brushing me off with a wave of his hand. “Totally.”

“You’re not still thinking he’s using me, right?” I ask, a little bit of fear in my gut at the idea. “I mean, he even put a smiley face after his text.”

“I’m sure he means it, Levi,” he assures me, standing up as he rubs his hands up and down his thighs. “I think it’s great.”

I cheer again and clap my hands. I throw myself at Mav, wrapping my arms around his neck. It’s a bit awkward because he’s so much taller than I am, but he happily accepts the embrace. “Thank you so much for helping me.”

“Anything for you, Levi,” he whispers against my hair. “You know I’d do anything for you.”

I pull back and show us both my phone. “What should I text back?”

“Why are you asking me?” he chuckles. “I don’t know what to do either. I’m thinking?—”

“—the internet.”

We both laugh at the same time as we sit back down on the couch and start scrolling through my phone. We find out that the ‘hard-to-get’ strategy is an option, but I’m too excited to wait. So, we sit together and come up with my oh-so-eloquent reply.

Me: Hi!

“What do we do now?” I ask, looking up at Mav as he chews the inside of his cheek.

He raises his brows and scrunches his nose at our board game cabinet. “Wanna play a

game?”

I smile widely as I smack a kiss on his cheek. “Always.”

CHAPTER THREE

Mav

He doesn't know what he did to me.

As I watch him set up our game, his curly brown hair covering his eyes as he hunches over the board, he has no idea what just happened to me. His slim fingers put all the pieces together, and although I've felt them on me, it's never been like this before. His silly superhero watch ticks loudly, and I can feel it pounding in my ears.

I've never been kissed before. I never really wanted to. I always thought that I didn't need that type of physical connection.

But I was so wrong.

He still has a little flush on his cheeks, that adorable freckle by the corner of his lip taunting me.

I think that might have been the best moment of my life.

But he doesn't know that.

He can't know that. He's got Asher Rashford , and he doesn't need me ruining his chance with UA's Golden Boy.

So, I'll just keep this to myself.

He looks up at me, smile wide as he makes a stupid hand gesture at the game. He reaches for his slushy, and I want to kiss those red-stained lips again.

He tasted like cherry ice.

“You ready to play?” he asks, brows scrunching a bit, and I realize I’ve been staring at him way too long.

I clear my throat. “Always.”

CHAPTER FOUR

Levi

You're insane!!!

I giggle as I roll around my bed, pressing my phone against my flushed cheeks. I can't believe I'm texting Asher. Ever since two nights ago when Mav sent the first text, Asher and I have been texting nonstop. We haven't shared anything serious—just stupid, silly things—but I'm still starstruck that he's even bothering to reply.

"What is it now?" Mav asks as he carefully constructs my Lego spaceship, the same spaceship I've been neglecting in favor of texting. "Are you going to help?"

"He thinks that The Reckoning II is better than the original," I tell him, ignoring his question, and still laughing as I reread the text messages. "I told him he was insane."

Mav pinches his brows and wrinkles his lips in disgust. "That is insane. Doesn't he realize that the production value grossly decreased after they changed graphic designers?"

"At least he likes video games."

"Doesn't pardon his bad taste."

I throw my pillow at his head and he yelps when it almost hits his half-finished

spaceship. “He does not have bad taste.”

“He probably only likes it because there’s more blood.” He shakes his head and clicks his tongue. “So easily swayed. When are you two going on that date?”

I bite at my bottom lip. Ash and I haven’t really talked about that yet. Like I said, it’s mainly been pointless texts about our days and him giving me his football stats that I can’t even come close to understanding.

“I don’t know,” I admit. “I think the season is taking up all his time. But he still texts me everyday.”

“Two days.”

“Shut up.”

My phone pings.

Ash

Send me a pic?

I furrow my brows. “He wants a picture of me.”

“He what?” Mav asks, eyes widening. “Like a sex picture?”

“Do you think that’s what he means?” I question, playing with the band of my watch, my heart starting to race. “I...I don’t know how to take a sex picture.”

“I think they call them nudes.”

“Then I don’t think I can take a nude.”

Another ping.

Ash

Haha I just realized what that sounded like. Just of whatever you’re doing. I want to see your cute face :)

“Oh, okay. He just wants a regular picture,” I say with a sigh of relief. I am nowhere near ready to showcase my skinny body to him. Asher is human perfection—tall, broad, built—and I’m string cheese. Not even mozzarella. I’m like provolone.

I hop off my bed and plop myself on the floor next to Mav. Before he knows it, I’m snapping a picture of us—me smiling and Mav looking confused—and sending it to Asher Rashford.

“Why am I in it?” Mav asks, looking a bit annoyed as he peeks over my shoulder at my phone. “He asked for a picture of you.”

“Well, he asked to see what I was doing, and I’m hanging out with you,” I reply with a shrug. I look as the three dots appear and disappear.

Ash

Who’s that?

That’s Mav. He’s my best friend. We’re building a spaceship.

It takes me two seconds to hear just how dorky that sounds, but I feel better when I see his reply.

Ash

Oh, cool!

“He thinks we’re cool,” I say, proudly displaying the text messages. “Do you think he likes Legos?”

Mav snorts. “I think he likes getting tackled and rubbing rocks together.”

“Don’t be mean,” I pout. “What’s gotten into you?”

Since I started texting Asher, Mav’s been acting all squirrely. Sometimes Mav will be dismissive of him and other times he’ll be plain cruel, suggesting all sorts of rude things about him.

Mav grits his teeth and turns to me, something akin to fury in his eyes. “What if he actually wanted nudes? Would you have sent them?”

“I...” I trail off because I don’t know. I’m not entirely comfortable with the idea, but this is Asher Rashford we’re talking about. If he wants to see it then... “Maybe?”

“You shouldn’t be letting him pressure you into things.”

“I’m not!” I argue, throwing my hands up in the air. “Maybe this is what people do nowadays? They send sexual pictures to people they like.”

“What would you do if he sent you one?”

I blush. I’ve never actually seen another penis. I don’t even watch porn, almost embarrassed and slightly paranoid to look it up. “It would be my first.”

“You’re not ready for that, Levi,” Mav says, but it sounds like there’s condescension in his voice, and I don’t like it.

“I can be ready for it!” I yell and, to prove my point— “Let me see your penis.”

Mav chokes on the water he was drinking. He whips his head at me and gasps. “What did you just ask me?”

“Take it out,” I demand, planting my hands on my hips. “I’m ready to see one. I’ll prove it.”

“I’m not going to show you my penis.”

“Why not?”

“Because it’s weird?”

“But we’re best friends.”

“If I show you my penis, will you drop this?” he asks, and when I nod enthusiastically, he rolls his eyes and curses. “Fine.”

My heart starts to race as Mav stands up. This is actually happening. I’m going to see a penis that isn’t mine. A dick . Maybe I should start calling it that. I feel a jolt of excitement as he starts pulling down his pants. When they’re around his ankles, he hooks his thumbs into his tighty-whities but hesitates.

“Come on,” I whine. “You said you’d show me.”

“I can’t believe I’m doing this,” he mumbles under his breath. With a deep sigh, he drops his underwear.

Okay. He was right. It's weird.

"You're not hard," I point out, eyes locked on his dick as he sits back down. "Why aren't you hard?"

"Because I'm not turned on?" he questions right back. His freckled cheeks are flaming, and he looks like he doesn't know where to put his hands. "Stop staring at my dick."

"Get turned on," I command.

He rolls his eyes. "It's not that easy."

Really? We're twenty-year-old virgins. He should get turned on by the wind. I push that thought aside. He's probably just feeling a bit awkward and unsure. I mean, I did ask him out of the blue to see his penis—correction: dick—so he's probably a little nervous.

"Can I get it hard?" I ask tentatively, peeking up at him through my lashes. I see his dick twitch, and it seems like Mini-Mav likes the idea. "Would you be okay with that?"

"Um..." He quickly covers his dick and shakes his head. "I don't think that's a good idea."

"Why?" I ask, confused until it hits me. "Wait. Do you not find me sexy?"

He chokes out an awkward laugh and shakes his head. "What does that have to do with it?"

"If you found me sexy, you'd be hard," I reason, scooting closer to him. "I can be

sexy.”

Well, I think I can be sexy. It can't be that hard, right? A sudden hit of panic strikes me. If Mav doesn't find me sexually appealing, maybe Asher won't either. I start to actually panic, my breath coming out in short bursts. Mav notices and shoots his hands out, grounding me to him as he rubs up and down my arms.

“Hey, you're sexy,” he says quickly. “I didn't mean you weren't?—”

“B-But what i-if he doesn't thi-think so?”

“Don't say that,” he whispers. He gulps and takes my hand in his. “We can practice, right? Do you want to practice?”

“Y-Yes.”

“Do you want to get me hard?”

I nod shakily. He guides my hand to his crotch and when I brush my fingers against his soft dick, I let out a deep breath. I make a loose grip with my hand and stroke him gently, distracting myself with the feel of silky smooth skin under my fingertips. It feels really nice. His dick gets half-hard and he starts letting out little pants, triumph coursing through me at the sound.

“Is...is this working?” I ask softly, already feeling my panic starting to fade. “You're still not fully hard.”

“It feels good, Levi,” he says, jaw clenched and breath hitching when I brush my fingers against his balls. “Just keep going?”

I nod and continue. After a few more seconds of touching and exploring him, his dick

starts to plump up. I think to myself what someone would do in this situation. “Can I kiss you?”

“Levi...” He shakes his head, but there’s something in his eyes I can’t read. Maybe he doesn’t want to kiss me. Maybe he’s just humoring me because I fully freaked out on him.

“I’m sorry,” I stutter out, taking my hand back. “I’m not very good at this.”

His green eyes soften. “That’s not true. You can...you can kiss me again.”

“You don’t mean that,” I say back, scooting away from him. “I’m being weird and pressuring you to do stuff. Ugh, I’m terrible. I?—”

But I don’t get to finish my sentence because a pair of warm lips settle on mine. I’m taken aback for just a second until my body melts into him. Almost as if completely natural, I deepen the kiss. I hesitantly stroke my tongue against his, and I must have done something right because he groans into my mouth.

The position is a little uncomfortable. We’re both hunched over and craning our necks to reach each other, so I do the only thing that comes to mind. I crawl onto his bare lap, wrapping my legs around his waist.

His breath hitches, but his hands fly to my back. “What are... what are you doing?”

“I’m trying to be sexy,” I murmur, nipping at his bottom lip. “Is it working?”

“Yeah, Levi,” he whispers, taking one of my hands and guiding it down to his dick. “It’s working.”

I gasp as I feel him under my touch. He’s hard as a rock. Because of me . With a

confidence I didn't know I had, I dive right back in. I capture his lips with mine, thrusting my tongue into his mouth as I stroke him. I pull back to peek down and shudder. "You're so big, Mav."

"You can't say stuff like that when you're doing this," he grunts, shutting his eyes tightly when I make a fist around him again. "You just can't."

"Why not?" I pout.

"Because I'll come if you do."

My heart races and I lick my lips. "So, come."

His eyes snap open. "What did you just say?"

"Come, Mav," I whisper, staring into his eyes as I flick my thumb against his leaking head. "It's okay. It's just me."

He looks like he wants to argue with me, but I can feel him pulsing in my hand. When I look down, his tip is angry and red, straining with the effort to stay under control. I glance back up at him and he must see something in my eyes because he nods. "Okay."

"What do I do?"

"Just keep touching me," he says, whimpering when I squeeze him. "And, um, pick up the pace a little bit."

"Like this?" I start to move my hand faster. "Am I doing it right?"

"Y-Yes," he breathes, moving his hands to my hips, tightening his grip. "Keep

touching me like that.”

A thought strikes me. “Can I put you in my mouth?”

I’ve always been curious about giving head. The concept itself seems a bit uncomfortable and—looking at how big Mav is—a little scary. But I want to try. I realize quickly that I’m tired of being so inexperienced. I want to live . I want to try everything.

I’m already moving off Mav’s lap when his breath hitches. “Isn’t that a bit too far?”

“Only if we let it be,” I counter. This is Mav. I trust him with my life. Nothing could ever be weird or off-limits for us. He’s seen me at my worst and at my best. If there’s anyone I’d feel comfortable trying this with for the first time, it’s him. “Please?”

He hesitates again but finally nods.

“Will you tell me if I’m doing it wrong?”

He lets out a pained chuckle. “I don’t think you can do it wrong.”

“What if I bite off your dick?”

“Um, don’t bite off my dick?”

Sure, as if it’s that easy. With sweaty palms and a fluttering heart, I lean down and tentatively flick my tongue against his tip. His precum is a bit salty but not unpleasant. I lick all over him, getting used to his taste—musky but almost sweet—before I suck on his head. I look up at him and find his stare burning into me. His jaw is hanging open and he seems mesmerized.

“Good?”

“Really good. Why don’t you see how much you can take?”

I’m a bit nervous as I open my mouth as wide as I possibly can and slide down his dick. When it hits the back of my throat, I gag. “Shit, I’m sorry.”

“No, don’t apologize,” he says quickly, palming the back of my head. “That was so sexy, baby.”

I snort and raise my brows at him. “Baby?”

“It seemed right in the moment,” he says, eyes embarrassed and cheeks pink. “Should I not call you baby?”

After thinking about it for a moment, I shake my head. “I think dirty talk is appropriate in a situation like this. Say some more.”

“Um, okay.” He swallows and searches for words. “You looked so good choking on my dick?”

I laugh at that, pressing a kiss to the underside of said dick. “I think you need to sound more confident for it to work.”

“Fine.” He rolls his eyes and laces his fingers through my hair. “Choke on my dick, baby.”

Shit. I immediately get hard. Mav’s not really the assertive type, but the sound of his deep voice commanding me to get him off makes my stomach flutter. Before I know it, I’m taking him back into my mouth and shoving him down my throat. I gag around him, spit pooling around the corners of my mouth, but Mav’s pleasure-filled groan

makes it okay.

“Fuck, yes,” he grunts. He pets the back of my head as he looks down at me. “Can I move?”

I nod around his dick and relax my throat as he starts gently thrusting. With every moan and every twitch of his hips, something builds deep in my gut. Mav spews out more dirty words that make my dick jerk, and I don’t want this to end.

It’s official. I really like sucking dick.

“Shit, Levi, I’m going to come.”

I pull back and cock my head to the side. “You could come in my mouth, right? That’s what people do.”

He shakes his head. “Not if you don’t want me to.”

“No, I do,” I say quickly. “Um, come in my mouth, please?”

Mav chuckles, but it turns into another long drawn-out sound of ecstasy as I suck him. “Keep going, baby. I’m so close.”

I double down on my effort, tears pooling in the corners of my eyes. And when I finally taste him, it’s weird at first. I don’t think I really care for it until it hits the back of my throat, and I realize why I actually do like it. It’s not because of the taste—cum is actually a bit gross if you think about it for too long—but because of the sense of accomplishment I get.

I made Mav feel good. Really good and that thought alone has me coming in my pants.

When I pull back, Mav looks like a brand-new person. It's similar to the way he looked when we first kissed, and I wonder if he's just as awestruck at our sexual exploration as I am. He brings his thumb up and wipes away some cum from the corner of my mouth. Almost hesitantly, he places it between my lips, and I flick my tongue out without a second thought.

"Suck."

I suck on his thumb, closing my eyes and humming around him because damn this is nice. "Did I do good, Mavy?"

"Really good. You did so well," he praises, brushing his fingers against my cheek. When he glances down at my sweats, his eyes widen and he curses. "Did you come, baby?"

I nod, a tad bit embarrassed. "Um, yeah."

"Come here," he says, helping me up. I'm a bit lightheaded, and it doesn't help that he kisses me breathlessly. "Do you like it when I call you baby?"

"It makes me feel special," I admit against his lips. "I think I like dirty talk."

"Me too," he chuckles.

"Do you think Asher will talk dirty to me?" I ask, wondering if it would feel the same if he did it. I've always thought it was cringy, but it was nice with Mav, so maybe I was just being close-minded. Or maybe...

Mav snaps his head back. He opens and closes his mouth awkwardly and nods. "Um, yeah. Probably. You suck dick really well."

“Thanks, Mavy,” I say, still feeling like I’m floating on air. “I’m tired.”

“Here, let’s get you changed first, okay?”

I nod dumbly and let him get me up on unsteady feet after he adjusts his clothes. He then carefully slides off my pants, and I can’t be bothered to feel mortified that he’s looking at my dick when he takes off my sticky underwear. He goes to my drawer while I laze around and brings back a pair of clean briefs. He puts them on me and then kisses my forehead. “Get in bed and go to sleep, Levi.”

I crawl under the sheets but then remember something. “Wait, my phone.”

“Right,” Mav says, his voice a bit short as he retrieves it from the floor and hands it to me. “Here you go. Good night, b—Levi.”

“Good night,” I call back, watching as he leaves my room. My eyelids feel heavy as I fight back sleep so I can check my phone.

Ash

Good night, cutie :)

Yeah, it is a good night.

CHAPTER FIVE

Levi

He keeps staring at my lips.

“Do I have something?” I ask Mav, wiping some queso from the corner of my mouth.

“Did I get it?”

Mav blinks himself out of whatever trance he was in. He clears his throat and digs into his nachos. “Yeah. You also have some cilantro in your teeth.”

“Damn. Thanks,” I say, using my fork as a mirror to pick it out.

We’re at our favorite taco joint in Arborville. The authentic quality kind, not the generic drive-throughs where everything tastes the same. That doesn’t stop me, however, from slurping on the slushy I picked up at the gas station on the way here. Cherry ice and guac. Yum.

“What do you want to do tonight?” he asks, rubbing his stomach as he leans back in his seat. “Some DND?”

“Actually...” I trail off, fingering my phone next to me, an unopened text message mocking me. “Asher invited me to a party.”

To say I was blown away would be an understatement. There’s a party going on tonight to celebrate their win this weekend against CGU, and he wants me to meet

him there. When he first approached me for a date, I guess I was an idiot for thinking it would be something sweet and romantic. He did say that this was a pre-date hangout, so I guess romantic candles and flowers might still be in my future.

“A college party?” Mav asks, choking on his soda. “We’ve never been to a college party before.”

“A frat party,” I correct. “We’ve been to parties before.”

“Playing Anarchy in Joshua’s basement doesn’t count.”

I slump in my seat and pout. “Should I not go?”

“I didn’t say that,” he argues, and his eyes find my lips again. Damn, did I get the whole restaurant on my mouth? “What did you tell him?”

“I haven’t responded yet.” I open up the message when an idea strikes me. “Hey, Mavyyyyy .”

He tilts his head but then he realizes what I’m getting at. He shakes his head firmly and narrows his eyes. “No.”

“But—”

“No.”

“It could be fun.”

“It won’t.”

“Come on, I made you come. You can do this for me.”

He stutters and his jaw drops. “You can’t use that as a reason!”

“Why not?” I argue, crossing my arms over my chest like a petulant child. “It was good, wasn’t it? I got all sexy and you called me baby.”

“Which I’m severely regretting now,” he mumbles under his breath.

I pout and my heart races. “Wait, you do?”

I didn’t think Mav regretted what we did. It was an amazing experience for me—giving head for the first time to my best friend—but maybe it was just pity on his part. The thought that I potentially made him uncomfortable sends a jolt of panic through me. What if he hates me now? He’s my best friend. I couldn’t stand it if he?—

“Levi, breathe,” Mav says, reaching across the table for my hand. He squeezes it tightly, rubbing his thumb across my palm, and the touch grounds me. “I didn’t mean it, okay. You were very sexy, and I loved every minute of it.”

I let out a choked cry. “You mean it?”

“Of course,” he says sweetly. He picks up my hand and kisses the back of it, holding it against his lips for a second. “I’ll go to the party with you.”

“Yeah?” I ask, wiping a single tear away with the back of my hand. “Are you sure?”

“It could be fun,” he says, but he cringes as he does.

“It will be,” I say. I don’t know why I do it, but I lean over the table and press a quick kiss to his unprepared lips. “Thanks, Mavy.”

He blinks back at me in a daze until a slow smile works its way onto his lips. “Yeah, no problem.”

“This is a problem.”

I bite the corner of my lip worryingly as I look around the crowded party. Yeah, this is not okay. Mav and I stick out like sore thumbs. We had no idea what to wear, so we both settled for something sensible. Turns out, wearing button-downs and khakis to a college party isn’t exactly the move. We keep getting odd looks from football bros as they pass us, and I even think someone snickers in our direction.

“Well, it’s too late to go back and change now.” I take his hand in mine and tug him. “Should we maybe get a drink?”

He nods. “Just a light one. We’ve never drank before.”

Damn, we are such losers. Either way, I agree that we should keep things light. We make our way into the crowded kitchen and look at our options. I take one whiff of the beer coming from the keg and that’s a no for me. Mav holds up something that looks like an energy drink on crack and shrugs. He pours a little for himself in a separate cup and then hands me the rest. I cringe when I sip on it. It’s a far cry from my slushies.

“Do you think Asher is here?” I ask, standing on the tip of my toes to look over the crowd. “Should I text him?”

Mav furrows his brows and his jaw clenches. It’s a weird look on him, but I don’t have the time to question him about it before he points ahead of us. “Don’t think that’s going to be a problem.”

I look at where he’s pointing and my whole body flushes because Asher Rashford is

so insanely hot. He's wearing something only a bad boy from a romance novel would wear—a leather jacket paired with the tightest black jeans I've ever seen—and I'm struck. I'm not prepared for the way his face splits into a wide grin when he sees me or how he sidesteps all the girls that try to come onto him as he makes his way to me.

“Levi!” he shouts over the music, stopping directly in front of me. He looks almost sheepish as he runs his hand through all that luscious hair. “I'm so glad you made it!”

“Well, yeah...” I say lamely, taking another sip of my drink. It tastes disgusting, but they don't call it liquid courage for nothing. “Um, hi.”

“Hi,” he says back, still looking way too enthusiastic at the sight of me. “You look great.”

I can't believe that's true, but when he says it that way it's hard not to believe him. “Really?”

He leans down and I nearly pass out when he kisses my cheek. He hovers his lips next to my ear. “The cutest one at the party.”

This has to be a dream.

A cough behind us knocks me out of my thoughts. We both turn to look at Mav who's got his arms crossed over his chest, an almost angry look on his face. Of course, he's pissed. I haven't introduced him. “This is my best friend, Mav. He's the one I build spaceships with.”

“Hi, Mav.”

“Yeah.”

I narrow my eyes at my best friend. What's his deal? This is Asher Rashford and he's acting like a jerk. Asher doesn't seem to notice or care. He just continues to smile at Mav before turning back to me. "Think you want to dance with me?"

I get nervous because I've never danced with a guy before. Well, if you don't count Mav and I playing Just Dance . I guess this is a week of firsts for me. If I can suck a penis—dick—I can definitely dance in front of a room full of people.

"I don't know how," I say honestly, toeing the ground because this is mortifying.

He just shrugs and links his pinky with mine. "I'll show you. Dance with me."

I look back at Mav, almost pleading with him to be okay with being left alone. He must see the nervous excitement in my eyes because he gives me a roll of his eyes and a curt nod. I swear I want to kiss him. He's the best friend ever. I turn back to Asher. "Yeah, I can dance."

He leads us away from Mav and the kitchen and into the living room that's been converted into a dance floor. I down my drink quickly and set it down on a passing table. I'm surprised by how it hits me. I'm a little fuzzy as Asher brings me to the middle of the dance floor, and I'm still shocked he's okay being seen with me.

He places his hands on my hips and pulls me flush against him. That big strong body pressing into mine, I almost faint. There's a sensual song playing in the background, and I let him lead me. We grind against each other, and I can't help but let my hands wander. I have a free pass to touch him however I want, and I'm sure as hell going to take advantage of it.

I run my hands up his firm chest and he takes me by surprise when his hands wander lower and settle on my ass. Not that I'm complaining. He can touch me wherever he wants, especially when there are two of him.

Wait, what?

I really shouldn't have eaten five tacos before coming here because before I know it, I'm barfing all over Asher Rashford's perfectly shiny black combat boots.

"Shit," he says, placing a hand on my shoulder to steady me as I straighten back up. "Levi, are you okay?"

"Levi!"

Mav comes running up next to me. Without any hesitation, he takes the sleeve of his shirt and wipes off vomit from the corner of my lips. "What's wrong?"

"I don't feel good, Mavy," I say, coughing as I clutch my stomach. "Oh God..."

I don't know what happens next because suddenly I'm outside and the cool air assaults me. I'm bent over and vomiting into something green and prickly. My throat hurts so much and the bile stings as it comes back up.

"It's okay, Levi." Mav rubs my back. "Let it all out, baby."

"Is he okay?"

I recognize Asher's voice, but I don't recognize the venom in Mav's that follows. "No, he's obviously not. I'm taking him home."

"Wait, let me call you a ride," Asher says and just craning my neck up to look at him makes another rush of nausea hit me.

"We're fine," Mav snaps. He pulls me against him, and I'm getting vomit all over his shirt, but he doesn't care. "Go."

Asher looks like he wants to argue. He clenches his fists at his side but huffs through his nose. He turns to look at me, and there's concern marring his beautiful features. "Text me when you get home safe, okay?"

I can barely even nod before Mav's leading me away. I don't know how Mav manages it, but he picks me up and guides my legs around his waist. Mav's a skinny guy like me, but he has height to his advantage. I close my eyes and try not to puke again from the swaying motion as he carries me. All the while, he's whispering soothing words into my ear that I can barely understand.

When I open my eyes again, we're in my bedroom and Mav is stripping me out of my clothes. I can't move so I just let him tuck me into bed without a fight.

"You'll be okay," he says, leaning over to kiss my forehead. "You just need to sleep it off."

"Stay," I whine, pulling at his arm when he goes to leave. "Stay with me, Mavy."

Mav bites his bottom lip and looks back at my bedroom door. I'm not coherent enough to try and consider what he's thinking. Either way, it doesn't matter because he's crawling into bed beside me.

But he can't be comfortable with all those clothes on, can he?

"What are you doing, Levi?" he whispers, breath hitching when I start to unbutton his shirt.

"Too many clothes," I mumble dizzily, pushing his shirt off his frame, and exposing all his creamy freckle-covered skin. "Take your pants off."

"Levi—"

“Get naked with me, Mavy,” I slur, already unbuckling his belt. My clumsy fingers can’t seem to get his button undone though. “Stupid buttons.”

“Here, I got it,” he says, and his own fingers seem to tremble as he undoes his pants and pushes them down his hips.

“Underwear too.”

“Levi. You’re drunk.”

“Am not.” I pout. I fumble my way through getting his underwear off, accidentally touching his dick and making his breath hitch. When he’s completely naked beside me, I starfish on top of him, skin against skin, and breathe a sigh of relief. “That’s better.”

“Levi...”

“Hush,” I say. I try to press my finger against his lips but end up smacking him in the face. “Sleep.”

I close my heavy eyes and let Mav’s scent envelop me. Safe. That’s what I feel right now.

Like nothing can touch me when I’m with my Mavy.

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CHAPTER SIX

Mav

He's pressed up against me.

He's snoring loudly, a bit of drool drops from his lips landing on my chest, but I don't care.

Levi is naked on top of me and sleeping like a baby.

This is a problem. A major problem, but I...I don't care.

When I saw him dancing with Asher, I wanted to rip those hands off my best friend. When he made Levi smile, I wanted to scream that those same pink lips had been wrapped around my dick.

But I didn't. Because Levi was happy. Levi was excited and that's what matters, right?

This is just a weird crush. My best friend is entering a probable romantic relationship, and I'm alone.

Is that why it feels so right to hold him?

I shouldn't, but I let my hands wander. They palm his cute bubble butt, the same butt Asher touched, but it's not his.

It's mine .

Every part of Levi belongs to me. It always has. Since we met when we were five, he's always been mine. Maybe not this way. Maybe not in the way that takes my breath away, but I know it now.

I want Levi. To kiss him, date him, love him. I want it all.

Now I just have to figure out if Levi could want that too.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Levi

I wake up with a groan. Every bone in my body aches as I turn over onto my back, my stomach curdling unpleasantly. Why does everything hurt?

And why the fuck am I naked?

“Nice, you’re up.”

“Barely,” I mutter, wincing at the pounding it sends through my head. I manage to blink an eye open, vision settling as I take in Mav sitting on the edge of the bed. “What happened last night?”

Mav frowns, reaching a hand to push back my sweat-matted hair. “I think you got wasted.”

If my eyes were physically capable of widening without giving me a stab of pain, they would. “I had one drink.”

“I think that was enough.”

I shut my eyes and huff, bringing my hands up to my face. “Seriously? That’s so lame.” A sudden thought hits me and has me shooting up, barely keeping myself decent with the sheet draped across my lap. “Wait, did Asher see me drunk?”

“You...” Mav hesitates, scratching the back of his neck. “You might have thrown up all over his shoes.”

No!

“Oh my God. Please, if there is a Lord, tell me that’s not true.” I whine, scrambling at the side table for my phone, looking to see if I have any notifications. “Was he mad?”

I scroll through my missed messages and see a couple from Asher. I breathe a sigh of relief when they’re just texts wondering how I’m doing and if I got home okay. I shoot him back a quick reply, profusely apologizing for vomiting on what I remember are a very nice pair of boots.

Mav quirks a brow as I send the message. “Well?”

“Not mad,” I tell him, burrowing under the covers to try and hide from the world. “I’m just mortified. What kind of loser gets trashed after one drink and can’t hold their alcohol?”

Mav tries to work his hand under the blanket to get me to come out, but I stay locked up. Nope. The world can swallow me whole for all I care. I’ll just stay here until the robots inevitably take control and then I’ll have a bigger problem on my hands.

“Levi...” he begins. He huffs, finally able to pull the sheet back to expose my face. “You’re not a loser.”

“Says the one who stayed perfectly sober the entire night.” I flip onto my stomach, hiding my head in the pillow. “Asher is never going to want to go out on a date with me again.”

I feel Mav’s stare burning through my back. After a moment, his fingertips make

contact with the back of my neck, featherlight and ticklish touches I love. I purr like a cat, angling my head to the side so he can reach my shoulders. Growing up close, Mav's gotten really good at knowing how to calm me down, and 'ghost kisses'—as we like to call them—always do the trick.

"Mmm, so good," I mumble, nuzzling my nose into his thigh. "More."

He chuckles softly, trailing his fingers down my bare back, his blunt nails lightly scratch against my skin giving me goosebumps. "Hey, Levi?"

"Yeah?"

"Would you want to go on a date tonight?" He gulps audibly, his fingers stilling for a moment. "With me?"

I snap my eyes open and turn fully to him, furrowing my brows. "Like a practice date?"

"Sure," he says with a shrug, but he can't quite meet my eyes. "It can be a practice date. We can go to that pizza place you love so much."

"You hate that place."

"But you love it."

I don't even have to think it over for a second. A night out with my favorite person? "Fuck yeah, let's do it." I snuggle back into the pillow. "Keep going, Mavy."

Once again, he chuckles, but continues on giving me ghost kisses that light up my skin, make my eyes droop, and lull me back to sleep.

“So, what do we do now?”

Mav stares at me, fidgeting with the top buttons of his shirt. I don't know why he dressed up so much to just grab some pizza. I know this is supposed to be a practice date, but he didn't need to go all out for me. I love him in his comic book t-shirts and ripped jeans. Dressed in a pair of nice slacks and a button-down shirt, he looks like he's ready for a job interview.

“Well, it's a date,” he says, waving a hand between us. “We get to know each other.”

I snort as I play with my soda straw. “But we already know everything about each other.”

“You don't know everything about me,” he argues a little petulantly.

I raise both brows at that. “Oh, really ? You want to go there?” When he doesn't answer, I crack my knuckles dramatically, dropping my neck from side to side as I prepare for battle. “I know that when you were fifteen you had your wisdom teeth removed. You're somehow scared of spiders but fearless when it comes to cockroaches. You like to sing in the shower, very badly, might I add. Your favorite color is teal and your favorite food is jelly beans.”

“That's all superficial shit,” he counters with a laugh.

I roll my eyes as I prop my elbows on the table and rest my chin in my hands. “Okay, whatever. Now, you tell me about me.”

“You play with your watch when you're nervous.”

“Everyone knows that.”

“It’s because I gave it to you when we were six,” he continues, cheeks flushing a bit.
“Do you remember that?”

I wrinkle my nose as I think back to it. I can faintly recall when Mav gifted me my superhero watch, claiming he didn’t want it, and encouraging me to take it. “Yeah, you said your mom already got you one.”

“I lied.”

“What?” I ask, rearing my head back a little. “Why did you do that?”

He scratches the back of his neck, pale cheeks flushing as he nibbles on his bottom lip. “Because you liked it and I’d give you anything you wanted, Levi. Then and now.”

Something warm bubbles in my heart. I chew on the inside of my cheek and squirm in my seat. That’s... That’s so fucking cute. Little six-year-old Mav was so considerate. I look around the crowded restaurant and then at the booth separating us. On an instinct I didn’t know I possessed, I slide out of my side of the booth, round the table, and settle myself next to him.

“What are you doing?” he asks, breaths stuttering when I take his hand and lace our fingers together.

“We’re on a date.” I squeeze his hand, leaning up to press a quick kiss to his cheek.
“We should be close. I mean... That’s what people on dates do, right?”

He seems to hold his breath for a moment. He looks around just like I did before, and I’m not too sure why it hurts when he takes his hand away. I flush and am about to crawl back to my side of the booth when he slings his arm around my shoulders and pulls me into his side. When I look back up at him, my Mavy is transformed into

someone else. There's a confident smirk on his face, something sensual in his eyes as he trails his nose down my temple.

"You know what else people do on dates, baby?" he asks, kissing the tip of my ear.

"I..." I trail off on a little gasp when his other hand moves to my thigh, inching far too high for public decency. "W-What?"

"This."

With almost practiced ease, he tips my chin up and molds his lips against mine. I sink into him, letting out a small whimper that doesn't sound like me as he takes charge of my mouth, dominating me in a slow dripping lust, hand squeezing my thigh, his pinky brushing the tip of my aching dick.

"Mav..." I breathe against his lips, head rolling back when he starts to nip at my neck. "We're in public."

He chuckles, licking at the skin he's abusing. "I know, but you're just so hot. I can't help myself around you."

I grow confused. This is supposed to be a practice date but... He sounds so genuine. It makes my heart race a little, butterflies erupt in my stomach as my heart responds as if this were a real date. It's thrilling but a little terrifying all the same. I open my mouth because I just need to get my head straight and say the first thing I can think of. "Do you think Asher will do this on our date?"

Mav stiffens, lips pausing right at my jaw. I swear he lets out a little growl while tightening his arm around me, which makes my confused dick give a little twitch. "You're not with him right now, Levi. You're with me."

“I-I know,” I stammer, nodding enthusiastically when he doubles down on his efforts to make me lose my mind. My eyes widen when he fully cups me through my pants, massaging my cock with purposeful strokes and squeezes. I glance around but see that nobody’s paying attention to us, and the tables are angled so nobody could really see his hand unless they tried. Either way, the idea of doing this in public makes me wiggle as my balls tighten. “Mavy...”

“You think you’re going to make a mess, baby?” he questions, hot breath filling my ear and making me moan lightly. “Going to cream in those pretty little panties you wear?”

My face heats up. I don’t... “How do you know about those?”

“Found them in the laundry one day but didn’t want to embarrass you,” he says, lowering my zipper slightly so the pink lace I wear peeks out through the gap. “You thought you could hide these pretty things from me? Why'd you wear them tonight, Levi? Wanted to dress up for me?”

I shake my head but that’s not entirely true. I did have a choice between my usual underwear and the pretty things I keep locked away for special moments. I usually only wear them in private, just to see my own reflection, but I never thought he would know. I picked this particular pair out, my favorite, and for some reason my mind is congratulating me on that choice when he lets out a satisfied groan. “Are you going to...”

“Am I going to make you come?” he questions in my ear, fingering the lace wrapped around my cock. “I don’t know, baby. Do you want to?”

I throw my head back when he speeds up his breath, eyes darting around the restaurant to make sure we’re still not being watched. “I... Yes. Yes, please.”

“Say it,” he demands, licking the corner of my jaw. “Say my name when you get those panties wet for me.”

The visual, the way he’s talking to me, it’s like he’s a whole other person.

And my body fucking loves it.

“Mav —”

I almost come on a shout but his lips are there to silence me. He swallows my orgasm, milking me dry as my tiny lace panties fill up with my cum. Once the shudders die down and I can think again, I find it odd that I’m not panicking.

This isn’t like me at all. I don’t do these kinds of things, but I guess with Mav I’ve always felt safe. Not once tonight did I feel like he was putting me in danger of embarrassing myself. I felt secure, comfortable, and so fucking hot .

“Um, Mavy?” I ask, letting out a small gasp when he dips his fingers into my panties before zipping me back up. “What?—”

My question is answered when he takes his cum-covered fingers and stuffs them in his mouth, keeping his eyes trained on mine as he licks my release off his skin. He pulls his fingers out with a smirk. “You taste good, baby.”

My heart stops. Since when has Mav been so...attractive? He’s not an ugly guy, and I’ve always appreciated his looks, but tonight he’s like a magnet I’m drawn to. His charisma, his charm, it’s all amped up, but it doesn’t feel disingenuous. Just like him but a little bit bolder, more confident, more adventurous.

Suddenly, I don’t want to be at the pizza shop anymore. Not because I’m upset but because I want it to be just him and I, at home in our pajamas, watching movies

together. “Can we go?”

Horror strikes his face and all that sexy confident Maverick fades. “Shit. Did I go too far? I’m sorry?—”

“I just...” I swallow hard. Am I really going to say this? “I want to fast forward to the end of the date.”

He relaxes but looks at me questioningly. “The end of the date?”

“When two people like each other, they go home together. Well, in the movies they do.” I play with the buttons of his shirt, scooting closer to him as I ghost my lips over his. “And, um, they do... stuff.”

“S—Stuff?”

“Like...” You can do this, Levi. Be brave. Be bold. “Like sex.”

He nearly jumps away from me, almost like I’ve shocked him, and his jaw drops as he stares. “Sex? Sex. Like you want me to put my...and you’re going to...with me? The sex?”

I know it’s sudden but, yeah, I do want that.

Maverick was my first kiss, my first blowjob, the first person to ever make me come, and I want him to be the first person inside me. Instead of fear and nervousness at the thought of taking this next step, all I feel is excitement. It’s not a rush to get it over with, but a need to just be as close to him as possible, a need my heart doesn’t want to ignore. “Yes. Is that okay? Do you want to fuck me, Mavy?”

Damn, Levi. Go off.

Instead of answering me with his words, he nearly shoves me out of the booth so hard I fall on my ass. He curses as he frantically grabs my hands, tugging me away and toward the door. “Home. Now .”

Good thing we’ve already paid.

I can’t believe I never realized how handsome Mav is before today.

Standing in the middle of the room, the soft light coming from the lamp on my side table creates shadows on his face that make him look like a movie star. His eyes are hooded with lust, but I can see his fingers trembling at his sides.

“So...” I start, rocking on my heels with a gulp. “What do we do?”

He traps his bottom lip between his teeth with barely there restraint. “We should get naked, I think.” I nod, grabbing the hem of my shirt, but he seizes my wrist. “No, um, let me.”

I nod through a shuddering breath, freezing with anticipation as he fingers the skin just above my jeans. With slow and methodical movements, he raises my shirt inch by inch, fingers trailing on the skin he exposes. “Arms up, baby.”

I do as he says and he slips my shirt off, tossing it carelessly to the side. He kneels, hands squeezing my thighs as he falls, his open mouth panting against my jeans. I watch mesmerized as he starts unzipping my jeans, hooking his fingers around the band. When he exposes the frilly pink lace, he groans. “Are these uncomfortable?”

I nod. My underwear is caked in cum and the lace is sticking to me. He nods back, taking the panties and my jeans along with them as he strips me. I raise my foot when he taps it then do the same with the other side until he’s pulling off my socks and I’m left completely naked.

“What about you?” I question softly, reaching for him when he stands. “My turn.”

He lets me take his clothes off with the same care and delicateness he did mine. Mav’s skinny, but he’s more built than I remember. There’s no muscle or bulk, but there’s tone. There’s also the little white scar from where he got his appendix taken out, and the birthmark he has that looks like Florida. He’s perfect, I realize, as I read the story of his life written on his skin.

A story I’ve been a part of.

“What now?” I let him take the lead, but he looks nervous. It’s like he wants this to happen but doesn’t exactly know how to get us there. Me neither, if I’m being honest. I don’t watch porn, so my frame of reference for what’s about to happen is slim. “Mavy?”

It’s like knowing I need him snaps him out of whatever daze he was in. He confidently guides me until I’m sitting on the bed and bends down to fish his phone out of his jeans. “I... I did some research.”

My brow quirks up. “Yeah?”

“Yeah,” he says, and the blush on his cheeks tells me this isn’t like the research he normally does. “Let me pull it up.”

“YouTube?” I ask as he unlocks his phone.

“Not exactly a good place to look. I found this instead.”

My eyes nearly bulge out of their sockets when I see the front page of a porn site. Jesus Christ, it’s like horny heaven. There are thumbnails of various guys in several compromising positions and is that a?—

“I’m not ready for that,” I say quickly, shutting my eyes. “God, I’m sorry. I don’t even know where to start.”

He chuckles fondly, petting the back of my head. “I found this one video. You don’t have to watch it if you’re feeling a bit embarrassed.”

Be brave. Be bold, Levi. It’s just Mavy.

I open my eyes to see the video he’s pulled up. There’s a man propped on all fours, his ass in the air, with another man slowly teasing his hole. I expect to feel the flood of shame and paranoia but am surprised when all I feel is deep sticky lust.

“So, you have to stretch me?” I question, watching as the man slides two fingers into his partner. I look up at Mav. “Do you think it’s going to hurt?”

He shrugs. “Honestly? Maybe at first it won’t feel too great?”

My heart starts beating quickly. “O—Okay.”

“Hey.” He turns and sets his phone down, taking my face in his hands. “We don’t have to do this if you’re not ready. And, if you are ready, but want to fuck me instead, we can do that too. It’s whatever you want, Levi. Always.”

I stare into his bright blue eyes, feeling myself relax with every passing second. I got a little bit scared, but this is Maverick. My best friend. My person. He’d never hurt me, and I know he’s going to do whatever is in his power to make this good for me.

I take a deep breath as I move away from him, crawling to the center of my bed and flipping onto my stomach with my ass in the air. “There’s, um, lube in the drawer.”

I wait a few silent seconds while Mav does nothing. I close my eyes, not knowing

what he's going to say or do, but when I hear the uncapping of a tube, I relax even further. My breaths are coming out deep and panting when I feel his finger press against my hole, so gentle it's like one of his ghost kisses.

"It's so pretty," he murmurs almost reverently. "Fuck, Levi. You're so good for letting me do this to you."

He explores me a bit more and I squeeze my eyes shut when he slides a finger in. It's not the best feeling in the world, but after a few seconds of having him inside me, the discomfort starts to fade. When he begins pushing his finger in and out, it even feels a little bit good.

"Can I do another?"

"You're going to have to do at least three to get your penis in there," I snort but then immediately blush. "Sorry. Dick."

"You can talk however you want," he reassures me, patting my ass. "Don't feel the need to be anyone else. I love you just the way you are."

My breath hitches when he inserts another finger, and I fully comprehend the meaning of his words. I hide my face in the pillow as I speak. "Mavy?"

"Yeah?"

"You love me?"

"Of course I do."

"Are you... in love with me?"

Before I know it, he slips out of me and I'm flipped onto my back. Mav's heaving chest hovers over mine as he stares down at me, tenderly pushing one of my legs back against my chest as his fingers once again find my opening.

"I think so," he whispers, a third finger joining the two. "I think so, baby."

It suddenly hits me what an idiot I've been. Here I was, pining after the king of college football, someone popular, albeit nice, but I've had the perfect guy in front of me the whole time. If I thought Asher Rashford was the perfect package, well, Mav is the whole damn UPS store.

"Can you show me?" I ask softly, wondering if he'll get what I mean. But since he's perfect, he nods and pecks my nose. "Okay, I think I'm ready now."

He lets out a shaky breath and grabs some more lube, slathering far more than necessary on his...cock. We don't need to have the conversation about condoms because we were virgins before each other. He holds himself by his elbows as he presses against my hole, dropping his forehead against mine. "You ready?"

I smile shakily, latching my hands onto his shoulders, digging my nails into his skin. "Let's do this. It's just like the quest for the Ogger Stone."

"Just another journey we're on together," he teases.

And then slowly, very slowly, he slides in and everything fits perfectly into place.

Well, I wouldn't describe it as perfect. It's perfect because it's my Mavy, but it is a bit uncomfortable. The stretch is far more than I imagined, and it does sting for a brief second. He notices when I wince, and his eyes are apologetic as he kisses my lips. "We can stop?—"

“No,” I whine, pulling him closer. “Just give me a second to get used to it.”

We stay still like that for a long time. I don’t exactly know how long until I start to see his arms tremble with the strength to keep himself up. I kiss his bicep, nuzzling my nose against his skin, and he automatically relaxes.

“You... You feel so good,” he says through a breathy chuckle. “Jesus, Levi. Baby, you’re hugging me so tight.”

“You can move now,” I tell him, wiggling my hips a little to test the theory. When I feel nothing but pleasure, I do it a bit more and smile widely when he moans. “Was that good?”

“So fucking good,” he growls, taking one hand and resting it on my hip. “How about you fuck me? Fuck me at your pace. Show me how much you love my cock.”

What I really love is that dirty mouth.

I do as he tells me, moving my hips, lifting up as he stays still. He throws his head back when I speed up, taking his full length, my stomach screaming in protest because I never go to the gym and here I am getting a full-on ab workout.

“Not going to last long,” he says through gritted teeth, tightening his grip on my hip. “Shit, stop. I can’t?—”

“It’s okay,” I tell him, continuing my movements when he lets go of me. “Please, Mavy. Come inside me.”

“I think I need to touch you,” he says, more to himself than me, and grabs my dick. “Tell me how you like it, Levi.”

“Just like that,” I whimper, moving against him faster, practically fucking his fist.
“Just a little more...”

He leans down, nipping at the corner of my jaw, something ferocious but loving in his eyes when he looks at me. “Do it. Paint my hand with your cum, Levi. Show me what a good boy you can be.”

That sets me off. My hips swiveling on his dick, his hand around my cock, his dirty words, the love that lingers in the air and the fact that this is my best friend I’m doing this with makes me come. Hard.

I let go, shouting his name for our neighbors to hear, so there’s no mistaking who’s making me feel this good.

“ Yes !” he shouts, slamming me down onto the bed as he delivers one hard thrust.
“Fuck!”

He slumps on top of me as I feel his cum filling me up. We lay there breathless for who knows how long, hugging each other close, and I realize just how amazing sex can be with my best friend.

I can picture this moment going on forever, and I was a fool to think there’d be anybody else besides him.

“Is it bad that it only lasted a few minutes?” he asks, face still buried in my shoulder, insecurity in his voice.

“We’ll get better at it,” I tell him, poking at his side. “Maybe we can even go for a full five with enough practice.”

He lifts his head and the overwhelming joy in his eyes is enough to knock me on my

ass. “Yeah. Practice sounds good.” He chews on the inside of his cheek, flicking his eyes to the side. “And Asher?”

“Will officially know tomorrow that I’m off the market. Right now, I just want to spend time with my boyfriend,” I say proudly, smirking like a madman when he gasps. “What? Don’t like the word?”

He shakes his head, showering me with kisses. “My boyfriend is such a dork.”

I giggle when he tickles my side, squirming away from him until we’re lying side by side. “So, boyfriends?”

He nods, wrapping an arm around my waist and hauling me closer. “Boyfriends.”

We rest our foreheads together, basking in the new and incredible turn of events. Eventually we have to leave the bed to clean me up, but we find ourselves back under the covers quickly after. As we begin to fall asleep in each other’s arms, I have the faintest thought in the back of my head. Just because Asher Rashford wasn’t the one, doesn’t mean I can’t thank him.

Because without him, I might never have realized that my Mavy is the one for me.

So, right on the cusp of sleep, I settle deeper into Mav’s warm arms and whisper in his ear?—

“I love you too.”

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I fall asleep with one thought in my head. A thought I never imagined would be the greatest thing in my entire life, something I never pictured I'd want, something entirely magical and new and fulfilling.

He loves me too.

The End

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LEVI

This is awkward.

As Mav and I lie next to each other the morning after, I'm keenly aware of the fact that we're both naked. Not just naked. His cum is leaking out of me, staining the sheets below, and making me squirm at the interesting sensation. It's not weird, just different, and I wonder how much longer I need to wait before I can clean up.

We're both on our backs staring up at the ceiling. When I turn my head, I see that Mav has this wide-eyed look to him, almost like everything he's ever known to be true is crashing into reality in front of him. I wince at that. Does he...

"Mavy..." I whisper, wondering whether I should snap my fingers in front of his face, because he's still on another planet right now. "So... We had the sex."

"Uh-huh," he mumbles, and I swear his eyes are glossy with something that makes my stomach hurt.

I pout but then clear my throat. I can be firm, right? Mav makes it look so easy. I take a deep breath and square my shoulders as best as I can laying down. "Mav. Look at me."

"Yeah, sure."

"Mav ..."

“Maybe later.”

“Maverick Harold Xavier Cooper! Look at me right the frick now!”

That snaps him out of it. He whips his head to the side, jaw dropped as he looks at me like he doesn’t even know me. “Levi, I never?—”

“Save the clutching of the pearls for later,” I bite out, sassy as hell now that I’ve unlocked this new... Well, I don’t know what you’d call it, but fuck I feel powerful. “What are you thinking?”

He furrows his brows. “About what?”

Baby Jesus in a manger, help me.

I sigh and turn on my side. I reach for him, and thankfully he comes willingly. Like it’s so natural for us, he takes me into his arms, and I sag against his chest. “You’re scaring me.”

“Shit.” He tenses as his arms squeeze me tighter against him. “I’m sorry. I just needed a minute.”

I peek up at him and frown. My heart lurches with a painful pang that resonates through my entire tiny being. “Are you... Are you still my boyfriend? Because I guess if you want to take it back I’d understand.”

It would break my heart though. I’d probably cry for forever plus infinity. I was so stupid pining after Asher Rashford when the real thing had been in front of me all along. Now that I finally have my Mavy the way it’s meant to be, I’d be heartbroken if he decided I was too much work.

Or worse. What if he can't forgive me for using him as a way to gain more experience for another guy. That's not cool, right? I mean, I swear I didn't know he liked me until literally eight hours ago, but I should have?—

“Levi, baby. It's okay,” Mav reassures me, petting the back of my head. “Do you think you can let go of me?”

I gasp in shock at his words but then quickly realize that I'm actually digging my nails deep into his bare shoulders. Pulling back my hands, I wince and give him a tiny apologetic shrug. “Sorry.”

He smiles softly at me and pushes a strand of hair off my forehead. “Let's get something straight here. Of course I'm your boyfriend. What you just saw was me...”

When he trails off and his cheeks burn pink, I quirk a brow in curiosity. “What did I see?”

He mumbles something under his breath, but when I poke at his side, he shoots me a look and relents. “You just saw me acknowledging that I'm a goddamn idiot for not coming to this realization earlier.”

“What realization?”

“That I'm completely and obsessively in love with my dorky-ass, forever-awkward, and perfect best friend.”

Oh wow...

That's just the nicest thing I've ever heard!

“Ah!” I yip, throwing myself at him and tackling him back onto the bed. “Really?”

You mean it?”

He snorts. “That you’re dorky and awkward? Of course— Shit! That hurt!”

I don’t even bother saying sorry for the pinch I gave his butt. “Be serious. How did you know you were in love with me?”

To this, he pulls me onto his chest and tucks the top of my head under his chin. He gives me ghost kisses with his fingers as he hums. “I think I always have been. It just took Asher and kissing you to realize that you’ve always been mine. It... unlocked something I didn’t realize I’d been keeping inside.” He looks down at me. “And you?”

“When did I realize I’m in love with you?” That’s an easy answer. “Well, Asher is great and all. Super cute and smart and?”

“Levi.”

“—But he’s not you,” I giggle, pecking his chest. “I don’t know. When I realized that I wanted you to have all my firsts, that maybe we could be more than what we were, it unlocked something inside me too.”

He lets out a deep huff, his blue eyes bright with concern. “So, you’re in this? We’re together now?”

“Yes,” I say definitively. “You’re the one I want, Mavy. I’m just sorry it took me this long to know it.”

Finally, I get a real Maverick smile. “Boyfriends.”

“Boyfriends.” But suddenly a pang of nerves hits me. “What if I’m not a good

boyfriend?”

He cocks his head. “How could that be possible?”

“I mean, what are we supposed to do?” I ask, waving my hands so dramatically I hit his nose. “Oops, sorry, but seriously. Like do we go out on dates? Do we kiss in public? Do we hold hands when we’re playing DND? Showers? How do those work? I?—”

He shuts me up with his lips, cupping my cheeks so firmly, I feel his reassurance. When he pulls back, he chuckles, but I’m not too upset because he just looks so damn happy. “You know what we need?”

“YouTube.”

We say it at the same time and laugh our asses off. Lunging, he tickles me in all the spots he knows threaten to make me pee. We wrestle a bit on the bed, going back and forth with who’s on top and who’s shouting for mercy.

And I think maybe having a boyfriend isn’t so scary at all.

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MAV

Three Months Later

Can you like sex too much?

I'm not even asking for a friend. Me. I'm the friend. The one who's currently railing his best friend into the mattress.

Fuck me, life is good.

"You can go harder," Levi whines, reaching back to put a hand on my hips. "Mavy, fuck me like they did."

He means in the porn we watched together twenty minutes ago that led to this. Levi's on his hands and knees, his face squished against his pillow, his beautiful bubble butt jiggling with every one of my thrusts, and his perfect little hole all stretched for my viewing pleasure. I smack his hand away, getting the not-so-subtle hint, and fuck into him so hard he jolts forward.

"Yes!"

I chuckle under my breath. My sweet little Levi used to be so innocent. He never would have dared asked for me to fuck him like a slut but here we are, three months later, and he and I have both grown. Sure, we're still awkward as fuck and don't really do much outside of our RPGs and spaghetti taco nights, but we're different. We're more confident, more secure, and more in love than ever.

“Baby, I’m going to come,” I rasp, digging my nails into his cheeks, leaving little red indents in his skin. “Touch yourself for me. Touch yourself for daddy.”

His entire body tenses as he cries out. Letting out a few spasms, I hear the slick and wet movement of his hand on his cock, and I unleash myself in him knowing that he’s found his peak. With a pleased groan, I collapse on top of him, leaving us a big pile of messy limbs and cum.

“Oh, wow,” he breathes, his glasses a little skewed as he turns his head. He nibbles at his bottom lip and snorts. “Daddy?”

I shrug. “Thought I’d try it out.”

“And?”

“And we can definitely do it again,” I tease, moving off him so he can breathe. I drag him against my chest and hitch his leg over my hip. Playing with his tender little hole, I coo in his ear. “Because you’re such a good boy, Levi.”

His giggle is so precious as he kisses my chest. “Thank you. Do we have enough time to shower before going to the light show?”

Every Christmas season, Arborville will put on a big light show in the downtown area. For a small town, it’s actually a massive affair. There are lights that illuminate all the buildings, twinkle lights that decorate the trees, and different figures and animals made all out of different bulbs and patterns. I have two tickets for us to go, and since tomorrow is Christmas, we should go tonight.

I glance at the clock on the nightstand and shake my head. “No. We actually need to get dressed.”

His scandalized gasp makes me laugh. “Maverick! I have your... fluids in me.”

“For the love of God, Levi, don’t ever call it that again.”

“I’m just supposed to walk around with cum in my butt?” he asks. When I spot something in his face and laugh, he frowns. “What’s so funny?”

“What’s funny is that it turns you on but you don’t want to admit it,” I taunt, giving his ass a light slap. “Go get dressed and don’t clean up. We’re going to be late.”

He narrows his eyes but does what I say, although I swear I hear a mumbled ‘Yes, Daddy’ as he gets up. I follow along with him and go to the other room.

Ever since we’ve become official boyfriends, we now share a room. All of my stuff is still in my closet across the hall for now, but we’ve decided to downgrade to a one bedroom in the spring. Since our parents still help us pay for everything, we had to let them know exactly why we only needed one bedroom. Levi’s eloquent answer of ‘that way Mavy can stick his penis in me when I’m sleeping’ probably wasn’t the best way to come out, but neither of our parents batted an eye. Apparently, my mom was confused because she thought we’d been dating for years now.

I change quickly and head back to our room. Once Levi’s dressed in his cute little jeans and oversized flannel shirt, I take his hand in mine. It’s so surreal to me that I can hold it whenever I want now, no excuse needed, and the adorable smile he gives me when I squeeze his hands tells me he loves it too. Downstairs, I make sure that we’re all layered up with our coats, scarves, gloves, and hats because pneumonia is no joke.

It’s only a five minute walk to downtown and by the time we get there, it’s incredibly packed. Levi sinks into my side like a scared puppy, and even though I’m uncomfortable as hell around crowds, he makes me feel strong. I wrap my arm around his waist and keep him tucked against my side as we start looking at all the lights.

“Mav!” he gasps when we’re looking at a light-penguin. “Look!”

I furrow my brow and turn my head where he’s pointing, and I see red. Asher Rashford of all people is making his way through the crowd directly to us. On instinct, my hand moves down to Levi’s ass, because my boyfriend is the hottest person on the planet, but he’s mine .

“Hey,” Asher says when he stops in front of us, all six-foot-three of him just so freaking jazzed. “Long time no see to the both of you.”

That’s an understatement. While Levi and Asher still shared a class this semester, there was no sort of outside hangout or even crossing of the social calendars. From what Levi said, Asher took the rejection rather well, and said they could be friends. Whether they’re friends or not while they’re in class, I don’t know, but I don’t like the guy.

Levi throws me a look to warn me to be nice, and I sigh. Okayyyyyyy . I have no reason not to like Asher. So, I suck up my lowkey jealousy and smile back. “Good to see you. How’s everything been?”

Asher’s eyes are bright in the dark as he smiles. “Things have been great! I actually?—”

“Ash!”

Without warning, a body comes tumbling into Asher, nearly knocking him to the ground. For a second, I’m afraid this big beefy dude has some sort of nefarious agenda, Levi does too because he subtly shifts us a little bit farther away from them. The two guys wrestle and I’m ready to go get the nighttime security guard but am entirely shocked when they start making out.

What the ...

“Sorry, guys,” Asher laughs, pulling away from the guy with flaming red cheeks. “This is my boyfriend, Al. Al, these are my friends, Maverick and Levi.”

Al has to be part of the football team. Somehow, he’s even bigger than Asher. He pats his meaty paw against my shoulder and, shit, it actually hurts a bit. “Hey, dudes. Nice to meet you.”

“You have a boyfriend now,” Levi states, smiling from ear-to-ear. “That’s so nice.”

“I guess you can call it a forbidden romance,” Asher teases as he stares lovingly at Al. “Our coach isn’t a huge fan but?—”

“But he can go fuck himself, babe,” Al finishes, smacking Asher’s ass. “Can we go get some cotton candy now?”

Asher nods before turning back to us. “It was nice seeing you guys again. Levi, really, use my number. The four of us can hang out one night.”

Levi and I both nod politely as Asher and Al take hands and walk towards the cotton candy booth. We both turn to each other once they’re out of the line of sight, and my jaw drops. “Are you going to use his number?”

“I don’t know. Don’t boyfriends go on double dates?” He wrinkles his nose as he pulls out his phone. “Let me look it up.”

“I mean, I wouldn’t mind,” I say but then chuckle. “What would the four of us even talk about?”

He doesn’t look up from his phone. “Video games and football.”

“A perfect combination,” I mutter with a roll of my eyes.

“The internet said double dates are good for couples,” he says very matter-a-factly as he puts his phone away. “I think it’d be fun. We’re all happy, right? We can bond over that.”

I take a moment and marvel at how much Levi’s grown. In the past, you wouldn’t be able to catch him wanting to do a double anything. He was shy—still is—but he’s branched out into trying new things. The pride I feel for him swells in my chest, and I don’t bother hiding it when I peck him on the lips.

“What was that for?” he asks, chewing on the inside of his cheek as he tries to fight his smile.

“Because we are happy, baby,” I whisper, bringing him into a hug. “We’re all happy.”

Happier than the Elven maid finding the Ogger stone.