

"PLEASE don't." Drew was stuck, chest fetched hard against the window of the SUV, hands up in the air holding the surfboard Garrett was supposed to be tying down. If he let go, the ropes and board would come down on his head.

Garrett was behind him, pressed against his back, his gloating snicker saying he knew full well Drew couldn't move.

"Please don't what?" Garrett asked, his voice a purring whisper in Drew's ear. He slid warm, callused hands into Drew's swimsuit, palms flat against his ass cheeks. Garrett's fingers curled, gripped, and parted, stretching the short shorts tight against Drew's groin and digging the hem into his hips.

"Don't take them off," Drew whispered, face pressed to his own bicep as though he could hide the shame there.

Garrett pushed. Shorts and hands slid down Drew's legs. The added friction on Drew's cock was enough and it began to fill. He groaned.

"Please don't, *Sir.*" A sharp slap on his ass accompanied the last word.

Drew yelped, squeezing his eyes shut and bracing himself. Garrett liked symmetry, and sure enough a second slap set the other cheek flaming too. "Please don't, Sir," Drew

panted, shoving the words out quickly before breathlessness stole them altogether and earned him a real spanking.

"Well. They're off now," Garrett pointed out. His hands flowed up Drew's sides, curved around his ribcage and up his chest. He held his breath as Garrett's fingers glided over his nipples, swirled, tweaked, *pinched*. They yanked a breathy groan from Drew's chest. Garrett pressed his hips forward, mashing Drew's bare cock against the warm metal of the van. Nimbly, he lifted a foot, snagged Drew's shorts with a toe, and hauled them the rest of the way to his ankles. "Spread."

"No—" Drew bit his lower lip hard, too late to stop the protest.

Pain flared through his nipples again, firing up his nerves, sizzling down his spine and tightening his belly.

"Not here." He barely breathed the words, not sure if he was saying them in real protest or in anticipation of more punishment. Either way, the nervous excitement had an unbreakable hold on him. He was already losing himself to the implacable will of his new Master and they had yet to make anything official.

"Wherever I say," Garrett said sternly. He backed off just enough to kick Drew's feet apart in the loose sand. His hands explored over Drew's back, over his ass, and fingers slid between his cheeks, prodding just enough to make Drew tilt his hips into the touch, then moving on, eliciting a frustrated moan Drew couldn't hold back "Whenever I say," Garrett said, moving away completely.

Drew wobbled at the sudden lack of support from behind. The board above rocked precariously.

"Don't drop it!" Garrett's sharp command cut through him, bouncing off the car and disappearing down the deserted beach, lost under the cry of gulls.

Drew shifted his grip to a more stable position. "Yes, Sir." Still his voice was breathy, raspy and indistinct. He tried to clear his throat. "I won't, Sir." Every inch of exposed skin tingled, tiny patches of excitement that lit him up, burned through his skin to heat him inside. The warm sun on his back and buttocks made him sweat. It trickled down his spine, between his cheeks, down his sides from his pits. It made his front slippery against the heated side of the vehicle. He felt foolish, exposed, and vulnerable. And slutty, completely fuckable, and knowing Garrett wanted him this bad made him feel ten feet tall. He waited.

There came a rustling sound behind him. He continued to wait. After a moment, he heard the distinctive sound of slapping skin and Garrett letting out a long, low sigh. He was jerking off.

Drew tried not to feel the sinking sensation, the disappointment. He didn't turn to look, didn't move a muscle.

A moment later, Garrett's overpowering presence was behind Drew again, close enough that his wanking brought his cock into contact with Drew's ass. "Mmm. Fuck, you're a sexy little bastard, aren't you?" Garrett's hand slapped onto the window beside Drew, bracing himself as he neared his peak.

Drew knew the sounds, already familiar with the way Garrett's breath hitched, the low murmur of his voice whispering Drew's name over and over. His Master's hips began to rock, moving in time with his fist and jarring against Drew with each thrust. His knuckles and the wet tip of his cock rubbed against the soft flesh of Drew's backside. He groaned, pressed himself against Drew's back, and warm cum spurted up over the curve of Drew's ass, up his back and dribbled down his spine with the sweat.

The slick heat sliding down his already heated skin pulled a low moan from him. His own cock was rock hard, aching. The thought of having Garrett's cum all over him, of being that desirable the other man couldn't wait to get him somewhere private, was enough to help him endure the fear of getting caught like this by some stranger wandering down the beach. It was more than enough to make him want to jack off himself.

But Garrett just rested against him for a few minutes, trailing his fingers through the spunk, tracing shapes over Drew's skin, rubbing it in like lotion. The touch of those big, strong hands was so delicate it sent shivers racing along every one of Drew's nerve endings. Finally, Garrett pushed himself upright, turned Drew's head with one hand, and pinched his chin. "Open up."

Drew didn't protest this time. He parted his lips, meeting Garrett's gaze and holding it, hoping he could convey how sorry he was for protesting the first time. Maybe convey how badly he needed to relieve the pressure.

Garrett slipped the tip of his finger into Drew's mouth. The salty, thick taste of cum, the smell of it, the feel of the invasion, even if was just his mouth, just a finger, had Drew whimpering. He sucked the finger in, licked and suckled until he had cleaned it of all the cum.

"Good boy." Garrett removed his finger with a pop and leaned in, kissing Drew soundly, tongue and lips owning Drew's mouth, taking a little more reason and replacing it with pure want. He reached up and grabbed the board as he pulled away.

Drew moaned sadly.

"Go get in the car."

Drew stared at him.

A sharp, predatory smile came over Garrett's face. "Take this." Drew glanced at the hand Garrett was holding out, saw the smooth, vibrant pink circle of silicone and felt a sudden prick of tears. He wasn't getting relief. In fact, Garrett was going to torture him and not even let him go soft. "Put it on and get in the car," Garrett said, holding it out to him.

Drew nodded, silent, frustrated, but he took the cock ring and managed, with some struggle, to get it on. His cock throbbed. His heart pounded; his blood slammed through his body. He tried to ignore it all as he reached for his swim shorts.

"Leave those."

Drew froze. Every instinct in him wanted to protest. He couldn't get in the car naked. He couldn't sit there, nude but for the ring, while Garrett drove them home.

"Anyone could see me," he said, hoping it didn't sound like a protest so much as a fact. Surely Garrett would never allow a stranger to see him like this. After all, didn't Drew belong to him? Wasn't that what this weekend was about? Never mind that on this lonely stretch of beach road, this time of year, the chances of them passing another car were so slim as to be non-existent. The point was it *could* happen.

"Get in the car!" Garrett's voice cut sharp and swift through the rest of Drew's complaints. He jumped and scrambled around to the other side of the vehicle, lest Garrett decided to smack him again, which he likely would anyway once they got back to the house. He yanked open the passenger side door and clambered in, slammed it shut, and got the seatbelt on as comfortably as he could manage in his nudity.

Garrett made short work of securing the board himself and climbed in the driver's seat. He buckled up and headed down the road to home.

They didn't pass another car. They did pass a hunky, well built man walking a Great Dane halfway between the beach and the house. The guy waved. Garrett waved back. Drew tried to smile, and Garrett slowed.

"Be polite, Boy."

Drew lifted a hand and wiggled his fingers, struggling not to slide his other hand from where it rested on the seat

to cover his raging hard-on. The stranger's gaze focused on him, slid from his face down his chest, and Drew stifled the shock of mixed excitement and terror that hot gaze caused. He was fairly certain the man couldn't see lower than his belly, but heat flared up into his cheeks anyway. The guy grinned wide, showing teeth, and winked. Drew's cheeks flamed and as the car passed him, the guy made an obvious effort to see more. Then they were past, and though the dog walker stopped on the road and turned to watch them drive away, there was no indication Garrett was going to stop or the stranger was going to follow.

"You did well," Garrett said as they rounded the bend and the guy disappeared behind them.

"Thank you," Drew mumbled, furious.

"Was that very humiliating?" Garrett asked, glancing over at him and reaching to take his hand. "Are you ashamed of your body?"

"It's just," Drew began, but saw the warning tilt of Garrett's head in time and reconsidered what he was going to say. "I'm not ashamed of my body," he replied. "But it's yours. I mean, I belong to you."

"Yes, you do, and therefore, if I feel like showing you off, you will accept that and not complain."

Worry and uncertainty furrowed Drew's brow and made him squint, dimming the fervor of his erection considerably, but he lowered his head in submission. "Yes, Sir. I won't complain." A bubble of disquiet formed in his gut around that acceptance, though, tainting it.

"Good." Garrett dropped his hand, stroking Drew's thigh as he pulled the car into the drive and parked. "Inside, now."

"Yes, Sir." Drew hopped out and hurried into the house.

He stopped in the kitchen. The terra cotta tiles were cold against his bare feet, but he waited there, hands cupping his flagging erection. He was still naked, still had the cock ring. He could only assume Garrett wasn't done with him. He hadn't told him where he wanted him, though. Bent over something, probably. That position seemed to be Garrett's favorite, taking Drew from behind, his ass in the air and his chest pressed over the back of the couch, the table, the counter, even the dryer, once. The thought was enough to wake up his cock as he recalled all the times they'd done it just this weekend.

Before now, they'd played at the whole thing, the relationship, the dominance, the fucking. But it had all been a game, started at an office Christmas party where Garrett ditched the overbearing jerk he'd come with and pinned Drew up against the copy machine in the supply room to ravish him. Drew liked bigger, stronger men. He liked their power and dominance. He liked his own ability to turn them to jelly. That, though, had been the first time he'd let a perfect stranger fuck him. Somehow, he'd known Garrett wouldn't stay a stranger long. They'd clicked immediately, and not more than a week went by in the following months that they hadn't found time for each other.

Last week, Drew had worked up the nerve and told Garrett, no more. He wanted the real thing or nothing at all. He'd expected Garrett to walk away. Not the result he

wanted, but he knew he was falling for the other man, and he didn't want to be the only one in love. Or if he was, he wasn't going to settle for games and weekends. He wanted it all or he needed to walk away, for his own sanity.

So when Garrett had asked him to accompany him on this surfing getaway for the week, he'd agreed. And he got it all. He'd had no idea how very dominant Garrett could be, or how very much he craved it. In the bedroom, it ramped him up fast and furious, and he'd never come so hard or so often. He could get addicted to it. Today had been slightly different, though. More. The intensity had flared, in Garrett's voice, his eyes, and in his commands.

It had excited Drew to feel so taken. Garrett had a way of making the commands as much about what Drew wanted as about what Garrett wanted. More, even. He'd firmly, confidently ordered Drew to do things, not just sexually but out on the water, that Drew had never done, had even feared to do. He wasn't that great a surfer. But Garrett told him to do it, and he did. And he'd succeeded. He'd learned more in one day of trusting Garrett's faith in him than he had in a whole summer of lessons. Garrett left him feeling confident, accomplished, and proud of himself. And wanted.

Then came the nudity on a public, albeit deserted, beach; the public sex, even if all he'd been was the living, breathing pin-up for it. And the drive home, the stranger ogling him. He wasn't so sure he liked that. Exhibitionism, apparently, wasn't his thing.

"All right." Garrett's purring voice behind him sent goose bumps tumbling over Drew's skin.

How he loved that sound. It hardened his cock and got his blood flowing.

"Bed." Garrett gave him a little shove between the shoulder blades. "Now."

Drew didn't argue. He hurried ahead of his lover, across the kitchen and down the short hallway to the bedroom at the end.

It was an unusual command. Since they'd been here, there had been plenty of sex. In every room of the little house, on the private beach, and even in the car when they'd arrived. Not in the bed, though, oddly enough. They hadn't even slept in the bed. The first night, they'd slept out under a canopy of stars in the double-wide hammock. Well. They'd had sex there, with the moon glimmering down on them and Drew's wrists lashed lightly to the cords of the swinging support, and it had been fantastic. Then they'd laid there, watched the stars wheel, talked about their families, and seen the sun come up. They'd spent the rest of that day on the beach, barbequing, and dancing in the candlelit living room, their activities liberally interspersed with love-making and heavy petting, and had-eventually-fallen asleep on the couch. This morning, they'd headed straight to the public beach, where the waves weren't tamed by the point that protected their little haven.

Until this moment, Drew hadn't noticed the lack of activity in the bedroom, or even realized he hadn't seen the inside of it yet. Now, he wondered about that as he turned the old brass handle and pushed the door open.

The bed was a huge four-poster. The footboard was tall, belly-height on him, and the headboard soared to six feet, filling the space with a lot of imposing dark, carved wood. The posts rose another three feet to flirt with the rafters of the ten foot ceiling, which was strung with strands and strands of Christmas lights that would twinkle like stars when lit at night. White cotton covered the high mattress and mounds of pillows, softened by a screen of sheer curtains. There were two tall windows on either side of the bed and a couple of stuffed chairs to the left, next to a wide fireplace.

"You have got to be kidding me," Drew breathed.

"Nope." Garrett's voice was gruff, jagged almost, and Drew turned to look at him.

His jaw was clenched so hard the muscles stood out in sharp relief. His eyes sparkled in the muted light coming in through the linen curtains. He'd crossed his arms over his chest. It wasn't a Dom stance, though. It was a selfprotective one. His fingers gripped his own ribs and he stood in the doorway staring at the bed.

"Tell me." Drew forgot about his hard-on, the cock ring, his own desire, and turned to face Garrett. There was a story here. He could see it in Garrett's dark gaze. One that needed to be told and got past if they were to move forward as a couple.

Garrett's gaze shifted to him, losing none of the sharp glitter. "Annabelle."

His wife. At least, she had been. They'd been married two years. She'd died pregnant. Garrett had disappeared into a funk for years, or so mutual friends had told Drew. It had all happened long ago. Before Drew ever met him. Before he found his soul again as a pastry chef, making wedding cakes and fulfilling the dreams of seemingly every GLBT couple on the west coast.

Drew stepped up to him and placed a hand on his forearm. He never got over the contrast. Garrett was built, tanned and covered in a fine dusting of sandy brown hair that felt glorious against Drew's shaved, smooth skin. Drew, on the other hand, was pale. Despite the summers in the sun, all the time on a surf board, he remained so. He was red-headed and freckled and burned to a crisp without a thick coating of sunscreen applied hourly. It was a fine excuse to get Garrett's big, limber hands all over him eight or ten times a day.

"Have you been in here since she died?"

Garrett shook his head. "Just on the day of her funeral. And for a month or so after."

Drew let the contradiction go. Much of what Garrett told him of that time was so full of contradictions. He thought that maybe Garrett had been a little bit mad during those years. A little bit broken, and that this new life he'd forged didn't include much clarity of those hard, lonesome memories. Just the good ones of a beautiful lady and a budding family.

"We don't have to-"

"Yes." Drew's attempt at soothing his lover was cut off by Garrett's firm grip on his wrist, his harsh voice grinding over the words as he was hauled over and thrown bodily onto the bed. "We do." Sheer curtains flew up and out and settled back as Garrett climbed onto the bed on top of him, straddling his ass and pinning both hands to the mattress beside his head.

The result was the feeling they were enclosed in a world not quite connected to the every-day. It was a step back into Garrett's past, a step sideways into the rough domination Drew knew him capable of.

But rough didn't come. Garrett hovered over him, pinning him on his stomach so he couldn't see him. All he could hear was Garrett's heavy breathing. He felt the slight tremors rushing through the bigger man. Drew's skin burned where Garrett's hands held him, twisting slightly, but it wasn't so bad. Garrett's weight ground him into the soft mattress, and he had a fleeting image of Annabelle pinned under Garrett like this, laughing maybe, smiling surely, enjoying his strength, the smell of sun and sweat and recent sex clinging to his skin, just as he did.

Drew didn't look anything like her, he knew, from pictures and home movies Garrett had given him to view. Besides being a different gender, he was pale and red where she had been olive-skinned and in possession of an impressive mane of long, black hair. She'd been pixie cute to his own decidedly masculine squareness, slender and delicate where he was lean and muscled.

"Garrett?" The pause had grown too long.

Garrett sucked in a breath. "Spread." He shifted, lifting himself to allow Drew to open his legs and expose himself. Garrett settled back between his thighs, never letting go of his wrists. Instead he dragged them up above his head and crossed one wrist over the other.

"Stay."

Trembling, Drew did as Garrett requested. The gravelly tone of his voice was new, worrisome, and Drew wanted to put him at ease. The best way he could see to do that was to obey his every whim right now.

A moment later, Garrett was back with a tie from the closet and lube from wherever they had used it last. He made quick work securing Drew's hands, firmly but carefully.

Drew tested the bond. "Why?" Not that he had a problem with it. It wasn't the first time they'd played this way, but Garrett had always asked before. Drew got the distinct impression he was not being given choices this time. That idea set his gut fluttering with nervous excitement.

"You're full of protests today, boy."

Drew couldn't argue with that.

"You have a problem with it?"

"No, Sir." Drew settled, letting his hands relax in their bonds.

"Good." Garrett tapped the side of his thigh. "Ass up."

"Yes, Sir." Drew shimmied to his knees and moved them closer to his elbows as he lifted his butt into the air. His heavy cock dangled, still trapped and aching in the ring. He couldn't remember ever having worn one so long or wanting it off so bad. He bit his lower lip hard and kept the wish to himself.

"Good." Garrett's speech grated over his emotions, still clipped and raw, and Drew wanted to turn, see his face, comfort him somehow.

Instead he remained as he was, determined to use his compliance to ground his lover and keep him calm. He listened to the lube open and the spurt of the last bits of it being forced from the tube. The wet sounds as Garrett applied it to his cock made Drew's mouth water in anticipation and his insides tremble. He tilted his ass up slightly.

Callused hands ran over his cheeks and thighs. He wondered absently why there was no wetness from the lube, but the sensation was too good to let something so trivial hold his attention. Having Garrett's hands on him was rapidly becoming one of his very favorite sensations, no matter what those hands were doing. They glided up his back, circled, trailed down over his butt, pulling his cheeks gently apart. There was no warning before the brief, blunt pressure of Garrett's already lubed cock was pressing at his hole, causing that mind-flushing burn of entry. His teeth clamped on his lip, adding that pain to the sensation ripping through his body, then it was past and Garrett was inside and rocking his way deeper.

Drew's body rocked with him, Garrett's hands on his hips controlling him completely. He moaned with the ripples of chill sliding up just under his skin to lift the hairs on the back of his neck. Garrett was going so slowly, one tiny increment at a time. It wasn't enough.

Drew pushed back, shoving himself onto that hard, perfect cock, wanting to be full, to feel the soft slap of Garrett's balls resting against the tender skin just behind his own. It was that complete sensation of fitting together, a perfect match that got him really going.

One of Garrett's hands lifted, scrolled over his skin, up his back through the slick of sweat to cup the back of his neck. Fingers and thumb raked into Drew's hair and Drew moaned.

"In a rush?"

"Yes." Drew swallowed, gulping around a whimper. "I can take—"

"I know. You can take it hard. I like that." He leaned over. There wasn't a big height difference, so his cock pulled out as he draped himself over Drew's back.

"Don't—"

The hand in his hair tightened. Garrett's other hand came up, too, gripped his chin and turned his head as Garrett leaned closer, so Drew could see him. The sable of Garrett's eyes was luminous, the turn of his lips soft, kissable if only Drew could reach.

"Who's in charge here?" Garrett asked.

"Y—" Drew cleared his throat. "You."

"Me." Garrett's thumb stroked Drew's lower lip lightly. "And I want slow."

Drew nodded as much as the hands gripping his head would let him. He looked into Garrett's eyes, fell into them, really, and this time he couldn't swallow the whimper.

Garrett smiled a slow, seductive smile. "Good boy."

God, those two words tied Drew up in knots tighter than the silk around his wrists, sending a wintery thrill through him that clashed deliciously with molten need.

Garrett got up again, re-seated himself, and resumed the slow rock, sliding in deeply, then out almost all the way, and hitting Drew's prostate every time. It was a slow kind of torture that scrambled Drew's brain, set his skin on fire, and reminded him with every swing of his own heavy, ringed cock he was completely captured, kept. He never thought the need to come could be so all-encompassing. It was more than need. Every nerve ending in his body tingled with the fierce demand until he thought he'd either snap the ring or his head would blow off.

He didn't even realize he'd squeezed his eyes closed, didn't quite hear the desperate sounds coming from his own mouth. He only knew the long, slow slide of that cock, the feeling he was complete. "Own me."

The words bled out before he thought, certainly before his slow brain could stop them.

Garrett stopped.

"Please." Drew hadn't meant for him to stop.

"Say it again," Garrett demanded.

Drew whimpered, pushed his hips back, but Garrett clamped a hand down on his ass to stop him moving. A rush of need swamped Drew. It wasn't physical, exactly. It was deeper, and the heat of knowing what Garrett wanted to hear, knowing what he wanted to say rushed through him, carrying away all the uncomfortable bits. "Own me."

Garrett pulled out. "You can't take it," he whispered.

"I mean it." This was bigger than good sex and they both knew it.

"Roll over." Garrett moved and pushed on Drew's hip, tumbling him onto his side.

Drew flopped and rolled languidly onto his back, feeling the weight of his cock and the emptiness, the betrayal of a sting in his eyes. "Please don't—"

But Garrett had left the bed, left the room.

Drew lifted his hands, tugging at them. Garrett would be back, surely. He wouldn't leave him. Still, the sting made him blink and dissipated only when he squeezed his eyes shut and felt the dribble of warmth across his temple.

He heard Garrett's returning footsteps but didn't open his eyes.

"Drew."

He lay still, tied hands on his belly, trying to get himself under control.

"Look at me, please."

Finally, Drew made himself open his eyes and meet Garrett's dark gaze. "I meant it," he said again, defiant.

"I know you did." Garrett knelt on the bed. "Lift your chin."

Drew frowned.

"Do as you're told, boy," Garrett said, though his voice was gentle.

Drew swallowed, lifted his chin, and watched Garrett's face closely. He missed what Garrett had in his hands until his lover was holding it up in front of his face. A thin black collar dangled from Garrett's fingers. It jingled with the sound of silver chains dripping from rings along its length. Drew blinked. "Oh." The one little word was breathy and indistinct.

"Oh, indeed." But Garrett smiled. "Now sit up."

Drew scrambled to do so, still tied, so the movement was awkward, but he managed. He stretched his chin out and met Garrett's gaze square on.

Garrett set the collar about his neck, fastened it snug, and sat back on his heels to admire. "You're gorgeous, Drew."

"And yours." Drew ran his fingers lightly over the collar. The chains chilled his skin, lying just heavy enough, just long enough to remind him they were there every time he moved. He grinned. "Thank you."

Garrett reached over and wiped away a bit of wetness from his hairline. "Lie back."

Drew nodded, fingers still exploring his new jewelry, amazed Garrett had it with him. He'd already thought about this, then, prepared for it. That thought, more than any other, made his heart trip. "Garrett, I—"

"Shhh." Garrett's fingers touched his lips and Drew kissed them as he nodded. "I'll take care of you." He took Drew's hands, pressing them once again over his head. He leaned in for a kiss that was gentle but firm, an offering backed by the steel of command. Drew melted, parted his lips, and sucked in Garrett's questing tongue, letting the heat warm his entire body. His mind drifted on the sensation of a wet tongue tangled with his, a firm body holding him down, the complete surrender to another, even while every sense sharpened to take in the unique scent of Garrett's skin, the weight of his limbs, and the rasp of his hair. Each touch was unique to this man, and Drew opened up a little more with every dance of fingers over his body and dip of tongue into his mouth.

"You, like this," Garrett cupped a hand on Drew's inner thigh, pushed it out to expose him, "so sexy. I could do anything."

Drew looked up into his eyes, remembered the exposure on the beach, in the car, and licked his lips.

"Can I?" Garrett asked.

This was the telling moment. Drew had the symbol he'd wanted, now it was his turn to back that with trust. He nodded.

"No more protests?"

"No more protests," Drew agreed.

Garrett smiled. "No more public exhibition either," he said, kissing Drew to seal the promise. "My boy." He caressed Drew's lower lip, his chin, ran his fingers along the chains at his throat. "I don't share."

"No." Drew smiled up at him. This was different. New. And once again, he was falling into those dark eyes. It heated his blood to know Garrett wanted him. "Fuck me."

Garrett poised above him, lifted an eyebrow.

"Please."

Garrett ran a finger over the too sensitive head of his cock and he bleated out a yelp. "Sir!"

"Better." He glanced down at Drew's cock and traced the ring around it. "Okay?"

Not really. Drew shook his head.

"Okay." Garrett lifted him and slid his thighs under Drew's ass, then once again pushed inside while he fiddled with the cock ring. He thrust home and released Drew at the same moment.

Drew groaned and came almost as soon as his cock was free, great streamers of the stuff spraying out over his chest, even hitting him in the chin. He was too relieved, too far

under the avalanche of bliss to care how embarrassing that was, or that he'd already soiled his new collar. Nor did he realize Garrett was pumping his own load into him until it was almost over and the other man was sagging down on top of him with a quiet, almost desperate whimper. It wasn't a sound Drew had ever heard him make before.

"Garrett?"

"Shh." Garrett collapsed on top of him and Drew wiggled to get comfortable, bringing his hands down to slip them around Garrett's shoulders. He couldn't see the other man's face, couldn't tell what he was thinking. He could feel him shaking, though, and it wasn't the soft tremors of coming down after a good release. His shoulders heaved unevenly, his breath rasped, and his fingers dug into Drew's midriff just a trifle too hard.

Drew took up the soft shushing, sliding his fingers in a gentle caress over Garrett's skin. He tried wiggling his hands free, but Garrett knew his knots. While the tie wasn't tight or uncomfortable, he wasn't getting out of it on his own. He settled for just holding his lover in silence while they watched the afternoon light slide across the floor of the hallway.

When Garrett finally pushed his hands away and sat up, Drew couldn't help notice his eyes were suspiciously red. He focused them on the tie, releasing Drew, and leaned to give him a kiss.

"Go get cleaned up." He shooed Drew toward the bathroom with a little pat on his ass.

Drew went without comment. He cleaned himself in a warm shower quickly, pleased to note that the collar was a nice, wash-and-wear variety. By the time he got back to the bedroom, Garrett was tucked in, but not under the pristine white bed coverings. He'd unzipped two sleeping bags, fastened them together, and made a comfy envelope big enough for them both.

"Come on." He patted the bed and flung back one edge of the bag. The layers of white cotton that had covered the bed lay in a heap in one corner.

"What's going on?" Drew pointed to the sumptuous coverings abandoned on the floor.

"Annabelle's," Garrett said simply.

Drew nodded and clambered up onto the bed. Garrett reached around him, pulled the sleeping bag up, and zipped them both in.

"This is cozy," Drew observed as they hunkered down facing one another.

"Yes, it is."

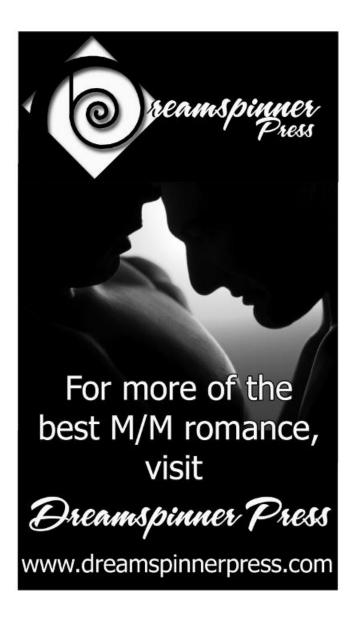
"I don't mind Annabelle's choice in linens."

Garrett smiled at him. He was tracing his fingers over Drew's face, lingering over his lips. "Neither do I." He leaned close, kissing him almost sweetly. "New love. New start." His fingers slipped down to play with Drew's collar and the chains. "New everything. We'll go shopping tomorrow. You can pick whatever bedding you want."

"Okay." Drew snuggled closer, wrapping his legs with Garrett's. "Anything you say."

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