



Tempted: An MM College Romance (LSU)

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Category: LGBT+

Description: From the bestselling author Becca Steele comes a standalone M/M college romance.

When Bennett Archer walked into my favourite nightclub, celebrating his promotion to London Southwark University's first team, he immediately caught my eye.

Since then I haven't been able to get him out of my mind.

On paper, we're complete opposites. I'm flamboyant and assertive, while he's laid back and reserved. His hobby is football, and mine is showing my body to my online subscribers.

But there's something about him. Something I want to pursue. So I decide to show up at his football match and make it clear that I'm interested in him.

I know I can be too much for some people, but am I too much for him?

I can tell he's tempted by me...but will he give into his curiosity?

Tempted is an M/M new adult college romance with bi-awakening themes, and is a novella in the LSU college romance series. Each book in the series can be read as a standalone.

This novella was first available in the Hit Me With Your Best Shot anthology. The content remains the same, with the addition of an epilogue.

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What the fuck was happening to me? One minute I was on a night out with the London Southwark University football team, and the next, a guy dressed in shorts and sparkly blue ankle boots was in my lap.

I repeat, what the fuck?

I suppose I'd better rewind to the beginning of the night...

"Everyone's here, and I dunno about you, Benny boy, but I'm ready to celebrate!" Ander flung an arm around my neck, sending us both staggering sideways.

"Whoa. Watch it." Righting myself, I grinned at him. "I'm ready. Can't believe I finally made it onto the first team. Even as a reserve."

"You proved yourself today." The voice came from behind us and I turned to see Travis, the team captain, holding a net filled with footballs. "That goal was superb."

"Yeah, you'll be giving Levi a run for his money in no time."

"I heard that!" Levi, one of our strikers, called from the side of the pitch, where Liam, Finn, Preston, and Pete were all doing cooldown stretches. He shot me a grin. "It's true, though. Nice goal."

"Cheers." I ducked my head, biting back my smile. Praise from my new teammates was the best validation I could've hoped for. Although the first and second teams often trained together, we tended to hang out in our own groups. I'd finally been given a chance on the first team when a couple of the guys had dropped out with

injuries, and in my very first game against Roehampton Uni, I'd actually scored a goal.

I was definitely in the mood to celebrate.

* * *

One drink had turned into two, which had turned into three. Then there were shots involved, and all of a sudden Ander had decided that we should meet up with his boyfriend and one of their housemates, JJ, at a club. What I hadn't realised was that the club in question, Revolve, was a gay club. I had no reason to suspect—yeah, I knew that a few of my team members were gay or bisexual or whatever—Levi, Preston, Liam, and Ander, but the rest of the team members were straight...although I guess I shouldn't assume. Just because someone hadn't explicitly stated their sexuality, it didn't mean they were necessarily straight. That was...what was the word? Heteronormative or something.

I wasn't gay. But I might've been a little bit bi-curious. Not enough to ever want to do anything about it, but y'know, sometimes I wondered what it would feel like to suck a dick. Or I might've watched some porn of guys wanking. Things like that. It might have been normal for straight guys, but it wasn't exactly the kind of thing I'd bring up with my mates. "Hey, guys, do any of you wank to porn of other guys wanking? Or wonder what it would be like to suck a dick? No? Just me, then."

Yeah. Not happening.

Anyway...we were here. In a gay club. And, uh...the environment was an unfamiliar experience if I compared it to other clubs I'd been in. Like, there were a lot of men wearing very few clothes, for a start. And there was a drag performance going on in the first room we'd been in. Now, here I was, several shots later and feeling the effects, and a short, slender guy with a mop of deep brown curls who'd introduced

himself as Niccolò was straddling my thighs.

“Hi. I’m Niccolò. You can call me Nic, or baby.”

I laughed, watching blearily as he trailed a glittery fingernail down the side of my bicep. “Hey. Your nails match your boots.”

“And my shorts.” He gave me a bright smile, peering up at me through the longest dark lashes I’d ever seen on a man. His honey-brown eyes seemed to sparkle in the club lights. “You’re very sexy. Why hasn’t JJ brought you here before?” The smile was replaced with a pout, and I laughed again.

“Uh, I guess because I don’t really hang out with JJ much. I see him at the gym sometimes. He’s got friends on the football team—he lives with some of them, right?—but I only just joined the first team. Now I’m here, I guess I might see more of him if I get invited to social events, and he’s there.” I shrugged.

“Oooh, a footballer. I love athletes. So strong,” he purred, winding his arms around my neck. What the fuck was happening? Whatever, I could blame the alcohol later.

A bark of laughter came from next to me, and I turned to see Finn eyeing me with amusement. His gaze flicked to Niccolò, then back to me, and he raised his brows. I shrugged again, because there was no explanation for what was happening, since I had no idea myself. All I knew was that this...what was the terminology? Twink? Whatever, this cute guy was in my lap, and he was amusing me, and fuck what anyone else thought. I was too drunk to care.

“I am strong,” I agreed. “So you’re here with JJ? Are you a student, too?”

He nodded. “Yep. Studying performing arts. But I also have a FanBoyzOnly account.”

My brows rose. “Interesting. I’ve never met anyone who did that.”

“Not that you know of. There are a lot of students doing it. OnlyFans, too. It’s a good way to make extra money.”

He had a point, I guessed, and in my drunken state, it sounded like a great idea. “You’re right.”

“Always am.” He gave me another bright smile. “So. Wanna fuck?”

I choked on nothing. When I’d recovered from my sudden coughing fit, Niccolò having moved off my thighs in the meantime, I stared at him. “Did you just ask me if I wanted to fuck?”

Ignoring the stifled laughter from next to me...or ignoring it after I’d elbowed Finn as hard as I could, I kept my gaze on Niccolò. The smile slid off his face. “Sorry. I thought...you seemed like you?—”

“Nic.” JJ was suddenly there, sliding his arm around his friend’s waist. “Come with me for a minute, babe.” Niccolò allowed himself to be led away, and I collapsed back into the booth, rubbing my hand across my face. What the fuck was happening?

“He’s forward. He knows what he wants and goes for it. JJ’s a lot like that too, but from what I know of Nic, JJ’s more, uh, toned down, I guess? I dunno. I wouldn’t worry about it, though. That’s just what Niccolò’s like. He won’t take offence if you’re not interested.”

Letting my head flop to the side, I eyed Ander, who had slid into the booth at some point without me noticing, too wrapped up in Niccolò. And too drunk to be completely aware of my surroundings, if I was honest. “Yeah?”

“Yeah. I wouldn’t worry about it. Here, have another shot.”

I had the shot. And then another.

The rest of the night was a blur.

I didn’t see Niccolò again.

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“Ugh. What am I doing here?” I kicked at a tuft of grass beneath my feet. “It’s muddy. You know I don’t do mud, JJ.”

“That’s not strictly true. We went to that spa and had that mud treatment with Dexter, remember?”

“Oh, yeah. Well, that doesn’t count.” Picking at one of the glittery threads that had come loose in my jumper, I frowned down at my feet. “These boots were expensive.”

JJ shook his head. “I know. Why do you think I’m wearing these old shoes?” We both stared down at his pristine blood-orange-and-black Nikes, and at the same time, we both started laughing. When we’d recovered, JJ elbowed me. “We’re here because you said to me, and I quote, ‘I want to see if the hot football boy is as hot as I remember. Please, JJ, as one of my best friends, it’s your responsibility to?’”

Covering his mouth with my free hand, I slid into his lap. “Shush. Now cuddle me. I’m cold.”

“Fuck’s sake, Nic.” He rolled his eyes but wrapped his arms around me anyway, and I huddled into my new personal windshield as we turned to watch the action on the field. Field? Pitch? Whatever it was called. I loved footballers—I mean, have you seen their legs?—but my knowledge of the game was lacking. Whatever. I was here to see one hot boy...well, him and the rest of the London Southwark University first team, because, hello, hot footballers, and so the actual logistics of the game were irrelevant. Why hadn’t I ever come to watch a game before this? Or invited myself to one of the student house parties at JJ’s house, for that matter? All this time I’d wasted. I hadn’t even met Ander until recently, and he’d been JJ’s housemate since

their first year at uni.

I wasn't wasting any more time.

"There they are!" Rubbing my hands together as the team filed onto the field-or-maybe-pitch, I eyed the line of players. "Hey, JJ. Is it called a field or a pitch?"

"It's a pitch."

My head whipped around to see the cute guy that I'd noticed at Revolve a few times. Nathan...no, Noah. "Thanks, Noah."

"You're welcome." He leaned closer, lowering his voice. "I knew barely anything about football before I got together with Liam. Hated it, in fact. But some of the knowledge has finally sunk in, I guess. And it's nice to watch my boyfriend running around the pitch in his shorts."

"Yes!" I held up my hand for a high-five, and he obliged me, laughing. "Finally, someone who understands why I'm here. It had better be worth it."

"It will be," Noah and JJ both said at the same time. But I didn't bother replying, because there my footballer was. Okay, he didn't know he was mine yet, but he'd definitely been interested in me in the club, and I was maybe sixty to sixty-five percent certain that it hadn't been the alcohol.

My gaze scanned over his face to begin with, because as much as I admired his body, his face had been the first thing I'd noticed in the club. That chiselled jawline with a shadow of stubble, messy brown hair and sparkling blue eyes. He was so hot, he took my breath away. And then he smiled, and he had dimples, and I think I whined aloud or something when I saw them, which was kind of embarrassing, but dimples were like my kryptonite. I wanted to lick him.

Anyway. JJ had warned me that the group of guys were all part of the LSU football team, and they were most likely straight—and why was Ander bringing straight boys to our club? But I'd never been one to turn down a challenge, and so I'd gone and planted myself in his lap. Up close, he was even sexier, with lovely thick thighs to balance me on, and strong arms to wrap around me. Not that he'd wrapped them around me. Yet. He'd been drunk, and a mixture of amused and bemused to find me in his lap. I hadn't realised just how drunk he was until I was up close, and...yeah...I probably shouldn't have been quite so direct when I'd propositioned him.

But no matter. Now I'd ascertained that yes, he was just as hot as I remembered, I'd dazzle him with my...my everything. Who could resist?

Back to watching him. So. To recap. Sexy face, nice strong thighs and arms. What else? I needed a closer look at his torso, but I was sure it would be just as lickable as the rest of him, and oh, his ass was pretty. Muscular with a good curve. Perfect for biting.

"I want to bite his ass," I announced to JJ.

"Of course you do, babe." He sighed. "You do realise that he might not be interested in guys, right?"

"Of course I do. I'm not stupid. I know what I saw in the club. There was no mistaking the look in his eye."

"I hope you're right. But even if you're not, it's not the end of the world. You've got no shortage of admirers. And me. You'll always have me."

"Love you." Twisting in JJ's lap, I pressed a kiss to his cheek. "Your face is so cold!"

"Love you too. Why wouldn't it be cold? It's twelve degrees or something. You're

okay—you've got me to warm you up. I don't have anyone to warm me up." He paused, then added, "Not today, anyway."

"No, but you've got no shortage of admirers." I repeated his words back to him.

"That's true." His lips curved into a smile, but it soon disappeared. "Not necessarily the one I want, though."

"JJ. If there's anyone that doesn't want you back, then they're either the straightest person to ever be straight, they're in a committed relationship, or they're too stupid to realise what a catch you are." Because JJ was the best.

"Thanks, babe." The smile reappeared on his face, although it seemed a little sad.

"Back to my admirers," I said, because it was clear that he needed a change of subject. "My subs have been a bit stagnant lately. I need to boost them. Can you think of anything I could do to, y'know, get more interest?"

"Subs?" a voice said from my left. When I turned around, there was Noah with his brows raised, not even bothering to hide the fact he'd been blatantly listening in to my conversation with JJ.

"Subs. Yeah. I have a FanBoyzOnly account. You know. It's basically OnlyFans, but it's purely gay content. Or gay for pay." Shaking my head, I sighed. "Those little cockteasers."

"FBO? Wow." Noah's eyes widened. "So, what do you do? Like, uh, solo or couple stuff?"

Well, I never needed an excuse to talk about myself. Except—I glanced up at the pitch, and oh. My football player had the ball, and he was running down the pitch,

past some other players from the opposite team, and he looked glorious. His leg drew back, and I heard a soft thump as his boot connected with the ball, and he sent it sailing over some other players' heads, right to Ander. Ander kicked, and then the ball was suddenly in the goal, and everyone was shouting and cheering. I jumped to my feet along with everyone else—or everyone supporting LSU—clapping and cheering.

“Did you see? My footballer did that! He helped Ander score!” I bounced up and down on the balls of my feet, smiling so hard my cheeks ached. I suddenly understood why people sat through ninety-plus minutes at the side of a freezing cold pitch, because this moment was euphoric. Not like orgasm-level euphoric, but maybe similar in a different way. Or, like, imagine a giant orgy where everyone came at the same time and you just all had a rush at once... Hmmm. No. That was highly unlikely to happen. Not that I'd personally know. Despite my sexual experience, I'd only actually been to one orgy. It wasn't really my thing. Too many people. But to each his own, or whatever.

I shook my head. Stop getting sidetracked by sex. Back to my footballer. Waving my hand in the air in the hope that he'd see me, I kept my gaze on him, watching as the team all congratulated each other and clapped the small crowd of supporters. My footballer's gaze scanned the stands, and then he saw me.

A jolt went through my body, like I'd been shocked with one of those heart starter things. My footballer's eyes widened, his brow creasing, and his mouth opened. The expression on his face was definitely disbelief. He blinked a couple of times, and then he smiled.

At me.

A smile, just for me, complete with dimples.

“Catch me, JJ. I’m swooning.” My knees felt weak. How could a smile have such an effect on me?

“Drama queen,” he murmured in my ear, but he placed a steadying hand on the small of my back. “Looks like you caught his attention.”

“It does, doesn’t it?” The action began again, and my footballer tore his gaze away from me as the players focused on the ball, but I couldn’t stop my smile. Taking my seat on JJ’s lap once again, I turned back to Noah, although I kept tracking my player as the game went on. My heart was still racing, and I attempted to calm myself by taking a deep, even breath. “You asked me what I did. My content’s mostly solo. Posing for photos, vanilla stuff, toys, whatever. But every now and then I do a collab with some of the other content creators on the site. We’ll usually take a day and do a load of different scenes, and then feed them to our subscribers over a period of time. We build up the hype, do little teasers on our social media, and then by the time we post the photos and videos, we’ve hopefully got enough interest for both our current subs and potential new ones.”

“That’s so interesting.” Noah grinned at me. “I could’ve done with that knowledge at the beginning of the semester. I had a money problem for a bit, and I happened to run into Liam’s car while that was going on.” He nodded his head towards his boyfriend, who was currently jogging down the side of the pitch. “Although whatever he tells you, it was his fault.”

“I would’ve liked to have seen Liam’s face when he saw you on FanBoyzOnly,” came a voice from the other side of Noah. Elliot peered around him, grinning at us.

“Me too.” JJ smirked, glancing at where Liam was on the pitch. “I’ll never forget his face when he saw me flirting with you that time in the student union. He looked like he was trying to murder me with his eyes.”

Following JJ's gaze, Noah shook his head. "Hey. He's not that bad. Yeah, he's a bit possessive still, but nothing like he was. He's much more secure with everything now. You know, that whole thing was a lot for him. He wasn't out back then, and he couldn't tell anyone that he wanted me. You know what it was like. Now he's...he knows I love him, and I'd never want anyone else. He's mine, and I'm his, and nothing's gonna change that fact. We can both be open about it, and I think—no, I know—he's much happier now, right?"

JJ and Elliot both nodded. "He's different now," Elliot said. "Definitely happier. More easy-going. He had a hard time of it, but when he came to that party and came out to pretty much everyone all at once, and announced that he wanted to be with you, I could see it so clearly. It was like he'd had this huge weight on him, and then it was just...gone."

I stared at Elliot, enraptured. "That sounds so romantic."

"It was." Noah's mouth curved into a small, soft smile. "He's just...he's the best."

"Look at you, all loved up. Elliot and Ander, too. Who's going to be next?" JJ wondered aloud. There was something in his voice...

I glanced up at him. There was a faraway look in his eyes. Did he...no. JJ wasn't the type to want to be with one person only. Surely not? But maybe...

"Hey." Angling my head so I could speak without being overheard by the others, I said, "Anything you want to talk about?"

Biting down on his lip, he shook his head. "No. Not... No." He smiled down at me. "Thanks, though."

"Anytime. You know I'm here if you need me."

“I know. You’re a good friend.”

We returned our attention to the game...well, I returned my attention to my football player, and before I knew it, it was half-time. Sadly, my footballer didn’t come over, because apparently, they didn’t walk around chatting with the supporters during their fifteen-minute break. Instead, I passed the time brainstorming with JJ about ways to boost my subscribers, and before I knew it, the whistle was blowing to announce the second half.

We had another forty-five minutes to sit through, and during that time, LSU scored another three goals. The atmosphere was electric, and I couldn’t stop smiling. This was fun. I decided I’d like to come back again, and not only for reasons relating to my footballer.

When the final whistle blew and the players left the pitch, JJ cleared his throat. “Nic, I need to go. I’m sorry, but I’ve got to see G. Do you want to leave too, or are you going to hang around?”

“I know. G comes first. Give her my love.” Pressing a quick kiss to his cheek, I grinned at him. “Of course I’m going to hang around. I still haven’t spoken to my football player yet.”

Climbing off him, I stretched, working out the kinks in my muscles. He tugged his phone from his pocket, waving it in my face. “Text me later with all the details. Don’t leave anything out.”

“I will. Wish me luck.”

“You don’t need luck, babe.” He gave me a quick hug, dropping a kiss on top of my head. “Talk later. And watch out for the mud.”

“Thanks for reminding me.”

When JJ had gone, I followed Noah and Elliot to the building where we’d meet the players. Without my JJ windshield, I found myself shivering. It was my fault for not wearing a coat, but I wanted to get my footballer’s attention, and how could I do that if I was hiding my best assets?

The doors opened, and I held my breath, rising onto my tiptoes to see the players coming out. I enjoyed being short, except for moments like this, when I couldn’t see. And when I was trying to get things out of the kitchen cupboard.

But then, there he was. No longer in his football kit, but in the softest-looking black zip-up hoodie with the LSU team logo and indigo jeans that hugged his legs, all finished with a pair of bright white Nikes. His gaze scanned the crowd again, and when he noticed me, his eyes widened and his brow furrowed, just like they’d done before.

I took a step towards him, and another, until I was standing in front of him.

“Hi.”

“Hi. You’re here. I mean, what are you doing here? Not that I mind—” Cutting himself off, he scrubbed his hand across his face. “Sorry. I just wasn’t expecting to see you here. You’ve never been here before. Or have you? I’ve only just started playing for this team. I just?—”

A wide smile spread across my face. He was so fucking cute, all flustered and unsure. I loved it. As if he wasn’t already attractive enough, he now had to add this cuteness to his repertoire.

“It’s my first time at a football match, and I came to see you,” I told him. There was

no point in beating around the bush.

“Me? Why?”

“Because I think you’re hot, and I think you might be interested in me.”

He blinked, and a flush appeared on his cheekbones. “Uh...okay. This is...” Shaking his head, he huffed out a laugh. “Unexpected. Okay.” Chewing on his lip, he studied me for a moment, before he sighed. “Look, you want to go somewhere and talk, or something?”

I wanted to do something that involved our mouths, but talking wasn’t it. Still, better to tread carefully when he was clearly unsure about my being here.

“Okay. Where should we go? Any suggestions?”

“What about The Coffee Collective? It’s just around the corner...or we can just walk around, if you prefer.”

“I’ll buy you a coffee,” I decided. “Lead the way.”

His brows rose. “Bossy little thing, aren’t you?”

I opened my mouth to protest, then immediately closed it. It was true. Instead, I said, “We should exchange names. In case you forgot, I’m Niccolò. You can call me that. Or Nic. Or baby. Or whatever you want, as long as it’s nice.”

Shoving his hands into his pockets, he grinned down at me. “I had a lot to drink that night, but I remember your name, and I’m pretty sure you told me the same thing in the club. I’m Bennett. But you can call me Ben if you want. Most people do.”

Good. He hadn't been too drunk to remember, then. "Ben." Returning his smile, I clapped my hands together. "Let's go. Because I don't know if you've noticed, but it's freezing, and I'm in serious danger of getting frostbite here. You don't want that on your conscience, do you?"

He had the audacity to laugh at me. Allowing a heavy-looking duffel bag to drop from his shoulder, he crouched down and opened it up. "Here you go. This should keep you warm for now."

My mouth fell open as he basically shoved a large bundle of soft fabric into my arms. When I shook it out, my mouth opened even further. It was a sky-blue hoodie with the LSU logo on the front. The number fourteen and letters spelling out "Archer"—Bennett's surname?—were emblazoned across the back in large block lettering. "Is this your football hoodie?"

"Yeah." Zipping up his bag, he rose to his feet. "You don't have to wear it, but it'll keep you warmer than that jumper you're wearing." His eyes flicked to my form-fitting fine-knit black jumper that was shot through with threads of glittering silver and blue, and his tongue darted out to lick his lips. I did a little pirouette, which made him laugh again, but I wasn't about to pass up the chance of having him ogle me.

"Like what you see?"

"You're a menace," he muttered, shaking his head as he hoisted his duffel bag onto his shoulder. "Come on, let's get that coffee."

Drawing the hoodie down over my head, I snuggled into the thick, soft cotton. It was far too big for me, of course, but it just meant that I was that much warmer. The warmth didn't matter to me anymore, though, because I was wearing Bennett's football hoodie. With his name and number on it. There was no mistaking who it belonged to.

I bit back my smile, because if I let it out, it would become a deranged grin. We fell into step, and I noticed he shortened his stride, so I didn't have to speed walk to keep up with his pace. Another thing tall people usually forgot about.

"You're new to the team, then?" It was probably best to start the conversation with something easy. He already knew why I was here, and now I had to put him at ease before I reeled him in. Hopefully.

"Yeah. I was on the second team before, but they had a reshuffle, and me and Pete—another guy from the second team—got promoted to the main team."

"I don't know much about football. But you were great. Very sexy and, you know, the ball things you did. You were good at those."

Another laugh. "I'm glad you think so."

"You do? So you are interested in me?"

He stopped walking. We were still on campus, partway across a bit where there was grass and trees and benches on either side of us. Branches curved over our heads, making a dappled pattern on the paved path where the sunlight shone through them.

"Honestly. I... You're... Has anyone told you that you're incredibly forward?" Without waiting for a reply, he went on. "Look, I don't know what you want from me. I think—" Cutting himself off with a groan, he removed his hands from his pockets, rubbing his palm across his face. "Fuck. I don't know what to say," he mumbled through his fingers.

Stepping up to him, I wrapped my hand around his wrist, gently tugging it away from his face. His cheeks were red, and his eyes were screwed shut. I wanted to kiss him so badly, but now was not the time nor the place, and maybe it never would

be—although he hadn't actually told me he wasn't interested yet. What I needed was to reassure him. Despite my overwhelming attraction to him, the last thing I wanted was to make him uncomfortable or try to force anything.

“Ben. It's okay. I know I'm forward, but I won't push you for anything you don't want or you're not ready for. You don't have to tell me anything, either, I promise. I just thought we had a moment in the club, and like I said, you're hotter than the sun or some kind of nuclear explosion, so...you know. I thought I'd see if you wanted to take it anywhere.”

His eyes had remained shut throughout my little speech, but finally he opened them, focusing that intent blue gaze on me. “You're really something else,” he murmured. Tugging his wrist from my unresisting grip, he shoved his hands back into his pockets. Biting down on his lip, he stared at me for a moment before he sighed. “Come on. Let's start with coffee, okay?”

“We can start with coffee.”

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Seated on a tiny leather sofa in the corner of the coffee shop, I stared into my mug, aware of the warm press of Niccolò's thigh against mine. I still wasn't entirely sure how I'd managed to get here—my head was spinning, in fact, but I hadn't wanted to turn him down.

Looking at Niccolò objectively... He was gorgeous. A confident man who wasn't afraid to speak his mind, or stalk people he was interested in, for that matter, all wrapped up in one small—compared to me—gorgeous package.

I watched as he dipped the tip of his index finger into the towering swirl of cream on top of his hot chocolate, his glittery blue nail disappearing under a layer of white. He lifted his finger to his lips, his tongue darting out to swipe the cream from his finger, before he inserted the digit into his mouth.

Tempting me.

I swallowed hard, shifting in my seat as my dick jerked in response to his provocative demonstration. Because it was a demonstration. As he hollowed his cheeks, fellating his finger, he made a soft noise that was almost a moan, his lashes lowering as his gaze slid to mine.

With an all too smug smile, he removed his finger from his mouth and delicately wiped it on a napkin, ending the tease and leaving me with a stiffening cock and a pounding heart.

“See something you like?” he purred.

“You should be illegal.” My voice was hoarse. What the fuck was happening here? I tore my gaze away from his mouth, fixing it on my mug once again. The question of whether I was simply mildly curious about guys seemed to have been answered—I highly doubted there were any straight men who’d get even a hint of an erection at the sight of another man sucking his own finger.

Or would they?

Another question without an answer.

He settled back in his seat, cupping his mug in his hands. A small smile played over his lips, but he dropped the teasing act. “What are you studying at uni?”

Exhaling shakily, I seized on the change of subject. “Mechanical engineering. My aim is to specialise in sustainable engineering, eventually. What about you? I know you said you were studying performing arts, but what about afterwards?”

“I’ve always been interested in everything to do with performing arts, so it was always my first choice for a degree. I love the spotlight, but I think I might want to do something backstage, though. Like being a show producer or something. I’m only in my first year, so I have time to decide.”

“Yeah. Plenty of time.” What else could I ask him? “How do you know JJ, anyway?”

He shrugged. “We went to the same school. He was in the year above me, and there weren’t many out gay people in our school, so I guess we kind of gravitated towards each other. He’s one of my best friends.”

The question was on the tip of my tongue. Fuck it. I’d just ask him. “Have you two ever, uh?—”

“Hooked up?” When I nodded, he flashed me a quick grin. “Yeah. Only a couple of times. Once when we were bored—oh, that was with our friend Shay, too. And another time before that, when I practiced my cock sucking technique on him.”

“You practiced your cock sucking technique on him,” I repeated slowly. The images going through my mind... Not of him with JJ, but of him with me.

My heart rate sped up, and I realised my palms were clammy. Fuck. I was heading straight into uncharted bi territory.

“No better way to learn. JJ’s very knowledgeable about these things, you know.”

“Uh-huh.” I was still stuck on the image of Niccolò on his knees, that tempting mouth wide open and ready for— Fuck. I picked up my mug, taking a huge gulp of my caffè mocha in the hope that it would make me focus on anything else. Anything but that.

“Ben? Are you okay?”

“Great. Brilliant. Uh. So, what did you think of the match?”

“It was good. Do you want me to come and watch you again? Are you going to come back to Revolve? Can we go somewhere so I can kiss you?” The questions came tumbling out of his mouth in a breathless rush, and it took me a minute to parse through them.

When I realised what he’d said, my breath caught in my throat. Staring at him, wide-eyed, I took several deep breaths, attempting to slow my racing heart. “Okay. Wow. You really are forward, aren’t you? To answer your questions—if you want to, maybe, and uh...I—I don’t know.”

Resignation filled his gaze, but he nodded, accepting my words. “That’s okay. I—I

shouldn't have asked. I know I can be a bit much. I guess I just...I just thought I'd try my luck. Sorry if I came across as pushy." His voice came out small, and he wouldn't look at me.

"Hey." Reaching out, I placed my hand on his arm. "You haven't got anything to be sorry for." I paused for a minute before shaking my head. I was seriously tempted, and I might never get another chance like this. "Fuck it. You only live once. Yes, to your third question."

He stared at me with huge, disbelieving eyes. "Are you sure?"

"Yeah. As sure as I can be."

A wide, beaming smile spread across his face. Immediately placing his hot chocolate down, he jumped to his feet. "Let's go. I know a place."

Draining the rest of my mocha, I followed suit, grinning at his enthusiasm. As we exited the coffee shop, I took a moment to admire the sight of him in my hoodie. I liked seeing him wrapped up in my clothes. Which was ridiculous, really, because we hadn't even... We didn't even know each other.

Although it appeared that we were about to become a little more intimately acquainted.

Niccolò led me into the campus library and over to the lifts. When we were inside, he hit the button for the basement, which held the study carrels.

I approved of the idea.

Stopping next to one of the empty private carrels in the far corner of the basement area, he slid something out of his pocket and began fiddling with the door. The lock

suddenly popped open, and he laughed breathlessly. “It worked.”

“Breaking and entering?”

“Yep. JJ told me about this one. Carrel twenty-two. The lock doesn’t work properly, and you can open it with a credit card. I haven’t tried it before now, but I did good, right?” He gave me a bright smile as he slid the door open.

He was so fucking cute. And sexy. I allowed myself to appreciate him all over again. “You did good. What’s going to happen now?”

In reply, he grabbed my wrist and tugged me inside the carrel, sliding the “occupied” sign across to show the carrel was in use, before closing the door. Hopping up onto the table, he crooked his finger at me.

“Now, we kiss.”

Dropping my bag to the floor, I stepped in between his legs, staring down at him. He stared right back, his lips slightly parted, his eyes huge with his pupils rapidly expanding. Lifting my hand, I cupped his chin. My fingers trembled, but I wasn’t backing out now. “You’re gorgeous.”

A smile curved over his mouth, and I lowered my head to kiss it.

At first, it was just a soft brush of lips. Then, he made a noise in the back of his throat, almost like a whimper, and the kiss deepened, our mouths opening against each other’s. I stroked my fingers over his jaw, taking my time, and he let me control the kiss, his fingers coming up to curl around my biceps.

When I pulled back to catch my breath, his eyes were wide and so dark.

“What did you think, my bi-curious footballer?”

“I think.” I brushed my lips over his again. “I need.” And again. “More research.”

This time, when the kiss deepened, our tongues slid together. Fuck. This kiss was blowing my mind. My cock was hard in my jeans, and I couldn’t help wondering if Niccolò was as affected by this kiss as I was. I moved one of my hands to the nape of his neck, and slid the other around his back, pulling him forwards into me. He gasped into my mouth as our bodies connected, his legs widening and wrapping around me, and even through two pairs of jeans, I could feel the press of a hard bulge against mine.

“Fuck,” I groaned into his mouth. Definitely very bi-curious. My heart was hammering and my palms were definitely sweaty. This was...exciting as fuck, but it was scary at the same time. It shouldn’t have been, but it hit me all at once, and panic made the breath catch in my throat and my heart jump. I was kissing a man. A man with a dick, which was currently grinding against mine.

Pulling away from Niccolò, breathing hard, I lifted a trembling hand to my face, pressing tentative fingers against my kiss-swollen lips. “Fucking hell,” I rasped, staring down at my hand.

“Ben.”

My gaze swung back to Niccolò. His eyes were still wide and dark, but now they were full of concern.

“Sorry. I— Fuck.” I scrubbed at my face. “I’m not— It’s not?—”

“Take a breath. And a seat. You should probably sit down.”

Yeah. Sit down. I should do that. My legs were feeling shaky, now I thought about it. Collapsing onto the bench seat next to the table, I folded my arms across the surface and lowered my head.

Fingers gently brushed across the back of my neck. “Stay here. I’ll be back in a minute.”

I wasn’t aware of how much time had passed, but when Niccolò returned, I’d gathered myself enough to lift my head, although I couldn’t quite meet his gaze. What the fuck must he be thinking, after I’d reacted that way?

“Drink this.” A bottle of Powerade appeared in front of me. “The sugar and electrolytes help. Or so I’ve heard. JJ won’t let me drink them.”

At his light tone, the knot in my stomach loosened a little. A smile tugged at my lips as my brows rose. “JJ won’t let you?”

“Not exactly. It’s not like he controls what I eat or drink or anything. He just says I’d be uncontrollable with any extra energy. It’s true.” With a small laugh, he uncapped the bottle, and then tapped the side. “But you, my maybe-maybe-not-bi-curious boy, need it right now.”

“Maybe,” I said, lifting the bottle to my lips. The cool liquid slid down my throat, soothing me. When I’d placed the bottle back down, I sighed, finally meeting his gaze. “Definitely. Sorry for, y’know, the way I reacted.”

“Don’t be sorry.” Tugging his lip between his teeth, he twisted his hands together in front of him, and I realised he was nervous. “Does that mean you regret kissing me?”

Fuck. He’d jumped to the wrong conclusion, not that I could blame him. “Come here. Please.”

When he was standing in front of me, I rose to my feet, placing my hands on his shoulders. I made sure his eyes met mine again before I spoke. There was no way this could go any further. Niccolò was a fun, flirty guy, secure in his sexuality, who had people that actually paid to see him naked or whatever on his FanBoyzOnly account. I was a random guy who was questioning his own sexuality and freaking out over a simple kiss. For fuck's sake, he'd even gone and got me a specific drink, he was that worried about me.

But I didn't want to upset him. I needed to ensure he understood where I was coming from.

"First of all, I didn't do anything I didn't want to. I want to make that clear. And no, I don't regret kissing you. I... You're a great kisser. But I?—"

"You don't have to explain. I get it." He flashed me a quick smile that I think was supposed to be reassuring, but it made something in my stomach sink.

I opened my mouth to reply, but my phone began vibrating. Fuck. "Sorry. Give me a second. It might be important." I yanked my phone from my pocket and hit Answer without checking the screen to see who was calling me. "Hello?"

"Where did you disappear to? We thought you were coming to the pub with us."

Pete. And he was still in the pub, if the background noise was any indication.

"Sorry. I, uh, had something to do." Niccolò raised a brow, and I placed a finger to his lips. He licked it, and then laughed quietly when I pulled a face while trying my hardest not to smile, yanking my finger away from his mouth.

"You have to come, man. I'm on my own here. I mean, I'm the only new one."

Oh. Yeah. We were the two new players on the first team, and although I didn't actually know Pete all that well, we'd played together since the beginning of the semester.

Niccolò tapped my bicep, clearly hearing Pete's words, thanks to the fact that we were so close, and Pete was almost shouting to be heard over the background noise. I should go, he mouthed. I shook my head, but he began backing away from me.

Holding up my hand in a gesture to tell him to wait, I told Pete I was on my way. But he slipped out of the study carrell, leaving me alone. Disappointment curled low in my stomach.

I guess I was just another blip on his radar.

It was probably for the best.

That was what I told myself, anyway.

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Source Creation Date: July 18, 2025, 1:55 pm

Hitting the timer on the camera, I sprawled on my stomach on my bed, pushing my ass in the air for maximum effect. My curls were perfectly mussed and shiny, and the light lip gloss I'd applied made my lips look plump and kissable. I knew that the white bedsheets were the perfect contrast to my tanned skin, and the whole aesthetic was going to make this a fucking hot photoshoot.

But as I pouted slightly for the camera, I couldn't seem to summon up my usual enthusiasm. This was not good. I relied on the money my FanBoyzOnly account brought in to pay my way through uni, topping up my student loan because my parents didn't have the money to spare. I huffed, annoyed with myself, and that was when the camera clicked. Because of course it did. Stupid camera.

Rolling off the bed, I stomped over to the camera, and sure enough, it had captured me mid-huff. Stabbing at the Delete button, I wiped all traces of my mini breakdown from memory. I yanked my bedroom door open, shouting into the hallway.

"Dexter! I need you!"

A moment later, there was a bang, and my housemate appeared in his bedroom doorway, rubbing at his eyes and yawning. "What the fuck is the emergency? I've only had two hours of sleep because the fucking shoot ran so late."

"I need your help. Please. Pleeese." I batted my lashes at him, and he groaned.

"Fine, I'm coming. Give me a second to wake up properly. And I want you to take a vow of silence after I've finished helping you with whatever it is. I need sleep. A lot of it."

“I’ll be as quiet as a mouse. Which is a weird saying, when you think about it, because mice make all kinds of scratching and squeaking noises.”

Dexter ignored my mouse comment, sauntering past me into my room. I took a moment to appreciate the sight of his body dressed in nothing but a pair of tight boxer briefs, because, hello, I had eyes. And my eyes liked looking at pretty things. We should all be nicer to our eyes and let them view all the pretty things, in my opinion.

He stopped in the middle of the room, taking in my setup. “What do you need me for?”

“I need you to motivate me for my photoshoot. I can’t seem...” Trailing off with a huff of breath, I shrugged. “I don’t know why, but I can’t find the enthusiasm.”

“Okay.” Without missing a beat, he lifted my camera from its stand, holding it in one hand and angling the ring light with the other. “White jockstrap. White socks. Hands on the wall, looking over your shoulder. Ass out, leg arched.”

I followed his instructions, already feeling better. Dex was another one of my besties, and as well as that, he was a porn actor, working at an actual studio. So he knew things. Lots of things about posing and lighting and angles.

“Hold it there. Don’t turn your head that far...yeah, that’s it. Nice.” He snapped a couple of photos and then studied the camera. “Okay. Now lose the jock, but keep the socks on. Fucking hot.”

“You think so?” I knew I was, but I liked the confirmation. He just rolled his eyes at me in reply, though.

“Over to the bed, now. We want to go for cute, corruptible boy-next-door look. The kind of boy you’d be happy to take home to your parents, and they’d have no clue

that really you were a depraved little fucker.”

“Hey! I’m not depraved. I’m very cute and corruptible.” Climbing onto the bed on my hands and knees, I glanced back at Dexter over my shoulder. “Speaking of parents, I hope that none of my family members ever stumble across my photos. They’d disown me.”

There was a flash of sympathy on Dexter’s face, but it was gone almost as soon as it arrived. He knew I didn’t need it. “They wouldn’t really disown you, babe. Arch your back a bit... Yeah, nice. Hold that pose.”

“I know they wouldn’t really,” I mumbled. “You know what they can be like, though. They don’t approve of the methods I choose to pay my way through uni. Or the way I dress and act, for that matter.” It wasn’t like they didn’t love me, because they did...they just had trouble accepting certain things about me—although not the fact that I was gay, at least. Part of that was thanks to my two older brothers, who’d immediately made it crystal clear that I had their full support when thirteen-year-old me had announced to everyone that I was one hundred percent gay during a family Sunday dinner.

My nonno had emigrated to the UK from Italy fifty-nine years ago when he’d fallen in love with my English grandmother, breaking off his engagement with a girl from his local town in the process. From what my dad had told me, it had resulted in a huge family scandal. Despite his break with tradition, and the fact he no longer spoke to a large portion of his family, my nonno had very set beliefs about how Rossi men should conduct themselves. Ah, well. I was me, and unlucky for him, I’d inherited his stubbornness and strong will. If I wanted to do something, I would do it, no matter what. I stood my ground.

Shifting on the bed, I returned my attention to Dexter, giving him a small smile. Lowering the camera, my housemate stared at me for a moment, before he strode

forwards, placing a warm hand on my back and dipping down to kiss the top of my head. “I know how they can be, but I also know that no one should ever be allowed to dull your sparkle, little magpie. You deserve to shine.”

My smile widened. No matter what other people thought of my job choice and lifestyle, I had the best friends I could wish for, friends who I knew supported and loved me unconditionally. Case in point—Dexter, who was taking time out of his sleep schedule to help me get some good photos for my FBO account.

“Okay.” Dex thumbed through the pictures he’d taken, and then glanced back up at me. His mouth stretched open in a yawn so wide, I swore I could see his tonsils. “Want another with different underwear?”

“I think I’ve got it from here. I’ll set up a timer to do the rest, then I’ll do a couple of videos. Thanks for your help.”

“Anytime.”

When he was gone, I set up my camera on the stand, took a few more shots, then switched to my phone. I preferred to do video with my phone, but I liked to use a camera for my stills. Don’t ask why, I just did. As I stroked my dick to full hardness, giving the camera a sultry look, my mind wandered to Bennett. I wondered what his dick was like. I doubted I’d ever find out. It was fun to play with curious boys, but this one hadn’t been ready for anything more, and that was okay. I just had to forget about how gorgeous he was, and how sweet, and how he was an amazing kisser.

I’d lose my infatuation with him soon enough. I had my uni work. My job. My friends. Other hot boys to corrupt, or to corrupt me. Either worked.

I kept my gaze averted from the corner of the room, where Bennett’s hoodie was draped carefully over my chair.

Page 5

Source Creation Date: July 18, 2025, 1:55 pm

Almost three months had passed since Niccolò had kissed me, and I still couldn't get him out of my head, no matter how hard I'd tried. I'd been on several dates with girls, I'd thrown myself into football and my uni work, and I'd continued my bi exploration through the internet. What was it about him? Maybe it was that he was so different to anyone else I'd ever met, and all I knew was that I couldn't stop thinking about him. He tempted me like no one else ever had.

Seated on my bed with the door locked so no one could disturb me, my finger hovered over the "subscribe" button. Fuck. Was I really going to do this?

It had taken me almost the full three months to crack and look up Niccolò's FanBoyzOnly account. It had been easy enough to find, with the links from his social media profiles, but I'd resisted the temptation...until now.

Fuck it. I'd have a look.

There was nothing wrong with just a look, was there?

Lying back on my bed, I filled in my details, and then there he was. Niccolò Rossi, or as he was known as on his @nicorossx profile, Nico Ross. Performing arts student and adult content creator, with a profile packed full of sexually suggestive images that made my dick hard. Instantly.

I groaned out loud, my hand going to the tent in my sweatpants, rubbing over the head of my dick as I scrolled through the pictures. It looked like I had to pay extra to view any images of him fully nude or posing with other guys, and even more for videos, but fucking hell, he was so sexy in every single one of the images on display,

I wasn't sure I could handle seeing even more of him without coming in my fucking underwear like a teenager.

Yanking my sweatpants and boxers down, I fisted my cock, clicking on one of the images to enlarge it to fill my screen. Niccolò was standing facing the wall, his hands planted on the surface and his back arched. His face was half turned to the camera, in shadow, with just a glimpse of a little smile curving over his lips.

Lips I'd kissed. Lips I wanted to kiss again, now I was finally being honest with myself after three months of living in the land of denial.

My gaze trailed down the smooth, graceful lines of his body to his delicious-looking ass. I groaned, my dick leaking precum as I stroked up and down my length, imagining sliding it between those perfect ass cheeks and inside him. How would he feel? Would he moan for me? Would he let me fuck him hard and fast, or take it slow?

My orgasm came out of nowhere, my cock pulsing in my grip as cum shot over my abs. Panting, I dropped the phone to the bed, loosening my hold on my softening erection.

Fuck.

I scrubbed my hand across my face as I fumbled for tissues to clean up the mess all over my stomach. This wasn't going away, was it? No doubt, Niccolò would've forgotten all about me by now, but for me, there was no forgetting. Believe me, I'd tried for three fucking months. Nothing worked.

The problem was, I didn't really have anyone I could talk to about this kind of thing. I knew a few of the guys on the football team were something other than straight, but I didn't know any of them well enough to talk to about anything serious.

At a loss, I showered and threw on joggers and a grey LSU hoodie, and after grabbing my keys and phone, let myself out of my halls of residence building, and headed in the direction of the student union. Hopefully, it would distract me from my thoughts.

At the bar, I ordered a pint of Doom Bar and then made my way over to the retro game machines, for lack of anything else to do. As I neared the machines, I noticed Ander playing a fruit machine at the end of the row, with Liam next to him, leaning against the wall behind his boyfriend, Noah. His arms were wrapped around Noah's waist, his chin hooked over his shoulder, as the two of them laughed at something Ander was saying.

Engrossed in their conversation and whatever was happening with the machine, they hadn't noticed me. I gulped down half of my pint and then forced myself to move. When I drew closer, Liam's head shot up, his gaze flying to mine. He took me in, giving me a genuine smile, cocking his head in an invitation. Returning his smile, I came to a stop in front of the three of them. They welcomed me, exchanging greetings and small talk about the team and our courses, and I began to relax. By the time I'd drained the final dregs of my pint, I was in a much better mood than I had been earlier.

"Want another? I'll get a round in." I tapped the side of my empty glass.

Noah glanced at his watch. "Shit! I'm supposed to be meeting Elliot and the rest of the running club in five minutes for our social thing." Downing the remains of his drink, he slammed the glass down on the high table we'd clustered around, before hopping off his stool. "Thanks for the offer. I'll take you up on it next time."

"Deal." I smiled at him.

Liam caught his wrist, tugging Noah into him. "I'll see you back at home later. Have fun, yeah?" He kissed him softly, wrapping his arms around his boyfriend, uncaring

of the fact that I was staring at them both. Something inside me flipped or jumped—it was a feeling I couldn't even begin to explain.

I had no idea what expression was on my face, but Ander leaned into me, speaking in a low voice. "Is it...uh, does it make you uncomfortable?"

My head snapped around, my eyes taking in his wary expression. I shook my head violently. "No. Fuck, no. I have no problem at all." Stopping to think about it for a second, I shook my head again. "It's not...I guess I never really had any gay friends growing up, so I haven't really been around, um, people that aren't straight—as far as I know, at least—but why should it be any different to Liam kissing a girl, y'know? That's not the point. It's..." I trailed off, burying my face in my arms with a groan. "I haven't had enough alcohol for this conversation."

There was a scraping sound, and when I lifted my head again, in front of me was a fresh pint, a shot glass brimming with a clear liquid, and two of my teammates who were looking at me with identical expressions on their faces—still wary, but intrigued.

"Drink up, and then you can tell us what's going on." Ander flashed me a grin, lifting his shot glass.

I nodded in acknowledgement and drank.

After the first shot, Ander decided we should have another. When we'd downed those, while I tried not to grimace at the burn of the alcohol, we moved on to our pints. As I lifted the glass to my lips, Ander spoke up again.

"Want to talk about it?"

Fuck it. What was the worst that could happen? Pushing past the embarrassment of

confiding in two people I didn't know particularly well, I said, "I subscribed to someone's FanBoyzOnly account, and I uh, did stuff while I was looking at their pictures."

Liam choked on his pint as Ander's face lit up in a huge, evil grin, his eyes widening as he leaned across the table. While Liam recovered from his coughing fit, I raised my brows at Ander's obvious glee.

He cleared his throat, still grinning. "Sorry, but I wasn't expecting you to say that. FanBoyzOnly. That's gay content, isn't it?"

I gave him a short nod.

"Ahhh, now I see what the problem with Liam and Noah kissing was. Another poor, confused, not-so-straight LSU football player. Welcome to the club. So far, the members are me, Liam, and Levi. It's very exclusive."

"Huh?" I stared between them, watching as they both smirked at me.

Liam shot Ander a sideways glance. "I thought I was straight until I met Noah. Levi...I dunno what happened exactly, but him and his boyfriend both thought they were straight before they got together. They were rival team captains as well—fuck knows how they even got past their differences, let alone have a relationship. Although, I guess me and Noah started off on the wrong foot, too. And then we have Ander, who was too dense to realise that his best friend was the love of his life."

"Fuck off! I was not." Ander paused. "Okay, I was, a bit. Whatever, the point is, we thought we were straight, until we weren't. How did it happen for you?"

"Uhhh..." Fuck, I could feel my cheeks getting hot. I gulped down more of my pint.

“I’m not sure. I always wondered about it a bit. I watched some solo guy porn every now and then and I could get off to it or whatever. But I never really had any inclination to take it any further.”

“FanBoyzOnly isn’t taking it much further. Unless—” Ander’s eyes widened, and his mouth fell open. “Fuck me! It’s JJ’s friend, isn’t it? Niccolò?”

I buried my head in my arms again. “How did you know?”

He laughed. “Lucky guess. Nah, maybe because I was there at Revolve when he was all over you? And then he came to our football match, didn’t he? There was a vibe between you two.”

“Yeah, well, I haven’t seen him since then. We kissed after the match and that was it. Nothing since then, and that was months ago.”

“But he’s been in your head, otherwise you wouldn’t have subscribed to his account,” Liam interjected.

“I don’t know what it is,” I admitted. “He’s nothing like anyone I’ve ever met. He’s... Fuck, look at him.” Thrusting my phone out, still open to Nic’s FBO page, I closed my eyes.

“Uh, we don’t need to see his nudes— Whoa, wait. Is that an LSU football hoodie?”

I snatched the phone back, ignoring Ander’s shocked exclamation. My eyes scanned the image, catching on something in the corner. I hadn’t noticed it before, too busy looking at Niccolò, but now, as I zoomed in, I saw it.

Someone who wasn’t familiar with LSU or the team would never have noticed it. But the way the sky-blue fabric was folded, I could see a small section of the LSU

wording on the front, and an 'R' on the back.

It was my hoodie.

The one I'd let him wear that day. The day we'd kissed.

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Source Creation Date: July 18, 2025, 1:55 pm

“Welcome to the ‘welcome to the LSU team’ party!” Ander threw open the door of number 1, the Mansions, a wide grin on his face.

“Any excuse for a party.” Our team captain, Travis, stepped up next to me, his arm wrapped around the waist of his girlfriend, Kira. He handed Ander an eight-pack of beer. “Isn’t this a bit too late, though? Bennett’s been on the team for a while now.”

“Yeah, but he hasn’t been to one of our house parties yet, has he? We need to initiate him into the ball club.”

“The ball club? Since when have you called it that?” Travis raised his brows. “Whatever, I need a beer.” He and Kira disappeared inside, leaving me on the doorstep.

Ander’s grin widened, if that was possible, as he gestured for me to come inside. “Did you get it? The ball club? Trav thinks I’m talking about football, which I am, but it has a secret double meaning.”

“Which is?” Stepping into the entrance of the double-fronted Victorian terrace and closing the door behind me, I leaned against the hallway wall.

“Ball. B is you, Bennett, A is me, and then Liam and Levi are the L’s. Remember what me and Liam said about our exclusive club of formerly straight LSU footballers?”

Something about this wasn’t right. When Ander had texted me to invite me tonight, telling me we needed to belatedly celebrate my position on the team, I’d been too

excited at the thought of attending one of his house parties to question it, but now I was here and he was bringing up ‘the ball club,’ I was on high alert.

Clearing my throat, I glanced down the hallway. “Right. Yeah. Uh, where’s the kitchen?” I tapped the side of the pack of beers I was carrying. “These need to go in the fridge.”

He showed me into the kitchen, where we were joined by Elliot. We made small talk for a few minutes, sipping our drinks, before something over my shoulder caught Ander’s attention. A smirk crossed his face. “Hey, Ben. What do you think of that game, seven minutes in heaven?”

“Nothing, because I’m not thirteen,” I said slowly. “Why?”

“No reason. Do you think you could look at something for me?”

“Ace,” Elliot muttered from next to Ander, but he silenced him with a brief kiss, his gaze softening as he met his boyfriend’s eyes.

“E, just go with it.” With that, he took my drink from me, grabbed my wrist, and then tugged me out of the kitchen, with Elliot mouthing sorry as we left.

Before I had a chance to ask what the fuck was happening, Ander had yanked a door open, placed a hand on top of my head, pushing me down, and I found myself unceremoniously shoved inside the under-stairs cupboard. The door slammed shut behind me, leaving me more or less in the dark, with the barest amount of light seeping in around the door. I sank to the floor, disorientated. What the actual fuck?

A muffled voice spoke through the wood. “Wait there. Your seven minutes in heaven starts in— Oh, JJ! Perfect timing.” The door opened again, and someone shrieked as they were shoved inside, landing in my lap.

Before the door slammed shut for the second time, I got a good look at my new cupboard companion. Honey-brown eyes fringed with dark lashes, rimmed in sparkling black, a mop of deep brown curls, and an expression of shocked outrage all over his gorgeous face...

“Niccolò?”

Shifting into a more upright position, he inhaled sharply, his hands coming up to my face, his fingers skimming the sides of my jaw. “Bennett?”

“Hi.” My heart was pounding, both from this completely unexpected situation, and having the guy I couldn’t get out of my head right here in my lap.

“Why are we in a cupboard?” His bewildered tone made me smile despite myself.

Lightly gripping his hips, because I couldn’t go any longer without touching him, I shrugged. “No idea. Ander said something about seven minutes in heaven and then shoved me in here.”

“JJ invited me over and said I had a special surprise waiting for me.” He huffed out a breath. “Liar.”

I swallowed hard. I couldn’t believe he was here with me after so long. “Am I not a special surprise?”

My eyes were slowly adjusting to the dim light in the cupboard, and I could just about make out his eyes widening, and a slow smile curving over his lips.

“Mmm. You are a very special surprise, bello.”

Emboldened by his words, I reached up, cupping the back of his head, and kissed the

smile from his lips.

I lost myself in the slide of his mouth against mine, his arms wrapping around my neck, pulling me closer, and his body pressing into me. His hardening erection rubbed against mine in the most fucking delicious way, making me want to thrust up against him, to make him fall apart, to make him mine.

But we were in a fucking cupboard, with our friends right outside in all probability, and there was no way I was going to try for anything more while we were in this situation.

“You have no idea how long I’ve wanted to do that,” I rasped, lifting my head, still holding him close.

“How long?” His hand slid down my chest. “Mmm. You feel so good. I want to see you naked.”

“Since you left me in the library,” I admitted, somehow finding it easier to speak the words in the dark. “Fuck, I don’t know, Nic. You’re so...you got inside my head.”

“I did?”

“You did.” I suddenly remembered something. Leaning into him, I trailed my lips down the side of his face, across to his mouth, before kissing him with the softest kiss I’d ever given to anyone. He sighed, his arms tightening around me. “Nic?” I kissed him again. “Was I in your head too? I saw a picture...”

Gasping, he shot upright. “What picture?”

“It—”

The door flew open, cutting my words off instantly.

“Your seven minutes are up. It might be longer, I lost track of time.” Ander’s grinning face appeared in the doorway, and I gritted my teeth. He caught my expression, rolling his eyes. “Don’t give me that look. You should be thanking me. You can use my room. Or JJ’s. He’s gone for the night.”

“Fuck off,” I muttered, glaring at him, and then turning my attention to Niccolò, who was unnaturally still on my lap. “Nic? Want to come back to my halls of residence so we can talk in private?”

He bit down on his lip in the most distracting way, but he eventually nodded. “Okay. Or you can come back to mine. My housemate’s working tonight, so we won’t be disturbed.”

“Okay, yours,” I murmured, forgetting Ander as I stared into Nic’s huge brown eyes. So fucking gorgeous.

“Come on.” Slipping his hand into mine, he climbed off my lap, pulling me up and out of the cupboard. We both blinked in the sudden brightness—even though the hallway lighting was dim, it was like staring into the sun compared to the darkness of the cupboard.

I angled my body away from Ander in the hope that he’d miss my erection, still fucking prominent thanks to Niccolò’s proximity, but from the smirk on his face, he hadn’t missed it.

“Have fun. Thank me later.” With a wave of his hand, he disappeared, and after throwing up my middle finger, I turned back to Niccolò. “Your house?”

As we headed towards the front door, he nodded. “It’s not far. You can tell me about

the picture you saw on the way.”

I groaned. “No.”

“Yes.” His voice softened as he glanced up at me. “Please, Ben.”

The manipulative little fucker. All pouty lips and blinking lashes. I was helpless to resist.

Giving in to the inevitable, I sighed. “Okay.”

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Bennett was holding my hand, and he didn't seem to care. He didn't seem to be uncomfortable with being out in the open like this. I smiled to myself. This was unexpected in the best way. When JJ had invited me over, telling me he had a special surprise for me, I had no idea what to expect. I'd never bothered going to one of his housemate's parties before, because I thought they'd be too full of straight, annoyingly drunk boys. In my head, I'd pictured their parties to be like American movie frat parties, full of super-straight dickhead jocks. It was a stupid viewpoint, I knew now. I suppose my teenage years hadn't helped, where some of the idiot popular boys seemed to act like my gayness was a contagious disease. Whatever.

Anyway, here I was, walking across campus with a cute football player next to me, casually holding my hand like it was no big deal. Why?

Raising our joined hands, I glanced up at Bennett. "What's all this about?"

His gaze flicked to our hands, and a wry smile curled over the corners of his mouth. "Honestly? No idea. It just...happened. Somehow. Wait, didn't you grab my hand to drag me off to your house?"

"I did. And you're okay with that?"

He shrugged. "Why not? Are you okay with it?"

"I hold hands with my friends sometimes."

One brow lifted. It was distractingly hot. "Yeah, but we're not friends, are we?" His thumb stroked across the back of my hand, sending tingles through my body.

The path split in two, and I tugged him to the left. “Not far now. Don’t you want to be my friend?”

“I don’t know what I want. You...confuse me, Niccolò.”

Stopping dead, I reached up, gripping his throat just underneath his jaw and pulling his head down. I brushed a kiss across his lips, and then another. He sighed, and then dropped my hand in favour of wrapping his arms around me, drawing me closer as he deepened the kiss.

When we drew apart, he stared down at me with dark eyes. “Fuck. I know one thing I do want, and that’s to do more of that.”

“That can be arranged.” I grinned happily at him, doing my best to ignore the erection pressing insistently against mine. I had him back in my arms, and yes, I’d told him I wanted to see him naked when we were in the cupboard—a cupboard! The audacity!—but I didn’t want to scare him off if he was feeling skittish. For a change, I’d take my cues from him. Unless he wanted me to take charge, of course.

At least he hadn’t freaked out after kissing me, so that was a good sign, and he’d said he’d been wanting to kiss me again since the library, which was three whole months ago. Which reminded me... What was his picture comment all about? I had an idea, but I couldn’t quite wrap my head around it. I decided to drop it when it became clear that he didn’t want to talk about it, but I wanted to mention it so badly.

Now wasn’t the time. I had to remember that.

We reached the row of small redbrick terraces where I lived with Dexter, and I fished my keys from my pocket. As I glanced back over my shoulder at Bennett, I caught him staring at my ass, and I smirked at him. His cheeks flushed.

“Like what you see?” I arched my back, and he groaned low in his throat.

“Fucking hell, you’re a handful.”

“I can be. Want to touch and see how well I fit into your hands?”

He practically shoved me inside my own house—rude, but I’d forgive him just this once—and then pressed me up against the wall, his hands cupping my ass as he kissed down my throat.

His thigh pressed between my legs, and I ground down, panting as he kissed all over my exposed skin. “My room. In case Dex comes back.”

“Huh?” Raising his head, he blinked down at me, all heavy-lidded and lustful. Delicious.

“My housemate. He shouldn’t come back, but?—”

He cut me off with a kiss. “Sorry. Your room?” He didn’t sound sorry, but if it meant more of his mouth on mine, who cared? Talking was overrated.

“This...way...” I gasped in between more kisses, somehow managing to get us both down the hallway and up the stairs. When we reached my bedroom, probably twenty minutes later, I was breathless, Bennett had unbuttoned my shirt all the way down to my navel as well as ridding himself of his hoodie, and I was certain I had a very obvious love bite just beneath my collarbone.

“You’re so fucking tempting.” He pressed up against my back, kissing my neck again as I fumbled with the door handle. Why wouldn’t it open? My dick was so hard it almost hurt, and it felt like he was in a similar state, grinding his erection into my ass as he moaned sexily against my skin.

Finally, I got the door open, and we stumbled into my room, heading straight for the bed. I still didn't know what he wanted, lost in a haze of lust, but getting horizontal seemed like a good place to start. As we reached the bed, he lifted me, twisting us around. He collapsed back onto the bed, all stretched out beneath me like a tasty snack, and I straddled his thick thighs.

"I like this view very much," I purred, pushing his T-shirt up so I could feast my eyes on his abs. Running my nail down his muscles and then teasingly over the dark trail of hair that disappeared into his jeans, I watched his pupils dilate, his hands tightening around my hips.

"Take your shirt off," he commanded hoarsely. "I want to see you."

"Is that so? Do you want me to see you?"

Rubbing his hand across his face, he groaned. "Yeah, but I have no fucking clue what I'm supposed to be doing here."

"Why don't you lie back and let me entertain you?"

When he removed his hand from his face, staring at me with his lips parted and so much heat in his eyes, I unbuttoned the rest of my shirt and then shrugged it off, letting him look his fill. He'd seen me wearing less. In the club, I'd only been wearing booty shorts, but he'd been drunk then, so I wasn't sure how much he remembered.

His palm slid up my chest, warm against my skin. "Even better in person."

Things were clicking into place, but I kept my focus on the hot football player I had in my bed, because who knew if or when this would be repeated? "Mmm. You like that, do you? Want more?"

“Yeah.”

My fingers danced over the clasp of my uncomfortably-tight trousers, teasing Bennett just because I knew it would rile him up even further. This was so different from the time we’d kissed in the library. This time, he was all in with zero hesitation.

Bennett’s hand clamped down on mine, making me massage my cock through my trousers, his palm covering the back of my hand. I gasped, and he flashed me the dirtiest fucking grin I’d ever seen, pressing down harder, my hand sliding up and down my length as he moved me where he wanted me. His sudden burst of confidence was so hot it was making my dick throb and leak a ridiculous amount of precum.

“Good?”

“So good,” I confirmed breathlessly. “More.”

Together, we undid my trousers and peeled them off my legs, leaving me in my socks and my favourite sky-blue jock. The material was tented, damp with my precum, and even to my eyes, it looked hot as fuck. I would’ve been tempted to photograph it, but my footballer was far more tempting, hard beneath me, giving me those eyes that gave me both butterflies and a leaking cock.

“What do you think?” I ran a blue-tipped finger down my torso, stopping at the band of my jockstrap.

“Fuuuuck,” he moaned, his hands fisting my sheets as he screwed his eyes closed, the prominent bulge in his jeans making my mouth water. “What’s happening to me?”

I froze on top of him. Was he really into this, or was he uncomfortable? Biting down on my lip, I studied him uncertainly. “Ben? Are you okay? We can slow down, or

stop if you want.”

His eyes snapped open, his gaze flying to mine. “No. We’re not fucking stopping, okay?”

Exhaling shakily, I nodded. “Okay. Want to get naked?”

“Yes.” The word was hissed out between gritted teeth, Bennett’s gaze tracking my hand movements as my fingers curled around the hem of his T-shirt. I was still unsure, but I figured that he’d give me cues if he wanted to stop. Even so, I was careful, taking my time, dragging his T-shirt the rest of the way up his body and over his head, and then flicking open the buttons on his jeans. When his tented navy boxer briefs came into full view, also damp with precum, I took a moment to sit back and admire the sight. So much of my FBO content involved showcasing my hard dick without actually showing it, so I was basically a connoisseur. And Bennett’s dick straining in his underwear was gourmet level mouthwatering.

“Mi ecciti,” I murmured, snapping back into English when Bennett made a noise that was somewhere between a moan and a gasp. “You turn me on so fucking much. I want you. I want your cock.”

“I think...yeah. I want that. Tell me how to make it good for you.”

“I will,” I promised, divesting him of his jeans without touching his underwear, which was a skill I hadn’t known I possessed until that moment. Touching his lovely cock would happen soon enough, but I needed to remember that this was his first time, and I didn’t want to do anything to scare him away.

Instead of removing our underwear, I decided to kiss him some more. Stretching out across his body, I lowered my mouth to his. His arms came around my back, and then down, his palms sliding over the curve of my ass. I moaned into his mouth, rolling

my hips down, and then it was his turn to moan as our cocks pressed together.

“More.” He got his fingers underneath the band of my jock, and I went with it, helping him to strip us of the rest of our clothes in record time. All except for our socks, because one, my feet were cold, and two, was there anything hotter than two guys naked except for their socks? My FBO subscribers were obsessed, at least. Then again, I did manage to pull off the nude-except-for-socks look like a pro.

I forgot all about socks and how we looked when Bennett pushed me into a seated position on top of him, his hard cock brushing up against mine, and just stared. Stared at our dicks, his mouth open.

It was so fucking hot. I’d been with a few ‘straight’ boys before, but it had always been a rushed, covert thing, and I’d never had anyone else look at me the way he was, all completely fascinated and turned on and hot.

Fuck me, I was a lucky boy.

“Can I...” he began, his fingers creeping towards my dick.

“Yes. Touch me.” We both watched as a bead of precum slid down the head of my dick, my breath catching in my throat and my dick throbbing, even though he hadn’t touched me yet.

The tip of his index finger slowly slid up my shaft, swiping over my precum, and then...

He placed his finger to his lips. His tongue came out, and he tentatively licked the moisture from his finger.

“Oh,” I whispered.

I'd been with men who were well-versed in the art of gay sex. My own housemate was a porn star. And yet... No one had ever affected me the way Bennett did in that moment.

His cheeks flushed, his gaze flicking to mine before returning to my dick. "More?"

"Mmm."

There was a slight shake in his hand as he wrapped his fingers around both of our erections, and his first few strokes were unsure, but when I moaned and thrust forwards, unable to help myself, he gave me a slow, dirty smile, his grip steady, and then he just fucking went for it with the sexiest rush of confidence I'd ever seen.

"Fuck, Nic. So good."

I was swooning like a Victorian maiden. "Don't stop."

"You like that?"

"Mmm, yeah."

"I want to try more." His tongue darted out and then slid across his lips, and my breath caught in my throat.

"Mouth?"

He nodded slowly, but then shook his head. "I want..."

"Tell me." Running my hand down the planes of his abs, I stared into his lovely blue eyes.

“I want...” Pausing, he sucked in a breath and let the words rush out of him. “I want to suck you, but I want you to come on my dick.”

“Bennett. Are you trying to kill me?” I fanned my face, gasping, and he laughed.

“You really are something else, Niccolò.”

“I am. So. Suck then fuck, yes?”

Another laugh burst from his throat. “Sex isn’t usually like this.”

“Is that good or bad?”

His hand left my dick, and he yanked me down to him, pulling me into an epic kiss with lots of tongue that left me breathless and more turned on than ever. “It’s very fucking good.”

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Raising my head, I glanced up at Niccolò, sprawled across his bed, his chest rising and falling in rapid movements. He whined low in his throat, and I took the hint, lowering my head again to take another experimental lick up the length of his erection. I'd thought about this moment too many times in my imagination, but imagining it and actually experiencing it were two completely different things. He was so warm and solid against me. So real. A man. Something I'd been curious about for so long, and now he was here, and I was so overwhelmed in the best way. I kept vacillating between nerves and excitement, and Nic was being so patient and letting me do what I wanted to him.

Not that it was a hardship for him. I took in his lust-blown pupils, his pretty mouth wide as he stared down at me, completely enraptured. Swiping another bead of precum from the head of his cock—and that was a taste I could definitely get used to—I trailed my hand up the warm skin of his thigh, his muscles flexing beneath my palm.

“Ben.” His voice was breathless. “D-do you want me to suck you? I’m very good at it.”

Releasing his dick, I grinned up at him. “Yeah, I have no doubt that you are. But I want to suck you, and then get my dick inside you. Save the blow job for round two?”

His eyes widened, and he nodded instantly. “Round two. Yes. But, Ben...” Biting down on his lip, he eyed me from beneath his lashes, and his expression made my dick throb. “I’m not gonna last much longer. This whole—” He paused to wave his hand in my direction. “—you thing is really doing it for me.”

“We’d better get on with it, then.” Lowering my head again, I closed my mouth around the tip of his cock, swirling my tongue around the sensitive skin, and then released him. Fuck. Back to being nervous again. “Uh, how do we?—”

“It won’t take much. I played around earlier today, did some scenes for my FBO. I can use my fingers, or if you want?—”

“Can you use your dildo?” The second the question was out of my mouth, I cursed under my breath, slapping my hand over my face. My entire face was boiling, and from the wide smile I could see through the gap between my fingers, he knew exactly what I was referring to.

Collapsing onto the bed next to Niccolò, I buried my face in his pillow. He laughed, smoothing a hand down my back, before lightly slapping my ass. I jumped, twisting to the side, and forced myself to meet his gaze.

“Someone’s been stalking my FBO. Did you like my pictures, bello? Did you watch any of my videos?”

We couldn’t have this conversation now. I needed a distraction, and fast.

Angling my body forwards, I placed my mouth to Nic’s ear. “We have way more interesting things to do than talk.” Kissing the soft skin just below his ear, I placed a chain of kisses down the side of his face and onto his smooth jaw, finally capturing his lips and pulling him into my arms.

He sighed against my mouth, wrapping his arms around me and pressing his body into mine. My dick, which had flagged slightly during my moment of embarrassment, became a steel bar against his erection, and I pulled him even closer, taking the opportunity to get my hands on his gorgeous ass as I did so.

We kissed until we were breathless, our sweat-slicked bodies sliding together, riding a knife edge. I dared to press a finger into the crease of Nic's ass and he moaned, tearing his mouth away from mine.

"Fuck. Ben. Wait. Stop. You need. We need. Dick. In me."

"Yeah," I rasped. "Need inside you."

He crawled over to the side of the bed, tugging a drawer open, and then threw a foil packet and a half-empty bottle of lube at me. "Get ready."

As I rolled the condom over my aching erection, I caught a flash of blue out of the corner of my eye, and I couldn't stop my gasp.

"My favourite dildo." Niccolò shot me a knowing look, caressing the marbled length, all blues and aquamarines. When he'd finished smearing lube over it, he crawled back over to me. "Do you recognise it?"

"Uh, yeah." Fuck. I'd been trying to avoid conversations about me stalking his FBO, especially when we were doing sexy things in his bed. "Show me what you like to do with it."

Smiling, he leaned back against the headboard and then patted the space in front of him. "Sit here."

When I was seated to his liking, he shifted onto his hands and knees, facing away from me. "You wanted to see. See."

Widening his legs, he placed the head of the toy to his hole, and pressed forwards.

"Oh, fuck," I murmured, watching him open up for the dildo, wishing more than

anything that it was my cock filling him. “Nic. That’s—this is like live porn. Better than live porn.”

“Much better,” he panted, the dildo now all the way inside him. “You like?”

“I fucking love. I want— Can I take over?”

“Mmm. Please do.”

My legs were shaking, my mouth was dry, and I’d never been more turned on in my life. Positioning myself behind him, I admired the sight for a moment before I wrapped my fingers around the base of the dildo and carefully tugged it free. Letting it drop to the sheets, I stroked my cock, just once, lined myself up, and then pushed inside him.

It was like nothing I’d imagined it would be, and everything I’d imagined it would be at the same time. Being surrounded by Niccolò, his body covered by mine, both of us moving together, our pace increasing as we found our rhythm... I knew right then that this couldn’t only be a one-time thing. I’d found it impossible to get him out of my head as it was, and now... I’d succumbed to the temptation of Niccolò Rossi, and once would never be enough.

“Bennett. Yes,” he moaned, pushing back, one hand going down between us to grip his cock. I wanted to be the one to touch him, but I was struggling to stay in control, to get him to make those breathy noises when my cock hit him just right, to hold him in place so I could keep up my pounding rhythm, giving him what we both wanted. Multitasking was beyond me. This time. There’d be a next time, if he wanted that.

“You feel so good,” I panted against his neck. “Gonna come.”

“Come, Ben. Come inside me. Please.”

His desperate words sent me hurtling over the edge, my cock throbbing, filling the condom with my release. He whimpered, his hand moving faster, and then he jerked against me, his cock shooting cum over the sheets beneath us. I held him through it, shuddering against him as the aftershocks raced through our bodies.

We ended up cuddling on his bed, and after a little while of having him curled up against me, his warm breaths skating across the crook of my neck, I realised something.

This wasn't only about the sex.

I liked this part just as much as the things we'd done earlier.

I wanted more of it.

I wanted Niccolò to be mine.

* * *

"I couldn't help myself. I thought, y'know, after the kiss, that I should draw a line under it. But I found your account, and I couldn't stay away."

"I am very tempting. I don't blame you." Niccolò gave me a wicked grin, and I found myself leaning in to kiss his nose, which wasn't something I'd ever had the urge to do to anyone before.

"You are." My gaze flicked to the corner of his bedroom, where I could see my hoodie peeking out from the bottom of a pile of clothes, haphazardly balanced on the edge of his desk. "Speaking of your FBO, I noticed my hoodie in the background of one of your pictures. Or Ander did, anyway."

“Ander’s subscribed to my FBO account?” His mouth fell open, his body freezing against me.

“No. I, uh, I showed him your account when I was talking to him about you.”

Niccolò relaxed, snuggling back into me and pressing a kiss to my chest. “Not that I mind, but it’s Ander. He made us go in a cupboard. A cupboard! He doesn’t deserve nice things after that.”

“JJ, too.”

“Yeah. We’ll get them back, somehow. You’re very cuddly. In a muscly way.”

I huffed out a laugh. “Glad to hear it. Are you gonna tell me about my hoodie?”

Burrowing into my neck, he shook his head. “Sorry. I didn’t mean for it to be on camera. I...I like it. It’s warm, and it reminded me of you.”

Smoothing my hand down his back, I let my eyes drift shut, relaxing in this moment with him. “Don’t be sorry. You couldn’t really see it in the photo. I don’t think anyone would have really noticed. Too busy looking at you to notice your surroundings. I know I was.”

“It could do with being a bit more glittery,” he mumbled.

My eyes opened. “You say that because you’re a little magpie.” Lifting his hand, I kissed one of his sparkly blue fingernails.

I felt his smile against my skin. “That’s what my housemate calls me.” A yawn followed the smile, and I wrapped my arms more tightly around him.

“Nic? Before you fall asleep, can I ask you something?” When he raised his head, I said, “I don’t want to pressure you or make this sound too serious, but I want to make sure we’re on the same page. Is this just sex—and I want you to know that I’m okay if it is—or are you interested in anything else with me?”

He studied me intently for a moment. “Anything else like what?”

“Like...like going on a date. You and me.”

His gaze dropped to my chest. There was a long, long pause, and my heart sank, but I did my best to keep my disappointment from showing on my face. Fucking hell, I shouldn’t even be this bothered about it. Of course he wouldn’t want more from me than sex—why would he? Having fun and fucking around was one thing, but a date was a completely different thing. A thing with expectations, even if it was casual.

Eventually, he met my eyes again. He gave me the shyest, sweetest smile I’d ever seen, pink dusting his cheeks as he spoke. “I’d really like to go on a date with you, Bennett Archer.”

He would? My own smile spread across my face as happiness filled me, warming me from the inside. “Okay. We’ll go.”

“Tomorrow?”

“Tomorrow.”

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The sound of a key turning in the lock broke the silence, and I exhaled, straightening my shoulders. It was time.

I'd spent far too long panicking about my date with Nic, and I'd finally given in and begged Ander to ask JJ for some tips. They both owed me, after all. My dating experience wasn't what you'd call comprehensive. In fact, the only dates I'd been on were during my school years—usually trips into town, the cinema, amusement arcades—typical British teenage locations, I guessed. So far, I'd had no dates during my time as a uni student, other than a few casual afternoon coffee shop meetups. It had been more about one-night stands, and I hadn't been concerned with anything beyond that—it hadn't been high on my priorities list. Until now.

JJ had insisted that Nic would like nothing more than a relaxed evening in, so I'd decided to trust him. I'd met Nic's housemate, Dexter, who'd let me into their shared house, before disappearing off with the promise that he wouldn't be back until the following day. JJ was keeping Nic busy while I got everything set up, and he was going to use an excuse to get Nic to stop by at home before our planned meeting time.

Now Niccolò was here, and I just had to hope that JJ had been right.

When Nic stepped into his lounge, subtly lit by a floor lamp in the corner of the room, I was ready, reclining on the sofa in a soft cotton LSU T-shirt in navy, and light grey sweatpants. Netflix was loaded up on the TV, and a bowl of popcorn was in grabbing distance on the coffee table. I'd also piled a selection of crisps, sweets, and chocolates next to the popcorn, and we had some beers and premixed cocktails. JJ had attempted to talk me out of the premixed drinks, telling me I should mix them myself, but I knew where my skills lay, and I was no mixologist.

His mouth dropped open in the cutest expression of shock I'd ever seen, his eyes widening as he took me in.

"Hi," I said, beckoning him towards me.

"Hi." It came out as a whisper, and he gave me that sweet, shy smile again. It gave me fucking butterflies to know that I had such an effect on this confident, gorgeous person. He was so cute, and I just wanted to wrap him in my arms and never let him go.

Okay...getting ahead of yourself there, Bennett. Calm down.

When he reached me, I grabbed his hand and tugged him down onto the sofa next to me, pulling a soft blanket over his legs. It was warm enough, but the blanket made it cosy. As he rested his head on my shoulder with a smile, I decided that this was an experience we'd definitely be repeating.

The evening was perfect. Simple, relaxed, and easy. We talked for hours, the TV a background hum to our quiet conversation. Niccolò told me about his family, and I told him about mine, about being the middle sibling in a family of five, with an older sister who was highly ambitious with hopes of becoming a politician, and a younger brother who wanted nothing more than to become a professional footballer and looked up to me as a role model. We'd already touched on our degrees and what we hoped to do afterwards when we'd been at the coffee shop, but we spoke more in depth. Nic told me about how he'd started his FanBoyzOnly account on a whim after he'd met Dexter, and how the income had relieved the pressure he was under, knowing his family's finances were stretched.

"I'm proud of you for doing it, you know," I told him, scrolling through a series of images on his phone. Each one was hotter than the last, and it was impossible to keep my dick under control when I was confronted with both the provocative images and

Niccolò in person, right there next to me.

“You are? You don’t have a problem with it?” His tone was cautious, and he wouldn’t look at me.

“Why would I? You’re earning your own money, and you look fucking good doing it. Bloody hell, Nic. I know you said your family disapproves of it, but you’re self-sufficient, and you’re putting a big chunk of your earnings aside for the future. I think most students could learn a lot from you. They should have you as a guest lecturer in business studies.”

He laughed, relaxing into me. “Maybe I’ll suggest that to JJ. Get him to run the idea by Dr. Wilder, see what he thinks of it.” His smile fading away, he tilted his head to press a kiss to my jaw. “Has anyone ever told you how lovely you are? I think you’re the loveliest footballer I know.”

Niccolò. He was so fucking sweet. Looking at him now, I wondered how I’d even questioned my sexuality around him. I’d never been so attracted to anyone in my life. “Aww, thanks, baby. You’re not too bad yourself, you know.”

“I know. I’m great. Hey, are you glad I flirted with you that night in Revolve?”

“I am.” My gaze lowered to the prominent bulge between his legs, and I swallowed hard. My hand slid up his thigh. When his breath hitched, I pulled him into my lap. “Let’s re-enact that night, but let’s pretend I went home with you. What happened when we got to your house?”

A smile curved over his lips as he wound his arms around my neck. “My lovely, sexy footballer. Carry me to my bedroom, and I’ll show you exactly what happened. In detail.”

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The pile of books next to me seemed to be growing. How was that possible, when I'd been here for two hours reading through the material already? Written assignments were the least exciting part of my performing arts degree.

Groaning, I pushed my laptop away from me, folded my arms across the table, and lowered my head. Maybe I could take a quick nap. I was in a quiet corner of the library—no one would disturb me here.

My phone let out a soft chirp, and my head flew up, my thumb instantly unlocking the screen.

My hot footballer:

The nails brought us luck. We won 6-2!

Me:

I knew it! Aren't you glad I talked you into letting me paint your nails? Imagine the score if I'd painted more than 2!

My hot footballer:

2 was perfect. Wish you'd been here to see us win

Bennett's words made me warm all over. It had been three weeks since our first official date, and we'd had several more dates, and hours of calls and texts, getting to know each other on a deeper level. Everything was moving fast...but we just clicked,

somehow, and it felt like he'd been in my life forever. We hadn't discussed the B word...boyfriend...but it felt like we were heading in that direction. Me with a boyfriend! Who would've thought it? Not me, that was for sure. I'd be a fool to give Bennett Archer up, though. He was the loveliest man to ever exist, in my opinion. Sexy, smart, sweet, caring, and his cock was the kind of thing that poets wrote sonnets about. Or they should, anyway.

I'd talked him into letting me paint the little finger on each hand in the LSU team colour, overlaid with sparkles, and my instincts had paid off. The LSU team had won, all thanks to my nails—or partly thanks to my nails. I'd definitely brought them some luck, at least.

Me:

Wish I'd been there. Why can't my assignments write themselves?

I added several sad and crying emojis to get my point across, and two replies came through in quick succession. The first was a GIF insinuating that I was a drama queen—ruuude. My not-yet-but-hopefully-soon-to-be-boyfriend must've been hanging out with Ander too much. But the second message made up for it.

My hot footballer:

Come and watch my match next week. I'll save you a seat at the front

Me:

I'll be there!

My hot footballer:

Can't wait. Got to go but I'll speak to you later. Let me know when you finish your assignment and I'll give you a reward

Me:

Does it involve your dick?

My hot footballer:

Maybe. You'll have to wait and see

Me:

TEASE. I guess you're giving me an incentive to finish it quickly

My hot footballer:

Speaking of teasing, your latest FBO pic was sexy as fuck

Me:

Thought I'd put your gift to good use. Who knew you could put a mini vibrator in the base of my favourite dildo?

My hot footballer:

My research paid off. I need to see the real thing though

Me:

I'll re-enact that and every scene for you in person. Also I might've filmed an extra

private scene just for you

My hot footballer:

You're killing me. Forgot to say I'm on the bus with the rest of the team and you've given me the most obvious boner ever. Got to sit sideways to hide it

I laughed to myself, clapping my mouth shut when the person at the next table glared at me. Giving them an apologetic wave, I returned my attention to Bennett.

Me:

That visual gives me a boner and I'm in the library. This is a sacred place of learning, Bennett!

My hot footballer:

Payback is sweet baby. Got to go but I don't want to. Hurry up and finish your essay so I can see you. I miss you

Me:

I miss you too

Placing my phone down with a sigh, I returned to my work. At least Bennett had given me an incentive to finish as quickly as possible.

* * *

"Right there." I stared down at Bennett, admiring the way the muscles in his arm flexed as he curled his fingers inside me. A moan fell from my throat as he brushed

across my prostate, and he shot me a quick, satisfied smile. Yeah, my man had accuracy skills on the pitch and in the bedroom. In just a short time, he'd somehow discovered exactly how to push every one of my buttons, and sex with him was the most fulfilling, satisfying, amazing experience.

“Yeah? You like that?” Withdrawing his fingers, he slicked up his cock, but instead of pushing inside, he pressed a soft kiss to my lips. “You’re so beautiful, Nic.”

A sudden rush of feelings hit me all at once, overwhelming me, and I was lost for words. Gripping the back of his neck, I held him in place, kissing him again, pouring everything I had into it.

Bennett hadn’t been part of my agenda, let alone falling for him, and yet, here I was. Falling. Hard.

“Ben,” I whispered, helpless, and he pressed inside, so slowly, kissing me all the while. It brought a lump to my throat and made me melt inside. This man was everything to me.

“Gonna make you feel so good,” he promised, rolling us so he was on his back and he could wrap me up in his arms. “You’re amazing, Nic. So fucking special. And you’re mine.”

Blinking away sudden tears, I held on to him with everything I had, letting him sweep me towards the edge, until I exploded in blissful oblivion, with him following me soon after.

I never wanted to leave this moment, and it scared me so much. How could one person be so perfect for me? How would I survive if he let me go?

I hoped with everything in me that it wasn’t too good to be true, that I wasn’t just a

novelty to Bennett. Because if he wanted to give me up, it would tear me apart.

Source Creation Date: July 18, 2025, 1:55 pm

Niccolò had been quiet and a bit distant over the past few days, which was unusual for him. I wasn't sure why—was it something I'd done? I didn't think so, but there was definitely something going on with him, and I needed to get to the bottom of it.

Booting the ball across the pitch to Liam, I tried to push all my worries from my mind and focus on training. I still hadn't got to play as many games as I'd like, but I'd been working hard on my technique, and after the match last weekend, Bryan, our coach, had singled me out for praise. It was a good sign.

The whistle blew, and I jogged over to the side of the pitch, swiping my bottle of water from the ground and draining half of it in one go. It was so warm today. Half the team had taken their shirts off so we could play skins versus shirts, and as I peeled up the hem of my T-shirt to wipe the sweat from my forehead, I wished I'd been picked for the skins side.

“You coming to the student union after?”

Dropping my bottle, I turned to face Ander, shading my eyes with my hand. “Maybe. I'm waiting to hear from Nic.”

He nodded, screwing up his eyes against the bright sunlight as he shoved his hand into his sweaty hair, pushing it back out of his face. “It's too fucking hot for this. I think we should ditch the student union and go to the pub. I need an ice-cold pint in a beer garden.” Pausing, he glanced across the pitch to where Elliot was sitting with Noah, sprawled out with textbooks and headphones, having an impromptu study session in the sun while their boyfriends trained. “Speaking of Nic, what's happening with you two? Are you together now, like boyfriends?”

Boyfriends. It was a big step, but it was what I wanted. I wanted Niccolò to be mine officially. Accepting my bisexuality had been surprisingly easy, and a lot of that was down to this group of guys I'd been getting to know over the past few months. Guys who were open and accepting. Guys who were becoming my friends. It had allowed me to see my relationship with Niccolò for what it was—not an experiment or something I was trying out because it was new and exciting, but something I wanted to nurture and grow because I was falling for him.

“No...not yet. I thought...I hoped we were heading that way.”

“But?” Ander's full attention was on me now.

“But nothing.” Scrubbing my hand across my face, I sighed. “I dunno. I just...he's been a bit quiet lately. It's probably just me being paranoid, but I can't help getting doubts in my head. What if he's had enough of me and he's?—”

Ander thrust his palm in my face. “Let me stop you right there. Take it from someone who went through a whole lot of shit with the person I love, based on assumptions I made that were completely fucking incorrect—” He shook his head violently. “—you need to speak to him. Yeah, I know it's easy for me to say when I don't have to have the conversation, but trust me when I say you'll save yourself a whole load of stress.”

I blinked, taken aback by the vehemence in his voice. “Uh...okay. I will. Thanks.”

“Good. Don't put it off.” He clapped me on the shoulder and then walked away with a grin. The whistle blew again, and I took my position behind Levi to do cone drills, my mind still fixated on Ander's words. He was right. I did need to talk to Nic.

As soon as training was over, I'd find him, sit him down, and find out where we stood with each other.

* * *

My stomach churned with a combination of excitement and dread. I was one of the starting players in today's match lineup. We were playing at home against Brixton, another local team, and Niccolò was here to watch me, sitting in the front row in the seat I'd saved for him. I'd asked him to arrive early, and I'd been relieved when I'd jogged onto the pitch and seen him waiting there for me. We hadn't had a chance to talk in person about everything yet, with both of us having final assignments to complete, and I wanted to make sure we were on the same page.

I came to a stop in front of him, admiring the toned muscles of his legs in his tight trousers, and his fine-knit sleeveless blue top that hugged his torso, shot through with midnight glitter. His hair was more mussed than usual, curling around his ears, and he looked so fucking cute and gorgeous, it gave me butterflies. "Hi."

"Hi."

Crouching down in front of him, I placed my hands gently on his thighs. "Nic, what's up? You've been quiet lately. I just wanted to make sure you were okay."

Biting down on his lip, he shrugged, staring at the floor.

"Baby, talk to me. If I've done anything wrong, I want to know so I can make it right."

His eyes flew to mine, widening. "No. No, Ben, you haven't done anything wrong. It's me. It's silly. I just..." His cheeks flushed, and he covered his face with his hands. "I keep thinking this is too good to be true," he said all in a rush. "Like the novelty will wear off for you."

"Nic." Peeling his hands away from his face, I shook my head. "Why would you

think that? Don't you know how into you I am?"

Blinking hard, he held my gaze, his lips wobbling. "But I'm me," he said in a small voice. "I'm full-on and I'm like a fun novelty and everything is so good and so easy between us. How can it last? It's going to kill me when you decide you've had enough."

"Baby." Climbing to my feet, I took a seat next to him, and then tugged him into my lap. "Is this why you've been distant? Because you convinced yourself I'm going to decide I've had enough? Even though that's the furthest thing from the truth?"

His eyes were huge as he stared at me. "It is?"

"Yeah, it is. Your brain is playing tricks on you. You're not a novelty, and there's nothing I'd change about you, okay? Nothing. I want you, and I feel so lucky that I get to have you. In fact..." I paused, lifting my hand to cup his cheek. "I was thinking about asking if you wanted to be my boyfriend. Officially."

He gasped loudly like the little drama queen he was, throwing his arms around my neck and pressing kisses all over my face. I noticed with amusement that he was paying special attention to my dimples. So fucking cute. Dropping one final kiss to my lips, he murmured, "Are you really proposing to me right now? Am I dreaming?"

"Not quite a proposal, but yeah," I said, laughing as I pulled him closer. "What do you say? Want to be boyfriends?"

Drawing back, his face regained its serious expression. "Did you really mean everything you just said? Because I really, really like you, Ben, and being your boyfriend would be...it would be everything."

"Yeah, I mean it. You're amazing, Nic. And you know it. Even better, you're

amazing for me.”

I could see the moment when his doubts melted away, and he decided to trust that I was telling the truth. His gaze turned warm and soft. “I do know it. Okay. In that case, I would be honoured to accept.”

I smiled, kissing the tip of his nose. “Good. That means I can give you your gift now.”

“A gift? For me?”

“Yep.” Lifting him off me, I dipped down, feeling under the seat for the bag I’d placed there earlier. Opening it up, I drew out the bundle of fabric and placed it in his arms. “A present for my boyfriend, to celebrate making it official.”

He shook out the bundle, a choked cry falling from his throat as he took in the LSU football hoodie he was holding. It was the same as the other one he already had, but this one had my name, number, and the logo in glittery black lettering, sparkling in the sun.

“It’s sparkly.” His fingertip traced my number reverently.

“Yep. Sparkles for my little magpie boyfriend.” I couldn’t keep the grin from my face. I had a boyfriend. And not just any boyfriend. Niccolò Rossi, the dramatic, cute, wonderful man I was falling for.

Despite the warmth of the afternoon, Nic pulled the hoodie over his head. Hopping off his seat, he did a spin. “How do I look?”

I met his gaze. “You look like mine. Come here and kiss me.”

“I am yours.” He wound his arms around my neck, kissing me softly. “I’m so happy.”

“Me too.” Movement at the side of the pitch caught my eye, and I released him reluctantly. “Time for your boyfriend duties. Cheer me on during my match.”

He beamed at me. “I’m going to be the best cheerleader you ever had.” Before I could join the rest of the team, he gripped my hand. “Wait. Selfie. I want to send it to JJ. He got his man, and now I get mine, and he needs to see the proof.”

We took a few photos, and I made him promise to text them to me so I could set one as my phone wallpaper, and after another kiss, I made my way to the centre of the pitch where the teams were lining up.

Ander dipped his head when I reached him, speaking low in my ear. “Did you two sort your shit out?”

I nodded. “Yeah. Thanks for, y’know, the talk. We sorted everything out, and he agreed to be my boyfriend.”

“Nice!” He slapped my palm, making Travis raise his brows, but there wasn’t time for questions.

I glanced back over at the side of the pitch, where Niccolò was on his feet, clapping along with the assembled spectators, his gaze fixed on me.

My lips curved upwards as I moved into position.

We had a football match to win.

And I had my boyfriend cheering me on, every step of the way.

FIVE YEARS LATER

Letting myself into the house as quietly as I could, I crept down the hallway. I'd managed to get an earlier train back from my week-long work conference, and I couldn't wait to surprise my boyfriend. I'd missed him so much.

"Bennett."

"Yeah?" I peered around the corner of the kitchen door to find Niccolò sitting cross-legged on the kitchen island, his laptop open in front of him. He was frowning down at the screen, his curls falling into his eyes as he chewed on the end of a pen. A wide grin spread across my face as I took him in.

"Nic? What is it?"

He blinked, and then his head rose. His eyes widened, his mouth falling open. "You're really here!"

I dropped my bag to the floor and entered our kitchen, crossing over to the island. "You didn't realise? You just said my name."

"I was trying to manifest you being here, and look at that! It worked."

Laughing, I shook my head. "If you say so. Come here." Reaching out, I ran my hands up his bare legs, over his shorts and onto his hips, and then pulled him across the counter to me. He screeched, flailing for a moment before he found his balance. Unfolding his legs, he wrapped them around my waist as his arms wound around my

neck.

“Hi,” he breathed, burying his head in the crook of my neck. “Missed you.”

I slid my hands under his football shirt—or more accurately, my football shirt that I normally wore in my casual five-a-side league games. Stroking up the warm skin of his back, I pressed a kiss to the top of his head. “I missed you too. As much as I love my job, an entire week of a sustainability engineering conference is way too much. Especially without you. I’m never going to do that again—or if I have to go, you’re coming with me. Not only that, but being away from you just reminded me that phone sex is nowhere near as good as sex in person with you.”

Niccolò lifted his head, giving me a dirty smile. “I know you loved the private cam show I did for you. It was like a throwback to the days when you used to wank over my old FanBoyzOnly account.”

“Nic...” Despite my warning tone, I couldn’t help my grin widening at the mischievous expression on his face. I really had missed him so much.

“Don’t deny it.” He gave me another bright grin and then darted forwards to lick at my dimple.

“Stop that!”

“Stop smiling, then. You know I can’t resist your dimples when you smile.”

“I guess there are worse things to be obsessed with.” Pulling back a little, I kissed the tip of his nose. “You know I’m obsessed with you, anyway.”

“I know.” Unclasping his hands from around my neck, he ran his blue-tipped fingers up my arm. “You look sexy in this suit, but do you know what? You’d look even better out of it.”

My brows rose. “How long have you been waiting to say that line?”

“Ever since I saw you packing your suits for the conference,” he admitted, but then his smile faded. “I do want to get you naked, but I...” Trailing off, he bit down on his lip.

“Hey, what is it?” I withdrew my hands from his shirt and tilted his chin up. His eyes were huge, his long lashes fluttering as he blinked back—were those tears? What the fuck?

“Nic? What’s wrong? Baby, talk to me.”

“Nothing’s wrong. I just...” He took a deep breath, and then the words came tumbling out in one long string. “I was all alone and the bed was empty and I love you so much and you weren’t there and I missed you. I-I know it was only a week, but we’ve never been apart for that long before.” His voice faded to a whisper as he looked up at me with brimming eyes. “It’s stupid— I’m sorry— I?”

“Hey. Baby.” Scooping him into my arms, I staggered into the lounge, dropping onto the sofa with him straddling me. “It’s not stupid. I missed you too, okay? More than anything. I love you, Nic. Nothing’s the same without you.”

“I just want to hold you,” he said, his voice muffled from where he had his face buried in my neck again. “I had all these plans for when you got back. Daddy K gave me a recipe to try, and I was gonna impress you with it. And then I had my presentation on my laptop that I spent all of yesterday working on. I wanted to show you the concepts I came up with for the new TV show we’re filming next month. I’m getting to work on the set design, and the costumes, and I even sweet-talked the casting director into letting me have a small walk-on part. I know I said I didn’t want to act, but you should see the sets!”

Pausing, he took a deep breath. “But none of that matters now you’re here. All I want

to do is this.” Hugging me tighter, he sighed, and my heart swelled, so fucking full of love for this amazing, talented man.

“Just when I think I can’t possibly love you any more than I already do, you prove me wrong.” I stroked across the back of his neck and up into his hair. “I love you so much, and I’m so happy to be home with you.”

“Love you more. I’m so glad you’re back.” A soft kiss pressed against my throat.

“How about we get a takeaway tonight and watch TV? Then tomorrow you can show me your presentation, and you can cook for me. Or we can cook together.”

“Okay.” He lifted his head and kissed me, his mouth sliding across mine in a way that never failed to give me butterflies, even after all this time.

* * *

Hours later, empty takeaway boxes strewn across our coffee table and the TV playing softly in the background, I glanced down at my boyfriend. He was curled up in my lap, under a blanket, his body relaxed in sleep. He was so fucking beautiful. Sometimes I couldn’t believe he was mine.

Glancing down at my phone, I groaned under my breath. I needed to get us both to bed, before I fell asleep here too, and I knew from experience that if that happened, I’d wake up with a crick in my neck and a grumpy Niccolò.

There was no way I could move without waking him, and I just hoped he’d fall asleep again quickly. “Nic.” Shifting on the sofa, I ran my hand up and down his arm over the blanket. “We need to go to bed.”

His eyes blinked open, and then he yawned widely, rubbing his hand over his face as he straightened up. The blanket fell from his shoulders. “Did I fall asleep? What’s the

time?”

“You did, and it’s almost one in the morning.”

“My legs are still asleep. I can’t walk. Carry me to the bedroom,” my little drama queen demanded.

“Of course they are.” I smiled at him. With a bit of manoeuvring, I managed to get us both off the sofa and into the bedroom. When we were finally ready for bed, I lay my head on my pillow, pulling my thick, soft duvet over me. I’d missed my bed. And I’d missed my bed companion most of all.

“I wanted us to fuck tonight—no, make love. Like people in love do.” Niccolò pressed his body up against mine, laying his head on my shoulder as he traced a finger down my stomach. Another wide yawn overtook him.

“Me too. Either option.” I pulled him into me. “But guess what?”

“What?”

“We have tomorrow. And the next day. And the day after that. We have all the tomorrows. Me and you. Together.”

“All the tomorrows.” He lifted his head, and even in the darkness of the bedroom, I could see him smile. “I like the sound of that.”

THE END