



The Year of Us 2: February

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Category: LGBT+

Description: The Year of Us is a twelve novelette series from Kate Hawthorne and EM Denning, exploring what happens when two men with nothing in common find out there might be something between them after all. February is Cory and Reeses second meeting, and their stories are meant to be read in order.

Cory Callahan and Reese Rollins are total opposites.

Cory wears a Rolex and makes six figures a year.

Reese is a bartender with a busted screen on his cellphone.

Cory lives in New York.

Reese lives in LA.

One delayed flight and a chance meeting at a bar later, the two strangers find they have one indisputable thing in common...

The attraction between them is incendiary.

But after a shared night at an airport hotel they learn there's one other trait they share.

They're both dominant and not interested in being told no.

Total Pages (Source): 10

CHAPTER 1

Reese

Cory's fingers were long and slender, pressing inside of me and deeper until they reached my prostate. He cupped his other hand around my balls, cradling my sac in the palm of his hand while taking my cock into the depths of his hot mouth. He consumed me, and the whole time those mischievous blue eyes sparkled up at me with a kind of knowing I'd spent the past month trying to forget.

I blinked the fantasy of him out of my mind and braced myself against the wall of my shower, shooting a fierce orgasm against the white tile. I continued to stroke myself to the point of discomfort, then gave it one more tug before rinsing my fingers and my dick under the spray of the shower head.

It had been something like five weeks since our little hotel encounter. He was back in New York or Dallas or whatever city his work took him to, and I was still in LA, but almost every night when I closed my eyes and took myself in hand, he was as real beside me as he'd been the night we met. The one thing I'd never done was entertain thoughts of the little things he'd hinted at, the implications of me being a dominant, but still getting on my knees for him.

I didn't want to kneel, didn't want to do what I was told, but the memory of his mouth when he called me a good boy was indelibly printed on my brain, the words whispering in my ear every time I stroked my cock and thought of him. I'd done everything I could to distract myself from the pull of him, including heading to Rapture on more than one occasion to find someone else to play with.

After leaving the hotel—and Cory—just before sunrise, I'd worried some part of me had been broken, that I wouldn't like the things I'd liked before him. But I had, thankfully. My body and my brain responded as normal to the sight of a man on his knees for me. When I picked up leather cuffs and a paddle, my hands knew what to do. I got my partner off, got myself off, all was well... but it was impossible to ignore the nagging chase for more that always settled around me at the end of the night.

Had it always been there? I started to wonder if I'd just suppressed it because the idea of switching was such an improbability. But as the days crept on and the time between the experience and the present grew, I began to wonder if the craving was more for Cory and not necessarily for some kind of submission.

I was going to think myself into a hole over the entire thing—again—so I turned off the shower and busied myself with getting ready for work. It was the weekend after Valentine's Day and my apartment still bore the marks of Morgan's date night assault, because when we were both single, we were inseparable. We'd spent the late hours of the fourteenth together after I'd gotten off work, of course, sitting on the couch eating conversation hearts and recounting stories of all the people we'd let get away.

"You know his name," she'd reminded me, tearing open a package of foil heart confetti and flicking pieces into my face. "You can find him."

"That's stalker behavior."

"Stalking is hot." She laughed and sprinkled some more hearts onto me.

"You read too much," I told her, but the idea of chasing Cory down was still in the front of my head a week later.

After getting dressed in a pair of torn black jeans and a well-worn black band shirt I'd

picked up at some point in my life, the band logo long faded toward oblivion. I laced up my Converse, grabbed my things and a bottle of water, then locked up and headed to the car.

The routine was welcome, especially after having the night before off. Normally I worked every night of every weekend, but since I pulled so many hours on Valentine's, I'd gotten the next Friday off. I hadn't made much use of the time, but now that it was Saturday, I was ready to get back into the swing of work. I liked the socialization and I really liked the tips.

The night started slow, which was usual for a Saturday. By ten, the bar was packed and I hadn't even had a second to stop and grab a drink of water. I was stuck down at one end of the bar and my co-worker Heather was at the other. She caught my attention at one point, and I met her in the middle, hands busy shaking a martini into the perfect blend.

"What's up?" I asked.

She puffed out her bottom lip and huffed a breath, the air pushing her magenta pink bangs out of her eye. "There's a guy at the other end of the bar who says our whiskey is shit."

"It is," I agreed, twisting the shaker loose so I could pour out the drink I'd been working on.

"He said he was here last month and you poured him a good one, but I don't know what label you used. He told me to ask."

The breath rattled around my lungs, eyes immediately darting down to her end of the bar, trying to search out the shine of a Rolex or the arrogance of a monogrammed pocket.

“What?” I asked. It was a ridiculous question, but my skin prickled with goosebumps and my ability to speak was just...gone.

“He’s not accepting no for an answer,” she said.

I scoffed, remembering the steps and skewering two olives for the martini I’d just made. I passed the drink to Heather and wiped my hands on the towel hanging out of my pocket.

“Yeah. I can’t imagine he would.”

CHAPTER 2

Cory

I told myself I'd stay away from him. We lived in different cities. Hell, we lived on opposite sides of the country. We had no future. And maybe that was the reason I found myself back in LA, back at the bar I'd first found him in. This time, I came prepared and I had more time available than a handful of hours in between flights.

I kept the Rolex on because taking it off would feel like lying. Like I was attempting to admit something about myself that wasn't true. Instead of my usual business attire, I dressed down, wearing a pair of charcoal trousers and a soft sweater the color of Reese's eyes. I'm sure that bit was accidental.

Part of me worried that he might have quit his job and moved away or that he wouldn't be at work when I stopped in, but he was there. After weeks of dreaming of him, seeing him in the flesh nearly took my breath away. I gave myself a minute to look at him before approaching the bar and taking the last vacant stool after someone closed out their tab.

It was even the same stool, but this time Reese was working the other end of the bar. The place was packed, which I hated, but would tolerate to be close to him. Reese was far more intriguing than I'd expected him to be when I laid eyes on him a little more than a month ago.

When I fell into bed at the end of the night, I knew I'd wake up alone. My miscalculation came in believing I'd be okay with that.

I ordered a whiskey and was served the usual sub-par brand reserved for people who lacked taste buds. After I lodged my complaint with Reese's coworker, I knew it was only a matter of moments before he'd see me. I watched her talk to him, watched the way his body straightened at her words. He turned, his eyes searching the crowd until at last his gaze met mine.

Sometimes, during the weeks since I saw him last, I was able to convince myself that the chemistry I'd felt was all in my head. That I'd been tired and worn down, and suffering from the effects of shitty whiskey. But one look from Reese and I knew that version of me had been a fool to believe myself.

Reese, in person, was electric. Captivating. I watched the way he moved toward me with grace that commanded attention. He looked fucking hot in a faded tee and jeans.

"I didn't expect to see you again." Reese grabbed a glass, then a bottle of whiskey from the top shelf. He mixed me the whiskey and soda I'd had last month and set it in front of me. "The whiskey will still be a disappointment, I'm afraid."

Lifting the glass, I took a sip, licked a stray drop from my lip, and set it back down. "I'm not here for the whiskey, Reese."

He seemed unaffected. "I didn't think you were."

"The whiskey was the only disappointing thing about the other night."

Reese scoffed at me. "The other night was more than a month ago."

The bar was slammed and Reese's attention was quickly demanded elsewhere. but it wasn't a hardship to watch him work. I loved the way he moved, the way he gave each of his customers his full attention.

Nursing my first drink allowed me to watch him for a long time. Every so often he'd glance over at me and see if I was still there, and then check how my drink was doing. Was he waiting for me to leave, or making sure I hadn't vanished? I couldn't decide.

When my drink was done, he returned and offered to pour me another.

"I don't want your whiskey, Reese." When he didn't respond, I arched an eyebrow. "Aren't you going to ask what I want?"

He formed a shield, folding his arms over his chest. "I don't have to. I know exactly what you want."

"Good." I stood from the stool and pulled a bill out of my wallet. I tucked the tip under my empty glass. "I'm in the same room as last time. But I don't have a flight tomorrow morning." I'd already scrawled the hotel and room number on a new card since I was a thousand percent sure he didn't still have the first one and I handed it to him.

Reese took it and slid it into his back pocket.

I wanted to make him a million promises, but this wasn't the place for that. I wanted to tell him about the toys I brought with me, but this definitely wasn't the place for that either. The feeling that I'd do anything to talk him back into my bed again was so thick I could barely think straight.

"I'll be waiting."

"I haven't agreed to come." Reese was still on the defensive. Still all spiky like a hissing kitten, though I doubted he'd appreciate the comparison.

“Doesn’t matter. I’ll be waiting, either way.”

I turned and left, and all the way to the door I felt his eyes on me. At the last second, I turned around and caught his gaze. I held it for a moment, then pulled away first, letting him have that little bit of a win, hoping it would be enough to let him come back to me later.

Back in my hotel room, I forgot about drinking more whiskey, or more period. If Reese showed up, I didn’t want to give him a single reason to say no. In my mind, he had to show up although I wasn’t quite sure what it was I wanted to do to him when he got here. Usually I planned things better, but Reese was harder to judge and predict than the men I was typically with.

There was nothing wrong with the men I usually picked up, but it wasn’t any of them who’d occupied my thoughts and fantasies for the past month. It wasn’t their names I thought of. Their lives I wanted to know about.

Instead of changing into sleep pants, I left my clothes on. I liked the way Reese’s gaze had lingered on me when I arrived wearing a sweater that matched the color of his eyes. He probably didn’t noticed, but it’s why I’d picked it.

I settled down on the couch with my laptop and a bottle of water, and I got to work while I waited.

And waited.

CHAPTER 3

Reese

I went to the hotel after work. I rode the elevator to the fourteenth floor. I walked down the hallway to Cory's room, and I turned around and repeated it all in reverse. I climbed back into my car, drove myself home, and sat on the couch and stared at the wall until it was almost six in the morning. Cory's business card—the new one—was clutched in my hand for the duration.

Honestly, who did that man think he was? Waltzing into my life and throwing everything I thought I knew about myself out the window? Who had that kind of audacity to stroll into someone's place of employment with all that arrogance? All that confidence?

Trouble, that's who.

I finally fell asleep sometime around seven, sliding down onto the couch in a position so awkward, when I woke up after nine, I wanted to cut my head off to get away from the ache in my neck. Cory's card had fallen out of my hand and landed on the floor, his pre-printed name and phone number gazing up at me with all the patience I knew the man himself possessed.

He wanted me to show up, but I didn't think he'd be surprised that I hadn't. Just like I didn't think he'd be surprised to watch me slink out of my apartment, hit up a bagel shop drive-thru for coffee, and head back to toward the airport, cursing myself the whole way.

I only had to knock once and he had the door open, those piercing blue eyes of his watchful and alert.

“Hi,” I said awkwardly.

“I didn’t think you were going to make it,” he said.

“I mean...did I make it?”

Cory pulled the door open and stepped out of the way to let me in. “You’re here, aren’t you?”

I hummed because I didn’t know what else to say, and it was hard to think anyway with his body so close behind me I could feel the heat rolling off of him. I walked into the room and set the bagels and coffee down on the entertainment center, doing my best to ignore the messy and tangled state of the sheets on the bed.

“I haven’t slept,” I admitted, turning to face him, once again taken aback at the height difference between us. Cory had on the same low-slung pajama pants from January, and I tried to not stare at how they clung to his hips. His hand moved, coming up slowly to trace a crescent moon shape beneath my left eye.

“I can tell,” he said simply. “You should lie down.”

“I didn’t come here to lie down.”

His mouth quirked into a grin. “Didn’t you?”

Groaning, I scrubbed a hand down my face, batting his fingers off my cheekbone. I turned away from him and paced over to the window, listening to the mundane sounds behind me of Cory taking a coffee out of the cardboard drink carrier, tearing

one sugar packet open, then another. The bed creaked, and I glanced back to see him sitting down on the edge, raising the white cup to his mouth.

“I don’t know why I’m here,” I said.

“To fuck, I imagine.”

If only it were that simple.

“Reese.” He said my name like a promise. “You’re overthinking all of this.”

“Am I?”

“What were you expecting when you came here tonight?”

“This morning.”

“Semantics.” Cory rolled his eyes at me and gestured toward the second coffee.

“How do you take your coffee?”

“Black,” I answered.

“Good. Get it and sit with me.”

I moved to do just that...then I cursed him under my breath.

He must have seen the realization on my face, because he chuckled softly, patting the bed and making room for me to sit beside him.

“What were you expecting?” he asked me again. “Were you thinking you’d show up and I’d order you to your knees? Set some more rules about how things between us

were going to go until it was time for my flight back to New York?”

That was surprisingly close to how I had thought things were going to go, and I still managed to get myself to the hotel, even if our time was shorter now than it had been at the end of my shift. Was that what I wanted?

I shrugged, hating how off my game this man made me feel.

“Would it make you feel better if I did those things for you?” He took another drink of his coffee. His eyes danced with mischief, and the whole thing felt like a setup...

A trap.

“That’s more familiar,” I said.

“And you know I don’t have a problem getting on my knees for you, Reese. So it’s not just about the kneeling, is it?”

“I...This is ridiculous.” I pushed up from the bed and set my coffee down by the TV.

“Why?”

I rubbed at my chin, two days’ worth of scruff abrading my fingers, but it was nowhere near enough to bring me out of my head to have this conversation with him.

“This is a mistake,” I said.

“Disagree.” He gave me another one of those fucking zen-af smiles of his. “We’re just two men who have good chemistry, Reese. It doesn’t need to be that serious. In fact...it shouldn’t be.”

“I’m glad it’s so simple for you.”

“Nothing about this is simple,” he corrected, setting his coffee beside mine. He stood and turned to face me, a good four inches shorter than me, but possessing all the control of a man twice my size. He stepped closer until our toes brushed, his bare against the tips of my sneakers.

“That’s easy for you to say. You breeze through town, fuck, and run.”

Cory scoffed, an unimpressed noise in the back of his throat. “Is that what you think? You don’t think I got back to New York with you consuming my entire brain? With my cock hard and my ass sore and your name still fresh on the tip of my tongue?”

“I…”

“As soon as I got home, I took the thickest toy I could find in my closet and shoved it so far up my ass it almost made me cry, Reese, and it was nowhere near as good as the real thing. I got on my knees and jacked myself off, fucking myself on this toy like it was anywhere near enough to sate the need you awakened inside of me.”

He tapped his hand against his chest, staring up at me with such a calm kind of clarity, it was impossible to not feel some of it wash over me as well.

“I didn’t know,” I whispered, because there wasn’t anything else to say. Telling him how I’d done the same things felt lacking in the wake of his bombshell confession. I still hated it seemed effortless for him to admit, but it did level the playing field for me.

At least, a little.

“Nothing about this is easy.” He repeated the sentiment, threading his fingers together

behind his head and sinking to his knees in front of me. “But that doesn’t mean I don’t want it. And it doesn’t mean I won’t take it.”

CHAPTER 4

Cory

I wondered if he thought it was some sort of trick, the way I fell to my knees so easily for him, hands behind my head as though I'd surrendered. Surrender wasn't what went through my head when I did these things. Nor were they any type of ruse or deceit. In the moment, they were what felt right. They were things he needed from me. If not control, he needed the option.

He looked down at me, exhaustion etched into his features. I wanted to smooth it away. Reese had likely been tangled up in himself before he met me, but I'll admit that I was pleased to know it was me who so thoroughly upended him. It was me who kicked a door open inside of him that he couldn't get to close again.

It made things even between us. In Reese, there was something I craved. Something I couldn't name, but had to have. It wasn't as easy as winning his submission. I didn't want him to bend to me so readily. Reese would always have that glimmer of dominance in him and I didn't want to snuff it out.

"Limits." His voice was thick with lust and fatigue. Anticipation and maybe a hint of dread, like he expected the tables to be turned on him at any moment.

Opening my eyes, I looked up at him and watched the contours of his mouth when I spoke. The tightness of his lips increased with every word. "Condoms. No marks that a suit can't conceal. And you let me look after you when we're done."

Unease flickered in his eyes. His grip loosened, only momentarily. “Aftercare is your limit?”

My gaze was unmovable. “Yes.”

The only sign that Reese agreed to my limits was the rasp of his zipper as he dragged it down to free his cock. It was leaking when he pulled it out, and though I wanted to drink in the sight of it, I kept my stare turned up, pinned to his face.

“Good boy,” I told him as he closed his fist around the base of his dick and aimed it at my face. His jaw twitched as though he hated hearing that. Or hated that he loved it. I’d ask about that later, but for now, I parted my lips, stuck out my tongue, and waited for him to decide what he wanted from my mouth.

He dragged the head of his cock across my tongue. Back and forth, bathing it with the tang of his precum before sliding it deeper. I closed my eyes, both for his benefit and for mine. His face already lived in my dreams, both waking and sleeping. If I haunted him, he enchanted me. I couldn’t look at him without being filled with wonder, and sometimes I thought my eyes gave me away.

I wasn’t lying when I told him how empty he’d left me feeling. Now that I had him again, my hole throbbed in anticipation. My cock had gone granite hard in my pants the moment he knocked on my door. I didn’t know if he’d come, but I’d hoped.

Reese worked his cock to the back of my throat. He placed a hand over mine, where they were still laced together at the back of my head and he held me against him until oxygen ran out and I gagged around him, my body desperate for air.

He pulled back, let his cock slide all the way out of my mouth as I gasped. My throat was on fire as he plunged back into my mouth. And I welcomed him. I opened for him and allowed him to take what he needed.

He fucked my face like a man possessed. Like he could fuck me out of his system. Like, somehow, me gagging on his cock was the key to rediscovering himself. He fucked me like he'd expected answers and only got more questions.

By the time he stopped, my cheeks burned from the constant stretch, and I was harder than I could ever remember being. A rough grip under my arms pulled me to my feet and then his mouth descended upon mine. If he couldn't fuck me out of his system, he'd try other ways to purge me. But it only made me want to burrow deeper.

My shoulders protested the movement when I released my hands from their position behind my head and wrapped my arms around Reese's neck, drawing myself closer. He'd started the kiss, initiated it, but I'd overtaken it now. I made him chase the taste of himself on my tongue.

With one arm still slung around his shoulders to keep him close, I reached down with the other and pulled my cock free of my pajama pants. Reese's breath caught as I moved closer again, grinding our bare cocks against each other. I wanted to throw him down on the bed and fuck him until my hole hurt. I wanted him to bend me over the mattress and fuck me until he couldn't breathe through the thick blanket of lust that wrapped around us whenever we were near one another.

"Tell me, Reese," I said as I undulated my hips, grinding against him. He shoved at his pants, pushing them down and out of the way to give us more skin on skin contact. We had matching greed where the other was concerned because, even now, I wanted more. "Tell me what you'd have done differently if I were submissive."

Reese stopped breathing, then his hips jerked, and he fucked his shaft against mine. I paused and worked up a mouthful of saliva. I pulled back only far enough to allow me to spit on our cocks. It landed perfectly in the crevice created where they lay nestled against each other. I wrapped a hand around us both and did my best to spread the spit and the precum to smooth the way.

“Tell me.” I said again. “Would you have ordered me to my knees? Would you have fucked my face? What would be so different about the things we did, had I been submissive, Reese? What makes it so different from what we did?”

Reese whimpered. Lost. Unable to answer, he clung to me.

Leaning close, I put my lips to his ear. My arms were around his waist now, cupping his ass to hold him tight against me while he writhed, frustrated mentally and sexually, not in equal parts, but like they were on opposite sides of a seesaw.

“Do you want to know, Reese?”

Reese answered with a growl, low and throaty. “Tell me.”

“Intent,” I whispered in his ear. “I kneel comfortably because I don’t intend to submit.”

“Shut up.” The first time he said it, it came without heat. Then he said it again, this time with more venom in his voice. “Shut up.”

He slammed his mouth down over mine and kissed me so hard I thought my mouth would be one giant bruise when he was done. He spun me around and whipped my pants down to my ankles. Placing a hand between my shoulder blades, he pressed me down until I was folded in half. I braced myself on the mattress.

The room went deathly still. For several thudding heartbeats, nothing in the air stirred. And then the stillness gave way to motion. Something sliced through the air. The whoosh of a hand splitting the atoms around it before coming into sharp contact with one side of my ass.

“God, I’ve wanted to do that since I first saw you.”

I looked back at him over my shoulder and shot him a cheeky grin. “What took you so long to do it?”

Reese didn’t let my smirk affect him. Much. He brought his hand down on the other side and I let out a moan. Fuck, it had been forever since a man wanted to smack my ass. Sure, I could get a submissive to do it. They’d do anything to please me, but it was hard to find someone who found real pleasure for themselves while doing it.

Reese glowed with the pleasure.

“Do it again,” I told him. “Do it, but remember, I’m going to give it back to you.”

I thought he might stop, pull up his pants and walk away. He was so still for so long as his silent war raged on in his head.

He squeezed the cheek of my ass before pulling his hand back and the air crackled when it made contact.

“Again. Do it again.”

CHAPTER 5

Reese

I wanted to stop because he'd told me not to, but every time my hand landed against Cory's ass, my dick leaked in pleasure. Already coated with precum and a glob of Cory's spit, I was well on my way to an embarrassingly premature end of the morning. The month before, I thought Cory was going to be a one-time thing, but here we were, in the same room and in the same position. I'd clearly underestimated one—or both—of us.

I spanked Cory again and again, my palm darkening to match the pink of his ass. God, he was perfect like this, bent over with his dick hard and copies of my palm prints against his skin.

“What else do you want to do to me?” Cory asked, pressing his cheek to the sheets.

“I want to fuck you,” I rasped, already working on getting out of my clothes, making another mess of his hotel room. “Where are the condoms?”

“On the bedside table. Next to the lube.”

I gave him another slap against the ass then went for the lube and condoms. Situated back behind him, I watched as Cory humped himself against the edge of the bed with no shame, lashes fluttering as he chased after his own pleasure.

“Enough,” I warned. “Settle.”

He groaned and went still.

“No coming without permission,” I said next, rolling the condom down my length. “You can come when I’m finished with you.”

He made a pleased sound, giving his hips a wiggle and lifting his ass higher into the air to meet me.

“I don’t need prep,” he said. “I was ready for you hours ago.”

I spread his ass apart, finding his hole shiny with lube and puffy from use.

“How did you get ready for me?” I asked, pouring lube down my shaft instead of my fingers.

“I rode my hand and pretended it was yours.”

“Did you come then?”

“You said no coming without permission.” His breath skipped when I pushed the tip of my cock against his hole.

“That was now.”

He hummed, rolling his forehead down into the sheets. “I had a feeling.”

I eased into him, digging my fingers into the soft, pink bruising of his ass cheeks, using his pain to ground myself into the present moment. I gave Cory inch after inch of my cock until there wasn’t anywhere else for me to go, and then I gave us both time to adjust to the stretch. I used my grip on his ass to change the angle, sliding out an inch before punching back into him so hard he gasped.

This.

This is what I'd been chasing with him since the first time—the surprise and the shock that overlaid the pleasure. The helplessness that came from being under someone else's thumb. That was one of the things that made dominance so appealing, the control and the power, knowing how and when to wield it safely.

"I'm so hard for you," Cory murmured into the sheets, and I fisted his hair, yanking his head back so I could hear him better. It arched his back and I slipped deeper into him.

"Say it again.

"I'm so hard for you," he rasped.

We both looked down at his erection, thick and strained, the skin shining and wet from his spit.

"Stay that way," I whispered, sinking my teeth into his ear lobe.

No marks visible in a suit, I thought to myself, kissing my way down the back of his neck to the top of his spine. I bit him there, pulling the skin between my teeth and sucking hard enough to leave a bruise. Cory cursed under his breath, hips twitching for friction while I licked and bit my way across the top of his shoulders. He tasted like sweat and lemons, and I shuddered behind him, overwhelmed.

Fucking Cory wasn't something as simple as two bodies coming together. He was a sensory experience, from the smell of him to the taste of his skin...his cum. He wasn't just wrapped around me, he was deep inside my brain, tunneling deeper into a walled-off place in the middle of my chest.

“Move, Reese,” he begged. “Please.”

“Say it again.” I bit a bruise I’d just sucked onto the back of his neck.

“Please fuck me,” he whispered, cock twitching helplessly against his stomach.

My entire body quaked, my hands trailing down his ribs and curling them over the swell of his hips. I gave him two sharp thrusts, then found a pace punishing enough it was hard for me to breathe. Beneath me, Cory moaned and whimpered, fisting the sheets to keep his hands away from his cock. Leveraging one leg up on the bed, I slammed into him, moving us both toward the pillows with every thrust. Sweat trickled down my temples, and I shook my overgrown hair back and out of my face.

“I need to come,” he said, sounding as much like a demand as anything that ever came out of his mouth. “Let me come, Reese.”

“No,” I answered, sinking into him three more times before an orgasm barreled into me like a semi-truck. My hips jerked as I emptied into the condom, my body folding over Cory’s bruised and hickeyed back. I was still spilling into him when I reached around and fisted his cock, stroking him with tight and merciless pulls of my hand.

“Reese, I need to come. I’m going to come.”

“Don’t,” I warned, bracketing my other arm around his midsection. He was small enough for me to lift, and I picked him up right off the bed, walking us back until I landed in the chair he’d put me into the first night. I let my hand wrap around the base of his cock, and we both watched pre-cum burst out of it with as much force as the real thing.

“Put your hands behind your head,” I said softly, moving to make room for him to get his fingers linked together again through his hair.

I stroked him slow and loose, fingertips barely touching the burning hot skin of his shaft. Every time a tremor tore through him, I let go entirely, taking my hand away from him. And every time I took my hand away, he ground down against my still hard cock, chasing after the one thing I had yet to give him permission to take.

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CHAPTER 6

Cory

The handprints Reese left burned where they pressed against him. It made me ache in ways that had my cock twitching and leaking. His cock remained lodged deep in my ass. I needed to come. I needed his permission, but he was going to drag it out. Whether because he liked the way I wriggled on his cock, desperate and needy, or because he wanted to prove something to himself. That he could be dominant again, that whatever it was he thought he'd lost around me wasn't lost at all.

I gave my own dominance a rest and let him edge me. I let him make me beg for his touch.

“Reese,” I groaned his name.

His hand wrapped around my cock again, the loosest of holds. More torture than touch. But it was almost enough.

No. It wasn't close to being enough.

“Reese, please.” I sought the friction of his fist, my hips jerked, and I fucked myself on his cock. He was as deep as he could get, but still I wanted him deeper. Wanted more of him inside me.

I'd driven myself mad with need before Reese had even arrived at my room, sleep deprived and disheveled. I'd ridden my hand until my wrist threatened to break,

shoved my fingers in my ass with his name on my lips. And it hadn't been enough either.

Reese touched me again. Firmer. More commanding than the last time he touched me. It felt like he was pulling the orgasm up from the depths of my soul only to stop it before it could break free.

"Not yet," he said, his breathing harsh in my ear as if he was the one panting and writhing and so very fucking close to losing it.

"Reese." I said no more. I'd wrapped every plea in the sound of his name and let it hang in the air as I held myself painfully still. I wanted to fuck myself on his cock. I'd fuck him through the floor, his dick so far up my ass I could feel him on the back of my tongue.

He reached for me again and I screwed my eyes shut. Reese stroked my cock just once before he let it go.

"Let me come," I told him, quietly desperate. I was going to lose my mind if I didn't come soon.

Reese's shaky exhale washed over my skin. He couldn't feel the way my fingertips dig into my scalp to ground me. Did he notice the tremble of my thighs or was he focused on the way my ass gripped his cock like a fist?

"Let me come, Reese." I ground against him, swiveling my hips, fucking myself on his cock.

He buried his face in the curve of my neck. Lips brushed against my skin. His hand slid over my chest and he grabbed a nipple, pinching it in his fingers. I felt his smile on my skin as he pinched harder, twisting a little.

I let my body have its way and I writhed on his cock, twitching and chasing oblivion.

“Let me come.” I told him, past the point of begging now. “Let me come, Reese.”

Reese took hold of me again with his other hand and jerked me hard and fast. He released my nipple as he gave the command I’d told him to give me.

“Come for me.” Reese’s words were almost lost to the white noise of my own pleasure as it tore out of me. I bucked in his lap, a wild thing not quite tamed. I coated his hand in the stickiness of my release. As I rode the aftershocks of my orgasm, I untangled my hands from behind my head and reached further back, looping them around Reese the best I could.

His hands roamed over my body, smearing my cum on my thigh, my stomach, my chest. He painted me with my release as he struggled to catch his breath. I’d had all night to think about what I wanted to say to him and longer than that to think of what I wanted to do to him. With him. The time I had left to spend with him wasn’t enough to get through a fraction of what I wanted. Reese made me greedy. Obsessive. Driven.

“I’ll be coming back to LA next month. And the month after that. And the month after that. I’d like to keep seeing you.”

Reese stiffened underneath me.

“Don’t overthink it, Reese. It’s sex. That’s all. We’re amazing together.” I gave my hips a little wiggle to drive home the point that he was still hard, still buried deep in my ass like he wanted to live there.

I wouldn’t push. Instead, I got up, letting Reese’s cock slide free. The immediate emptiness he left behind filled me with a renewed determination to convince him to

keep seeing me. Reese had become an addiction that I didn't want to kick.

"I need a shower," I told him. "You can join me if you like." It wasn't really a request—he'd promised me that aftercare was mine.

I was under the spray, washing the cum off my skin when Reese stepped in behind me. I turned and wrapped my arms around his neck. "I like that you're taller than me."

"I like how my handprints look on your ass."

"I'll give you a matching set if you let me."

Reese huffed, but kept quiet about whatever thought it was that made him scowl. I could venture a guess. The moment Reese felt like control was slipping away, he got grumpy about it.

"You're here because you chose to be here. I have your marks on my skin because I chose to let you. Everything we do is just a series of choices, Reese." I lifted myself on my toes until I was tall enough to brush a kiss against his still-scowling mouth. "Are you going to choose to do this with me next month?"

"If I say no, are you going to show up at my bar again?" Reese didn't sound upset by that.

"You can bet on it." My cock was hard again. Or still. Either way, it throbbed with a renewed interest in the wet, naked body pressed against mine.

Reese had kept my orgasm from me, and now I wanted to force as many out of him as I could. I wanted to make him come until every drop of resistance left his body and he agreed to see me again.

CHAPTER 7

Reese

I wanted to lift him up, press his back against the wet tile, and bury myself inside of him again. I wanted to take him bare, fill his body with my cum so bruises weren't the only souvenir I sent him home with. Instead, I let him walk me under the spray and lick his way into my mouth with an insistent tongue. Circling one of my arms around his waist, I held him up while he kissed me, shivering when he reached between our bodies and dragged his fingers across the top of my already sensitive cock.

"Is it my turn to steer?" he whispered against the corner of my mouth, smiling against my lower lip.

"Within reason."

"I'll stop when you tell me," he promised, tightening his hand around my shaft. "I haven't forgotten."

I made an indecipherable noise in the back of my throat and Cory pressed his lips against my shoulder, no longer rising to his toes to reach my mouth.

"I thought you wanted aftercare," I said.

"I said I want to take care of you," he corrected.

“Is this what—” I trailed off, the tight squeeze of his hand choking the words out of me. “Is that what this is?”

“No,” he said softly, nipping at my collarbone. “This is me making you come.”

I bent my knees and crashed our mouths together, desperate to taste the man who knew how to push the buttons I didn’t even know I had. Cory was competent and quick, wringing another orgasm out of me like I wasn’t anything more than an over-wet towel. I came all over his fingers with a strangled cry, my knees shaking a little more than felt fair considering I was already in the middle of an existential crisis.

“A good start for my favorite boy,” he murmured, reaching behind him to turn off the shower. He wrapped a towel around my waist, then one around his, and ushered me back to the bed.

He wanted to go again—and so did I—but as soon as my head hit the pillow, my eyes closed and refused to open. I reached for him blindly, patting the sheets until I found his thigh. I heard his towel hit the floor and the bed depressed beside me, then he was over me and on me, face buried in the crook of my neck.

“I’m so tired,” I admitted, skating my hands up the length of his ribcage. “I haven’t slept.”

“You should have come over after work,” he said. “We could have been done and asleep by now.”

I huffed, angling my neck so he could reach the sensitive spot beneath my ear. He kissed me there, his teeth cool against my skin as his lips gave way to something more biting.

“My mistake,” I conceded.

“Will you see me again next month?”

I blinked my eyes open, even if it was only halfway. Cory hovered above me, hair dripping, eyes as bright and tempting as they always were.

“I want to.”

“That’s enough for me. That’s all we need, isn’t it, Reese?”

“Is wanting enough?” I asked, not sure if it was.

“For now.” Cory pressed his palm against the underside of my chin and tipped my head back so he could seal his mouth around my Adam’s apple and suck. “Can I mark you here?”

“Yes,” I rasped.

And he did, sucking a chain of bruises onto my throat before working his way downward. He took one nipple into his mouth, then the other, and I was still beyond fucking tired, but I was also so fucking hard for him.

“Do you have one more in you before I lose you tonight?” he asked, breath hot against the hair below my navel.

“I don’t know.” I reached down and threaded my fingers through his hair, which earned me a groan. “Not if you’re still counting on any sort of aftercare at the end of it.”

“Maybe the aftercare is you staying here with me for a night. Maybe it’s something I’ll give you when you wake up.”

I licked my lips, letting my eyes fall closed again. When I didn't argue, Cory slid further down my body until his mouth was alongside my cock. He didn't take me into his mouth right away, instead he dragged his lips and his tongue up the length of my over-sensitive shaft. He sucked a finger into his mouth and reached behind my balls to tease my asshole, and I hated how much I loved being on my back for him.

I knew that bottoming didn't have anything to do with dominance, but the control just oozed out of his pores whether he intended it or not. Cory must be a force of nature at work, because if I found it hard to say no to him, how must a weaker man feel? That thought led me down an unwelcome rabbit hole of jealousy and comparison, knowing there had to be a thousand men between here and New York who were better suited for him.

As if he could hear all the intrusive thoughts and wanted to drive them away, he took my cock into his mouth and swallowed me down to the back of his throat. Cory didn't move quickly, which would have felt like pins and needles for how sensitive I was. Instead, he held me in his mouth and hollowed his cheeks, swirling spit around me and simply letting my shaft take up space against his tongue.

"Fuck, your mouth feels so good." I carded my fingers through his hair, and he leaned his weight against my thigh, settling in.

He hummed around my dick, taking it out of his mouth long enough to ask, "Can I come for you again, Reese?"

"Yes."

He took me quickly back into his mouth, then the bed began to shake as he stroked himself off. His moans and whines reverberated through my whole body, and as another orgasm crested through him, my balls emptied whatever was left inside of them onto the back of his tongue. My grip on his hair was punishing, but he refused

to let me pull him off, and I fell asleep like that, with my cock in his throat and his body warm and in control between my legs.

CHAPTER 8

Cory

I'd never considered cock warming to be among my kinks, but as Reese nodded off, I could suddenly understand the appeal of staying here, sheltered between his thighs, his cock more soft than hard against my tongue.

Despite my strange and sudden urge to remain nestled between his thighs, I crawled up the bed and wrapped myself around him. I took stock of my body. My ass was well used on the inside and still warm and tingly on the outside. I wasn't a switch because I didn't have it in me to play the part of the submissive. But that didn't mean I didn't appreciate a man who knew how to use his hands the way Reese did.

I watched him sleep for a few minutes, enjoying the way he looked when he was relaxed, when there were no thoughts churning around in his head about what was going on between us and what it meant. Then, because I'd stayed up half the night before Reese's arrival, and had been fucked thoroughly after, it wasn't long before I dropped off to sleep too.

It was hours later when I woke. The late afternoon sun was slamming into the thick curtains, trying to break through with limited success. It made the room all soft and glowy and perfect. In my arms, Reese stirred and tried to wriggle free.

"Stay," I told him. He was warm next to me, and soft. His body relaxed from sleep, a match for me and my own heavy limbs.

“I have to piss,” Reese said, and I let him go.

“Hurry back.” I stretched while I listened to him in the bathroom. Theoretically, we had the rest of today and the night before I was due to fly back to New York, but I doubted that I’d get him to agree to stay that long. Part of me was surprised to find him still in my arms when I woke up. I was still half asleep when the bed dipped. Reese didn’t move to curl up in my arms again, so I edged closer and draped myself over him.

“You’re an octopus. Has anyone ever told you that?”

“Mmhm.” I nuzzled against him, sleepy, but also horny now. On another morning, I’d ask him to fuck me while I was still half awake and loose limbed from sleep. This morning, however, I’d promised to look after him.

I started by kissing my way down his body. Down the slant of his collarbone to the hollow at the base of his throat. Down his sternum to where it gave way to the soft tissue of his abdomen. I slung my legs over his, straddling him as I kissed further down, tickling the hair around his navel when I exhaled. I watched the muscles in his stomach jump as my mouth moved lower.

When I kissed the crease of his thigh, Reese let out an impatient breath. “You’re a tease.”

“Don’t act like you mind.” I kissed him again, softer, because when I loved how hard my gentleness made him. I loved that his cock was rigid and weeping precum, standing straight up against his stomach, twitching every time I kissed him.

“Cory—” Reese said my name, and nothing else. Maybe he thought better of it. Maybe he didn’t want to be caught begging. I wouldn’t make him beg. Today.

Today I planned to stay true to my word to look after him.

Sliding my hands under his thighs, I rolled him up so his ass was off the bed before he could protest the sudden change in positions. And then I put my mouth on him. I pressed my open mouth against his taint before dragging it upward, sticking my tongue out far enough to tantalize him.

Reese practically choked when I slid my mouth lower and slicked my tongue over his hole. I looked up at him as I licked a trail all the way back up to the tip of his cock.

“Fuuuck.” He dragged the word out on a sigh, like it was him giving up, deciding that it was too much trouble to fight me, especially when I had my tongue in his ass. He had to know what was coming, but I pressed the pad of my finger against his hole and paused, then asked anyway.

“Are you going to let me fuck your hungry little hole, Reese?”

Reese’s chest rose and fell twice in rapid succession before he answered. “Cory.”

He said my name like a curse, like it was the ghost that haunted him. “You’d better.”

“Can you reach the supplies?”

Reese opened his eyes and half rolled over to get the condoms and lube. He tossed them down to me, then relaxed again, splaying his arms out to the sides like he was an offering.

I ate him like he was. Licking and spearing his hole with my tongue, humming my pleasure against his skin until he was sweating and writhing, fucking himself against my face. I ate him until he was loose and open, until I could slide two fingers in him easily.

“I bet I could get my whole hand in you,” I told him as I pulled my fingers free. His body spasmed at my words, but so did his cock. “I’d make it so good for you.”

I tore a condom open and rolled it down my cock as I spoke. “I’d get you so wet and loose. I’d open you up bit by bit, starting with my tongue.”

Reese didn’t respond. His eyes moved behind their lids and I smoothed a hand down his chest to soothe him. “Don’t overthink it, Reese.”

I slicked my dick with lube and sank deep inside him in one thrust.

CHAPTER 9

Reese

It was impossible to argue with the man when he was balls deep inside of me, so I let my still sleepy eyes fall closed as Cory sank into me. He made it so easy to forget the kind of man I'd always wanted to be, because when I was with him, I didn't need to be anyone other than who I really was. Everything with Cory felt like a threat and sounded like a promise, and as he slammed our bodies together in the early morning light of his airport hotel room, I found myself hard pressed to tell the difference.

"You made me so hard last night when you spanked me," he said, using his shoulders to spread my legs apart.

His spit trickled down my balls, and I wanted to cover my face and hide from him.

"I love everything we do together."

Of course he did because it cost him nothing.

"Is this how you aftercare all your submissives?" I asked, each word punctuated with a sharp breath driven out of me by the force of his thrusts.

He blew out an amused breath, corner of his mouth angling into half a grin before pleasure swept across his features and his eyes rolled back.

"I didn't think you were a submissive," he said after recovering the ability to speak.

Cory was cocky, but he was small. I hooked my legs around his waist and flipped us so he was flat on his back and I was in a straddle over his lap. I sank down fully around his cock, working myself up and down his length until his thighs began to quake beneath me.

“I’m not,” I said.

He nodded, folding his hands together behind his head like the unspoken command to not touch was a given—and like it was simple. Trying to ignore the quiet release etched around the corners of Cory’s mouth, I moved on top of him the way I liked best, with short grinds of my hips that brought our bodies unbearably close together.

I’d seen Cory twice in as many months, but the man had given me more orgasms than my last six partners combined, and that was saying something. It killed me that he was based an entire country away from me, but it was also a blessing. If Cory was near, if he was accessible, the mental crisis I found myself in when we were in the same space would have hit me so much harder than it had.

It was bad enough to jerk off alone in the shower thinking about the way his voice sounded like a purr every time he called me a good boy, and worse still for how hard the praise continued to make me. He’d told me that he planned for his work to bring him to LA more frequently, which I wanted, but we were going to come to an impasse sooner or later.

There were only so many ways two dominant men could fuck before someone had to submit...and I knew, at the end of the day, it was going to be me.

“Fuck,” I cursed under my breath, squinting hard and curling my fingers around my shaft. I was achingly erect, but so sore from use the night before. I winced and let my shaft bounce against my stomach, angling my body backward and bracing my hands on Cory’s thighs instead.

“Is it too much?” he asked, unfolding one of his arms from behind his head and reaching for my dick.

“It’s sensitive.”

“You made me wait so long to come last night,” he whispered, sliding his finger over the sticky and swollen tip of my dick.

“It’s not my fault your sound so pretty when you beg.”

Cory hummed an amused sound before grabbing my erection in his hand. “So do you.”

He stroked me hard and fast, ignoring the way I grit my teeth and fucked him through the stimulation of his grip. We both knew all I had to say was stop and he would, but I had no intention of calling an end to things. Unfortunately, it didn’t take long for the friction of skin against skin to become too much for me. Heat pooled low in my belly and, at the same time, Cory’s hips lifted off the bed.

“Gonna come in you,” he murmured, licking his lips and baring his teeth in a defiant grimace. “Gonna come so fucking deep inside of this gorgeous, dominant ass.”

Fuck, I wished he could.

Wished there wasn’t a condom between us.

Wished I could feel the heat of his release paint the inside of my body like he?—

Fuck.

Cory grunted, grabbing my waist with his free hand and pulling me down onto his

lap. His nipples pebbled on his chest like little beads, and then he went still enough for me to feel the thick pulse of his cock as he emptied into the stupid condom that kept our bodies separate. He threw his head back and stared up at the ceiling, panting as he caught his breath.

I went still above him, content to enjoy the presence of him inside of me.. After a beat, his hand started to move again, and I dug my nails into his thighs, moaning as he brought me closer to another orgasm.

“Cory,” I managed to whisper his name and nothing else before my release slammed into us both. Cum trickled over his fingers as I came, slicking down my shaft, and he kept stroking, smearing my spend into the burning hot length of my shaft.

“Reese,” he said my name back, fingers still dancing across my cock. “Now that we’ve got that out of the way...will you let me give you aftercare?”

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Reese flopped over on his back and stretched out. I could tell he was thinking about my request. I wouldn't force anything on him. Even aftercare. It wasn't like we'd had a proper scene where he'd have no choice. This was sex with a hint of kink. A promise of things that could be.

"Yeah." Reese draped an arm over his face and heaved a sigh.

So dramatic.

"I'll order breakfast. Any allergies?" I slid out of bed and grabbed the menu. They had a decent selection of breakfast foods to choose from.

"Nothing that you'd find at a breakfast table."

"What exactly are you allergic to?"

Reese dropped his arm and shot me a crooked smile. "Fuzzy caterpillars."

"It's your lucky day then. No fuzzy caterpillars on this week's menu." I ordered a standard breakfast. Bacon, eggs, toast, some fruit, and coffee. And then I told them to deliver it in an hour.

When I hung up, Reese looked at me from where he lay sprawled on the bed.

"An hour?"

"You're adorable when you pout. But yes, an hour. Stay here."

I left him lying there while I slipped into the bathroom and poured a bath. I added some bubbles to the water, just for fun.

When I turned to go get him, Reese was already standing in the bathroom doorway, his arms folded over his chest. I arched an eyebrow at him.

“I thought I told you to stay put?”

He shrugged. “Is that for me?” He glanced over at the tub, then back to me.

“It’s for us, yes. Get in.”

Reese unfolded his arms and stepped closer to the tub. “Bubbles?”

“Yes, bubbles. Quit fussing and get in before I spank you.”

The smile Reese flashed me at that was wicked. It looked like a dare, but lacked the verbal challenge to go with it. Without any further dramatics, he stepped into the tub. His eyes practically rolled into the back of his head when he sank into the water.

“Good?”

Reese’s only response was a deep throaty moan that woke my dick up.

Half-hard, I padded over to the side of the tub. “Scoot forward a little.”

I slid in behind him and leaned back, then pulled him against me. He slid down a little so that his head was resting on my chest and my arms were around him. Reese made a little sound that might have indicated contentment.

“This is your aftercare?” Reese asked after a few minutes of silence.

“Well, not always. But yeah. I like baths. I like the closeness they provide and they’re less hurried than showers. They let me cuddle with my submissive and get them all cleaned up at the same time. It’s a win-win.”

I hadn’t missed the way he stiffened when I’d said my submissive .

“Is that what I am to you?”

“No, but would you hate it if you were?”

“I’m not sure I have an answer for that yet.” Reese put his hands on my legs, for lack of a better place to put them. He was bigger than me and I liked the way it felt to have him cradled between my legs.

“You don’t have to.”

I spent the next few minutes carding my fingers through his hair and gently massaging his scalp until he was practically purring in my lap like an overgrown house cat.

Reese shifted around like he was trying to get comfortable, or maybe something was making him uncomfortable.

“I hate that I don’t think I’d hate it,” he answered, his voice soft and vulnerable. It made me want to protect him and help him through whatever turmoil meeting me had created.

“Why do you hate the idea that you might like it?”

“Because it’s confusing.” Reese snorted, then stood and climbed out of the bath. He grabbed a towel and wrapped it around his waist. I climbed out after him and did the same. Then I went over to him and took his towel off and started to dry him.

“You’re not the only one confused, for the record. I’m wondering how I managed to pull a dominant man in the first place, and then I wonder if I’m going to screw things up between us because we’re alike in some ways.” I took my time drying him, circling around behind him, patting his shoulders, then down the curve of his spine.

“You don’t seem confused.” Reese glanced back at me over his shoulder.

“I have a hell of a poker face.”

After I finished drying us off, I grabbed the robes that the hotel provided and helped Reese into his before putting mine on. We ended up sitting on the bed, side by side. I wiggled closer to him so our arms were pressed against each other.

“If I ask for your phone number, are you going to give me the real one, or are you going to ghost me?”

My question made Reese laugh and he bumped his foot against mine. “I’ll give you the real one. Scout’s honor.”

“Were you a scout?”

Reese scoffed. “No, but I’ll still give you my real number. Get your phone.”

“Bossy.” I rolled my eyes, but grabbed my phone off the nightstand while he fished his out of his pants. After I unlocked it, I handed it to Reese, who tapped away at the screen. A few seconds later, his phone screen lit up with a new text message.

“See. Now you have my number. Maybe next time, I’ll get a bit of warning before you blow into town.”

“Not a fan of surprises?”

He met my gaze and held it. Just when I thought he was going to say no, he spoke. “Sometimes they’re okay.”

A knock on the door startled us, and we both flinched. Laughing, I dusted a kiss against his lips. “Stay here, I’ll get it.”

Reese put his hands behind his head and grinned at me. “I could get used to being on this side of aftercare.”

I think he’d meant it as a joke, as a bit of levity to take the weight out of the moment, but even hours later, all I could think about was wondering if he ever let anyone take care of him before, or if anyone even offered to. And the more I thought about it, the more I wanted to take care of him. If he’d let me. Reese was more tangled up than a cat in a yarn shop. Getting him to let me look after him would be no easy task.

It was a good thing for both of us that I’d already decided I was up for the challenge.

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Are you ready to see if things get more serious for Cory and Reese in March?