

Something Beautiful

By Discothequey

Friday, February 15, 2008

11:03 PM

I stared unblinkingly at the droplets of moisture collecting along the outside of my beer bottle. The amber glass had begun to fog with condensation, speckles of water peppering the sweating surface. A tear-like drop slid from the neck, traveling slowly down the bottle until it rested at the base, a dark stripe trailing behind it.

I hadn't touched my drink, not so much as laid a hand on it since Brian had purchased it ten minutes ago and clanked it down under my nose, the beer sloshing around sloppily.

"So," he said to me, swallowing loudly, clearly only breaking the silence. We hadn't spoken yet. We weren't ready to speak yet.

I glanced up at him, meeting his hazel eyes, feeling empty yet full, needy but fulfilled. The pit of my stomach burned.

"So," I confirmed, yearning more than anything to reach out and touch him. Brian stared at me from across the table, nursing his beer, his left arm resting on the table, hand palm-up, fingers curled inward, aching for me to touch them. I wanted to, fuck, I wanted to, but I couldn't. We needed to talk first.

Three years had taught me patience. Three years had taught me that no matter how many wounds it healed, sex wasn't the glue that mended shattered pieces. It bandaged things, put them off for a while, maybe even buried them deeper and locked them away, but they would eventually resurface.

That's why I had refused to meet Brian at the loft. I knew that fucking was what he wanted, and even more than that, I knew that was what I wanted as well. I knew that I would meet him there, we would embrace, and before we could even attempt to talk things out, to set our lives straight and get them in order, we would be lying in his bed, chest to chest, breathing erratically and working our way toward physical release. Physical wasn't what we needed right now. Not entirely.

It had been over a year since I had last seen him, but in truth, almost three since we had properly talked. That time a year ago didn't count. We were already uncommunicative, and our disgustingly polite, awkward conversation at Hunter's graduation party was nothing but a twist of the knife in my chest. He asked how I was, how my art was coming along, everything that a casual acquaintance would ask, not someone you had been with for five years, someone that had taken your virginity and ruined you for anyone else, someone you almost married, someone that had admitted that he loved you. Fuck, he shook my hand when we parted that afternoon after the party. No hug, no kiss, no "I've missed you," no goodbye. A handshake was what our relationship had dwindled to. I was crushed.

My eyes burned, both from the smoke of my discarded cigarette lying in the ashtray and my painful memories.

"How have you been?" Brian asked, scratching at his upper lip with the thumb of his right hand, his index and middle fingers clamped around a cigarette.

My stomach grumbled with nervousness. More polite conversation.

"I've been," I started, finally grasping my abandoned drink and squeezing my fingers around the bottle, feeling the wetness of condensation drip between my fingers. "I've been fine. The usual."

Brian stared at me through the smoke of his Marlboro, taking a long, cheek-hollowing drag and exhaling, sending streams of smoke out his nostrils like the spout on a teapot. He rolled his lips inward.

"How was life in the fabulous city?" He smirked, puffs of smoke escaping his lips. "Was it all you expected it to be?"

I rolled my eyes, resting my chin on my palm. He was taunting me.

"It was great at first," I started, deciding to ignore his sarcasm. "I was living in a shit-hole apartment with Daph's old friend from middle school, Abby, who turned out to be this psycho bitch bohemian artist, but other than that minor complication, I was doing okay for myself. I had a couple of galleries showing my art, and I was slowly gaining exposure. I got my own apartment then, right after..."

I stopped, changing my tracks. This was not the time to go there. "It just got so fucking lonely up there, all alone. I mean, I guess I had some friends, but when it came down to it, it just wasn't what I wanted. Maybe it is a fucking amazing place for a struggling artist, but I decided that without my Pittsburgh friends, my family," him "it just wasn't worth it. I wasn't happy. All I want to do is my art, and I can do that anywhere. I don't give a fuck about money or recognition."

"So you came back to the Pitts," Brian cooed sarcastically, taking a swig of his beer.

"Yeah." I blinked slowly. "I'm staying with Daphne until I can find a place of my own. She just broke up with her boyfriend so she has space in her apartment."

"Hm. How's your mother and her May-December romance?"

I blinked excessively. "Fine, I guess. They're still in Harrisburg, but I believe Tucker is looking for another job near Philadelphia because his mother is sick and he wants to be close."

Brian snorted into his beer bottle. "Maybe your mommy can stay with her. I'm sure they're the same age."

I stuck my tongue out at him, teasingly. "Molly's pissed about moving so much. She's apparently wanting more and more time with the man formally known as Dad, and Mom is worried that she'll eventually want to move in with him."

The air went still.

"So, how have you been, Brian?" I wanted honesty, no bullshit response like I had given him.

He shrugged, raising his eyebrows and wiggling his left thumb. "The usual."

I sighed, furiously biting at my bottom lip.

"I mean," I started, inhaling so roughly that my lungs felt as if they would burst. I didn't want to go there, especially so soon in our conversation, but this was the entire reason that I asked to meet with him. "How have you been handling this?" I motioned in between us with my free hand, the other still clamped on the dripping bottle.

Brian gave me an annoyed look, sitting up straight on his stool and crushing the butt of his cigarette in the ashtray. "What's 'this?'"

Licking my bottom lip, I finished. "Us. Whatever we are."

He rubbed his eyes with his palm and sighed. "If you're asking how my little self is getting along without you, then the answer is fine."

He glared, not liking the way the conversation seemed to be headed. He knew what he was getting into when he agreed to meet me at Woody's, though. If he didn't want this, too, he would've told me to fuck off when I ran into him at Babylon the hour before.

"Fine?" I whispered in disbelief, rubbing my lips with my left hand.

"Yes, fine," he confirmed in a grouchy tone, leaning over the table and propping his head up on his hands.

I stared at him, absentmindedly scratching at the label on the beer bottle with my thumbnail.

"Look," he continued, sitting back again, swiping at his nose with his left hand. "If you had these warm, fuzzy illusions of you coming back to a crying, distraught Brian Kinney, then you're fucked. Life goes on, Sunshine."

My stomach ached. "I didn't have any illusions," I whispered, tucking my chin into my neck. "I just wondered why you ignored me and was hoping we could work things out."

He raised his eyebrows, taking a loud guzzle of his beer. "What's there to work out? You were in New York, now you're not, because you can't survive without your friends and family. You're living with Daphne and you've come back to be reacquainted with your dear old buddies from the Pitts of Hell."

"I mean us." I looked at him intensely, stomach flipping and flopping with nervousness.

Brian gave me a questioning look, a look full of bullshit, knowing exactly what I meant.

"What about us?" He plopped his half-empty bottle down in the center of the table and placed his palms flat on the wooden surface.

I rolled my eyes. "You're fucking unbelievable. Don't toss this all aside like nothing ever happened, pretending we were never in a relationship. We almost got married, for fuck's sake! I think you owe me a goddamn explanation." My eyes watered and nose suddenly felt tingly.

"Sunshine, would you like to tell me what the fuck you're talking about?" Brian stared at his hands resting on the table, knowing fully well what I was talking about.

"You know exactly what I mean, stop playing dumb." I was fuming. "Why did you stop taking my fucking calls? You just disappeared."

"I was busy."

"The fuck you were. I must've called you a hundred times over a two month period, left fifty fucking messages, emailed every day.

Cynthia said you were 'in a meeting.' Michael said he hadn't heard from you. I even called fucking Ted and he told me he would get you to call me back when you weren't 'busy,' but of course you never did."

"So?"

I clinched my fists and bit at the insides of my cheeks to keep from screaming at him. "So? What the fuck, Brian? We parted with only good feelings toward each other, and for six months after, we were fine. Then, with no fucking warning at all, you go AWOL. No one told me anything. I flew down for Molly's birthday and went to the loft to see you. I even used my fucking key to get in, but you weren't home. I wrote you a goddamn note and put it on your refrigerator for you to call me immediately but you never did. After a while I fucking gave up. How could you do that?"

He stared at me, wiggling uncomfortably in his seat, but saying nothing.

I felt as if I would vomit.

"What the hell happened? You came up to New York for the weekend, we were perfectly fine, fucking each other non-stop, and the next day you stopped returning my calls. Did I do something? Was this all some big, fucking scheme to get rid of me?"

"What does it fucking matter?" Brian climbed off his stool, grabbing his jacket.

"Brian," I said, deflated. "Stop being so fucking hostile, just talk to me! I'm back. We can work this out."

"I'm not talking about this shit right now."

"Where the fuck are you going?" I turned to him, feeling completely helpless.

He roughly shoved his arms into his jacket and took a few steps toward me, leaning down so that his face was inches from mine. "I'm leaving you here to your childish whining and whatever bullshit you feel like crying about." Two beats. "Or is that just your allergies?" He leaned back, straightening his jacket and, as an almost afterthought, said quietly, as if he wasn't sure if he wanted to, "I'll be at the loft, if you would like to bitch some more later."

Saturday, February 16, 2008

1:14 AM

The metal of the loft door was cold against my hands, sending goose-bumps up my arms and down my legs. Or was that even the reason? The whirl of the door on its track was louder than I remembered, more prominent in the still, quiet air.

Closing my eyes for a second, I ran my hands through my hair, grown out like before the Pink Posse buzz-cut, and took a step inside, anticipating what I would find and wondering which of the many faces of Brian Kinney I would meet.

He basically invited me here, I reminded myself, clutching the cuffs of my brown jacket in my hands and tugging, nervously, out of habit. If he wasn't interested in talking, he never would have told me where he was going.

My stomach hurt, a gnawing, nauseating feeling. I couldn't believe how nervous I was. Hundreds of times I had walked into the loft, many times I had met an angry, uncommunicative Brian, but somehow this was different. The results of this visit would determine my entire future with him. I couldn't survive without him. Over the past years while Brian and I weren't talking, I had attempted to convince myself I didn't need him. I told myself it wasn't worth it, that he had hurt me in too many ways than forgivable, and by ignoring me, had popped the ever-inflating balloon that was our tumultuous relationship.

But it was all bullshit, a collection of fallacies I had conjured to attempt to rid Brian Kinney from my mind.

The night before I made the decision to move back to Pittsburgh, the dam burst and all the emotions I had trapped inside me flooded my body like waves of water.

Thursday, December 6, 2007

11:56 PM

Past

I was lying in bed, flipping through an old sketchbook I had dug out of the bottom of a box I had neglected to unpack, and came across page after page of drawings of Brian I did while we were still together. I don't know what it was; maybe it was the stress of the day built up, maybe it was feelings that finally made it to the surface, but I was pushed over the edge. I broke into tears, slamming the book shut and tossing it across my apartment, allowing my body to fall backwards onto the pillows.

My toes curled against the cold, slick fabric of the fitted sheet of my bed as I slid my shaking right hand up under the hem of my tshirt, carefully stroking my stomach and trailing my fingers down the center, dipping into my belly button as I made my way lower and lower. With my left hand, I began to stretch the elastic waistband of my sweats, fingers fumbling sloppily, blood racing, heart pounding, stomach quivering, pelvic muscles contracting.

"I need this," I whispered, licking my dry lips and harshly shoving my hand into my pants, under the soft cotton material of my gray boxer-briefs. My breaths came in short puffs, chest clenching, lungs expanding beyond full capacity as I stroked myself, thinking of nothing but memories, memories I had been trying for so long to suppress. I didn't swallow, barely breathed, barely existed. I may as well have been unconscious, lost in feelings, emotions, sensations and the dull thud of my heartbeat.

Behind my eyes I saw flashes, white-hot flashes of light that intensified with each pull. I saw Brian, felt him, practically smelled him.

His body was pressed against mine, hands tangling in my hair, tugging fistfulls of strands as he moved against me, our sweat mixing against my chest, hearts pounding in rhythm, teeth grazing each others as we bit and sucked at lips, his hot breath hitting me full in the face, cheeks red from arousal, mouth purple and swollen from kissing. I felt him inside me, filling me, making me whole, each thrust sending me over the edge into oblivion, a place I never wanted to leave.

I let out a short groan as I touched myself, hand moving rapidly inside of my pants, fingers wrapped around, damp with precome and sweat, my salty tears dripping into my open mouth as they streamed down my cheeks. I was almost there, toes bent, legs contorting, chest rising and falling, sweat beads gliding down the heated skin of my forehead and temples like the tears that were steadily falling from my eyes.

I needed this. I needed release.

Biting my lip so hard I almost swore I could taste salty blood, I scrunched my nose, squeezing my eyes shut and slowing my slippery strokes to rough tugs, an orgasm on the brink, set on by my vivid memories, fantasies in their own right. My stomach quivered, a tingling sensation catching inside of me, escalating into intense pleasure so great yet so painful that I thought I would pass out. My lungs expanded even farther, threatening to burst, head feeling swimmy from lack of oxygen intake. I shook, arm aching, thigh muscles twitching as I came, letting out a strangled burst of air.

I suddenly felt alone, my hand hot, wet and sticky as it rested against me. I was miserable. Empty. I cried and cried, falling asleep sometime after three, but not even remembering drifting off or waking up the next morning. My eyes were swollen all the next day.

Saturday, February 16, 2008

1:16 AM

Present

The loft was dim, with only a low glow of lighting, casting an orange shadow over every surface. At first I didn't think anyone was home. It was quiet, way too quiet. The faint woosh of the high-powered central heat jetting into the air was the only thing I could hear, something I had never actually paid attention to in the past.

A few stray pieces of ice fell into the ice-box of the freezer, creating a dull rattle, a sudden noise in the still loft that caused my skin to jump.

"Brian?" I questioned in an almost whisper, sliding the door closed on its track behind me.

Nothing.

My scuffed sneakers smacked soundly against the hardwood floors as I trudged further into the apartment, completely forgetting there was anyone else in the world except for Brian and I, any other place besides that loft.

"Brian?" I smelled a mixture of cigarettes and alcohol. "Are you..."

I stopped.

He was lying on the couch in the back corner of the loft, shirtless and barefoot, facing the opposite wall, an unlit cigarette perched between his lips and a half-empty bottle of Beam lying on its side in the center of the coffee table.

"Hey." My words were barely a whisper, barely a stirring of air pushed through my dry lips.

He removed the cigarette from his mouth daintily, delicately, and placed it in the ashtray on the side table.

I walked toward him, taking slow, careful strides, anticipating how he might react to my presence. I wanted him to listen to me. I needed him to.

"Justin," he confirmed, a lazy acknowledgment that I was in the room with him. He sat up, combing through his hair with his fingers and rubbing his eyes sleepily, as if he had recently woken up from a nap. His eyes were glassy and pink around the corners, from marijuana, no doubt. "Why are you here?"

Taking a deep, prolonged breath, I crossed in front of him, having a seat at the opposite end of the couch, leaving a cushion in between us. My heart hurt and stomach felt as if it had taken up gymnastics.

"You said I could come if I wanted to bitch some more." I tried to smile, but the only thing I could manage was a brief twitch of my right cheek.

Brian turned to face me, bringing his right leg up and curling it in front of him, resting his bare foot on the cushion separating us. He placed his thumb under his chin and rubbed the side of his index finger against his lips like he always did when he was thinking about something.

He blinked slowly, eventually taking a deep breath. "Have at it."

Words always came easily to me, and I always thought that, though it could definitely be one of my faults, it was also one of my best attributes.

This time, however, nothing came. My tongue rested dormant against my teeth as I struggled to think of something to say. Anything.

Brian stared at me intently, removing his hand from his face and placing it on his thigh, squeezing gently at the fabric of his jeans. His Adam's apple bobbed up and down as he swallowed.

"I just..." I started, shoving both hands through my hair roughly, without purpose, tugging the strands absentmindedly. "Brian, I just want to know why."

He raised an eyebrow, rolling his lips inward and looking at me blankly. "Why?"

"Stop playing so fucking innocent!" I shot at him, a lot more forcefully than originally intended. "You know exactly what I'm talking about. You know exactly why I wanted to meet with you at Woody's, so the fact that you turned into a defensive asshole, getting up and leaving when I questioned you about our situation was completely irrational. Stop acting so completely dumb to the circumstances at hand."

"Why are we doing this?" He asked me in a hostile tone, scooting to the edge of the couch. "I thought this shit was over."

It was my turn to raise an eyebrow and stare blankly. "What shit?"

"I thought you were finally satisfied," he continued sarcastically, standing up and walking over to stand in front of me. He leaned down until his face was so close I could smell the whiskey on his breath and could see the individual hair follicles of his stubble.

"Finally, little Justin had everything he wanted up in the big city."

"What?" I pulled my legs up onto the couch and crossed them, wanting to crawl inside the cushions to get away from him. I hated when he made me intimidated, yet I always seemed to allow myself to feel that way around him.

"It's what you wanted. You finally got your big break. You always complained about not having enough, not being satisfied by whatever the fuck, and I thought once you were settled in New York, you finally got whatever it was that you wanted."

I looked around, positively confused. "Brian, what the fuck are you talking about?"

He stepped back, striding over toward the kitchen. "Don't even fucking lie and say you were satisfied in the Pitts. I knew you weren't and I knew it would be easier if you just broke all ties so you could go be this fabulous artiste you dreamed of being. You obviously weren't going to do it yourself, so I did it for you."

"Brian." I was pissed. Scrambling out of my burrow in the couch, I walked steadily over to where he was standing by the refrigerator.

Everything he was saying was bullshit, and he knew it as well as I did. "Why in the fuck are you saying this? None of it makes any sense whatsoever. How could you actually think that by losing the person I care more about than anyone or anything else in the world, I could be satisfied? Stop trying to be a martyr. That's all you've ever done, and particularly in our relationship, it's never worked."

"That's bullshit!" he yelled, covering his eyes with his hands as if he had a headache. "If anything, I'm helping you! We knew," he started, pausing as if he were having second thoughts about continuing with his train of thought. "We both knew that as long as you were in New York and I was here, with Kinnetik, it wasn't going to work."

My mouth dropped in disbelief. Stepping closer to him, I grabbed his hand and pulled it away from his face so I could see his eyes.

"What the hell, Brian? Helping me? If your idea of helping me is disappearing from my life without warning, hurting me in ways I never thought imaginable, causing me to question every fucking thing I've done in my life and making me feel like absolute shit for years, then I don't know what to think. As for us both knowing, well, you can speak for yourself. We have been through hell together, Brian. Hell. But we always managed to come out the other end okay - what, with getting together in the first place, my bashing, cheating, your cancer, Hollywood, engagement, all that, Brian. I knew we could get through anything, and until you started fucking ignoring me, I was sure it was going to work out somehow. I fucking know you believed so, too. This isn't about me at all. It's about you."

His eyes looked pained for a split second, but hardened again. He positioned his mouth as if to say something, but didn't.

"Just admit that this has nothing to do with me. I know exactly what your problem is."

Brian took a step backward and leaned against the counter. "What the fuck are you talking about? Don't play this bullshit with me."

I took a deep breath. "Three years ago, I thought you had changed. I thought you were finally able to be in a relationship without always pushing me away when things got too intimate." One beat. "I was wrong."

He lowered his eyebrows and glanced around the room at the refrigerator, the chaise, the window, everywhere but at my face.

"I was so wrong," I continued, stepping closer to him. "I always thought your problem was that you never allowed yourself to fall in love. I thought it was always an ongoing internal battle within you to let yourself love me, when some part of you was afraid or didn't want to or whatever the fuck." I paused, breathing heavily from being so worked up. "When actually, it wasn't that. You had no problem loving others, and though you were reluctant to admit you were in love, you eventually came around. Your problem was, and still is, that you don't allow others to love you."

"Where is this coming from?" Brian crossed his arms in front of his chest, shielding himself from me. "How in the fuck did we get on this subject? It has nothing to do with..."

"That's why you stopped returning my calls. That's why you always pushed me away. I don't know if it's because you don't want others to be able to love you in the way you love them or because you think you're being selfish or don't feel worthy."

His mouth opened slightly and he loosened his grip on his arms, blinking profusely. His bare chest rose and fell rapidly.

"Brian," I continued, reaching out to touch his shoulder. He took a step to the side, dodging me. "Why is it so hard for you to believe that it's possible for another person to love and want you more than anything in the world? If you think you're being selfish by accepting that, embracing it, living with it, simply because it may cause other things in my life to take a lower shelf, then you have another thing coming. What's selfish is you stealing that from me, not allowing me to talk to you, make love to you, be in any type of fucking contact with you because you think it's 'best

for me,' or 'helping me' or however you phrased it. I know you love me, Brian, and pushing me away and pretending you don't because you think it will allow me to live my life more efficiently is bullshit. It's fucking bullshit."

"Justin," Brian said softly, yet gruffly, dropping his arms to his sides and loosely placing his hands on his hips. His cheeks were flushed.

"It's not fair to me," I continued, eyes welling with tears. My vision was getting blurry, the height of my tears was rising and at that moment I wanted nothing more than to be alone, free to cry without an audience. I turned away. "It's fucking destroying me."

I couldn't feel anything. All that existed was my shoes, peeking out from the hem of my jeans. I studied them, willing my tears to stay put, praying they would not spill over my eyelids and make me look like a stupid fucking little crying faggot. I couldn't breathe. All the emotion left in my body, all the betrayal, the hurt and sadness I had hoarded over the past two and a half years was exploding in my chest, causing my throat to feel tight. I wrung my hands, feeling the sweat collecting between my fingers.

"Justin," Brian repeated, his voice annoyed, but without the majority of the hostility it presented earlier. "I..."

I reached up and covered my face with my right hand, afraid of letting him see me cry. My back shook and nose began to run. I wanted to walk away, to leave the entire building, but something was keeping me in place.

Suddenly, I felt Brian's hand on my shoulder, light at first, as if he was unsure about what he was doing, and then more firm. His fingers clamped onto me and pulled me around to face him.

I couldn't remove my hand. I felt snot at the opening of my nostrils and tears were beginning to drip down my face in a mad rush to my trembling lips. He had seen me cry many times, but for some reason I couldn't bare to let him see me at that moment.

"I don't..." he started again, sighing loudly. I felt his other hand rest on my right shoulder, holding me at arms distance from his body.

His palms were warm against the thin fabric of my cloth jacket.

The dam was about to burst. The tears streaming out were just the beginning. If I didn't get out of there at that moment, I was going to wail and become an embarrassing, blubbing mess. My head hurt from trying to hold in my tears, and the back of my throat felt tight and constricted. "I can't do this," I whispered through quivering lips, pulling out of his grasp and turning to face the door. I removed my hand once I was sure he wouldn't be able to see my face and started taking long strides across the kitchen, not wanting to leave but at the same time, desiring it more than anything else in the world.

"Justin!" Brian called, the soft pattering of his bare feet against the hardwood floors following my own toward the door. I wanted to break into a run, to dash so that he couldn't catch me.

I placed my hand on the loft door, the metal feeling cold against my hot, clammy skin, and as soon as I began to slide the door along its track, I was engulfed in the strong warmth that was Brian's body.

"Justin," he whispered into my hair, his arms wrapped around me from behind, holding my back against his chest, his mouth buried in my hair and lips touching my scalp. That was it. I was lost.

A loud, shrieking moan escaped my lips, tears falling freely now, nose running messily and mouth shaking with every bawl. I doubled over, resting my forehead against the cold metal of the door, Brian never breaking his embrace.

"It's...it's okay," he whispered against my head, gently walking me backward, pulling me back into the kitchen, squeezing me tightly, possessively, nuzzling his nose against my hair. "I'm..."

He paused with his speech, releasing his grip on my body and slowly spinning me in his arms, walking me backward until my back was up against the cold surface of the refrigerator. "I know what I've always said: 'no apologies, no regrets.'" He swallowed loudly, bending his head slightly so that his face was even with mine. I could tell he didn't want to continue, but was forcing himself to. "But I..." He swallowed. "I shouldn't have ignored you. I just...I wanted you to be happy, and I knew you would never be able to achieve everything you ever wanted if I were holding you back." Deep breath. "And it wasn't just that. The night I left, as I was sitting on that fucking pl..."

Without even giving him a chance to finish, I grabbed his head, pulling his mouth into mine so harshly and so roughly that after a few seconds, I tasted the saltiness of blood on my tongue, not sure if it was mine or his.

I kissed him with so much passion I could feel it in my fingertips, no longer caring that tears were streaming out the corners of my eyes and that my face was a mess. No longer caring about what he was going to say. That could wait. Right then, I needed him. More than anything else, I needed to feel him, to touch him, to be with him.

He moaned into my mouth, placing both of his hands on the side of my head and pulling me closer, impossibly close, so much that I felt as if he was trying to suck me inside of him. I bit at his lips, relishing in the taste of him, so familiar and so missed that I felt a wave of tears once again rush to my eyes.

I hummed, assaulting his mouth with my tongue, not bothering to breathe, not caring that I was so out of breath my head was filling light. His hands slid from my face to my shoulders, playing across my neck and trailing down further still until they rested between us, against our chests.

"I love you," I breathed once I was able to pull myself away from his mouth for a long enough period of time, reaching behind him and sliding my hands up his back, feeling the smoothness of his hot skin against mine.

Brian smiled against my cheek, dipping his head and nipping at my neck with his lips. His mouth was scalding against the flesh of my throat, and I sighed when I felt his tongue brush across my collarbone.

"I missed you so much," I whispered into his hair as I pushed his open mouth harder against the bit of exposed chest peeking out from my shirt and jacket.

Saturday, February 16, 2008

1:49 AM

I couldn't breathe. All the air in my body was contained in my chest, locked tightly away as Brian and I undressed each other, making our way to the bedroom. Every touch of his hand to each newly exposed area of my skin sent shock-waves down my spine. The fine, blond hairs on my arms stood on end and the crotch of my pants was impossibly snug.

His bare stomach quivered and shook against mine as I held him close, biting and sucking at his collarbone while I unfastened his jeans between us.

He stopped me for a second, backing his body away but stretching his neck toward my face, grabbing the back of my head and pulling my mouth roughly against his, so roughly that I felt our teeth bump together in a rushed frenzy. It was wet and painful but ridiculously wonderful.

We stumbled to the bed, barely breaking the connection of our mouths and lips and tongues and teeth and hurriedly shed our remaining clothing, tossing our pants and underwear in a disheveled heap beside the bathroom door.

Brian hummed against my lips as he walked us, both on our knees, to the center of the mattress, reaching down and grasping both my hands in his, meshing our fingers together tightly. He breathed erratically, sweating as if he had just finished running a marathon, and slowly kissed his way from my lips, down my neck to my chest, where he licked at my nipples and planted sweet kisses in the center of my breastbone, never breaking the intense grasp on my fingers.

"God," I whispered, tossing my head back and sighing, relishing in the experience. I had waited so long to feel this and needed this so much I couldn't stand it. My stomach muscles twitched as I felt Brian's chin bump against the head of my penis, so erect it was almost flush against my skin. He nipped at my bellybutton, licking the flesh softly, lovingly. My chest expanded, lungs filled with the air I was having trouble releasing.

Brian's fingers untwined from mine and he raised his head and mouth and lips from where they rested against my abdomen, placing wet, searching kisses on my mouth, sucking my tongue and lips like he was starving for them. He slid his hands to my chest and forcefully pushed me backwards, a new intensity rising, the burning blood coursing through my veins, a representation of the circulating heat around us. God, it felt so good.

I could feel a line of wetness against my stomach where Brian's dick had left a trail of precome, and all I wanted at that moment was to feel him inside me. I didn't want foreplay. We didn't need it. Both of us were hard as rocks, precome dripping from us in beads, and I knew from the second Brian started massaging my cock minutes earlier while he had me against the refrigerator that this was going to be quick. There was no time to fool around or give or receive a partial blowjob. At the way things were going, if Brian so much as licked the head of my dick I would shoot. I had wanted this for so long. Almost three years of fucking agony, almost three years of unsatisfying orgasms in backrooms of New York City gay clubs and solo. The fact that the things I fantasized about while jerking off or getting blown by some hard body, anonymous stud, were finally real almost got me off as soon as it started.

"Uh," I groaned, wrapping my legs around Brian's body and pulling his pelvis into mine, writhing at the sensation of our cocks rubbing against each other. He sighed loudly, lying flat against me, and began grabbing at my hair, tugging it roughly, making my scalp hurt, but I didn't fucking care. I didn't fucking care at all.

We lay like that for minutes, kissing so passionately that I swore our lips would be bruised for months, years, grinding our dicks together, not bothering moving for anything else. The friction we were creating was almost painful, but so ridiculously good that I could barely bring myself to moan, "Fuck me," against Brian's collarbone.

He stopped moving against me, panting wildly, and lifted his head from where it rested to look me dead in the eyes. Sweat was literally dripping from his temples, and the edges of his hair were wet and matted against his skin.

"Brian, fuck me!" I repeated with a gasp, grabbing his head and pulling him to me once more for a crushing kiss.

His eyes were desperate, pupils entirely dilated, and I knew he needed release as badly as I did. I placed my hand on his chest, rubbing my fingers through the pools of sweat that had collected there, a mixture from both of our bodies, and smeared it across his erect nipples. He dropped his face once again to mine for a quick, loving kiss, and moved down my body, placing both knees between mine, separating my legs.

I watched through fluttering eyelashes as Brian picked up my bent, quivering legs and, kissing my right knee, placed them on his shoulders. The look on his face was beyond anything I can ever remember seeing in the past. His eyes were dark and lips were squeezed tightly together, giving him an almost angry, passionately hungry look. It was a look of absolute desperation, possessiveness and the need to claim me back. He seemed almost primal, similar to when he had torturously kissed me in the loft after the bowling match years ago.

A squirt of lube, and then he leaned in to me, dick pressing up against my entrance. I gasped.

Right when he started to push past the opening, he froze, eyes widening. My cock was throbbing painfully, pulsating so much with blood flow I could almost swear I could see it thumping. I clenched my stomach muscles, trying to keep from coming right then and there.

"Fuck," Brian whispered, so quietly I almost didn't hear him. It was more of a mumble than anything else. He was still frozen, dick an inch inside of me, and he suddenly pulled out, shaking his head as if he couldn't believe what he was doing. "Fuck," he repeated, louder this time.

He avoided my eyes, reaching over to the little bowl on the bedside table and grabbing a condom, almost dropping it, he was shaking so badly. His face was bright red, not completely from arousal, and he turned his head to the side as he ripped the condom wrapper open with his teeth and sheathed himself.

He had almost fucked me without a condom.

I knew if he would have continued, I would have let him. God, I wanted it more than fucking anything, but I knew if I even went so far as to suggest barebacking again, like I did almost seven years ago, he would be outraged.

Brian placed his lips against mine, resting them there for a few seconds and then pulling away, as if he were apologizing for his lapse.

Our breathing was uneven, shaky and loud, and when he gripped my thighs, pulling my ass up so he could enter me, the room began to sound like a lamaze class.

"Fuuuck," I whispered against his throat as he pushed into me, closing his eyes, scrunching his face and biting his bottom lip. It took extreme control to keep me from coming. I felt the orgasm building, and I knew it was all going to be over in a matter of seconds if I didn't try to control myself.

Brian groaned as the tip of his cock brushed my prostate. As a reflex, my fingernails buried themselves in the flesh of his back. "Oh my God."

I was close, so fucking close I was sure I could come on command. So close it was almost embarrassing.

Brian babbled against my cheek, kissing over and over at one spot near my jaw. He pulled out slowly, pushing in again in one prolonged stroke. He began to quicken his pace, grasping at my hair and biting the corner of my mouth.

My legs were tangled around his neck, dick rubbing up against his stomach every time he thrust. I could feel the fire inside me starting to build. The tingle started at the base of my spine, and made its way around to my balls, gradually growing in intensity.

I gasped, squeezing my eyes shut, trying not to swallow my own tongue as I tried to keep my orgasm at bay, wanting to come with Brian, needing for us to come at the same time.

"Stop," I whispered, pushing my head as far down in the pillows as it would go. "I'm..." Deep breath. "I'm too close."

Brian slowed his pace, thrusting more shallowly, and looked into my watering eyes, lips a deep crimson and cheeks flushed. He smiled then, leaning down and planting a sweet, tender kiss on the tip of my nose. "Already?" His whisper was teasing. He understood completely.

I smiled back at him, reaching up and pulling his face back down to mine, kissing him softly, little whispers of kisses across his cheeks and lips, forehead and chin. I listened to his breathing pattern, aligning our breaths, and nuzzled my nose against his as we both began to lose control, panting against each other's skin.

Brian began to thrust harder, hitting my prostate repeatedly, burying himself balls deep as he whimpered sounds I knew so well.

Sounds that meant he was on the verge, teetering on the edge of insanity, orgasm building and about to take control of his entire body.

"Ahh," he moaned, thrusting into me so hard that I wanted to cry from the pain. I slid my legs from his neck down to his back, wrapping them around him with incredible force, and pulling him harder against me. Everything in my body began to shake, every limb, digit and nerve ending.

I couldn't breathe, couldn't feel and for a second, completely lost control of where I was. All I knew was this explosion taking control.

He kissed me, leaving a lingering taste of blood from his bleeding bottom lip as he thrust once, twice, three times more, body going rigid as he came, dick pulsating inside me, sending me into convulsions of my own, an orgasm so powerful I felt as if I had literally gone unconscious. I didn't think of breathing, didn't think of moving, didn't think of anything but Brian and how much I loved him.

Saturday, February 16, 2008

3:21 AM

I breathed heavily, grasping onto Brian's arm which was wrapped around me from behind. This wasn't like the last time. The last time was hurried and fast and intense, a representation of our immediate need for release. This was slow and careful.

My limbs felt like jelly, arms threatening to form a puddle on the bed.

"Uuh," Brian breathed as he thrust into me, steadily, left palm flat against my chest, pulling me into his body, molding me into him.

We were a perfect fit. He placed soft kisses on the back of my neck, breathing against my skin and sending shivers down my spine.

I loved this man more than anything else in my life. Thinking about that intensity, the burning desire I had for him made me crazy.

Nothing could describe it, nothing could replace it and nothing ever would. He was mine and I was his. Completely. We belonged to each other.

"Ahh," I gasped, feeling Brian's hand snake down my chest, gliding along my stomach as it made its way to my dick. I writhed against him when his hand found its destination, losing myself in his touch and the intense pleasure it gave me. My legs began to twitch, senses springing to life as my orgasm hit me, long and hard, seeming to never end.

My ass clenched around Brian's cock, tremors quaking through me like an aftershock.

"God," he whispered against the base of my neck, sliding his hot, sticky hand from my dick and tightening it around me, pulling me so hard against his chest that I felt as if I were suffocating.

"I love you," I whispered to him, twisting my head around and kissing him on the lips, his mouth open and still as he came, curling me into him as if he wanted to pull my entire body inside of his.

Afterwards, as we lay still, a tangle of sweaty, sticky limbs, Brian wrapped his arm around me, tugging me up against him so that my head was resting against his neck.

"I love you," I breathed, more for my own confirmation than for him to hear, kissing his neck with tiny, baby kisses, drawn in by the smell of him, like shaving cream and cigarettes and the intense, musky smell of his sweat. No matter how many times I said it, I could never say it enough. This powerful, overwhelming, bone-rattling, knee-shaking sense of love was so deep that I was drowning in it. I didn't want to think about the past. I didn't want to think about what had happened three years ago, or what we had argued about earlier that day. Not now. At that moment, I was drawn in by Brian and my love for him. We were together again, and even though things weren't perfect and we still had a lot to discuss, knowing that I was with him, feeling his strong arms wrapped around my body as if he were afraid to let go, was enough. "I love you." Kiss. "I love you." Kiss. "I love you."

Brian ducked his head, kissing me repeatedly on the forehead before nuzzling his nose in my hair and closing his eyes.

I laid there for a while, silent with my eyes closed, just basking in the afterglow of love making. It was so relaxing, snuggled up against Brian, a thin sheet draped across our waists, his warm body heating me, encircling me in a cloud of peace and calm. I felt his heartbeat against my palm, a soft thud through his hot skin. I had waited for years to feel that.

After about fifteen minutes, a tiny squeak came from Brian's throat. I didn't know what it was, but stayed still and pretended to be asleep, not wanting to spoil the moment.

It started with a small shake, a little vibration of his shoulders and chest against me, and then progressed further, until his entire body quaked gently, more tiny squeaks coming from his throat. He sniffed softly, wetly, and then I knew: Brian Kinney was crying.

It took every ounce of strength in my body to keep me from opening my eyes and attacking him in a hug. I had seen Brian cry only once before, the night that I left for New York. He didn't want me to see him and never knew I actually did, but after I had crawled out from under his sated body, I made my way to the bathroom to wash myself off and get dressed, cracking the door so I wouldn't disturb him. I had heard a rustle on the bed and peered around the corner, my breath catching in my chest when I saw. He was lifted up on his elbows, face buried in his palms, shaking uncontrollably. He swiped at his eyes furiously, then his nose, and lay back down, careful to make sure his face was out of view. That had absolutely killed me. Before I left, I had gone over to him and kissed his shoulder, leaning my head against his for a few seconds and telling him I loved him repeatedly, knowing he was only pretending to be asleep.

I felt a warm teardrop fall onto my forehead, and suddenly Brian's body tensed, terrified I would wake up and find him weeping.

The tear rolled from its resting place above my eyebrow, down the bridge of my nose and settled in the corner of my eye. I knew there had to be some sort of deep meaning behind one of my lover's tears dripping into my eye, but I didn't want to think about it. More than anything, I wanted to kiss Brian silly, to comfort him and make sure he was only crying out of happiness.

As I felt Brian's body loosen again and heard him sniff one last time, I settled into a deep slumber, wondering what the next day would bring.

Saturday, February 16, 2008

9:12 AM

I woke to the burning, tingling sensation of Brian's hot mouth wrapped around my dick. His left hand was splayed flat against my lower abdomen, right wrapped around my cock, tugging as he licked the underside, stopping every few seconds to blow gently, cooling the spit and driving me crazy.

"Jesus," I whispered, rubbing my eyes both out of pleasure and sleep, a smile breaking out across my lips. I loved when he woke me up like this.

My stomach was quivering uncontrollably, jumping with every touch of Brian's tongue digging into my slit. It felt so warm and so comfortable and just so fucking good that I wanted to be in that moment forever.

Brian dropped his mouth and began to kiss and suck at my balls, causing me to grasp the sheets on either side of me desperately, bending my legs and biting my bottom lip. He rubbed his nose against my inner thigh, planting soft kisses there.

"Brian," I whispered, needing his mouth on my cock again. It was twitching for attention, precome oozing out in incredible amounts, and it was taking all the strength in my body to keep from grabbing it myself. He lifted his head, looking me dead in the eyes and smiled, planting a sweet kiss on my stomach, right under my belly button.

I closed my eyes and gasped as I felt his lips enclose around my tortured cock, the ridges of his mouth against the head sending my body into shock-waves, nipples hardening to an impossible peak. He swallowed, the contractions of his throat milking me, tightening around me, making me groan with pleasure.

"Brian," I said again loudly, pulling roughly at the sheets to the point that I was afraid of ripping them. I came hard, so hard that Brian had to adjust his position on the bed in order to drink me up without choking.

I panted, heart racing, as I felt my dick slowly soften inside his mouth.

He swallowed once more, releasing me and sliding up my body, planting quick, closed-mouthed kisses on my abdomen, my chest, my neck and finally my lips. "Morning Sunshine!" He said with a smile, nuzzling his nose against my chin.

I wrapped my arms around his naked frame, holding him to me impossibly tight, feeling alive yet dead, conscious yet comatose.

"How'd you sleep?" I croaked, sliding my arms up and down his back and tucking my chin into my neck to look at him. He kissed the hollow of my throat and breathed, long and steadily.

"Much better."

My heart hammered.

Me too, was all I could think as I slowly slid out from under him and returned the favor of the wake-up blowjob.

Saturday, February 16, 2008

10:19 AM

"Brian," I whispered, curling on my side as we lay together, sweat-covered and satisfied. My head was resting in the crook of his arm.

"Hm?"

"When you stopped returning my calls, I was...I was crushed." I swallowed loudly, leaning my head away from him and settling on the other pillow so I could talk to him face-to-face.

Brian rubbed his face with his hands and gave a little groan. "Justin," he said in a slightly annoyed voice, rolling his lips into his mouth.

"We have to talk about this," I interjected. "Things are okay now, but I don't want this shit to happen again."

"It won't. I told you..."

"How do you know?" I took a deep breath. "When we broke up a few years ago because I wasn't...satisfied, and I started seeing---"

"Okay," Brian stopped me, placing his finger on my lips to keep me from rehashing that memory.

"We got back together eventually, like always, but never discussed it. I knew where you were coming from, you knew where I was coming from, but we never sat down and tried to make things right again. Then, two years later, the same thing happened when I left you after the syphilis thing."

Brian closed his eyes and rubbed at his temples. "Is this fucking necessary?"

"Yes." I grabbed his hands and clutched them against my chest. "I just don't understand, Brian."

"Justin, what the fuck?"

"I don't understand what goes on in your head."

Brian sighed, pulling his hands away from me gently and rolling onto his back. He stared up at the ceiling, blinking slowly as if he were calming himself.

"Just talk to me," I said carefully, leaning over and kissing his shoulder. "Tell me what you were thinking when you started ignoring me."

He turned his head to me, sticking his tongue inside his cheek and rolling his eyes, clearly not happy with the conversation. "Justin."

I leaned over and gave him a quick kiss on the lips.

"Why are we bringing this shit up again? Especially now, right this second?"

"Because we have to. If not now, we never will. At least not until something else happens."

He blinked languidly, reaching up and rubbing at his lips, touching the small cut from the night before repeatedly. "I told you. I started thinking, and I figured that if I was holding you back, you could never go off and be this huge, fucking---"

"Brian."

"Justin."

I rolled closer to him, face was inches from his, dick brushing his stomach. I tried to ignore the tiny jolt it gave me.

"What do you want me to say?" He started again, licking his finger and rubbing some of the dried blood off the cut. "What, Justin?"

I tried to kiss him again but he pulled away. "I want you to tell me---"

"Do you want me to say that it absolutely fucking killed me to leave you that day? That I sat on the plane on the way back to Pittsburgh with a goddamn lump in my throat, wanting more than anything to go right back to New York once I landed?"

I swallowed, placing my palm against his breastbone.

"That by the time I had driven back to the loft, I decided I wasn't going to do that again, and that it hurt me too fucking bad to even think about going back, or talking to you, when I knew it was never going to work out in the end?"

He reached out and grabbed my hand, cradling it in both of his and squeezing my fingers individually.

"That for months after I stopped talking to you, I couldn't concentrate. I could barely sleep. Michael wasn't lying when he said he hadn't heard from me. I fucking holed myself in Kinnetik and the loft for about a month."

"Then you moved on and pretended that nothing ever happened," I whispered, finishing for him. I knew his game, knew him better than he knew himself.

He stared at me, eyes shining with tears I knew he would never allow to fall in my presence, bottom lip shaking. I could tell he was itching to climb out of bed and run away from me, to get away from the repercussions of the emotions he had allowed himself to express. I knew he was regretting ever saying anything.

"Brian," I murmured, framing his face with my hands. He closed his eyes, opening them abruptly when he felt a single tear start to drip over his bottom lid.

He coughed, turning his head out of my grasp and swiping at his eyes nonchalantly.

"I love you so much," I whispered to him, pulling his face toward mine. There was a tiny glint of moisture on his cheekbone that he had missed, and when I leaned in to kiss him, my cheek brushed up against it.

His lips were warm and hungry, twisting around mine with all the passion in the world combined. Hot puffs of his breath hit my face as he breathed, loudly and staggered out his nose as we kissed.

"Justin?" Brian whispered against my lips, assaulting my mouth with his tongue, his hands wandering across my back, threatening to go lower.

"Hm?" I pulled my mouth away from his and began to suck at his neck.

He never answered, but instead, made love to me with so much passion, so much love that I felt as if my heart would burst.

Saturday, February 16, 2008

2:54 PM

"I'm fucking starved," I groaned, rubbing my bare stomach as it growled furiously. I glanced at the clock. I hadn't eaten in almost twenty-four hours.

The bed shifted beside me and Brian hovered over my body, placing both palms against my belly and leaning down, kissing softly above my belly button. "What else is new?" He grumbled sarcastically, baring his teeth and gently taking a bit of my skin between them, letting go before it hurt.

"Want me to order something?"

He sighed, pulling his face away from my stomach and sitting up in bed, yawning and stretching the muscles of his arms and legs. "I want to fuck you again."

I laughed, rolling my eyes, and sat up beside him, leaning backwards to pop my back. "Let's get some food first. I don't think I can get it up."

Brian raised his eyebrows, bending down and burying his face in my crotch, kissing the flesh around my cock and reaching to cup my balls with his right hand. "What do you call this, then?" He laughed, placing his palm against my chest and gently pushing me backwards so he could have better access.

I bit my lip, stifling a smile, and reached down to bury my hands in his hair.

The rest of the afternoon could only be described as lazy. When we weren't fucking, sucking or rimming, I was pigging out on Chinese food that Brian had called in yet refused to eat and watching television while he worked at the computer. I was so happy.

"Come sit with me," I whined teasingly, attempting to eat my chow mein with chopsticks, eventually giving up and using the fork I had snatched from the silverware drawer just in case.

Brian stopped typing, glancing away from the screen to meet my eyes and smiled boyishly, sending butterflies flapping around in my stomach.

"In a minute," he mumbled, resuming his typing.

I continued to munch at my chow mein, wiping a tiny piece from my underwear that I had dropped and sucking it off of my finger. I hadn't been so content in ages. It was the first time in a long while that I could honestly smile. Just smile.

Before, I had smiled so much it hurt, but I never meant it. It was just an upturn of my lips, a lie to fool everyone into thinking I was happy, when really I was deliriously miserable. My friend Mackenzie, honestly the only person I could refer to as my friend in New York without wondering if the feelings were reciprocated, would come over from time to time and hang out in my apartment. I would always act so jolly, so joyful, that she started calling me Sunshine without even knowing it had been my nickname all along.

When she left, however, my feelings showed. I got stomach cramps whenever I thought about Brian, which needless to say was a lot, and I tended to spend more time wallowing than being productive. I knew I was feeling sorry for myself, I knew that none of that was going to help, but I simply could not allow myself to do anything else.

I had never masturbated more in my life than I did within that three year span - even when I was fourteen and used to literally lock myself in my bedroom for hours with a copy of some girly teen magazine I had stolen from Daphne's house, the kind with all of the fold out posters of shirtless male celebrities. I felt stupid and adolescent, lying around the apartment with my hand on my cock constantly, but it was a way of release, something my art couldn't give me.

Sure, I had made the occasional trip to local gay clubs, squeezing in a backroom blowjob or a quick fuck every once in a while, but as time went on, I stopped altogether. It did nothing for me.

The hard fuck Brian had given me the night before was honestly the first time I had partaken in actual sex in longer than I could remember. It had to have been close to a year since I had done it. My ass was still hurting from the stretch.

I felt Brian's arms snake around my neck from behind, smelled the toothpaste on his breath and felt the warm softness of his lips as he pressed them against my cheek, leaning over the back of the couch.

"Want some?" I asked him, turning my body to the side and pulling my legs up onto the cushions, holding out the half-empty carton of chow mein.

Brian raised his eyebrow and kissed me quickly on the lips. "Mm, not now." He paused, unwrapping his arms from my neck and standing up straight, walking around the couch and plopping down beside me. "And if you so much as drop a fucking noodle on my couch I'll murder you."

"Come on," I whispered, inching closer to his body. "You know you want some."

Brian rolled his eyes and licked at the cut on his lip. "I've gained five pounds since oh-five," he sighed, as if he were admitting some deep, dark secret. "If I eat any of that, you'll be fucking a tub of lard by the time we're fifty."

"By the time you're fifty. I'll only be thirty-eight." I laughed, jabbing my fork into the carton and twisting it around, gathering a few noodles. "Brian," I giggled, withdrawing the fork and dangling it slowly in front of his mouth. "Eat it. You want it."

He leaned his head backwards away from the fork and, I suspected, the tempting smell. "Sorry. I know you're not into fat, Justin."

"Shut the fuck up," I giggled, leaning over and kissing the hollow of his throat. "Eat it. It's like, four noodles. Twenty calories."

"Ha," Brian laughed sarcastically, taking a deep breath. He straightened his head and, with a defeated eye roll, opened his mouth.

"Good, isn't it?" I cooed into his ear as he chewed, wrapping my arm around his chest and snuggling against him. He was so warm and just fucking comfortable.

"It's okay."

"You love it."

"Shut the fuck up."

I smiled evilly, kissing his shoulder. "I don't care if you get fat."

"I will never get fat." He reached for the carton and snatched it from my hands with a smirk. "I'll off myself before I hit 200."

"I don't care if you get love handles," I giggled happily, squeezing at the nonexistent bits of fat at his side. He took another bite of chow mein. "As long as we're still fucking each other when you're fifty and I'm thirty-eight."

Brian extracted the fork from his mouth slowly, reaching over to gently scratch at my arm with the prongs.

"Maybe I won't kill myself," he decided with a grin after a few seconds. "I'll make you fuck my fat ass because it'll be your goddamn fault."

I laughed heartily, moving off from his side and climbing over him, straddling his lap. "If that's what it takes for me to be able to fuck your ass, eat away."

"Don't even try it," Brian snorted with his mouth full, obviously trying to suppress a grin. "You're not getting anywhere near my ass."

I kissed him, tasting the food and accidentally getting a piece of chewed up noodle on my tongue. I swallowed it. "You love when I fuck you."

"I do no such thing." He paused, jabbing the fork back into the carton and twirling. "Besides, I can't recall a time when I've ever allowed that."

"Okay," I laughed sarcastically, opening my mouth for him to feed me the next bite. He stuck out his tongue and then ate it himself.

"Then I must have been dreaming about having you bent over the kitchen table a few years ago, almost breaking the wooden legs out of ecstasy. And about you lying under me on the floor of my New York apartment as I fucked the shit out of you. And about---"

Brian silenced me with a kiss, opening his mouth all the way and transporting the partially chewed noodles from his mouth to mine. I squirmed when I realized what he was doing and pulled away, scrunching my nose. "Brian, that's gross." I giggled, eating it anyway.

"You wanted some, didn't you?"

"Give me the fucking carton," I laughed, jerking it, along with the fork, out of his hands.

We sat for the next few minutes, feeding each other, kissing and giggling sillily. I loved moments like this. Moments where both of our guards were completely down and we were loose and happy and laughing like two teenaged lovers.

Saturday, February 16, 2008

11:42 PM

"Justin," Brian whispered against my lips as he thrust, sweat pouring down his brow as he neared his orgasm.

My heart pounded rapidly against my come-coated chest. I loved when he said my name during sex.

"Brian," I groaned back against his neck, lifting up a bit to meet him half-way. His scrotum bounced against my skin with each thrust, sending shivers down my spine. "I love you."

For a second, I thought he was going to say it back. I waited for it, stomach muscles clenching and unclenching, working my orgasm out of my body.

Brian sucked at the corner of my mouth messily, leaving a puddle of saliva on my right cheek, and when he pulled away for a second and looked into my eyes, I just knew he was going to return the confession.

But he didn't.

He bit his bottom lip, wincing when his tooth scratched the healing cut and thrust harder, breathing erratically and hurdling our bodies toward orgasm.

"I love you," I repeated when we were done, lying in a pile of naked limbs in the center of his bed, sheets in a messy pile at the foot after we had kicked them off us to cool our bodies.

No matter how long we had been together, how long we had been fucking each other, and no matter the fact that I was now twentyfive years old, I still felt like a teenager when I told Brian I loved him. I almost felt unintelligent and naive.

I knew I shouldn't feel that way. Brian loved me, I knew he did, but when it was only me saying it, I felt as if I were a love-struck child trying to win over the affections of an older man.

I'll admit that, even after Brian had finally confessed he loved me after the bombing, from time to time, I would repeatedly profess my love for him, not so much for the declaration, though there was definitely that, but because I wanted to leave it open-ended, giving him the chance to say it again.

I felt so fucking stupid doing that, fishing for an "I love you," but I had come to realize that, even though I knew Brian's feelings were sincere, I truly needed to hear the words. I just didn't understand why it was so difficult for him to say it.

After all we had been through, it was hard for me to believe that Brian Kinney, who sometimes let his walls down so much around me that he would do silly things and act in ways that no one else would believe, could not mutter three little words in reply to mine.

He had only said it four times total: twice the night of the bombing, once in a roundabout way during his second proposal at Britin, and again during a particularly satisfying orgasm after we had awoken in the middle of the night to fuck like crazy a few days before I left.

Sure, he threw in a "me too" every once in a while, usually over the phone or in an email response before he went incommunicado, but who knew if that was the truth, or if he was just playing on words, in a Kinney-esque, "I love myself, too" way.

God, he was so fucking frustrating. Sometimes I literally wanted to ask him to say it, just so I knew that he could. That's how I felt as we lay there, huddled together after our first full day of being together since the reunion, chests thumping soundly and breath slowly regaining its normalcy, right after my repeated "I love you" met dead ears.

"I do love you, you know," I murmured to him, pulling a bit out of our tangle for fear of combusting from overheat. I reached out and tapped his bottom lip softly with my index finger.

Brian opened his eyes and looked at me, as if to say, "whatever," and gave a little half-smile.

I scrubbed at my face with frustration. "I know you love me too," I finally blurted out, after a few minutes of silence. Brian yawned and rolled over onto his back, outstretching his left arm and resting it on my chest.

Why couldn't he just say it? I knew it wasn't his "thing," I knew that was not how he "was," but what the fuck? If he could join in and sing Justin Timberlake's "LoveStoned" with me as I danced to the radio in the shower like he did a few hours before, something that would never be classified as his "thing," he could tell me he loved me.

"Will you..." I allowed to slip from my lips, stopping before I went any further. I was embarrassing myself for sure.

Brian tilted his head to face me, wrapping his index finger around my pinky as our hands lay on my chest. He raised an eyebrow in question.

Fuck.

I shook my head, silently begging him to drop it.

"What?"

"Nevermind."

"What?"

"It's nothing. Just go to sleep."

"Will I...?"

I wondered how the hell he could be so simultaneously brilliant and stupid. If there was one person in my life who could take the most obvious of things and ignore it completely, pretending it never existed, it would be Brian Kinney.

I simply could not grasp how he just didn't "get it." For years I had wanted him to tell me that he loved me, years, and I always let him know verbally that was what I wanted. He had refused to give that to me, refused to tell me. But after the bombing, he finally did. He fucking knew how happy that made me, and if I knew Brian Kinney at all, I knew it made him deliriously happy as well. He knew exactly how he affected me and knew everything I could possibly want, yet he just didn't give it to me.

Maybe it was how differently we were raised that put that huge gap in our social selves. I was quite open with my feelings, but had grown up in a generally loving home. Brian, on the other hand, was so closed up that it took the Jaws of Life to crack him open even a bit, probably because he grew up emotionally and often physically abused. I just wished that he would open himself up for me at all times, not just sometimes, because he had done it before and knew the world didn't come to an end when he did.

Sunday, February 17, 2008

9:02 AM

"Sunshine!" Debbie yelled cheerily from across the diner, balancing a plate of pancakes in each hand and wearing a look of absolute elation. She quickly served the dishes and ran up to me, engulfing my body in a crushing, suffocating hug. "I just knew you'd be back!"

I smiled, falling out of her embrace and allowing her to kiss my cheeks repeatedly. "Yeah..." I trailed off, quickly darting my eyes to my left at Brian and then back at her.

"The little shit just won't leave me alone," Brian grumbled teasingly, wrapping his strong arms around me from behind and giving me a quick, feathery kiss on the ear before setting me free. The butterfly activity in my stomach escalated, causing me to feel floaty and light, as if I had been injected with helium.

"Hey baby," Emmett cooed from his seat at the gang's old booth, leaning over Ted's food to gently graze my chin with his hand as I scooted in across from them. Ted gave Emmett an annoyed slap on the hand when the sleeve of his sweater brushed against his eggs.

"I bet you two had quite the evening. La-dee-da!"

I blinked profusely, smiling like a cat and staring into my lap, where Brian had reached over and playfully squeezed at my thigh.

"How have you been the past few days?" Michael asked, glancing from me to Brian and back, fully knowing what had taken place.

The look on his face was one of clairvoyance. He chewed at his toast and batted his eyelashes.

I sighed happily, leaning my head against the wall and reaching to the left of me to lock index fingers with Brian under the table.

"Better."

"Better...?" Ben asked, giving Michael a "Yep, I knew it" look and forking his sliced fruit.

"Much better."

The table went silent.

My stomach growled a few seconds later, filling the void with a loud, squeaky groan.

"I'm fucking starving," I whispered to Brian, stroking his finger with mine.

"Worked up quite an appetite, I bet," Emmett giggled, swatting at the air with his fork.

Brian laughed unsmilingly. "Very funny. Justin eats like a pregnant muncher. I'm going to have to padlock the fucking refrigerator."

I rolled my eyes at him, pulling at his finger under the table, a silent tug-of-war.

"Deb?" Brian called, yanking his finger away from mine and placing his open palm against my belly. "Get this boy some breakfast!"

I smiled, glad to be home.

Sunday, February 17, 2008

10:27 AM

"Where are we going?" I whispered to Brian, pressing my forehead up against the foggy, chilled window of the Corvette.

After breakfast, he had grasped the sleeve of my jacket, practically pulling me out of the Diner and Debbie's possessive embrace, and with a promise of taking me "somewhere," we climbed in his car and took off.

The faint thump of a CD, The Clash's London Calling, hung between us, the only other sound filling the car besides the crunch of pavement under the tires and the low rumble of the engine.

"Get your fucking face off the window or you'll be cleaning it," Brian growled at me, reaching over, grasping my collar and pulling my resting head into an upright position. His voice softened. "You'll see."

What the fuck?

My pocket vibrated.

"Hello?"

"Justin!" It was Daphne.

"Yeah?"

"Where the fuck are you? I've been trying to reach you since Friday night."

I swallowed, stomach dropping. I had completely forgotten to call her after my meeting with Brian to tell her I wouldn't be coming home right away.

"Ah, my phone was off. I'm sorry! Fuck." Two beats. "And I don't know where I am," I answered honestly. "Brian won't tell me where we're going."

There was a crackle of the phone and then, "Ooooh. Gotcha. I guess you two had a heck of a reunion, huh?"

"Yeah. We did."

"You'll tell me everything?"

I laughed, crossing my arm over my chest and giving the listening Brian a sideways glance. Daphne had no idea how loud she talked.

"I'll tell you almost everything."

"Are you still planning on crashing here anytime soon? Like, this week? Because rent is due Friday, and while I'd feel pretty shitty making you pay it while only your junk is here, I'm short almost half since Alex--"

"I don't know." I bit my lip. "Don't worry about rent, but I don't know about the other thing." I hoped to Jesus, Mary and Joseph that somehow Brian didn't hear her ask if, in a roundabout way, I was going to be living with him from now on. That was his call, and I didn't want to breach the subject unless he gave the invitation.

"Let me know, yeah? And fucking call me or come over or something and tell me about all that hot makeup sex you two had!"

I smiled, squinting my eyes at the upcoming road sign.

West Virginia.

My heart started to beat quickly, solidly, thickly against my chest.

"Daph?" I whispered, breath catching in my throat. "Can I...I'll just...I'll call you later."

Daphne snorted. "I won't wait up. Tell Brian I said 'hi.'"

"Okay. Later."

"Later."

I snapped the phone shut, dropping it into the drink holder and glancing up at Brian, a smile forming in my heart and spreading throughout my entire body.

Sunday, February 17, 2008

10:54 AM

"Brian," I said in an even tone, following the West Virginia sign with my eyes until it left my field of vision. My heart was hammering in my chest like a tom-tom.

It couldn't be. Could it?

"Justin."

I swallowed, wetting my bottom lip and giving him a look of elated disbelief. "Are we...?"

He shrugged, rolling his lips inward, the left corner of his mouth twitching into an almost smile.

"Oh my God. We are!" I leaned over and kissed his cheek intensely, causing him to swerve sharply to the left to keep from running off the road.

"Careful, Sunshine." He smiled.

"I thought...didn't you...I just assumed you sold it!"

Brian shook his head, a faint blush creeping up his neck and puddling in his cheeks. His eyelashes fluttered furiously.

Happiness was literally bursting in my chest. I had the antsy desire to both scream and fuck the shit out of the man beside me. My throat was tight with anticipation.

"Have I told you lately that I love you?" I sang, voice cracking under the glee. This meant so much to me. Brian's possession of Britin meant he never gave up. That he still loved me and thought about me when we were apart. That he was hopeful for the future. That he never let go.

"Yeah, yeah," he answered with a tiny smile, one that he tried to cover up. I figured that was as close to an "I love you, too" as I was going to get anytime soon.

"It's just how I remembered," I breathed, turning to face Brian as he pulled the key out of the ignition. My stomach felt fluttery and light.

He stared at me, something different in his eyes, and leaned down, capturing my lips in a sweet, sweet kiss.

He knew exactly what it meant to me. He knew because it meant the same to him.

His mouth was warm and enveloping, closing around each lip individually and gently tugging until it slid from his grasp. My stomach clenched as we kissed, muscles contracting and almost making me feel nauseated from all the unvoiced proclamations of love he was giving me. I loved him so much it made my heart pound. I felt it everywhere.

"Why didn't you sell it?" I whispered against Brian's cheek as I pushed my lips along the skin of his face, relishing in the sensations of his flesh against my sensitive mouth.

He pulled back, reaching around to mesh both of my hands in his and stared me dead in the eyes.

He shrugged with a smirk.

I sighed, tugging his hands and pulling him closer so his upper body was bent across the barrier between the front seats, chest against mine, chin resting on my shoulder. I didn't want to lose this moment just yet. Even though romance wasn't everything, as learned through my "whatever" with Ethan years before, it truly did mean something to me. Sometimes I needed for Brian to be romantic and sweet and not just his "fuck them all," "no apologies, no regrets" self. It was the same with "I love you." I could live without the words because I knew one hundred percent he felt the emotions, but sometimes I just needed to hear them in order to feel whole.

I felt Brian's lips graze my neck as his fingers pulled out of mine and tangled in the back of my hair.

"I love you, Brian." I couldn't help but say it again.

"Come on," he whispered against my jaw with a light kiss, reaching over and opening my car door before pulling away from me and climbing out his side.

The air was fucking frigid, much like it was the first day he brought me there, to Britin. The smell of the damp, snow-dusted earth conjured memories of marriage proposals and slow, passionate lovemaking on the floor. My stomach tingled.

"Wipe your feet," Brian instructed, motioning toward my wet, sludgy sneakers and pointing at the small "Welcome Home" mat near the front door.

I giggled at the thing as I dragged my shoes across it, glancing up at my lover and trying to catch his eyes.

"I borrowed it from Mikey. It's was just for until everything was furnished and we got around to getting a new, less lesbionic one."

"You don't have to explain," I whispered to my feet, holding them out one by one for Brian to inspect. "I think it's sweet."

"More like disturbingly munchery - or worse, heterosexual."

I rolled my eyes, allowing him to think I believed all the bullshit he was spitting at me. Sometimes it was best to just take a deep breath and let it pass.

"Ready?" he asked with a smile, giving my sneakers an approving nod for cleanliness, mixed with an eye roll. "Christ, Justin, how old are those fucking things?"

The house was all I remembered it to be, but more. The once-bare living room was partially furnished with soft white furniture and burgundy pillows, the dining room holding a large, wine-colored oak table and matching chairs and the kitchen carrying a select few necessary stainless steel appliances.

"Furnished?" I walked over to the dining room table and grasped the back of one of the chairs, raising an eyebrow at Brian.

"Partially. I had a few things moved in for..."

"Our wedding night," I finished, biting my tongue and breathing slowly, steadily.

Brian rolled his lips inward.

"I love it. The wood of this table is fantastic."

"I thought you might. I'll admit that the furniture was a bitch to pick out - It's so fucking hard to find anything decent to match your tastes." He shot me an evil, joking glance.

"My tastes?" I was touched he had thought of me while picking out furniture.

"Mm. The dining room, the kitchen, all the semi-lesbian bits of the house I figured you would enjoy most..." He studied my face with a smile in his eyes. "The living room is furnished a la Kinney. No fucking way was I having any beanbag chairs or recliners smelling of a New York City dumpster."

I laughed, remembering how much he had complained about the seating in my old apartment. Beanbag chairs were easy, cheap and efficient.

"Of course."

The air went still, the only sounds being our faint breaths and thumping hearts.

"I love that you brought me here," I started, freeing the wooden back of the chair from my grasp and making my way over to Brian, who was leaned up against the door frame separating the dining room from the foyer. "And I love even more that you kept this place.

Our place."

My head whirled as Brian pushed away from the door, outstretching his arms and enveloping me in a tight embrace. I could feel his heart pounding against my collarbone as I leaned into him, a steady rhythm, smelling his light cologne and smiling into his neck, kissing at the bare flesh tenderly.

His hands dug lightly into my back as he squeezed me to him, holding me so snugly that I felt as if he would never let go. I didn't want him to. All that existed was us. That moment. Our breaths, our heartbeats, the rise and fall of our chests and flexing of our muscles as we buried ourselves closer together, wanting to climb inside each other, create one person out of two.

Brian ducked his head and kissed me, first softly and sweetly, a light brush of his lips against mine, as he carefully walked me backwards, hands traveling from my back to my shoulders.

I was completely lost in him, in his kisses and his breaths, his whole self, and it wasn't until the backs of my legs hit the side of the couch that I realized we had been slowly walking together.

I toppled backward onto the cushions, tugging Brian after me, fingers frantically pulling at his clothing in a fiery frenzy as our passion grew, transforming from tenderness to wet, burning need.

His tongue was hot against my throat as he licked at my Adam's apple, taking a second to suck at the bit of skin just to the left, assuring me of a deep red mark, a love bite.

"Mm," he hummed against me, kissing across my wet, saliva-covered flesh, pulling at my jacket in a mad attempt to rid me of it. My pants were feeling tight and constricted, hardness growing harder, and the barrier of our clothing was a frustrating annoyance, blocking us from what we wanted and were going to get.

"Here, lift up," Brian murmured, climbing off me and tugging his disheveled shirt over his head, toeing off his shoes as he watched me jerk my jacket off my body, grabbing the hem of my shirt, about to pull it off.

"No," he stopped me, leaning back over the couch, shirtless and sweating and snatching my hands, preventing them from tugging off my tee.

I breathed, kissing him on the tip of the nose and leaning back against the cushions, temples dripping with sweat, dick feeling as if it were about to burst through the seam of my pants.

Brian grasped the hem of my t-shirt and folded it up so my squirming stomach was exposed, quivering from his touch. His hands rubbed around my belly button, palms flat, just touching my skin, feeling every exposed inch. Lips replacing fingers, he nipped at my flesh, planting audible, damp kisses from my belly button, down the thin trail of honey colored hair until he reached the button of my pants.

"Fuck," I whispered when he suddenly cupped my erection, squeezing and massaging through my jeans. As a reflex, my hands flew to my fly, beginning to fumble with the button and zipper.

"Uh, uh, uh," Brian scolded, pulling my hands away and meshing his fingers through mine, stretching my arms above my head and bending down until he was kissing me passionately, tongue tickling my lips and teeth.

"Shit." He ground his crotch against mine, thrusting and humping and kissing and grasping and breathing, almost sending me over the edge.

I pleaded with him, reaching in between us to once again fidget with my fly, but he only flattened himself against me harder, blocking my access and squishing my hands between our abdomens. He kissed my cheeks, forehead and chin.

"Brian," I warned, grabbing his ass and trying to get him to cease thrusting, the tingle in my spine beginning to take charge. "Please, I'm going to come if you don't stop."

I was impossibly hard, so much that my penis was painfully pushing against my pants. Fuck the snug pants I had decided to humor Brian by wearing. We had found them in the back of my old drawer, a pair of mine from before I left for New York.

"Brian."

"Mm, let's..." He rolled off the couch, grasping my left hand and pulling me up with him, all but dragging me across the living room, into the foyer. He kissed me again, right on my upper lip, and nuzzled my face, slowly beginning to scale the stairs, tugging me along with him.

When we got to the bedroom, I had to pull away for a second. The room was gorgeous, a perfect combination of both of us.

The bed base was slatted, low to the ground and a deep gray, dressed with a pale blue duvet and a massive amount of pillows in various sizes and shades of gray and blue. Everything else in the room seemed to focus around the bed, accentuating it as the main focus. The way it should be.

"It's the only room fully furnished," Brian whispered in my ear before kissing it, reaching up to pet my hair.

My heart couldn't help but pang a bit as I thought about Brian preparing our home for our wedding night. This was our bedroom, our bed. We were meant to make love in it.

I tilted my head up, opening my mouth for Brian to plunder with his lips and tongue, gasping as I felt his hands on the bulge in my pants, prodding, rubbing, massaging me through the jean material.

I reached between us and began to unbutton his pants, freeing him, as he pulled us closer to the bed.

"Fuck me," I whispered against his neck, closing my eyes as Brian began to remove my pants, rubbing his hands along my ass and thighs as he pushed them, along with my underwear, down my legs.

All I could feel was the weight of Brian against my chest and the fullness of his dick inside me. He had my hands smashed almost painfully into the mattress with his own as he thrust, rocking my body furiously, sheets becoming disheveled under me as I slid up and down, head buried in the pillows.

"Fuck, fuck, yes," I whimpered, tightly wrapping my legs around Brian, pulling him down even harder against me. Droplets of his sweat dripped onto my forehead from his temples, the skin on our chests drenched and slippery.

"Justin," Brian growled into the crook of my neck, licking sweat from where it had pooled in the hollow of my throat. "Uhhh."

"More, harder..." Brian's fingernails broke the skin on my wrists as I thrashed, body contorting, legs clamping around my lover's ass, groaning as he hit my prostate over and over, sending me onto the brink of insanity.

"Jus..." He opened his mouth wide, biting my shoulder and almost drawing blood as he groaned. His thrusts sped, stomach quivering against mine, rock hard nipples rubbing against my chest. "Fuck!"

"Brian!"

My balls tightened, ass thumping and quaking with Brian's thrusts, skin prickling, hairs standing on end as the fire ignited, flooding me with an intense, burning, body-shaking orgasm so intense that I felt as if I would break Brian in half, come spurting from my dick like a waterfall, splattering against my stomach.

"Ahhh," Brian hollered, letting go of my wrists and grabbing my hair, pulling roughly, so hard it almost hurt, coming in a shuddering roar.

"I love you," I murmured, legs twitching with aftershocks, nerves singed. "I love you, Brian."

"Yes," he answered, kissing over my heart before collapsing on top of me.

Sunday, February 17, 2008

8:28 PM

"Can we stay here tonight?" I murmured against Brian's bare chest, rubbing down his side with my hand as we lay, sticky and warm under the covers. We had made love six times throughout the day in various rooms of the house, finally passing out in our bed, hearts thumping wildly.

"Got work tomorrow," he grumbled into my hair, throat hoarse from our not quite silent activities. "No clothes or briefcase here."

I glanced at the digital alarm clock on the bedside table. We still had an hour or two before we needed to leave.

"But," Brian continued, tossing an arm around my nude, limp body and pulling me closer against his chest. "If you would like, we could come back next weekend, maybe Friday, and stay for a few days."

"Really?" My heart sped.

He kissed me tenderly on the lips.

"Speaking of clothes, you need to get some. Christ, you've been wearing that same God-awful thing for the past three days. I'm about ready to accidentally rip it to shreds while we fuck."

I smiled, playfully swatting him on the thigh. All my clothes were at Daphne's apartment, still unpacked, and I had resulted in rewearing what I had worn Friday night.

"You love my shirt. You like rubbing your face against it."

"It's soft, but that's it. When are you going to start wearing man clothes? You dress as if you stole your mommy's credit card, skipped algebra class and went wild." That got another slap.

"Shut up! I, for one, don't enjoy spending \$200 on a shirt I can buy at the mall for \$20."

"There's no comparison. When your little tee is shredded, either by wear and tear or my hands, my shirts will still be in pristine condition."

"Until you eventually weigh 200 pounds and can no longer fit."

Brian lowered his eyebrows, leaned down and bit my cheek hard, bringing tears to my eyes.

"What the fuck?" I yelped, pushing him away, not knowing whether to laugh or cry. I could feel tooth marks in my skin. "That fucking hurt!"

"Sooooorry." He puckered his lips in an exaggerated fashion and kissed where he had bitten. "You know better than to make cracks like that. I told you, that's never happening." Two beats. "Get some clothes."

"I'll just..." I paused, squirming a bit in Brian's arms and rolling onto my back. "My junk is all at Daph's. I probably need to go back sometime soon. I'm not being much of a roommate."

"I'll pay your half of the rent." He had obviously overheard the phone conversation earlier.

"No, that's okay. I mean, I've got money, and it would be pointless for you to cover it when I can, especially after all you've done..."

"I'll pay it."

I didn't know what to think. Was Brian saying he would pay my rent because I wasn't going to be there, in a way asking me to stay with him, or was he just offering to pay because he was taking care of me again? I definitely was not going to breach the subject of cohabitation. That was for him to decide and for him to bring up.

"You really don't have to," I began, deciding on the approach I was going to take. "I'm a big boy, Brian. I'm living there, so I'll pay."

You don't have to pay for everything. I did make some money in New York."

"Living there."

"Well, I thought...I mean...I don't know."

He leaned over me, upper body resting against mine, and kissed me softly on the lips, barely even touching them, before falling back into his original position. "My offer still stands. It was always standing."

Someone could have knocked me over with a feather.

"I didn't want to assume anything, you know?" I glanced at him, reaching above us to where his hand rested on the pillow and entwining my fingers with his. "I wasn't exactly sure how we stood. Where we stand."

"What do you mean?"

"With us." I rolled to the side and propped my head up on my arm. "I didn't know, I still don't know, if we are just picking up where we left off or if this is a whole new thing or what exactly we are."

Brian rolled his lips inward. I knew he hated relationship talk.

"I mean," I started, draping my right leg over Brian's lower body. "We're obviously 'together again,' in some variation of the phrase."

I'm just not sure if we're partners or...boyfriends or...two people who had a previous relationship and are now fucking again..."

"God, Justin. Do you know how much more appealing you would be to me if you couldn't talk?" He appeared frustrated, eyebrows lowering and forehead crinkling.

"Brian, don't."

"We just fucked for hours and were lying in bliss and now you bring up this 'relationship' shit again. Do you enjoy pissing me off?"

"What the fuck?" I pulled my leg away from him, inching slowly away so we were no longer touching. I fucking hated when he got like this. "I made a completely valid statement. There's no reason for you to get angry."

"It's not that." His face softened slightly. "It's just that I brought you out here, to our fucking house, and you start whining about how we might be 'two people who had a previous relationship and are now fucking again.' Seriously,

Justin. Is there a brain in your fucking skull? I'm sick of you always assuming the least possible thing where we're concerned."

My breath caught. Did it actually bother him that I thought that?

"I'm sorry, but to be completely honest, I still feel as if I was justified in what I said. You're like a fucking chameleon, Brian. I never know which side of you I'm going to get at any given moment. There's the loving, romantic side of you, which would suggest that we're partners again, the sweet, kind side which could possibly mean we're technically in a relationship, but not living together, and then there's the horny, sexual side of you, that just wants to fuck and touch all the time, which means you just want my ass. The problem is that every side of you comes across exactly the same. You could be acting so sweet and romantic because you want to fuck me, and then again, you could be acting that way because you love me and want to. I can never determine your motives behind anything. You never fucking talk to me."

"Jesus, Justin..."

"Let me finish." I shot him a warning glance, heart pounding, face growing hot from being so worked up. "Yes, our 'whatever' would be a lot easier if neither of us ever talked. We would be free to fuck and kiss and jerk each other off without having to worry about feelings or emotions. But that's not why I'm in this. Brian, I am so in love with you that sometimes I feel sick to my stomach when I think about being apart. I love just sitting around and talking to you as much as I do spending hours in bed. I hope that you feel the same way. I know that sex is your way of communication. You are a man of action, Brian Kinney, and as much as I believe that you are showing me you love me every time we fuck, sometimes I just get discouraged, and I don't know what to think. I need you to tell me things. You know that if I didn't tell you I love you constantly and didn't say a word Friday, just came back the loft and let you fuck me into the mattress, you would be wondering the same things about me as I am now about you. I truly, honestly, completely believe you are in love with me, but as much as I know that, I need it to be confirmed verbally sometimes."

"Justin." Brian's eyes were soft and a faint blush had begun to creep up his cheeks. He scooted closer to me, reaching out to brush his fingers across my collarbone before pulling back. He swallowed loudly, looking around the room, anywhere but at my face. I could tell this was hard for him. "You have no reason to doubt my feelings for you."

"I know," I resigned, rolling over onto my stomach and burying my head in my pillow. "But you know me, Brian. I need assurance."

"I know," he replied softly, right corner of his mouth twitching as he reached over and began to stroke my hair.

"I'm really sorry," I blurted, raising my head from the pillow and scooting up to him so that I was, once again, snuggled against his warm chest and beating heart. "I know what I said was stupid and probably hurt you in some way you would never tell me, but it's just been eating at me. I know I have no reason to doubt your feelings. I know you love me. Thinking about it, I know bringing me here, to Britin, was a huge, romantic gesture of your feelings and I'm sorry I brushed that aside. It's probably selfish of me to want to hear all these things when you show me all the time."

"No." Brian ducked his head and kissed me right between the eyes, nuzzling my forehead with his nose. "Justin, you know I don't like shit like this. I hate discussing anything even remotely related to...love-like things. But that doesn't mean I don't feel stuff, sometimes incredibly, ridiculously lesbionic things that most of the time I don't understand." He cleared his throat, nervous. "Words just don't come easily to me. Maybe they will one day. But I don't want you to ever think that the only reason I'm fucking you is because I'm horny. One reason, maybe, but definitely not the only."

He paused, leaning in to kiss my lips softly.

"I know you want me to tell you all this stuff, but if I promise I really am feeling...things, will you just let me show you right now?"

My heart swelled. "Brian. How is it possible that you can infuriate me beyond belief one minute and yet be so...perfect and make me feel so good the next?"

He took both my hands in his and raised up, holding my wrists out to the side against the bed and began to kiss me slowly, passionately, beautifully. It wasn't raunchy, wasn't overtly sexual, and when he entered me minutes later, the only thing I could think of was the vibration of his heartbeat against mine.

Wednesday, February 20, 2008

8:01 PM

"I think I'm going to puke," I groaned, collapsing in Brian's lap on the couch the following Wednesday. "Remind me to never eat lasagna again for as long as I live. It may kill me."

We had just returned from dinner at Debbie and Carl's house after making a detour by Daphne's apartment to "pick up the shit that probably just needs to be thrown away," to quote the Great Brian, and I felt awful. I told myself that lasagna probably just expands in your stomach like french toast and shrimp, and that I really didn't eat as much as I did. It didn't work.

"I swear to God, Sunshine, you're going to have to stop eating like a fucking pig every time we go somewhere. You're going to make Debbie think I'm not feeding you, and then she'll be over here all the time with her tuna noodle casserole." Brian pulled his feet up onto the couch and leaned back against the armrest, pulling me with him. "Plus, you're what, twenty-five now? Your twinkdom is almost over and all that shit, fifty flavors of fat and whatever the fuck else you eat, will catch up with you."

I smacked him, settling in between his legs and pulling his arms around me. "First of all, you don't feed me. I'm going shopping tomorrow because you have literally no food in the entirety of the loft. Second, I can't think of a single person in my family with a weight problem, and we all eat like savages. I'm destined to be thin forever."

"Ha," Brian laughed sarcastically, pulling my t-shirt up and rubbing at my tight, full stomach. "That's what I thought, and I'm about to call fucking Jenny Craig for myself."

I turned my head to look at him, receiving a smack of a kiss on the cheek. "Don't fish for compliments, you're hot as hell and you know it. You've put on five pounds in three years. Big deal. You were skinny before and you're still skinny. You could stand to gain another ten."

"Plus," Brian added, completely disregarding what I had just said. "The pants you wore Sunday we found in your old drawer were snug."

I rolled my eyes, leaning my head back to rest under his chin. "My body has changed some in the past few years because of my age, not my eating habits. Men's bodies change again in young adulthood, gaining natural muscle and definition."

"Thank you, Mr. Health Education." He paused, sliding his right hand all the way under my shirt to absentmindedly rub my nipple.

"But anyway, you need to watch what you eat. And if you do go shopping tomorrow, do not buy any shit cereal with a cartoon character on it or anything chocolate." Kiss. "Buy me some grapes."

I groaned, leaning up to fold myself in half, wrapping my arms around my stomach. I was suddenly hit with worse pain. "Can we please stop talking about food? I'm seriously not feeling well."

Brian scooted closer, wrapping his legs around me and pulling me tightly against his chest. "Are you okay?"

My stomach began to rumble, mouth growing watery and beginning to taste like iron. "Um."

"Need to use the bathroom?"

I shook my head "no," focusing intently on a tiny scratch on my toe, acid in my stomach beginning to rise like vinegar being poured into a cup of baking soda.

Brian kissed my neck, reaching around and rubbing at my stomach, trying to massage away the pain. "What kind of hurt is it?" He held my upper stomach with one hand while alternating between my lower stomach and lower back with the other, not sure what kind of pain it was and wanting to touch all bases.

"Uh...I...I think I'm going to..." I pulled away from him, running at a mad dash across the loft and into the bathroom, collapsing in front of the toilet and vomiting.

I hate throwing up. I would rather have a head cold combined with explosive diarrhea.

Chills broke out over my entire body, brow sweating profusely.

"You're okay, you're okay," Brian whispered soothingly, dropping to his knees behind me and rubbing my back as I retched. He reached his hand up and pushed my shaggy hair out of my face, holding it away from my eyes and mouth.

"Mm," I groaned, going limp against the toilet bowl, dropping the lid and resting my head on it. I was burning up, yet cold at the same time. "Fuck."

"Do you think it's food poisoning?" Brian asked, kissing my spine through my t-shirt once, twice, and then curling his left arm around my body.

"I think I just ate too much." I took a deep breath, waves of nausea shooting through my entire body. "Actually, maybe. You might want to call and let everyone know just in case."

My brow dripped with sweat, mouth tasting like bitter lasagna and limbs quivering and shaking with weakness.

Brian pulled away, making as to get up, but then, almost as an afterthought, scooted up behind me again, sitting flat on the floor and placing his legs on either side of me, cradling my body against his. "Not until you feel better."

"So," Brian started, tugging off his white t-shirt and climbing into bed with me. He had just gotten off the phone while I drifted in and out of consciousness, waking up every once in a while to dash to the bathroom for one reason or the other. "Michael has been puking his guts out for the past three hours and," he paused, making a disgusted face, "Emmett and Ted both have diarrhea."

My head pounded and intestines squirmed and squealed. Speaking of diarrhea...

"How are you feeling?" I asked, rolling over onto my stomach and covering my head with a pillow.

"Okay on both ends."

I groaned.

"Well, as okay as you can be without having your dick up someone's ass," he added, giving my behind a playful slap.

"Fuck off." My insides felt like slosh. "And how the hell did you keep from getting sick, too? You ate as much as everyone else."

Brian scooted closer, wrapping an arm around my waist and sliding his open hand under me, holding it against my bare stomach.

"They think it's the ziti. I didn't have much."

I pulled his arm off me and tossed it back over to his body, tugging the pillow even tighter onto my head. "Fuck you."

"Christ, Sunshine. Are you sure you've got food poisoning and not bipolar disorder with a touch of PMS?"

"Leave me alone."

"Need me to run to the store for you? Super or light?"

"Fuck off!"

"Cardboard or plastic applicator?"

I ripped the pillow off my head and swung around, planting my feet against his side and firmly pushing until he started sliding off the bed. "If you can't be nice, get the fuck away. I feel like shit."

Goddamn. I rubbed my face.

Brian climbed back onto the bed and slid up to me, lying on his stomach and wrapping his right arm lightly around my body. "When's the last time you puked?"

"Mm," I mumbled, opening my eyes and rolling onto my side to face him. "Not since you put me in bed. It's pretty much coming out the other end now."

"Gross."

"Sorry."

"I can think of so many more productive activities for your ass."

I smiled faintly, scooting up closer to his body so that my nose was pressing against his breastbone. "Don't even fucking try it. My ass is currently out of commission."

"What about your dick?"

I closed my eyes, going limp beside him. "Sorry. I can't exactly get it up when I feel like my stomach is about to explode."

Brian's hand began to snake down my chest, making its way lower.

I grabbed it before it made it home. "Don't you dare."

He rolled his lips inward, pulling his hand away and sliding it to join his other in a folded position under his head. "I guess I won't be getting lucky tonight."

"Brian." I moved back a little so I could look at his face.

"Hm?"

"Please tell me you're joking and you're not seriously only wanting to fuck me right now."

He looked taken aback by my sudden seriousness. "What the hell?" Two beats. "I always want to fuck you."

My skull felt tight and temples pounded. "You could at least pretend to give a shit." It was some weird thing set on by the food poisoning, a heightened sense of emotion I was sure, but I suddenly felt as if I was about to cry. "Who knows? Maybe I'll feel better sooner and you can get in my ass again before you have a fucking shit fit." My speech was dripping sarcasm, stomach rumbling loudly.

"Jesus Christ."

"Just leave me alone, Brian." I yanked the covers off my body and climbed out of bed, uncomfortably making my way toward the bathroom.

"Justin," Brian said to me a few minutes later after I had managed to pull myself away from the toilet. I turned off the sink and furiously wiped my hands at my shorts, trying to dry them, as I pushed open the bathroom door and stepped back into the bedroom.

"What?"

"I'm soooooorry for whatever I did and I'll never do it again."

I rolled my eyes, trudging around to the right side of the bed and collapsing onto the mattress. "Just don't."

Brian sat up, scooting over so he was right up against my body and crossed his legs indian-style. "Justin. For the record, I was mostly joking," Two beats. "I'm sorry I'm an insensitive prick," he sighed in a pseudo-resigning voice.

"You are an insensitive prick most of the time." I exhaled loudly with a faint smile. "But I love you. I just need to sleep and will myself from having to dash to the toilet every ten minutes."

Brian kissed my cheek and reached down to pull the duvet up over our bodies, snuggling against me. "Need me to get you anything?"

His right hand drew lazy patterns across my back as he cradled me. "You need fluids so you don't get dehydrated."

I nuzzled my nose against his chin. "Not right now, but thanks."

"No Midol?" He smiled into my hair, puckering his lips and kissing my scalp.

I laughed softly, ducking my head and resting my forehead against his collarbone. "Fuck you."

Friday, February 22, 2008

5:53 PM

"Home, sweet home!" Brian declared in an exaggerated fashion as we scrambled into Britin late Friday afternoon, overnight bags in tow.

After work, he had swung by the loft in the Corvette to pick me up, fucking me into the mattress before we left, and we had made our way, giggling like happy teenagers to West Virginia, a mix disc I made spinning away in the CD player.

Earlier

Friday, February 22, 2008

4:55 PM

"What the fuck is this?" Brian asked, reaching across the car as we drove along, making a grab at the blue CD case to see if it was labeled.

I smiled, pointing at the road to direct it back into his attention and stretched my legs out in the floorboard. "Just a mix I burned a few hours ago."

"A mix of...?"

"Songs I like."

"No shit." He raised his eyebrows to indicate his sarcasm. "What kind of songs?"

I realized then how little we knew about each other as far as interests went. Brian and I knew each other on a deep, intimate level for sure, but when it came to tiny details such as our musical tastes, we had never really delved into much conversation.

Judging by the CDs we tended to listen to while traveling and by my snooping in his music collection, I knew he loved The Clash, U2, Nirvana, The Cure, The Rolling Stones, Sex Pistols and The Smiths. As for modern music, I had absolutely no idea. He rarely listened to the radio in my presence, and if he did, it was always talk shit I had no interest in. He seemed to know a few of the Top 40 songs that frequented the radio station I liked to listen to while we showered, such as Justin Timberlake and OneRepublic, but those were played constantly and he was bound to pick them up somewhere. Maybe he liked Timbaland remixes. I had no idea.

"Well, this is 'Back to Black' by Amy Winehouse, but I've also got some Panic! at the Disco, Fall Out Boy, Postal Service, Yo La Tengo and Justice."

"Amy Winehouse is the one that sings that song about rehab, right?"

I smiled, looking up at him and nodding. "Yeah. She's good. She's got this crazy-abusive drug problem..."

"Did she end up going to rehab?"

"Yeah, I think."

Brian laughed, leaning over to fidget with the heat.

"So, what kind of music do you like?" I asked him, feeling strangely idiotic. It was as if I were on a first date with a guy, trying to get to know him better, not talking to a man I had known for eight years.

He looked at me, twitching his right eyebrow as if he were deciding whether or not to retort my remote curiosity in his interests. "Lots of stuff."

"Like what?"

"My favorites are The Clash and the old U2, most classic rock, but I like other stuff, too: Bob Marley, Coldplay, Radiohead..."

"Daphne's parents saw Bob Marley live for their first date."

Brian smiled boyishly, biting his bottom lip. "How devastatingly romantic."

"She says she has the sneaky suspicion that her mom and dad were serious pot heads back in the day."

Present

"It's fucking freezing in here," I said, crossing my arms and shivering.

"Mm. I'll light a fire."

"I guess I'll..." I started, walking over to the staircase and suddenly feeling as if I were a guest in someone else's house. It still hadn't sunk in that it was my home too. "I'll just...head on up to our bedroom and drop off our bags."

"Alright."

I grabbed my navy blue overnight bag and tossed it over my shoulder, snatching up Brian's perfectly zippered suitcase in my left hand and making my way up the staircase.

"Justin."

"Yeah?"

"I forgot to ask. Do you want something to eat?"

I bit my lip, pausing on the stairs for a second and adjusting the shoulder strap of my bag.

"Uh, yeah. I can call us in something if you..."

"I ordered some groceries online this morning for delivery at six."

I smiled, leaning over the railing to see Brian bent over the gas fireplace in the living room, adjusting the knobs.

"I'm not much of a cook, as you know," he continued, a bright blue flame shooting up out of the artificial wood and changing to a deep orange as it grew. "But, I figured one of us can whip up something whenever the fucking delivery guy gets here." He shook his arm in the air so his sleeve slid up and checked his watch.

"One of us, meaning me," I laughed, smiling brightly at him and then leaning back off the railing so I could continue my way up the stairs. "I'll cook dinner if you make dessert."

Brian rolled his lips inward, raising his eyebrows and standing up straight. "Well, if you don't tell your mommy, I'll let you have dessert before dinner."

I laughed, climbing the rest of the stairs slowly until I heard a faint thud, thud behind me. "What the..."

Brian was running to the staircase, chasing me.

"Brian!"

I squealed like a child, running as fast as I could up the wooden stairs, the bags a hinder to my speed. He giggled playfully, easily taking the stairs in twos, catching up to me in no time.

"No, no, no!" I laughed, all but throwing the bags off my shoulders onto the landing and grasping the railing, preparing to be captured like a small child playing a game of Chase with a friend.

My knuckles were turning white as I squeezed the wooden spindles, bracing myself from falling once Brian finally grabbed me. His arms were warm, wrapped tightly around my middle, my back to his chest, and the knit sleeves of his sweater were soft against my belly where my shirt rode up in front.

"Ah!" I yelled through a laugh, spinning around in his arms and sitting on the fourth step down, tangling my legs around his waist and pulling him against me. He tickled my sides and planted sweet, dry kisses on my cheeks and forehead, his lips soft and warm.

"This may prove to be difficult," Brian murmured with a smile against the hollow of my throat, unwrapping his arms from my body and making a grab for my belt. The clank, clank of it unfastening was loud and echoing in the stairwell.

I pulled at the hem of his shirt, tugging it up as far as it would go given the barrier his arms made, and rubbed at his back, feeling every muscle, every vertebrae of his spine, trailing my fingers from his jutting shoulder blades, down the lean slope to the top of his pants.

"Uh," Brian started, pulling out of my reach and standing up, grabbing the bottom of my pant legs and pulling downward, over my shoes. I had to wrap my arms around the railing to keep from sliding on my ass down the stairs.

Once my pants were off and effectively tossed up the stairs, onto the heap of luggage on the landing, I freed Brian's throbbing dick from its constraint inside his pants and took him in my mouth all at once, eyes bugging and face turning red from the near gag his penis hitting the back of my throat caused.

"Jesus," he whispered, leaning over and baring his weight on his hands, placed on the third step down on either side of my body.

He throbbed under my tongue, the vein running along the side of his cock pulsing with every beat of his heart, the swollen, red mushroom head seeming to shudder against the walls of my mouth.

"Stand up," Brian groaned, leaning back a little so he slid from my mouth, leaking dick peeping out the opening in his jeans like a deep pink rod.

I followed his orders, pulling myself up by the railing, dressed only in a black turtleneck sweater and gray Pumas. I was achingly erect already, nipples feeling hard and tight under the fabric of my top.

Brian grasped my shoulders, switching places with me and taking a seat on the stair, pulling me onto his lap with so much force that I started to sit down on his naked dick, stopping right as the head bumped my entrance so he could suit up.

We fucked quickly and rushed, hard and dirty, a whirl of sensations and tastes and the smell of sex and sweat as he grabbed at my ass, pulling me down on him so hard that at one point I felt as if he were permanently embedded.

"Fuck!" I groaned, biting his shoulder through his gray sweater, a few threads sticking in my teeth and causing me to feel as if I had just eaten a ball of cotton. I bounced in his lap, clenching and unclenching my ass, moaning and groaning like I was in pain, dick rubbing against his stomach with each movement.

"Faster," Brian breathed, sweat trickling down his face like tears, eyes squeezed shut and mouth open, tongue tucked against his bottom lip.

I leaned over him, wrapping my arms around his neck and burying my face in the hollow of his throat. "Oh God. Oh my God!"

Ding, ding, ding

What the fuck?

"Goddamn it!" Brian yelled, grasping my waist to still me for a second, chest rising and falling with each pant. "Fucking delivery."

I grabbed his wrist, pulling it up in front of my face so I could read his watch. 6:19.

"I'll..." I started, breathing loudly and making to climb off his lap, so aroused I felt as if I could touch the head of my dick and shoot.

"No."

He grabbed my arms and pulled me back down, penis brushing my prostate.

"Shit!"

I wrapped my arms around him again, slowly moving, up and down, up and down, picking up speed with each bounce.

Within a matter of seconds, we were both groaning again, biting each other and kissing with a painful force, hearts pounding against one another's through our clothing.

"Yeah," I panted, reaching down to grab my cock, jerking the shaft and rubbing the head with my thumb, precome oozing from my body like a river. "I'm...I'm coming..."

My ass clenched as I bounced against Brian's pelvis a few more times, breath catching in my chest as I came, shooting all over his sweater and mine, hearing nothing but the whirl of static in my ears and Brian's moans as he orgasmed.

Friday, February 22, 2008

8:02 PM

"Did the delivery guy see us, you think?" I asked, rinsing a potato under the stream of water from the kitchen faucet and handing it to Brian to dry off and wrap in aluminum foil.

"Well, the door has some glass and we were right there. I don't see how he could've missed it." He smiled like a naughty little boy and placed the wrapped potato on a baking pan. "It's kind of hot."

I rolled my eyes with a smile, grabbing the other potato and rinsing it. "Not really."

"Oh, come on. I thought you had a kink for voyeurism. Plus, he looked like fucking James Dean."

"And he was totally straight." I turned off the water, shook the potato and placed it in Brian's outstretched hand. "I don't know. That kind of thing is fun in public, but not so much when we're at our house. It feels..." I shrugged, pulling my rolled up sleeves down.

"...more personal here, I guess."

Brian looked at me, wrapping the potato, and smiled. He placed the vegetable beside the other in the pan and stepped up to me, putting his arms around my waist and pulling me to him in a tight embrace.

"Do you know how much I love you, Brian Kinney?" I tucked my head into his neck and kissed it, relishing in the warm, comfortable smell of his skin.

"Mm." He pulled me tighter, gently rocking our bodies as we hugged. "Do you really think the delivery boy was straight?"

I pulled out of his arms, laughing loudly. "Way to ruin a moment!"

He scrunched his nose and smiled brightly, leaning his face into mine and pressing our foreheads together. "My specialty."

He puckered his lips and kissed me softly, reaching his hands up to cup around my neck.

I ran my hands from his shoulders, down his arms, gliding them down and behind my head until I found his fingers, stroking the back of my head tenderly.

Twenty minutes later we leaned against the kitchen counter, nude from the waist down and panting loudly, snuggled in each other's arms after having made love against the wall.

Brian had picked me up and gently held me against the painted sheet rock, kissing me softly, lovingly as he thrust into me, our lovemaking never growing faster or fiery, just slowly building in intensity until we both came almost simultaneously, squeezing our eyes shut and burying our faces in each other's neck.

"That was great," I whispered, kissing the hollow of Brian's throat.

"It was."

"I...missed that." My heart beat soundly. "I missed making love to you."

He ducked his head and kissed my upper lip, running his hand up under my shirt and stroking my back. "Me too, Sunshine."

"I've never done it with anyone else. Only you."

Brian smiled naughtily, kissing my ear. "Well, I beg to differ..."

"You know what I mean." I playfully swatted his arm. "You're the only person I've ever made love with."

"What about Ian?"

"No." I bit my lip, gently rubbing his chest through his shirt. "That wasn't...no. There is absolutely no comparison. When we're making love, it's like nothing else in the world. We're...connected, both physically and emotionally. It's the best feeling there is."

Brian raised his eyebrows and nodded. "It is."

I smacked his arm again and planted a kiss in the hollow of his throat. "I meant the connection. But the other is great too."

"I know."

That's when I grasped the hem of his freshly-changed t-shirt and slid it up, bending down to kiss at each bit of newly exposed flesh as he raised his arms and allowed me to pull it off him.

"I love you so much," I breathed against his bare chest as he tugged off mine, pulling me down with him onto the rug in front of the counter. He laid between my legs and kissed me roughly, exploring my mouth with his tongue.

"Me too."

I smiled, wrapping my legs around him and leaning my head back, allowing him better access to my neck. "Are we ever going to cook dinner?"

Thursday, March 13, 2008

JTaylor (March 13, 2008 12:04 PM): BRIAN!!!

BKinney (March 13, 2008 12:05 PM): What? Is everything okay?

JTaylor (March 13, 2008 12:05 PM): everything is amazing!!!! i was going to call you but i saw you were online so i decided to im you. guess what?!?!?

BKinney (March 13, 2008 12:06 PM): What?

JTaylor (March 13, 2008 12:10 PM): i was watching tv about a half hour ago and i got a call on my cell. i answered, and it was PIFA!! they are in the process of organizing a program for middle and high school students who are interested in furthering their education in art, kind of a college prep thing, and they are looking for YOUNG, STUDENT instructors to teach some classes. apparently, PIFA called my former manager, jamie justice, and asked if he could recommend anyone "young but experienced in the field of art" and he gave them my number!!

BKinney (March 13, 2008 12:11 PM): Justin, that's great! (please, for my sanity, type correctly) Did you take the job?

JTaylor (March 13, 2008 12:15 PM): I told them I was definitely interested!!!! Basically, PIFA is stationing some young artists, primarily upper level college students but I guess there are exceptions, at the Pittsburgh area middle and high schools, and we will be teaching two middle school (students can't teach the high school) classes per school day (only two hours total!) of a more advanced, detailed art. Jamie must have told them I was a former student, because, when discussing salaries, they said I could be compensated with money toward classes to help finish my degree!!!! They were originally looking for art education majors to teach for their student teaching, but they didn't have enough that were available, so they called Jamie!!!!!!!!!! BRIAN I AM SO FUCKING EXCITED!!!

BKinney (March 13, 2008 12:17 PM): That's great! When does this start?

JTaylor (March 13, 2008 12:21 PM): They are still making the preparations to begin it, but they said it should take flight at the beginning of May. They are just now allowing students to sign up for it if they are interested. Jane Crawford, the woman I talked to, said it is a six month program, May-November. During the school year it is taught at the actual schools, two classes per day, one hour per class, five days a week, but over the summer it is one two hour class per week, taught at PIFA.

BKinney (March 13, 2008 12:23 PM): So you will be employed by PIFA?

JTaylor (March 13, 2008 12:25 PM): Yes. Brian, I really want to do this. I know I didn't say anything to you, but I was really feeling kind of down about not having a job. I was so fucking worried.

BKinney (March 13, 2008 12:27 PM): This is great for you, Justin. You'll be employed and will be able to work toward finishing your degree.

BKinney (March 13, 2008 12:28 PM): If you felt down about your job situation, you could have told me. Maybe I would have been able to help you. I just figured you weren't thinking about it at the moment and were going to worry about that later, because it's only been about a month since your big return. I would have put you in the art department at Kinnetik, even as a temp if you didn't want to work there full-time. People in our type of arrangement do things like this for each other. Or so I'm told.

JTaylor (March 13, 2008 12:31 PM): Our type of arrangement? Get your ass home and fuck me.

BKinney (March 13, 2008 12:33 PM): Unfortunately, I have a meeting in twenty-seven minutes, so it will just have to wait until later.

But I'll make it worth your while.

JTaylor (March 13, 2008 12:34 PM): Hurry!!!

BKinney (March 13, 2008 12:34 PM): I'll see you at home, okay?

JTaylor (March 13, 2008 12:35 PM): Ok. I love you, Brian.

JTaylor (March 13, 2008 12:44 PM): How fucking long is your response? It has said "BKinney is typing..." for about ten minutes.

JTaylor (March 13, 2008 12:47 PM): Brian? I know you're there. You haven't gone on idle.

BKinney (March 13, 2008 12:47 PM): Later.

BKinney has signed off

Thursday, March 13, 2008

5:21 PM

"Hey!" I chirped, climbing out of the computer chair when I heard the loft door close and skipping over to meet Brian by the kitchen counter. He encircled me with his arms and kissed me silly, nipping at my lips and neck and cheek with his teeth.

"Congratulations, Mister Taylor."

"Thanks. I'm so excited about this. Jane said she would give me a call in a few weeks about training."

He dropped his briefcase onto the bar stool and began to plunder in my hair, tugging at the strands and smiling at me proudly. "It sounds like we both had exceptionally good days."

I grinned at him, grasping the collar of his shirt and slowly pulling him closer to me, so close that I could smell the scent of orange Tic Tacs on his breath. "Really?"

"Mmhmm. I landed the FitLife account, that weight loss shit that I'm probably going to end up taking one day. It's fucking huge."

"Yay!" I kissed his chin, tugging him against me. "I believe." Kiss. "You promised me." Kiss. "A worth while fuck when we IMed earlier." Kiss.

Brian ran his hands around my body and slid them down the back of my gray sweats, squeezing and rubbing at my ass. "Mm." Kiss.

"Lead the way."

I grabbed his arm and pulled him after me, both of us running excitedly into the bedroom, collapsing onto the bed and into each other's tight embrace.

Thursday, March 13, 2008

9:42 PM

"Want to go to Babylon tonight?" Brian asked me, stretching out on the couch and wrapping his legs around me. I was lying on top of him, sweatpants disheveled from having been thrown on in a hurry after our marathon fuck when the doorbell rang earlier for the Japanese food. I was exhausted.

"Not really."

"Why not?"

"It takes too much effort to shower and get ready. I don't feel like moving, much less dancing."

"Feel like blowing me in the back room?"

"I can blow you here." I laughed, turning over on my side and sliding into the gap between Brian's body and the back of the couch. "I seem to recall already sucking you off a couple thousand times in the past two hours."

"Your services were greatly appreciated."

"But you can go if you want. Some anonymous ass is just begging for your dick, I bet. I'll just fall asleep now and stay comatose until next Thursday."

Brian chuckled, turning on his side to face me. He kissed my nose lightly. "Well, the anonymous ass can beg for tonight."

We lay like that for the next half hour or so, napping, kissing and cuddling, a tangle of half-dressed limbs.

Thursday, March 13, 2008

10:21 PM

"Do you want to play a game?" I asked later, tossing an arm over Brian's bare chest and leaning in to kiss his biceps.

He breathed a laugh through his nose, reaching up to rub his eyes sleepily, having just woken up. "Like what? Monopoly? Apples to Apples?"

"No, though if Apples to Apples was designed for two players, I would beat your ass at it."

"Ha." Brian rolled his eyes. "Whatever."

"I used to play a game with Daphne whenever I would sleep over at her house..."

"Beauty Salon? Pretty, Pretty Princess?"

I smacked him. "No. I don't know if it really has a name, but it's basically just a series of questions and answers."

He raised an eyebrow at me.

"We each ask each other any question we can think of, and the other person has to answer it. If you refuse to answer a question, or answer it sarcastically or falsely, the other person wins." I kissed his chest.

"That's dumb."

"No, it's not."

"I'm not playing your little fucking party game."

I bit my tongue, rolling onto my back. "Oh, come on! It'll be fun. I promise not to ask you anything I know you won't answer. That would be unfair."

Brian sighed, reaching an arm up to tangle in my hair. "Alright. What does the winner get?"

"The winner..." I bit my lip for a second, pondering. "The winner gets to top."

"As if that's fair. You get to fuck me if you win, but all I get is to fuck you, which I can do anytime."

I lowered my eyebrows.

"I didn't mean it like that," Brian added, climbing into an upright position. "I want something else."

"What?"

"If you win, you get to fuck me. If I win, you throw out all your shit clothing and we go shopping."

I laughed, sitting up beside him and wrapping my right arm around his body. "Deal. But can we take this to the bed? The couch is a little cramped."

"You go first," Brian said to me, sitting on the edge of the bed and pulling off his pants before climbing under the covers.

I took a deep breath, rolling on my side to face him. "Hm. What is your favorite color?"

"That's deep." He chuckled. "Green. What about you?"

"Come on, you know this."

"No, I don't."

"Red!"

"I think I knew that."

"How old were you when you got your first kiss?"

Brian smiled, looking up and to the left as if trying to remember. "Thirteen, I believe. Maybe twelve."

I bit my lip with a grin, trying to imagine a little twelve-year-old Brian getting his first kiss. It was hard to believe he was once innocent. "Tell me about it."

"This is not part of the game."

"Who cares? I want to know."

He sighed, rolling over onto his back and folding an arm under his head. "When I was twelve or thirteen, my bitch of a mother made me go to the thirteenth birthday party of a girl from church, thinking it would be this wonderful celebration of God's gift of life. I think the girl's name was Michelle. Anyway, we played Spin the Bottle, some girl named Christy I had never spoken to in my life spun and it landed on me. I really did not want to kiss her. I kind of had an idea I was gay then, but at that point I really wasn't interested in either gender when it came to anything other than looking. Christy and I had to stand in the center of the circle and kiss for five seconds. We did. I wanted to puke. End of story."

I smiled, cuddling up to his side.

"Your turn," he announced, leaning over and poking me right in the center of the chest. "What about you?"

"You need to be original," I teased, grabbing his hand mid-poke and holding it. "If we're talking about real kisses here, and not little pecks I got from girls when I was nine, then I was seventeen."

Brian raised his eyebrows, leaning his head up to look at me. "Seventeen?"

"Yeah. It was just with some guy that found me under a streetlight."

His face softened and he looked, dare I say it, a little touched at the thought. "I was your first kiss?"

I smiled, biting my lip. "Yes. You were my first everything."

"And all in one night."

I nodded, looking off into the distance. "Alright, I'm up." My eyes narrowed. "How old were you when you were fucked for the first time?" I couldn't help but smile.

"I'd like to add a new rule before I answer," Brian said abruptly, rolling over and propping himself up on his arm. "We are allowed to ask for details, but it is our choice if we want to divulge."

"Which means you won't tell me a story about this one?" I stuck out my bottom lip like a whiny child.

"To answer the question, I was sixteen. And no fucking way." He pinched my hand teasingly with his fingers. "Um. When you were in New York, did you...fuck anyone regularly?"

I laughed. "Are you asking if I had a boyfriend?"

"A boyfriend, fuck-buddy, sure."

"I wasn't romantically involved with anyone, but there was a guy named Jimmie that lived in the apartment next to mine and sometimes if we were both home and horny, he would come over and we'd fuck. No kissing, nothing intimate, just fucking."

Brian nodded. "Was he any good?"

"He was okay." I smiled and scrunched my nose, closing my eyes when he leaned down and kissed me. "My turn. Did you ever think about me while you were fucking a trick when I was in New York?"

He rolled his mouth inward and bit down, red lips turning white. "Sometimes that was the only way I could get off."

I sat up slightly and leaned over Brian's body, placing my lips against his and kissing him slowly, unhurried. "Once, I called out your name as I came when Jimmie was fucking me."

He wrapped his arms around me and pulled me on top of him, chest against chest, heart beating against heart. "Right after I left you for the last time," he started to my surprise, puckering his lips and kissing at my cheeks. "I went to Babylon and fucked some guy. He was so hot, but I couldn't come. I kept thinking about how I had just left you every time I pounded into him, and I eventually lost my fucking erection."

"Brian," I whispered, lowering my head to rub my nose against his. "Sometimes I think that I couldn't love you more, but every day you prove me wrong."

"Did you ever love Ian?"

I was silent for a minute until I realized it was his turn and that was his question.

"Ethan was romantic. He was artistic and gorgeous and sweet to me, and maybe at the time I was trying to fool myself into thinking that just because I enjoyed waking up to dark chocolate and roses and I liked romance that I was in love. But I wasn't at all. Brian Kinney, you are the only man I have ever loved and the only man I ever will."

"I don't understand romance."

"But you do and you know it," I countered, reaching my hands up to run through his hair. "Taking me to Britin the Sunday after we got back together last month was incredibly romantic. You don't have to buy me roses or bring me breakfast in bed to be romantic. Romance is just doing something to show me you love me."

Brian rolled his eyes. "I know what the term means, Einstein. I meant that I don't understand why so many...couples want it all the fucking time."

"I don't believe you for one second."

He raised an eyebrow at me and rubbed my back. "Continue."

I chewed on my bottom lip, trying to think of another question, but with the conversation of the last few minutes, my brain was shot.

"Uh. What is...What's the worst punishment you ever had when you were a child?"

The moment it left my mouth, I knew it should have just stayed on my tongue.

"I mean...like, you know... Not..." Fuckity fuck. I was screwed.

Brian's body went rigid and hands stilled on my back. His eyes looked fiery.

"I'm...I'm sorry," I whispered, sitting up so I was straddling his waist. I rubbed his chest. "I swear to God I didn't mean to. I wasn't thinking..."

"I know," he answered quickly, placing his hands on my thighs. "Let's just not talk about Brian Kinney's childhood." I couldn't tell if he was angry, mildly annoyed or okay. His eyes were devilish, but his voice was even and rather calm. "Think of something else."

"Would you ever tell me about it?" I knew I was treading in dangerous waters, but his indifferent tone of voice gave me a bit of confidence to ask what I had been wanting to ask for years.

"Justin..." he closed his eyes and took a deep breath.

"You know I would never tell anyone. I wouldn't even say anything about it if you didn't want me to. It's just..."

"None of your fucking business?"

"Brian. I love you and I want to know everything about you."

"No, you don't."

"I do!" I laid back down on him and began to kiss his chest. "I would tell you absolutely anything about me you ever wanted to know, just because I trust you and I love you and as...partners or whatever we are, we're sharing a life with each other, and that means sharing ourselves."

"My childhood has nothing to do with you." He was angry, now.

"But you tell Michael. I've talked to Debbie about it before. She said you used to go over to Michael's drunk and crying after meeting with your dad."

"What the fuck does it matter what I tell Michael?"

"I just..." I breathed loudly, holding on to Brian's chest tightly, afraid he would push me off. "Sometimes I wish you would trust me with every part of your life. You know I would never..."

"Game's over, Sunshine."

He rolled out from under me, tossing the duvet to the side and climbing out of bed, making a bee-line for the bathroom.

Thursday, March 13, 2008

11:58 PM

My phone vibrated across the bedside table, slowly moving closer to where I lay with each vibration.

"Hello?"

"Howdy, Sunshine!" Mackenzie's voice was bright and cheery.

"Uh...hey. What's up?"

"I'm actually in Alberta right now, and I'll make this quick so your cell bill doesn't hit the roof, but next week Valencia NYC is showing some of my art. It's fucking amazing. I was just calling to invite you up to see it. Sorry for the lateness, but I figured you weren't asleep."

"Why the fuck are you in Canada?"

"Long story, no time."

"Um. I'll have to get back to you, I mean..."

"Short notice, yeah. Just shoot me an email when you get the chance."

"Um, alri--"

"Gotta run. Talk soon."

"Later, Mackie."

"Arrivederci."

Mackenzie Lewis talked faster than anyone in the entire world. I swore she ran on a motor.

"Brian?" I called, flipping my phone shut and laying it back on the table. I climbed out of bed, grabbing my discarded sweatpants and pulling them on. "Will you pretend we never had the conversation we just did?"

Nothing.

"Jesus, Brian. I know I fucked up big time, but I am very, very sorry. Just put yourself in my shoes. You know that if the person you loved more than anyone else in the world had a bad childhood and didn't like to talk about it with anyone but his friend, you would wonder why he couldn't tell you too."

I walked up to the bathroom door and knocked softly. "Can I come in?"

No answer.

Taking a deep breath, I pushed the door open.

Brian was sitting on the lid of the toilet seat, smoking.

"Are we okay?" I whispered, walking up to him and stopping inches from his body. My knees brushed his. "I'm really sorry. You know I would never want to hurt you or make you do anything you don't want to do. I love you and I only want to help you." I closed my eyes, taking a deep breath. "Just please...please forget this ever happened."

Brian swiped at his nose with the back of his hand and sighed loudly. "It's okay, Justin," he finally said after a few eternal seconds.

"I'm not going to fucking talk about my childhood. Not ever. Just deal with it." He crushed his cigarette butt in the ashtray he had sitting on the sink. "Who was on the phone?"

I bit my lip, wanting nothing more than to sit on his lap and hug him. There was still a bit of distance between us, I could feel, so I didn't try. "Mackenzie, a friend from New York."

He nodded, rolling his lips inward.

"She invited me to come up next week for her gallery showing."

"Close?"

I nodded slowly, scratching at my arm. "She was kind of my Daphne of the City."

"Fag-hag?"

"Most definitely." I smiled, showing my teeth, happy he seemed to be over the fit he had thrown earlier. "She's from Texas, is really southern and has this thick accent. She's seriously one of the most crazy, interesting people I've ever met. Amazing artist."

"So I guess you want to go."

"Well." Sigh. "I mean, yeah. I miss her and I'd love to see her work."

"Should I be jealous when you're up there all alone with her?" Brian smiled faintly, raising his eyebrows.

"Mackie's great, but not great enough for me to go straight."

"Thank God."

I laughed, closing the distance between us and climbing into Brian's lap, straddling his hips and wrapping my arms around him. "I love you, Brian Kinney. I'm sorry for pushing you too far."

We sat there for a few minutes, just listening to the sounds of each other breathing. "Can you come for a day or two?" I finally asked him, rubbing his bare back and nuzzling my nose against his neck.

"Mm, nope. FitLife is going to be invading every facet of my life the entirety of next week, unfortunately."

I kissed his cheek and pulled away to face him. "How are you going to get along without me for five whole days?"

Brian shrugged and grinned like a cat. "Not very well." He kissed me. "What I'm wondering is when in the hell are we going to get up off of this goddamn toilet seat and fuck on every surface of the loft?"

I laughed, ducking my head and licking the hollow of his throat. "We don't have to get off the toilet seat just yet." I climbed off him and tugged down my pants, stepping out of them and resuming my position in his lap.

Monday

JTaylor (March 17, 2008 11:32 AM): Hey Brian. You are away, but I am just letting you know that I have arrived safely. I figured you would see this before you had a chance to check your phone, but I left a message there too. I'm staying with Mackenzie for the week in the house she recently bought in Brooklyn and have stolen her laptop so I can send you this. We are probably going to see a movie later, but call me or IM me back when you get this. I love you endlessly.

BKinney (March 17, 2008 1:49 PM): Sorry, I just now got this. Absolute SHIT is going down at Kinnetik, my friend. Glad you got there safely. Your away message says you have gone for food and a movie. What are you seeing? Maybe I'll catch you on here later.

JTaylor (March 17, 2008 6:23 PM): yay, we're on at the same time!!

BKinney (March 17, 2008 6:25 PM): Hello Sunshine.

JTaylor (March 17, 2008 6:25 PM): what are u doing?

BKinney (March 17, 2008 6:26 PM): Type correctly. I am currently on the couch watching Rebel Without A Cause and eating chow mien. Getting fat.

JTaylor (March 17, 2008 6:27 PM): Sorry.

JTaylor (March 17, 2008 6:27 PM): Stop saying you're getting fat. I'm not going to tell you you're skinny again, so don't even try.

BKinney (March 17, 2008 6:28 PM): I have a box of about fifty bottles of FitLife sitting in the floor right now and I'm about to down them all. Can you OD on weight loss pills?

JTaylor (March 17, 2008 6:28 PM): I don't know, but don't try.

BKinney (March 17, 2008 6:29 PM): What movie did you see?

JTaylor (March 17, 2008 6:29 PM): Horton Hears A Who!!

BKinney (March 17, 2008 6:30 PM): You're kidding me, right? Justin, how old are you? I think Gus and JR saw that last Friday.

JTaylor (March 17, 2008 6:30 PM): Shut up! It was really cute!! Mckie liked it too.

JTaylor (March 17, 2008 6:30 PM): *Mackie

BKinney (March 17, 2008 6:31 PM): So did Gus and JR.

JTaylor (March 17, 2008 6:31 PM): :-p I think you would have liked it.

JTaylor (March 17, 2008 6:31 PM): *liked

BKinney (March 17, 2008 6:32 PM): Learn to type. If it doesn't have James Dean, Marlon Brando or naked men, chances are I would hate it.

JTaylor (March 17, 2008 6:32 PM): Don't lie ! We watched How the Grinch Stole Christmas a few years ago on TV and you were attentive and interested the whole time.

BKinney (March 17, 2008 6:33 PM): I happen to like Jim Carrey movies.

JTaylor (March 17, 2008 6:37 PM): You happen to like Dr. Seuss. Haha!!

JTaylor (March 17, 2008 6:37 PM): I'm going to rent some movies when I get back Friday and we're going to watch them all weekend...

BKinney (March 17, 2008 6:38 PM): Joy. Please, for my sake, rent One Eyed Jacks. Or porn. Nothing animated or rated anything but R unless it's black and white.

BKinney (March 17, 2008 6:38 PM): Actually, I take that back. I think Dan in Real Life just came out on DVD last week and I kind of want to see it. Rent that. Steve Carrell is fucking hilarious.

JTaylor (March 17, 2008 6:47 PM): Sorry. I was in the bathroom. You are a man of contradictions, Brian Kinney. And for your information, Steve Carrell does a voice in Horton Hears A Who. HA!!!

BKinney (March 17, 2008 6:50 PM): Fuck you.

BKinney (March 17, 2008 6:50 PM): When is Mackenzie's art showing?

JTaylor (March 17, 2008 6:51 PM): Wednesday and Thursday...

BKinney (March 17, 2008 6:51 PM): What are you going to do tomorrow?

JTaylor (March 17, 2008 6:52 PM): I don't know. Sleep until noon? Mackie has to work so I will be on my own for the majority of the day...

BKinney (March 17, 2008 6:54 PM): Oh.

JTaylor (March 17, 2008 7:00 PM): Why???

BKinney (March 17, 2008 7:01 PM): Planning on seeing Jimmy?

JTaylor (March 17, 2008 7:01 PM): You jealous bastard!!! :-D

JTaylor (March 17, 2008 7:02 PM): No. Jimmie is in Chelsea. I am in Brooklyn. Unless for some reason I happen to see him on the street, which is unlikely, I don't plan on seeing him at all.

BKinney (March 17, 2008 7:04 PM): I don't do jealous, Little Shit. I was just curious.

JTaylor (March 17, 2008 7:05 PM): Whatever you say!!!

BKinney (March 17, 2008 7:08 PM): I'm getting off here.

JTaylor (March 17, 2008 7:09 PM): Going to Babylon???

BKinney (March 17, 2008 7:09 PM): I don't know!!! Probably not!!! Why??? ... ??? !!!

JTaylor (March 17, 2008 7:10 PM): Are you making fun of my punctuation?(?!?!...) I was just wondering.

BKinney (March 17, 2008 7:12 PM): Of course not!!! ??? ... Whatever!!! gave??? you... that!!! idea??? =)

JTaylor (March 17, 2008 7:12 PM): Fuck you.

BKinney (March 17, 2008 7:14 PM): I'll!!! talk??? to... you!!! tomorrow??? ...

JTaylor (March 17, 2008 7:14 PM): Stop it. Okay. I love you Brian Kinney, even though you are an utter asshole.

BKinney (March 17, 2008 7:15 PM): Have sweet dreams later tonight whenever you decide to go to sleep. Call me when you wake up.

JTaylor (March 17, 2008 7:15 PM): You too. I will. I love you, I love you, I love you.

BKinney (March 17, 2008 7:16 PM): Later.

JTaylor (March 17, 2008 7:16 PM): Later. :-* (kiss)

BKinney (March 17, 2008 7:17 PM): !!!

BKinney (March 17, 2008 7:17 PM): ???

BKinney (March 17, 2008 7:17 PM): ...

BKinney (March 17, 2008 7:17 PM): :-*

BKinney has signed off

JTaylor has signed off

Tuesday

JTaylor (March 18, 2008 1:14 PM): Why aren't you calling me back? I've left like 10 messages since 11:00.

BKinney (March 18, 2008 4:12 PM): Because Kinnetik is fucking crazy today.

JTaylor (March 18, 2008 4:12 PM): hey brian

BKinney (March 18, 2008 4:13 PM): Use capitals, asshole. Why do you leave nicely typed messages when I'm not here, and yet as soon as we're live, you 'type liek this!!!!!!!!!!'?

BKinney (March 18, 2008 4:13 PM): :-*

JTaylor (March 18, 2008 4:14 PM): I don't know. I guess I get excited. :-*

BKinney (March 18, 2008 4:16 PM): :-o <===8# Me too.

JTaylor (March 18, 2008 4:17 PM): What the fuck??

BKinney (March 18, 2008 4:17 PM): Blowjob.

JTaylor (March 18, 2008 4:17 PM): Oh ok. I think I see that.

BKinney (March 18, 2008 4:18 PM): How has your day been?

JTaylor (March 18, 2008 4:19 PM): Ok. Mackie and I just got back from McDonald's. I never knew how much I missed fast food until I got away from nuts and berries at the loft. ;-)

BKinney (March 18, 2008 4:20 PM): You get plenty of nuts at the loft, but what berries? Don't even pretend that you eat healthily here. It's all take out and the various flavors of fat you cook for dinner.

JTaylor (March 18, 2008 4:22 PM): You love my cooking, Brian. Dont lie.

JTaylor (March 18, 2008 4:22 PM): *Don't

JTaylor (March 18, 2008 4:23 PM): And you like fast food just as much as I do.

BKinney (March 18, 2008 4:24 PM): That's why you're bad for me, Sunshine. That cheesy shit you cooked Friday, I swear to God, made me gain a pound overnight.

JTaylor (March 18, 2008 4:25 PM): But it was fucking good. And I'm not bad for you at all. I'm the best thing that's ever happened to you.

BKinney (March 18, 2008 4:25 PM): I wouldn't go that far... The cheesy shit was fucking good, though.

JTaylor (March 18, 2008 4:26 PM): I am, Brian. Admit it.

BKinney (March 18, 2008 4:26 PM): What?

JTaylor (March 18, 2008 4:26 PM): That I'm a good thing.

BKinney (March 18, 2008 4:27 PM): You're a thing, alright, but good? =p

JTaylor (March 18, 2008 4:27 PM): Shut the fuck up. Say it. You love me.

BKinney (March 18, 2008 4:29 PM): Whatever.

JTaylor (March 18, 2008 4:32 PM): Why don't you ever tell me you love me? I tell you like 2343454 times a day.

JTaylor (March 18, 2008 4:37 PM): Brian?

JTaylor (March 18, 2008 4:48 PM): Jesus. Don't go all silent now. I'll take back what I asked.

JTaylor (March 18, 2008 4:55 PM): seriously. Come on. You are NOT on idle so I know you're there. Answer. Me. Now.

JTaylor (March 18, 2008 4:55 PM): Please??? (...!!!)

BKinney (March 18, 2008 4:57 PM): Holy fuck, Sunshine. Calm down.

BKinney (March 18, 2008 4:58 PM): Some idiot from the art department needed to "speak" with me. I couldn't be sitting on AIM while he was here.

JTaylor (March 18, 2008 4:58 PM): Did you fuck him???

JTaylor (March 18, 2008 4:58 PM): You didn't answer my question from before.

BKinney (March 18, 2008 4:59 PM): Not hardly. He is apparently having problems with Claudia, the intern, who looks like a fucking beast and scares the hell out of me.

JTaylor (March 18, 2008 4:59 PM): Why did you hire her?

BKinney (March 18, 2008 5:00 PM): She's really talented, just a bit...primal.

JTaylor (March 18, 2008 5:00 PM): You're working late. And you didn't answer my question.

BKinney (March 18, 2008 5:01 PM): I'm about to take off. What question?

JTaylor (March 18, 2008 5:02 PM): Ok. Be safe. I love you, I love you, I love you. Tell me you love me.

BKinney (March 18, 2008 5:02 PM): Do you know how much you talk? Jesus, Justin.

JTaylor (March 18, 2008 5:02 PM): Please? I need you to.

BKinney (March 18, 2008 5:03 PM): Christ...

JTaylor (March 18, 2008 5:03 PM): I...love...you... Tell me.

BKinney (March 18, 2008 5:04 PM): Lay off the crack. I'm signing off.

JTaylor (March 18, 2008 5:05 PM): I love you, Brian, even though you APPARENTLY don't love me.

BKinney (March 18, 2008 5:05 PM): Shut the fuck up, Justin. I'll get back on later tonight.

JTaylor (March 18, 2008 5:06 PM): Yes or no?

BKinney (March 18, 2008 5:07 PM): Did you seriously just ask me that? Aren't you supposed to send it in a horribly spelled note with little check boxes?

JTaylor (March 18, 2008 5:07 PM): Say it and I'll leave you alone.

BKinney (March 18, 2008 5:12 PM): YES. Happy? Now, I'm going to sign off, go home and eat something low fat. I'll get on later or you can call me.

JTaylor (March 18, 2008 5:12 PM): :-* :-* :-* :-D I love you.

BKinney has signed off

JTaylor has signed off

BKinney (March 18, 2008 11:56 PM): Are you there?

JTaylor (March 18, 2008 11:57 PM): Yes, but give me five minutes. I was on my way to the bathroom.

BKinney (March 18, 2008 11:57 PM): Okay. Have a nice time.

JTaylor (March 19, 2008 12:03 AM): Back. And I did.

BKinney (March 19, 2008 12:04 AM): Good.

JTaylor (March 19, 2008 12:04 AM): Did you go out tonight????

BKinney (March 19, 2008 12:04 AM): Stop using excessive punctuation. You sound as if you're dying to know.

BKinney (March 19, 2008 12:05 AM): I went to Woody's for a bit and then spent literally about fifteen minutes at Babylon.

JTaylor (March 19, 2008 12:05 AM): Long enough for a blowjob or a quick fuck...

BKinney (March 19, 2008 12:06 AM): Long enough to check everything out and visit my office... But, apparently that makes a certain little blonde boy jealous.

JTaylor (March 19, 2008 12:08 AM): Unlike you, I'm not going to pretend I'm not jealous. Because i am.

BKinney (March 19, 2008 12:09 AM): I do not pretend I'm not jealous. I never am. I don't do jealous. This particular time, you do not have any reason to sit and cry. The only people that have touched my dick in the past two days are me and you.

JTaylor (March 19, 2008 12:11 AM): So you fucked someone Sunday??

BKinney (March 19, 2008 12:11 PM): God, Justin. That's none of your fucking business.

JTaylor (March 19, 2008 12:12 AM): Yeah, ok. Who my PARTNER fucks besides me is none of my business. It makes perfect sense.

I don't care if you DID, so there's no reason to get hostile. I just asked you a question and, as a regular, I have the right to know.

BKinney (March 19, 2008 12:12 AM): A regular? Yes, I partook in extracurricular activities Sunday night while you were at Daphne's. Sue me.

JTaylor (March 19, 2008 12:13 AM): That's all you had to say the first time. Yeah, a regular fuckee of Brian Kinney.

BKinney (March 19, 2008 12:13 AM): Sunshine, I refuse to have another conversation with you about this shit. You are not just "someone I regularly fuck." End of story.

JTaylor (March 19, 2008 12:14 AM): That's nice to hear.

JTaylor (March 19, 2008 12:19 AM): Are you there?

BKinney (March 19, 2008 12:19 AM): Just because I don't respond to every word doesn't mean I've left.

JTaylor (March 19, 2008 12:20 AM): I know, I know. Mackenzie thinks you're hot. :-D

BKinney (March 19, 2008 12:20 AM): When has she seen me?

JTaylor (March 19, 2008 12:21 AM): I showed her a picture on my cell phone. It was the one I took the other day in bed.

BKinney (March 19, 2008 12:21 AM): !!! ??? ...

JTaylor (March 19, 2008 12:22 AM): HAHA! The one of both of our faces when we are smiling. I have the silly face one as my background.

JTaylor (March 19, 2008 12:22 AM): And the one of your cock saved in My Pix.

BKinney (March 19, 2008 12:24 AM): How do you get cell pictures onto the computer? I want to save the one of you and I that Hunter took at Ben and Michael's last week. He just sent it to me a few minutes ago.

JTaylor (March 19, 2008 12:25 AM): You can send it to your email address.

BKinney (March 19, 2008 12:25 AM): Okay. Thanks.

JTaylor (March 19, 2008 12:26 AM): Forward the email to me when you do, ok?

BKinney (March 19, 2008 12:28 AM): Alright. I just sent it to my email, so I'll forward it to you and you should have it in a minute. I like it.

JTaylor (March 19, 2008 12:34 AM): Got it! Awwww... I love it too! I don't really remember him taking it. I wish it were better quality...fucking cell phone cameras. Because I'd like to frame it otherwise.

BKinney (March 19, 2008 12:37 AM): Yeah.

JTaylor (March 19, 2008 12:42 AM): Well, I think I'm going to get off. I'm going to try to go to bed because Mackie and I are going into Manhattan at about 8 in the morning. The gallery opens at 10.

BKinney (March 19, 2008 12:43 AM): Okay. Sweet dreams, Sunshine. Call me at the loft when you wake up. I should be here until 8:30.

JTaylor (March 19, 2008 12:43 AM): I will. I love you so much.

BKinney (March 19, 2008 12:44 AM): :-*

JTaylor (March 19, 2008 12:44 AM): :-* Sleep well and dream of me! ;-)

BKinney (March 19, 2008 12:45 AM): I don't know about dream, because I usually don't remember them, but I can guarantee you that I will sleep well and jerk off to you. =D

JTaylor (March 19, 2008 12:47 AM): How romantic. Goodnight! !!

BKinney (March 19, 2008 12:47 AM): Goodnight.

JTaylor has signed off

BKinney has signed off

Thursday

BKinney (March 20, 2008 4:01 PM): Hey. Just so you know, when I pick you up from the airport tomorrow, I'm going to take you home and fuck you so hard you won't be able to walk straight for days. I hope you are having a good time in the Big City. You must be, because I haven't heard from you in over a day...

JTaylor (March 20, 2008 6:13 PM): Hi Brian. This is Mackenzie Lewis, Justin's friend. He isn't here right now, but I will copy down your message for him for when he gets back. I'm about to sign on my account and the message will be lost otherwise.

BKinney (March 20, 2008 6:14 PM): Where did Justin go?

JTaylor (March 20, 2008 6:14 PM): You know, I'm not entirely sure. He spoke of visiting Chelsea when he left around 2:00, but I have not heard from him. Maybe you could give him a call?

JTaylor (March 20, 2008 6:19 PM): Brian, are you still there? I am going to sign on my account.

BKinney (March 20, 2008 6:21 PM): Okay.

JTaylor has signed off

Thurs., March 20, 2008, 6:28 p.m.

From: Brian

where r u?

Thurs., March 20, 2008, 6:34 p.m.

From: Justin

i am on the bus

Thurs., March 20, 2008, 6:42 p.m.

From: Brian

where did u go? why wont u answer when i call?

Thurs., March 20, 2008, 6:46 p.m.

From: Justin

2 visit some friends. sorry i had my phone on silnt & just saw u called when u txted me

Thurs., March 20, 2008, 6:51 p.m.

From: Brian

in chelsea?

Thurs., March 20, 2008, 6:54 p.m.

From: Justin

how did u know?

Thurs., March 20, 2008, 7:00 p.m.

From: Brian

talked 2 mackenzie on aim

Thurs., March 20, 2008, 7:03 p.m.

From: Justin

o. yea i met some friends at cafe 4 early dinner.

Thurs., March 20, 2008, 7:05 p.m.

From: Brian

call or im when u get back 2 mackenzie house

Thurs., March 20, 2008, 7:07 p.m.

From: Justin

k

JTaylor (March 20, 2008 8:13 PM): hey Brian. I'm back.

BKinney (March 20, 2008 8:24 PM): Okay. Have a nice time?

JTaylor (March 20, 2008 8:31 PM): Yes...

BKinney (March 20, 2008 8:33 PM): How was Jimmy?

JTaylor (March 20, 2008 8:33 PM): What???

BKinney (March 20, 2008 8:34 PM): I know you went to Chelsea today to fuck Jimmy. I'm not an idiot

JTaylor (March 20, 2008 8:35 PM): Jealous, much? And NO, I did not fuck Jimmie. I told you. I had an early dinner with friends.

That's all.

BKinney (March 20, 2008 8:37 PM): I'm not jealous. I just didn't know where you were. You could've told me.

JTaylor (March 20, 2008 8:37 PM): Are you drunk?

BKinney (March 20, 2008 8:39 PM): Probably

BKinney (March 20, 2008 8:39 PM): i don't know.

JTaylor (March 20, 2008 8:40 PM): Brian, please don't. I will tell you exactly what happened:

JTaylor (March 20, 2008 8:44 PM): Last night I got a phone call from Francis, a girl that lived across the hall from my old apartment whom I had been talking with on AIM, and she asked if I would like to meet her, her girlfriend Alexis, Abby, Jimmie, and Jimmie's BOYFRIEND Tyler at Paradise Cafe, a little deli we used to frequent, at 3:00.

That's where I was from 3 - 5, and then we went for drinks at a bar and hung out. Some people sang karaoke and we just drank and talked. That was until about 6:30, and then I caught a bus and came back. That's all.

JTaylor (March 20, 2008 8:50 PM): Brian? Are you okay? You need to stop drinking. Everything is fine.

BKinney (March 20, 2008 8:52 PM): Yes.

JTaylor (March 20, 2008 8:53 PM): I know when Mackie told you I was in Chelsea and had been gone since 2:00 you freaked out and assumed I was with Jimmie. Don't deny it, I KNOW that's what happened. I'm sorry and I should have talked to you earlier and let you know I was going to be gone.

BKinney (March 20, 2008 8:54 PM): That's not what happened. You have the right to do what you want just like I do. I'm just drinking because I don't really know why.

JTaylor (March 20, 2008 8:54 PM): Brian. Listen to me. STOP DRINKING. Everything is okay. You just love me and you got jealous when you thought I was seeing Jimmie.

JTaylor (March 20, 2008 8:57 PM): Brian?

BKinney (March 20, 2008 9:00 PM): I think I'm going to lay down and watch a movie.

JTaylor (March 20, 2008 9:02 PM): Ok. No more drinking. I love you, Brian, more than anything in the world. Do you want me to call you?

BKinney (March 20, 2008 9:04 PM): That's okay. You can if you want but I'm just going to lay down and watch The Godfather or something. I won't drink anymore. The bottle is empty.

JTaylor (March 20, 2008 9:05 PM): Ok. I love you!!!

BKinney (March 20, 2008 9:06 PM): Mee too.

BKinney has signed off

JTaylor has signed off

Friday

JTaylor (March 21, 2008 10:13 AM): Hey Brian!!

BKinney (March 21, 2008 10:13 AM): Good morning, Sunshine.

BKinney (March 21, 2008 10:13 AM): What time is your flight again?

JTaylor (March 21, 2008 10:14 AM): 11:20. I'm about to leave for the airport in a minute.

BKinney (March 21, 2008 10:15 AM): Okay. I will be there to pick you up. Prepare for a fuck like no other when we return to the loft.

JTaylor (March 21, 2008 10:15 AM): Oh yeah, Mackenzie gave me your message. She refers to you as my "Hot Boyfriend."

BKinney (March 21, 2008 10:16 AM): What can I say? I have that affect on people.

JTaylor (March 21, 2008 10:16 AM): Sure do...

JTaylor (March 21, 2008 10:17 AM): Ok. Mackie's yelling at me to get off her "fuckin laptop" and put my shit in her car. Haha!

BKinney (March 21, 2008 10:18 AM): Alright. I'll see you very soon. Get your ass ready to take a pounding.

JTaylor (March 21, 2008 10:20 AM): It's always ready. I love you.

BKinney (March 21, 2008 10:20 AM): Later.

JTaylor (March 21, 2008 10:21 AM): Later. :-*

JTaylor has signed off

BKinney has signed off

Sunday, April 20, 2008

4:01 PM

"This is, without a doubt, the most idiotic, lame excuse for a movie I've ever seen," Brian grumbled against my ear, pulling me closer and rubbing at my stomach through my shirt.

We were lying, snuggled against each other on the couch, my body between Brian's legs, back to his chest, watching a low budget, independent film I had picked up from Blockbuster. It was about a twenty-one year old girl who had gotten pregnant after a one night stand, and was struggling with a growing romantic interest in her best male friend.

"It's not that bad," I whispered, leaning my head back against his chest and tilting my chin up, receiving an upside down kiss on the lips.

"Yes it is. You are a horrible movie renter. I'm going to have to accompany you next time."

"What's so bad about it? It's a little like Juno, and you enjoyed that."

I could tell by the tone in his voice he had raised an eyebrow. "Juno was funny. This is a movie for teenage girls and little blond drama queen boys named Justin Taylor."

"You love little blond drama queen boys named Justin Taylor."

Brian sat up straight for a minute and shifted my upper body so my head was cradled in his arm. He leaned in and kissed me, tasting my tongue and my lips and sharing my breath.

"Mm," he hummed, pulling away and lying back again, leaning my head against his chest. "They're okay."

"Want some chips?" I asked, pulling out of his arms a few minutes later and climbing off the couch. "I bought like, three different kinds at the grocery store today."

"Jesus."

"I got Salt & Vinegar, Guacamole and Dill Pickle."

"Justin." Brian gave me a what the fuck?! look and reached up to absently hook his finger in my belt loop. "Whatever happened to Barbecue? Sour Cream & Onion? Plain?"

"I like the more exotic flavors."

"Well, get whatever you want. I don't want any, anyway. I've lost two pounds so far."

I smirked, leaning down and giving him a peck of a kiss on the chin. "Anything to drink?"

"Evian."

"kay." I padded off to the kitchen, bare feet slapping against the hardwood floors and too-long jeans dragging the ground. I snatched the bag of Lay's Dill Pickle potato chips from the cabinet and grabbed a bottle of Evian water out of the refrigerator.

"Thanks, Sir," Brian cooed to me with a laugh, taking the bottle from my possession and pulling me roughly onto the couch, between his legs, the bag of potato chips crackling and crunching between us. He settled me back against him and hugged me tight from behind with one hand, kissing my neck tenderly.

I grabbed the remote and hit "play."

Two beats.

"This movie sucks."

"Shut up! I'm not forcing you to watch it."

"It's too hetero."

"Well, go watch porn on the computer."

I opened the bag of chips, sending a sharp, vinegary pickle scent into my nostrils. Snatching a crisp from inside, I tossed it in my mouth and chomped, jaws tingling from the zing. "These are so fucking good."

"Really?"

I nodded with a smile, silently counting down from five, the time I knew it would take for Brian to reach into the bag. Five, four, three, two...

"Give me one."

"Sorry," I teased, squeezing the top of the bag shut and giggling. "You're on a diet, remember?"

"Fuck you." Brian jerked the lime green bag from my hands and opened it, reaching in and grabbing a handful.

"Good?"

I heard him chewing from behind me and felt the contraction of his throat against the back of my head when he swallowed. "They're

okay."

"Okay, as usual, meaning amazing."

"Brad," the pregnant girl on the movie whined, taking a step toward her love interest and looking up into his eyes. "I love you."

"Sara, I kind of love you too. A lot. More than a lot."

The two kissed, passionately and almost comically, seeming to eat each other's face for the camera.

"Fuck," I murmured with a laugh, rolling up the half-eaten bag of chips Brian and I had devoured and dropping it on the floor beside the couch.

"Is it almost over, Justin? I swear to God, this is making me sick. 'I kind of love you too!' How fucking stupid is that?"

"Sara hasn't had her baby yet!"

"You cannot be enjoying this."

"The lines are cheesy as hell but the movie itself is good."

"I hope you know, Sunshine, that after Little Justin's Movie Night, we are heading to Blockbuster and renting every Brando and James Dean movie in existence and you are sitting here and watching them all. Without breaks."

"We watched One-Eyed Jacks the other night..."

"That was just one of many."

I sighed, focusing my attention back on the movie. "Here it comes!"

"Thank God."

Sara started grabbing at her stomach, groaning and looking at Brad helplessly. "Brad...I think it's time..."

"How much do you want to bet," Brian started, taking a sip of his water and screwing the cap back on, "that she has her kid and at the end, Brad decides to help her raise it?" He slid his left hand up under my t-shirt.

"Whatever."

I pulled my shirt up some and looked down, watching his fingers rub against my flesh. "Brian. Would you ever consider...you know, one day, having a baby with me?"

He raised an eyebrow and slipped his hand higher up, massaging my chest. "Let me know when that's possible and I'll give you my answer."

"Would you ever want another baby?" I whispered ten minutes later, after the credits began to roll and Brian's theory about the ending had been proven correct.

"Sunshine..."

"I mean, one with me, that you could help raise."

"You're never watching movies about pregnancies again."

"I don't mean that we could create the baby together. I meant we could adopt or use a surrogate."

"If you want a baby, go find a woman, get married and knock her up."

"Brian." I turned my head and looked up at him, biting at my lip. "I'm not talking about now. Not even soon. But maybe in a few years, we could find a surrogate mother that could give us a baby. I'd like to father a child."

Secretly, ever since Gus was born, I had wanted to have a baby of my own. As the years went by, I had dreamed of raising a child with Brian, having a family, but I was always afraid to breach the subject. With good reason, apparently.

"Justin, let's not talk about this."

"Why not? You love Gus, and I know if I had a son or daughter, you would love it too. We could be daddies together."

"I'm going to pretend you did not just suggest that we be 'daddies together.'"

"I mean I would give the sperm, but it would be your baby too. You would be its father."

"Are you sure you're gay?"

"Shut up."

"Or maybe you are gay, but a gay woman."

"Be serious, Brian." I turned on my side so I could look at him. "Wouldn't you want to have that with me one day? A family?"

He leaned his head all the way backwards so it was hanging upside down off the armrest of the couch. "Justin, shut the fuck up. We are queers. Queers do not have babies."

"What about Lindsay and Melanie? Two children. Ben and Michael have Hunter. You have a child. What do you think Gus is?"

"That's different. I'm just the sperm donor who occasionally visits. Lindsay and Melanie are lesbians, and you are well aware of my opinion on the Stepford Fags."

"What makes you think that just because we would have a child, we would be 'Stepford Fags?' We'd be the same as we are now, but just with a little person to raise."

Brian pulled his head back into an upright position and rolled his eyes. "I'm sure we would be able to work in Babylon, tricking, taking recreational drugs and fucking in every room of the house somewhere between ballet practice and play group."

I smiled secretly, thinking it was adorable that Brian referred to ballet practice. "Well, we'd have to compromise some things, but it would be worth it, wouldn't it? Having a child?"

"Anything that compromises my life is not worth it."

I bit my lip, a bit of disappointment showing through my face.

"You know what I mean," he added, grasping my index finger and giving me a small smile.

"I know how you are, Brian. I'm not asking this now, definitely not. We still have things to work out before we involve anyone else in our lives. I'm talking about the future; three or four years down the line. I know that now all of those things are important to you, but they may not be then. At that time, we could be..." I stopped, not daring to go father.

"What?"

"Nothing." I took a deep breath, not wanting to get into another 'what I want, what you want' discussion. Those only ended badly.

"You don't go out much anymore. I don't know if that's because you're still adjusting to me being here or what, but I'm hoping it's because you're starting to...maybe not need it as much as you used to."

"So you think in four years I'll eventually be father material?"

"I didn't mean..."

"Monogamous? Come home from work every day and read the paper with the kids in my lap?" He wasn't angry, just a mixture between bored and annoyed.

"No. No. While I hope, and you know I do, by then we will have reached...a new level in our relationship...I would never expect that.

Brian, growing doesn't mean you have to change who you are. I wouldn't love you so much if you were a...Ted. Remember that time before our non-wedding? It wasn't you. It was weird." I took a deep breath, laying my head on his chest. "Likewise, raising a child doesn't have to make us imitation heterosexuals."

Brian dipped his head and kissed my hair. "You're really freaking me out."

I busted out laughing. "Brian!"

"Hm?" He pushed my back and flopped me over on my stomach, crawling on top of me.

"Tell me you'll think about it." I rolled over onto my back and wrapped my legs around his waist. "Please, Brian."

He flattened himself, lying between my legs, and kissed my lips repeatedly with increasing passion. "I'll think about it, but not seriously."

I sighed against his lips, feeling his tongue drag along my teeth. "I want this. Not now. Later. You might, too."

"Can we talk about this later?" Two beats. "Right now, I'm going to fuck the shit out of you, and speaking will prove to be difficult."

Sunday, April 20, 2008

6:11 PM

"If we do decide to have a baby," I said with a pant, dropping my right leg lazily to the side of the couch and reaching down to rub at Brian's sweaty back, "you're going to have to knock me up."

"It's not like I haven't tried." He shrugged out of my arms and reached down to the base of his penis, holding the condom in place and beginning to pull out.

"No." I wrapped my legs around him again, holding him in.

He laid back down against my chest, breathing heavily against my skin.

"We'll have to go crazy one night and accidentally have unsafe sex." I giggled, rubbing his ass with my feet.

"Ha." Brian raised his head and looked at me, a serious expression on his face. "Not happening. And besides, I never fucking said I would even consider a kid. That's not happening either."

"Brian."

"Don't give me that bullshit again. If you want a baby, go have a baby, but I will have nothing to do with it."

I closed my eyes, suddenly feeling uncomfortable. "Why not?" I breathed, smelling the sweet scent of Brian's shampoo mixed with sweat in his hair. "How many times can I stress to you that I'm not talking about right now? I'm talking about later, after I have my degree in Art Education, after I have a job, when we're...settled."

"Settled?" He lifted an eyebrow and rolled his lips inward. "You keep using these words and phrases...'settled,' 'a new level in our relationship,' what do you think, we're going to be an old married fag couple in three years?"

I opened my mouth and then closed it again. "No."

He stared at me, eyebrows raised, chewing at his reddened lips.

"Do you not understand that people change?" I scratched my forehead with my index finger. "In three years, you will be forty! You can't expect to fuck around and be promiscuous Mr. Babylon forever. Maybe you'll want a family."

Brian lowered his face and rested his chin between my pectoral muscles.

I continued. "You love it more than anything when Gus is over and you call him and talk about him constantly. I know you love children, Brian, or yours at least. Why wouldn't you want another?"

He rolled his eyes, hooking his arms around my shoulders and settling his face against my chest. "I don't need another fucking kid, Justin."

"Why?"

"Do I look like a..." he lowered his eyebrows and made a face against my nipple, lips brushing the tender, reddened flesh. "...father?"

You're not talking about being Drop-In Dad. You're talking about fucking living with the thing." He scoffed. "Not happening."

"Brian..."

"Justin."

I took a deep breath, slowly letting the air out from between my teeth.

"Are you going to huff and puff about this for the next fifty years? Because if you are, you can go back to New York." He scooted up my body, still inside me, and kissed me softly on the lips.

"I'll huff and puff about it until you give in." I smiled against his lips, sighing when he grabbed the bottom of the condom, holding it snug to his penis, and pulled out.

Sunday, April 20, 2008

8:32 PM

"How's Gus doing with his soccer?" I asked later, as we were lounging around near the television. I was lying sideways in the chair, sketching Brian's form, sprawled out uncharacteristically on the couch watching CNN. He looked like a lazy teenager just home from school.

Brian had just gotten off the phone with Lindsay and Gus, and like he always did after the calls, he seemed happy.

"He's a natural of course, just like his old man."

Many times I had talked to Brian about what he was like as a teenager, completely omitting any question that could possibly involve his parents, and he had often spoken about soccer. He was very good, apparently a star player on his high school team. The closest I had been to playing a sport in my teenage years was sitting on the wall with Daphne watching the hot football players practice.

"Old man."

"Fuck you."

"God, it's been forever since I've seen Gus." I looked up and to the left, trying to count the years.

"He's really great."

"He's growing like a weed from what I've seen in the photos Lindsay emails. I think he's going to be tall."

Brian smiled to himself, clearly proud of his son. Gus was going to be handsome, and at seven-years-old he was very intelligent. He was already reading at a fifth grade level.

"You're a great dad," I whispered, closing my sketch book and tossing it, along with the pencil, onto the coffee table.

"Sunshine, just stop before you get any further. Buttering me up is not going to work."

I flexed my toes, causing them to pop like crackling bubble wrap. "I'm not buttering you up. I respect your decision. You don't want to have a child with me."

"Christ. This conversation is going in fucking circles."

"But you don't. I know this is stupid to even talk about, because I was well aware before I even brought the subject up you would say no. I know it's too soon to talk about shit like this, because I've only been back for about three months. Maybe it's just another one of my 'stupid, romantic thoughts,' but I had hoped that one day you would want a family with me." I breathed, pulling my legs up into the chair and wrapping my arms around them. "But that's not you. Brian Kinney doesn't like families or babies or anything resembling hetero life."

"Because we're fucking queers. This is who we are."

"Just because you're gay doesn't mean you can't have everything straight people do. We're not a separate sector of the fucking human race, Brian."

"Jesus Christ."

"And I know you, Brian. You'll be pissed at me for saying this but I don't fucking care. I know that you talk shit about how Michael and Ben are 'Stepford Fags' and any homosexual couple with children are pretty much a disgrace to the gay community, but I don't think you really believe that. Not entirely."

"If you think that, you don't know me at all..."

"Let me finish." I climbed out of the chair and slipped over to where Brian was lying, arms folded over his bare chest, legs bent and skinny knees showing through the material of his gray gym pants. I sat down. "I think sometimes you even like the idea of children."

I've seen you on the phone with Gus. Brian, you should see yourself! You glow."

He rolled his eyes, leaning his head back onto the armrest. "Jesus..."

"I know you hate the idea of being the traditional married couple. You hate the idea of being a 'Michael and Ben' with their vegan meals, gay rights activism, monogamy, whatever. Sometimes I don't like that either. Sometimes I want to trick and be unconventional."

But other times, most of the time, I just want you. Sometimes I want to go to Babylon and dance and drink and do recreational drugs, but other times I want to stay at the loft and watch movies or paint or just...be with you. I think you're more like me than you think."

"What the fuck..."

"I think you're still holding onto tricks and Babylon, but like me, you no longer need them. You may want them a little more than I do right now, but I honestly believe your need for them is barely there or gone."

"Justin, don't piss me off..."

"But why does this piss you off? If it does, you're obviously getting defensive, which leads me to believe that I'm correct."

"Fuck you." Brian pulled his knees up closer to his body and rested his head on them. "It pisses me off because you keep bringing this shit up. Justin, holy fuck, you bring up more drama than anyone I've ever known in my entire life. We cannot have a conversation without eventually arguing about tricking or babies or love or my goddamn childhood."

I bit my lip, suddenly feeling very small and vulnerable. I wanted to get in bed and curl up into a ball under the covers. "Brian."

"What now? Are you going to give me shit about how I need to talk to you?"

That was actually what was coming next.

"Brian, just..." I scooted closer to him, reaching out and placing my hands on his kneecaps. "There are some things I just don't understand. I think it's because our personalities are so different. I'm open about everything with you, I am willing to tell you absolutely anything you could ever ask me, but it requires force to get you to talk."

He raised his head and lowered his eyebrows, looking at me like I was an idiot.

"It's true. We've had this conversation before, Brian, but you just don't seem to get it through your head. I wish you'd trust me with things. I know you tell me a lot of things about your life have nothing to do with me, so you refuse to talk about them. That's true, and it's all your business, but as partners or whatever we are, I would hope you would feel comfortable telling me things. You can trust me, you know."

Brian looked as if he were about to interrupt.

"Not yet." I held my hand up to stop him. "We have a communication problem."

"Christ..."

"See what I mean? Every time I try to bring up something that deals with us, you push it off and act like I'm the one being stupid."

"Because you are."

"Why do you think that?"

He was silent.

For what seemed like an eternity, we just stared at each other, mirroring facial expressions, eyebrows raised, mouth slightly open. He didn't know what to say.

"You're too closed up," I whispered finally, walking on my knees closer to him and wedging myself between his legs so I was lying against his chest. "I love you so much, Brian Kinney. I just want you to be able to tell me everything about you. I want to know what's in here." I pressed my palm against his heart. "And up here." I kissed his temple.

He said nothing. Just closed his eyes and allowed me to touch him.

"Uh," he breathed, almost silently, eyelids fluttering as I tugged at his penis with my hand, jerking him off slowly, sensually, with care, inside his pants, not even bothering to pull him out. This was not for me. It was for him.

He licked his full lips. His nipples were hard, tight brown buds.

"Oh God." His dick was thick with blood flow, slippery with precome and felt heavy in my hand as I stroked, cupping his balls.

"I love you, Brian Kinney," I whispered into his ear, pressing my nose and lips and forehead against the side of his head as I worked faster and rougher to finish him off.

His body froze, stiffening. "Jus...Jus...tin," Brian babbled, opening his mouth wide and orgasming explosively, coating my fingers with his warm come and shaking all over.

"Damn, Sunshine," he panted, reaching an arm around my body to pull me close, my hand still lingering wet and sticky inside his pants. "Shit."

"I love you," I said.

He kissed me, long and slow.

"I want to talk to you," I began, settling against his chest, gently pulling my hand out of his pants and locking it, still damp, in his. He pulled our interlaced fingers up to his lips and kissed them. "One night, not tonight, I want to sit in bed for a few hours and talk about some things."

I closed my eyes, expecting an argument to start up again.

There was silence.

I looked at Brian, catching his eyes, and was surprised to see him nod slowly.

"I'll let you know when," I whispered, turning my head into his chest and inhaling the scent of his skin.

"Alright."

Friday, May 2, 2008

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 1:04 PM): hey

BKinney (May 2, 2008 1:04 PM): Caps, Justin. Hey.

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 1:05 PM): Sorry. What are you doing?

BKinney (May 2, 2008 1:05 PM): Restraining myself from committing a mass murder and offing every fucker in this building.

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 1:06 PM): Rough day?

BKinney (May 2, 2008 1:07 PM): No more than usual. How are you feeling?

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 1:09 PM): like my head is a bubble. Do you think you could buy another box of kleenex on the way home?

BKinney (May 2, 2008 1:10 PM): I should have some extras here. I'll bring a couple back with me.

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 1:12 PM): K. I'm worried I won't be better by Monday. That would be just great...I'd be called Mr. duck or something.

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 1:12 PM): Sorry...I was typing fast... *be just *called

BKinney (May 2, 2008 1:13 PM): Mr. Sniffles. ;-D

BKinney (May 2, 2008 1:13 PM): Just kidding. It's only a cold. You'll be fine for your big day.

BKinney (May 2, 2008 1:14 PM): :-* (That's the only kiss from me you're getting until you're better)

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 1:15 PM): I've probably already given it to you, but you haven't shown symptoms yet. :-(I want a real kiss. It's been almost two days.

BKinney (May 2, 2008 1:16 PM): Justin, don't even joke about that. I cannot get sick right now.

BKinney (May 2, 2008 1:16 PM): I want to kiss you, too. Not to mention fuck you. I'd try again, but given the breathing difficulties we discovered last night, unless you have a serious antihistamine, it could be fatal.

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 1:18 PM): It wouldn't be that bad if I could breathe through my mouth, but my throat is all gunky and it makes me cough. I'm so nervous about Monday. What if they hate me? I don't even have a fucking degree!!! What were they thinking giving me this job?!?!?

BKinney (May 2, 2008 1:20 PM): a) That's really fucking gross. b) DON'T WORRY. You will be fine. There was obviously some reason they gave you the job. You're practically the age of the kids, so they'll love you.

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 1:22 PM): shut up. I'm still nervous as hell. Since I don't have my degree yet, I can only do student teaching, with involves the middle schoolers only. It's just like a slightly more difficult art class for them, and completely free and voluntary.

Plus, I'll be observed the fuck out of sporadically for the first few weeks by Jane. NEWS FLASH Brian, I'm 25!!! These kids are like, 12.

BKinney (May 2, 2008 1:23 PM): I promise you, you will be fine.

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 1:25 PM): I hope your right.

BKinney (May 2, 2008 1:25 PM): YOU'RE

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 1:26 PM): soooooorry!!! I hope YOU'RE right.

BKinney (May 2, 2008 1:27 PM): I'm always right. How's your painting coming along? You looked pretty busy when I left this morning...

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 1:27 PM): Pretty well. I think I'm getting out of the rut coming home and getting adjusted put me in. I was kinda getting worried when I didn't really feel that motivated at first...

BKinney (May 2, 2008 1:28 PM): I know. That's why I didn't say anything. Returning home after three years is a big change, and it's bound to throw you off. I knew you'd be back on track once you got everything together again.

BKinney (May 2, 2008 1:35 PM): Are you there?

BKinney (May 2, 2008 1:46 PM): Mr. Sniffles?

BKinney (May 2, 2008 1:53 PM): I have a meeting in seven minutes, so I'm going away. I sincerely hope you're not dead. You'd be a lot less fun to fuck.

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 2:43 PM): SORRY!!! I went to the bathroom to blow my nose, and on the way back, I saw this fucking black paint smudge on the corner of my painting which I COULD NOT ignore, so I fixed it and then washed my hands and made a sandwich (that I can't taste, of course) because my stomach was all rumbling and then Mackenzie called so I talked to her and then I remembered I left you here and I'm really sorry.

Automatic response from BKinney (May 2, 2008 2:43 PM): I am in a meeting until 3:00.

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 2:44 PM): Fuck. Well, I guess I'll just reply to what you said and about other things that are on my mind while I wait.

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 2:47 PM): I would be lying if I said I didn't love the inspiration NY gave me. That was my favorite thing about it. It was free and wild and had this way of making you feel like you were completely alone and

able to do whatever the fuck you want without anyone telling you otherwise. My painting was AMAZING. Sometimes I would stay up all fucking night in my studio and not go home until lunch time because I would get on such a roll. After a while, though, something just left me. I had a breakdown one night in my apartment and ended up jerking off to thoughts of you and it felt like it wasn't ME jerking off but something inside me. It was weird. But that's when I knew I had to come back. I couldn't paint anymore up there. I couldn't LIVE up there anymore.

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 2:50 PM): So I came back. Honestly, the only thing I had on my mind was you when I returned to the Pitts. At that point, I was willing to fucking GIVE UP my art for you. I didn't think about it AT ALL for the first month and my shit was still in Daphne's apartment, untouched. I would draw some while you were at work, but I didn't feel my inspiration anymore. I felt kind of like I was MAKING myself draw, to prove I hadn't lost it. Then, last weekend when we were at the house, I looked at one of the blank canvasses we moved from Daph's and just FELT IT again. That's why I brought it back to the loft Monday and started working. I was scared to DEATH I would never find the

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 2:54 PM): motivation to paint again. I was scared because that's what I DO. Justin Taylor is an artist. And if Justin Taylor didn't feel like painting again, what would he do?!?!?! But I feel my motivation returning and I'm so happy. I also think getting confirmation that I got the student teaching job with PIFA helped me a lot. I feel like I'm WORTH something again. Not that I felt worthless before, but I sorta felt like a housewife or something. I was just hanging around the loft or with Daphne or at the diner while you were at work. I was BORED. I was WORRIED!!! But I'm much better now.

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 2:58 PM): And I LOVE YOU Brian. I know you probably hate me saying that all the time but it's true. i love you so much that sometimes I feel like I'm going to throw up because I get butterflies when I think of you. I will love you until the day I die. THANK YOU for knowing everything I need. THANK YOU for not saying anything about my art rut even though you saw what was happening. I think if you would have said something, it would've made me worse. And you knew that so you didn't. I love you I love you I love you I love you.

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 3:02 PM): And now I'm feeling kind of bad because I know I can't kiss you or make love with you until I'm better, and when I think about getting better I think about going to work on Monday, and when I think about going to work on Monday I feel nervous and that makes my stomach hurt. Message me when you get this. I'm going to go blow my nose and make some tea or something. I'll keep checking the computer.

BKinney (May 2, 2008 3:18 PM): Holy fucking hell, Sunshine. Remind me to never leave you alone on AIM again. Give me a few minutes to read the novel you wrote me while I was away, and I will respond.

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 3:18 PM): K.

BKinney (May 2, 2008 3:19 PM): ...if I can decipher what you're saying, with all the fucking run-on sentences. Are you sure you got 1500 on your SATs?

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 3:19 PM): :-p

BKinney (May 2, 2008 3:26 PM): Of course New York was a huge source of inspiration for you. I knew that, Justin, and that's one of the reasons I refrained from flying up there, grabbing you and taking you back home with me when we were apart. Everything you said, about how you were "WORRIED!!!" and scared, it's all normal. I knew what you were going through, Justin. I knew your art was very important to you and you hadn't given it up for good. You were still adjusting. I'm glad the student teaching job helped boost your self confidence and got you started again. And don't ever think you were being a "housewife." I do not look at you that way at all.

BKinney (May 2, 2008 3:27 PM): As for the other, as lesbionic as this sounds, and I'm probably only saying this because I just got out of a meeting from HELL with the dumb fucks whom I have made the worst mistake of my life

employing--therefore I am a little drained and not quite my self. But: I do not hate it at all. And when you were gone, sometimes I did throw up.

BKinney (May 2, 2008 3:28 PM): And for the record, whenever you ARE better, count on being fucked until you pass out.

Repeatedly.

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 3:28 PM): Brian, you make me so happy.

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 3:29 PM): I want kisses too!

BKinney (May 2, 2008 3:29 PM): AND kissed until your lips bleed.

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 3:30 PM): Ouch.

BKinney (May 2, 2008 3:30 PM): Don't even say "ouch." You weren't the one with the busted lip the night of our "reunion" or whatever lesbian term you like to refer to it as.

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 3:31 PM): Hahaha!!! Sorry!!!!

BKinney (May 2, 2008 3:31 PM): It's about time you apologized. It's a wonder I still have lips, the way you attacked me.

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 3:33 PM): I was all worked up. That was the first time I kissed you in TWO AND A HALF YEARS!!!

BKinney (May 2, 2008 3:33 PM): I might have been a little worked up, too, but at least you didn't end up with scabbed lips like you had some disgusting disease from ancient times. That hurt like a mother fucker.

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 3:34 PM): Oh, POOR BABY... *eye roll*

BKinney (May 2, 2008 3:35 PM): Don't get smart with me. I may not be able to fuck you without you threatening to pass out from lack of oxygen, but a spanking is still something I can deliver.

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 3:37 PM): HA. You barely get near me. You wouldn't even hug me this morning OR cuddle in bed!!!

BKinney (May 2, 2008 3:38 PM): Because I can't get sick now, I'm telling you. And plus, I have never cuddled, at least not consciously.

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 3:39 PM): oh, shut up! You cuddle with me all the time. What do you call what we do every morning (when i'm not sick!!) in bed? If you don't like the term "cuddling," then we'll use "snuggling."

BKinney (May 2, 2008 3:39 PM): What do I call what we do every morning in bed? Fucking. And don't even try to use the word "snuggle." That's even more idiotic.

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 3:41 PM): HA. I'll remind you of this conversation next time we are talking in bed while you have me pulled against your chest, stroking my hair and kissing my forehead.

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 3:44 PM): See?? You have nothing to say to that. Hahahaha!!! People wouldn't BELIEVE how sweet you are when we're CUDDLING/SNUGGLING.

BKinney (May 2, 2008 3:45 PM): I am not sweet.

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 3:46 PM): Whatever!! I hear the things you whisper in my ear. Brian, when you are in the right environment and in the right moment, you are, to use your term, "ridiculously romantic."

BKinney (May 2, 2008 3:48 PM): Excuse me while I sign off.

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 3:48 PM): oh shut up!! No one would BELIEVE it.

BKinney (May 2, 2008 3:48 PM): I'm going to sign off...

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 3:49 PM): You are not. "Justin, I want you so much I can't stand it." :-D

BKinney (May 2, 2008 3:49 PM): You were dreaming...

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 3:50 PM): "I love how you feel in my arms. I want to stay like this forever."

BKinney (May 2, 2008 3:51 PM): Delusional.

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 3:52 PM): All that stuff you say to me...Even though you never tell me you love me, I know. Every time you say something like that I know you really mean "I love you. Madly. Passionately. With burning desire..."

BKinney (May 2, 2008 3:53 PM): What cold medication did you take? Because I think you're getting me mixed up with some other guy you're fucking. I don't recall any of that.

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 3:55 PM): Shut up. :-* I love you, Brian.

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 4:03 PM): And ONCE AGAIN, it has been saying "BKinney is typing..." for almost ten minutes and I haven't gotten a response yet...

BKinney (May 2, 2008 4:03 PM): :-* I'm going to go. I'll be home within the hour.

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 4:04 PM): You know what???

BKinney (May 2, 2008 4:04 PM): ...no. What?

JTaylor (May 2, 2008 4:05 PM): I think you almost told me you love me. I think you had "I love you, too" typed and kept changing your mind and clearing it out and then typing it again and THAT'S why it said you were typing for so long. If you leave words in the box, it says you're typing, regardless to whether or not you are. I've figured you out. If I recall, the LAST time that happened, I had said "I love you." You can't fool me, Brian.

BKinney (May 2, 2008 4:06 PM): You're wrong. Later.

BKinney has signed off

JTaylor has signed off

Sunday, May 18, 2008

8:43 AM

"So, how's the new job?" Daphne asked me, staring at my reflection in the mirror as she flat-ironed her hair.

We hadn't talked much in the past few weeks, as I was busy teaching art classes to twelve-year-olds and she was splitting her time between her new physician's assistant job at the hospital and fucking her boyfriend Gregory. She had called me early that morning to see if I wanted to meet her at her apartment and then go for breakfast.

"I really love it," I admitted, pulling my legs up onto the couch and smiling brightly. "I was so fucking nervous at first, but the kids are great. I was expecting them to be annoying and rowdy, but they actually had to be approved by their teachers in order to take this course. They're all really fun."

"I knew you'd love it!" She smiled brightly, steam shooting from the straightener and fogging around her head. "So you're taking summer classes in addition to teaching?"

"Summer classes at PIFA start June 16th, and I'm signed up for twelve hours. Plus, after June 6th, I switch over to teaching summer courses, which is only one two hour session each Friday. There's only six kids signed up for my class then, as opposed to the fourteen in it now, so it shouldn't be bad at all."

"How's that working out...?" She raised her eyebrow, trying to picture my schedule in her head.

"Give me one sec and I'll tell you exactly." I reached into my pocket and dug around for the scrap of paper I had written my schedule on the day before. I was wearing the same pants two days in a row. Brian would've killed me.

"I have..." I started, squinting my eyes at the tiny writing. "Let's see, I have class Monday and Wednesday from 10 AM to 12 and another from 2 PM to 4. Tuesday and Thursday I have just one class from 11 AM to 1. Then, Friday I teach from 9 AM to 11. It's not bad."

"Not at all. In fact, it's a hell of a lot better than my fucking schedule."

"But you're making a shitload of money."

"And since money is everything..." She smiled, bugging her eyes at me sarcastically.

"Daph, if I thought money was everything, I would not be doing what I'm doing."

"I know. So, anything new on the Briiiian front?"

I sighed, kicking off my flip-flops and tucking my legs under my seated body. "Not much."

"Anything different?"

"As opposed to..."

"Is he still all romantic and strange acting like he was before you left?"

I shrugged. "I think he's found a happy medium. Or a medium, anyway. Sometimes he's really romantic, and he's always very sweet to me, but it's definitely none of that pre-wedding weirdness."

"Is he still kind of distant?"

"He's...Brian. You know how he is, it's always the same. I try to talk to him about anything even remotely related to our relationship and he gets pissed off for no reason."

"Like what?" Daphne turned off her flat-iron and pulled out her brush, combing it through her now-manageable hair.

"Like..." I took a deep breath, scooting to the edge of the couch. "Like how he should trust me. I know it's technically none of my business, but he absolutely refuses to tell me about things like his childhood or his feelings."

Brian was treated like shit as a kid, and I know he doesn't want to rehash those memories, but sometimes it kind of makes me feel bad that he talks about this with Michael, but not me. He tells me it doesn't concern me, and therefore it's none of my business. Of course it's none of my business, but I know a lot of the problems Brian has in his relationship with me, when it comes to fucking around, not being able to be fully committed, finding it the hardest thing in the world to tell me he loves me, it all came from that. I just think if he were to let me in, we would be able to tackle the other problems. I think he would be happier."

"That sucks," Daphne declared, dropping her brush onto the vanity and swinging around, walking over to where I was sitting. "I mean, I remember what you've told me about him, about the things Debbie used to tell you when you lived with her. It's fucking awful, and it's only natural he wouldn't want to talk about them. Michael was there to see the aftermath, so that's probably why Brian feels more comfortable with that subject around him. But I do think it's important you two discuss it. It's like my Uncle Jack. His wife was raped when she was like, twelve, and that caused intimacy issues in their marriage. They went to counseling and had this session where she came to terms with what happened to her and how it related to their marital problems. They were able to work it out together."

"If it were that easy with Brian, it would've already been discussed, believe me." I rolled my eyes and moved over a bit on the couch to give Daphne room to sit. "If I go so far as to mention it, he gets pissed and runs off to be alone."

"Maybe you two need to do something to bring you closer together first. Have you discussed fucking without condoms?"

Well, that was unexpected.

"Are you crazy?"

"Why is that such a stretch? You two have been an item, sort of, for years. Alex and I stopped using condoms after the first six months when we were together."

I laughed disbelievingly, turning to the side to face her. "You two were straight, negative and monogamous. Your biggest problem was pregnancy, and all you had to do was get on The Pill. HIV is a serious issue within the gay community. It's not as easy as saying,

'Let's fuck bareback!'" I breathed. "Fucking without condoms would mean monogamy from Brian."

"So?"

"Daphne, do you know who you're talking about here? Sometimes I think he's going to fuck anonymous ass until he carries a cane."

"Gross." She made a face, crossing her legs. "Well, maybe if you just convince him to do it with you once, he'll never want to go back to using the rubbers. Sex is so much better without them."

"The chances of that working are slim to none." I sighed, rubbing my eyes with my fists. "What do I say? 'Oh, Brian, by the way. Do you want to stop fucking other guys for the next couple of months just so we can try it raw once?'"

"It couldn't hurt to ask."

"Yes, Daphne, it could." I stood up, beginning to pace the floor as I talked. "The average person asked that question would either say 'yes' or 'no,' then explain why. Brian would just say, 'What the fuck is your problem?' and refuse to speak to me for the next hour. No explanation. If there is one, it's something to the nature of, 'We're queers!'"

She lowered her eyebrows sympathetically and shrugged. "Then I don't know. I agree that you and Brian have some serious verbal communication problems, but unfortunately, I wasn't a Psych major, so I can't help you any further."

"Brian promised to have a talk with me sometime. About a month ago, I told him I would make a list of the things we need to discuss and we would take one day or night of my choosing, camp out in bed and talk. Maybe it's time for that."

"What kinds of things did you list?"

"Trust, monogamy..."

"Maybe it is time you have that talk. You know, before he forgets all about it and suddenly doesn't want to anymore."

I rolled my eyes, pausing to place my hands on my hips. "Probably."

"Maybe just breach the monogamy topic, and if he shoots you down and starts getting uncommunicative, bring up 'the talk.'"

"Yeah, that'll be an easy thing to do while he's holed up in the bathroom with his cigarettes."

"At least he's holing himself up in the bathroom and not embedding himself in the hole of another guy!" Daphne smiled at her word play.

"Just..." I took a deep breath, zipping my jacket up further. "I don't know...Wanna go for breakfast?"

Sunday, May 18, 2008

11:34 PM

"I love you so much, Brian," I moaned against his neck, feeling his hard cock press against my lower belly and balls slide against my dick.

He kissed me, long and slow, taking his thumbs and placing them on either side of my face, rubbing the pads against my cheeks.

"Mm."

Brian lifted up, leaning over to the little dish beside the bed and grabbed a condom, holding it tightly between his fingers as if it were going to fly away from him.

Metallic wrapper to teeth, teeth biting and pulling, ripping...That reminded me... "Wait," I breathed, penis throbbing with arousal.

He raised an eyebrow, leaning to the side and blowing the ripped piece onto the floor. "What? I'm going to fuck you, so don't tell me you have a headache."

I smiled, shaking my head 'no.'

"You're going to get pissed," I started, rubbing my hands along his chest. "I know you are, but..."

"Justin, what the fuck?"

"I'm not talking about right now. I'm only asking this for future reference, but is barebacking ever going to be an option?"

He looked at me, dropping the condom in its wrapper on my chest and lowering his eyebrows. "Are you nuts?"

"No." I swallowed with a squeak.

"No barebacking. Ever."

"Why? I bet the sex is amazing. And like I said, I don't mean now. I just want to know what you think about it."

"Condoms are not optional for gay men."

I closed my eyes, biting my lips. "They would be if we both got tested and..."

"Justin, just...no."

"Why not? Why won't you do this with me? We can get tested in a few months and do it raw for just one night. It will feel so good, Brian. Then, if you want to go back to tricking, then..."

"Shut the fuck up. Was this one of Daphne's ideas? Do it once and never want to go back? I should have known you two were going to cook up something."

"What? No, I mean..."

"I take that as a yes."

He was pissed. Beyond pissed. His face was red as a beet and eyes looked fiery and wild. It was scary.

I sighed loudly. "I love you, Brian, and I want to be as close to you as I can. I don't know if you feel the same, but at this stage in our relationship, for me, condoms are starting to feel like a barrier. We have been together, emotionally at least, for almost eight fucking years. The things we do together, how we sometimes just lay around holding each other and listening to each other breathe, I thought maybe you might be willing to try it. Do you understand where I'm coming from? I'd like to be monogamous one day, and..."

"Goddamn it, Justin. Why do you have to bring this shit up? Once again, a perfectly nice moment has been ruined by you." He was fuming, breathing loudly out of anger and annoyance. "And if you say anything about talking, I might just fucking hit you. We are not a nice, loving, married couple. We are queers and I'm not going to give up any ass I want just for yours."

I wanted to cry. Every nerve in my body was tight, preparing to send me into an anxiety attack. My erection had disappeared.

"Brian, please listen to me. I shouldn't have brought it up. I just kind of thought we were starting to..."

"Settle down? Domesticate?"

"No."

"Well..." I felt his penis slowly soften against my stomach. He pulled off me, but not before flicking the condom off my chest and off the side of the bed. "We won't be needing condoms tonight."

The next thing I knew, the bathroom door was slammed and I suddenly felt very cold.

Monday, May 26, 2008

12:29 PM

I couldn't remember anything from the night before. Not really.

All I could recall was lying there, hearing Brian's breathing but not feeling him. We slept in the same bed, but far apart, not even touching.

After he had returned from the bathroom, where he had apparently sat for hours, smoking and probably jerking off for all I knew, he climbed in beside me, careful not to touch.

He knew I was awake, I knew he knew, but neither of us said a word.

Sometime in early morning, right before Brian was to get up for work, I felt a peck of a kiss between my shoulder blades. I was awake, of course, and had been for the majority of the night, but I didn't make a move. I knew he was waiting, wanting to touch me, but I didn't scoot closer to him.

I closed my eyes and pretended to be asleep until he left.

I was groggy, achy after only getting a few hours of sleep. My joints hurt as I sat down in the computer chair of the loft, mug of tea in hand, thanking everything holy that I didn't have to teach. It was Memorial Day, meaning no school for the students.

Welcome, Brian Kinney

Password:

The bright blue of the screen killed my eyes. Shit.

I quickly typed in "bak91900," Brian's initials and Gus' birth date, and hit enter.

After checking out CNN's web page for election news, I signed on to AIM.

Brian was online.

BKinney (May 26, 2008 12:34 PM): Hey.

JTaylor (May 26, 2008 12:34 PM): hello

BKinney (May 26, 2008 12:35 PM): Have you checked your email?

JTaylor (May 26, 2008 12:35 PM): Not yet. Why?

BKinney (May 26, 2008 12:37 PM): Just do it now. I'm going to sign off. Call me or wait until I get home if you want to talk. Ted and I are the only ones here because I let everyone else have the day off. We just needed to go over some financial stuff, so I should be home soon.

JTaylor (May 26, 2008 12:38 PM): K. ??

BKinney has signed off

What the hell?

I went to GMail and typed in my user information, wondering what the fuck Brian could've been up to.

1 New Message

From: Brian Kinney

Subject: Justin...

Date: May 26, 2008

Time: 10:32 AM

Justin,

This is probably one of the most idiotic things I've done in a while, but I think sometimes I'm better at writing than I am speaking without getting angry or making you angry or whatever the fuck. Just take this for what it is and if you want to talk about it, call me or wait until I get home.

I know I never say this, and I still do not believe in apologies, but I think I might want to say "sorry" for how I acted last night. I think maybe I hurt you, and I want you to know that I didn't mean to. I would never want to do that. I also think possibly some of what I said was untrue or inaccurate.

So, without yelling, which I would probably be doing if I were telling you this instead of writing it, (it's something I really cannot control) I will try my best at lesbianism for the next few minutes and explain my feelings. Even though it may possibly make me want to hurl.

First, I want you to know that my reasoning has nothing to do with you. If there was no such thing as HIV or any other STDs, I would fuck you raw every hour of the day. You have no idea how much I want to do that sometimes.

As you are aware, I am not a fan of monogamy. It's not that I think the fact that you want it is stupid, it's because I just don't understand it. I don't understand why two men would want to only fuck each other and no one else (though I don't understand, I may possibly be beginning to). One of the privileges of being gay is the lack of emotional attachment most men get after having sex.

Before this pisses you off, let me add that I am not talking about us (see, I used the word).

For me, I like being able to fuck as many anonymous asses as I want and then coming home and fucking you. With tricks, it's nothing but the orgasm. It feels good, so I do it. I don't give a shit about their names or their feelings. It's nice to be able to get off whenever I want.

Obviously, it's different when I'm fucking you. To clear things up further and to keep you from dragging us into the "Is Brian just using Justin for sex?!" conversation ever again, I feel things when we are together. You are not just the key to an orgasm. Sometimes I want to do it with you just to be, shoot me now, "together." The orgasm is just a very satisfying plus.

Barebacking requires monogamy. There is no other safe way around it. As much as I want to fuck you raw, doing so means I give up tricking. You may possibly have been right that I do not need it as much as I used to. As of the past few months, I have been scarily absent from the mouths and asses of miscellaneous men more often than not. But don't get the idea that by my saying this, I am telling you that in six months you will be the only one to see my cock. I still like tricking, and I still want to do it for now. Do I think that maybe someday you can tie a leash to my dick and keep it for yourself? Possibly (read 'yes').

To sum all this up and to clarify so you cannot possibly be confused or need any extensive clarification:

- 1) I want to fuck you raw.
- 2) You are not just an ass, Justin. You are more.
- 3) Tricking means nothing to me except for fun and free pleasure.
- 4) You have to be monogamous in order to bareback safely, and I do not want that right now.
- 5) Most likely, someday, I will want that, which will mean that sometime in the future...
- 6) ...we will forgo the condoms.

Like I said before, if you would like to talk about this further, though I don't know why we would need to, give me a call or wait until I get home (preferably wait until I get home).

Please do not be angry or hurt. I was stupid last night. I should not have locked myself in the bathroom like a pussy and then came to bed and slept as far to the left as possible. I should have held you in my arms and kissed you to sleep. I know you didn't get much rest last night, because I didn't either. I listened to your breathing for most of the night.

I hope you will read this before I get home. I would kind of like to come home and make love to you before we talk, if that's okay?

Brian

Monday, May 26, 2008

2:43 PM

I heard the door to the loft slide on its tracks slowly.

"Hey," I said, pushing my long hair out of my face and sitting up straight on the couch, feeling rested from my two hour nap.

"Hey."

Brian looked at me, staring questioningly into my eyes and rolling his lips inward. He silently asked me if I was okay. If we were okay.

I climbed off the couch, plaid pajama pants dragging the ground, gray American Eagle shirt, a size too big with too-long sleeves, hanging baggily to my waist, and padded over to where he was standing.

He lowered his eyes to meet mine, keeping completely still. It was clear that I had to make the first move.

When our lips touched, it was like an explosion. What began slow, my lips taking what seemed like forever to meet his, took off in a fury when we began to kiss. Hands grabbing at Brian's jacket, ripping it off, cold fingers slipping inside my pants, pushing them, along with my underwear down to the ground, buttons flying everywhere, hitting the ground like spilled M&Ms.

I don't remember how it happened or how we got there but within a matter of minutes I was up against the refrigerator, door freezing against my back, screaming with pleasure at the top of my lungs.

Brian thrust, barely out of his pants, sucking my neck so hard I felt as if I was starting to bleed, body slipping up and down the steel door of the fridge, nipples hard, cock erect, ass being pounded so hard and so fast I almost choked on my tongue.

"Justin...!" He groaned, flattening himself against me, squishing me so hard against the refrigerator it was painful, heart thumping against mine, sweat mixing against our chests in a slick sheen.

"Oh shit. Oh shit." I bit my lip, drawing blood, waves of pleasure hitting me over and over, seeming to build into an impossible peak until I eventually came in five, powerful spurts, spraying all over my stomach and chest, moaning like I was dying. I felt like I was dying. Dying from the most intense orgasm I had ever experienced.

"That was...amazing," I panted, rolling onto my back in bed, watching as Brian tugged off the filled condom and tied it.

He had carried me, still inside, from the kitchen to the bed, plopping us down in the pillows.

We laid like that for a while, saying absolutely nothing, just staring at each other and kissing.

"Yes."

I groaned gutturally, scooting up and allowing Brian to fold his arms around me, holding me to his chest like a prized possession. "I feel all...fluttery." My limbs were shaky and limp. I felt as if I had just performed a full body workout.

"Me too." He kissed me and nuzzled my nose.

"I want to talk," I whispered. "I think we should have our talk tonight." Brian closed his eyes, remembering, and nodded. "But for now, I just want to cuddle."

He nodded again, eyes still closed, and then stopped, a small smile forming on his lips. "Cuddle?"

"Gotcha." I kissed him playfully, wrapping my arms around his waist and settling against his chest. "Admit that we're cuddling, and that you like it."

"Shut up."

"Please?"

"Justin."

"Please?"

"Do you know how annoying you are? I don't know why I put up with you."

"Pretty please?"

Brian sighed, trying to hold in the smile forming on his lips. "We are cuddling."

"And?"

"And, if Justin Taylor doesn't shut the fuck up, this is the last time he ever will."

I burst into giggles, wrapping a leg around his waist and kissing his chest. "I love you."

"Yeah, yeah."

"Say it."

"What?"

"Tell me you love me."

"Why?"

"Because I want to hear it."

"You don't need to."

I stuck my tongue out at him and scrunched my nose like a bratty child. "I do."

"You don't need to, because you already know."

Monday, May 26, 2008

7:18 PM

"Jesus Christ, Justin," Brian complained, picking up the tube of pizza flavored Pringles I pulled out of the cabinet and following me out of the kitchen.

In preparation for our talk, I had grabbed enough food and drink to hold us, and by us I meant me, over for a few hours - Two bananas, one bag of Hershey Kisses, one bag of white grapes, a tube of Pringles and a huge bottle of Evian.

"What?"

"You do know that in the event you are stricken with deadly hunger, you can get your ass up and go to the kitchen."

"I don't want to interrupt us."

"Whatever." Two beats. "But we are putting down fucking towels. I do not want to wake up in the morning with potato chip crumbs stuck to my skin."

I placed my food on the bedside table and waited as he disappeared into the bathroom and returned with two fluffy blue towels.

"Ready?" I sat cross-legged beside him on the bed, pulling the foil off the top of the Pringles can.

"Let's get this over with," he sighed, reaching for the bag of grapes, "so we can fuck till we're unconscious."

"Shut up!" I slapped him playfully, taking a sniff from the can.

"Why do you sniff everything?"

"What?"

"You just sniffed the fucking Pringles can. That's not the only thing, either. I've noticed you also sniff lunch meat, peanut butter..."

"I don't know. Stop distracting me."

We sat in silence for a few seconds, chewing our food and glancing around the room.

"Okay, so first," I began, reaching into the can and pinching half an inch of chips, pulling them out and sitting the stack on my knee.

The pads of my fingers were orange. "I just want to clarify that under no circumstances can you express any form of sarcasm. You're not allowed to get pissed off about nothing. You're not allowed to refuse to answer something reasonable."

"Christ, Justin..."

"Nope!" I pressed my finger to his lips. "None of that."

"Don't even think you're taming me for the hour."

"Brian, I'm asking you, from one partner to another, to lower your walls for me. Okay?" I paused, staring into his blinking hazel eyes.

"Even if you never do it again, I'm begging you to please just don't try to play defensive, unfeeling prick for the next few hours. We will get nowhere with this if you do that."

He rolled his eyes at me with a slight nod, reluctantly agreeing. "So, what's first on Justin's Agenda?"

I breathed, licking my bottom lip and going over the list of topics in my head. I had sorted them, not by importance, but by the order of progression. In order to get to the big stuff, we had to conquer the factors that led up to it. First came trust.

"Do you trust me?"

Brian nodded, plucking a grape from the bunch and popping it into his mouth. "Yeah."

"And I don't mean trust as in you trust me not to steal your shit while you're gone or you trust me to be careful when I get to fuck you on occasion."

He rolled his eyes.

"I mean do you trust me enough to tell me things? Do you trust what I say, and know that I would never ever hurt you for any reason?"

"Yes."

"I don't know if I believe you."

Brian's face grew red. I could tell that if he weren't bound by the rules, he would be yelling.

"I know you trust me enough to tell me about confidential shit at work and you always give me information on the business of our friends, but I'm not sure if you completely trust me with your feelings."

"What the fuck?" His voice was completely even in tone. "What feelings? I always let you know when I'm pissed or ridiculously happy."

"Exactly." I swallowed, breaking one of my chips in half and placing one piece on my tongue. "Anger and happiness are so easy to express, Brian. Feelings like hurt, sadness, embarrassment, confusion, those are the intimate ones. Those are the feelings I wish you'd express in front of me."

Brian looked at me, opening his mouth slightly and tucking his tongue into his bottom lip.

"I'm honestly a bit tired of having to guess when you're feeling hurt or sad."

"Because I almost never am."

"That's not true." I placed the other half of the Pringle in my mouth. "Brian, you're human. Everybody feels that way on occasion."

"So?"

"So... We're partners, Brian. We are in love. A part of being in a romantic relationship is sharing your feelings. You always want to know when I'm feeling badly. I wish you would tell me when you're feeling the more private emotions. I wish you would trust me and know that I would only help you in that situation."

"I don't ever need your help."

I sighed, placing the lid back on the Pringles can and reached out to grab his hand. "You do. Sometimes you need me to hold you."

Sometimes you need my advice. Sometimes you need to cry."

He raised an eyebrow. "Justin. I agreed to have a 'talk' with you, but I'll be damned if I'm growing a pussy and listening to you preach at me like we're on some daytime soap opera."

I rolled my eyes. "Just listen to me." Sigh. "At times, I sort of feel as if I'm the woman in the relationship." I smirked a bit, scooting closer to Brian. "I feel as if I'm always the emotional one, the one who has to be helped, the one who needs things."

"I don't feel that way."

"It's true, though. You act like you never need me, you say you never need me, even though I know you do. It makes me feel bad when I'm constantly the one being consoled, constantly the one being encouraged and held and fussed over when I'm upset. I know you get upset at times, and by upset I don't mean pissed off. You have a lot of emotional baggage, Brian, and sometimes I think if you would just let it all out in front of me and give me some of the shit on your back, you would feel better."

He bit his bottom lip. "Running the risk of being borderline lesbionic, I will say that three years without you proved that I definitely do need you. I know I'm possibly not the best partner when it comes to sharing feelings. I'm not very emotional. I fucking hate shit like that, and I don't know why. I hate that 'Show and Tell' crap you are so into. It's like..."

"I think you hate it because you have so much inside of you. I trust you won't get pissed at me for saying this, just don't, but I think you have tons of emotional damage from your childhood. I know you've told Michael stuff, but I don't think you've told him the full extent of it. It's built up and locked in a little corner in your heart, and over time, you've learned to numb out all emotion as a way of defense. Contrary to what you may believe, letting people, and

by people I mean me, your partner, the person you almost married, the man that loves you more than anyone in the world times a hundred, see some of your emotions and help you through things you may be going through in your life can help you. It's a good thing."

"I'm not letting that shit touch you."

"Is that your problem with telling me about your childhood? You don't want it touching me?"

Brian swallowed loudly, reaching a hand up to swipe at his brow. "I don't want you, the person that I..." He paused. "I just don't want you to pity me. I don't want you to feel sorry for me and think you have to do something to fix me. You don't need that in your life."

I reached out and brushed his cheek with my fingertips. "But don't you understand that we're way past that? I think what you're afraid of is that if you let me in on this part of your life, you will no longer be the invincible, perfect badass you think everyone believes you to be. That you'll be another person that has had something shitty happen to them that people feel sorry for to some degree. Brian Kinney, my love for you is unfaltering. You could tell me you were a fucking serial killer in your teenage years and I would still love you with all my heart. I know a lot about your childhood, probably more than you think I do from Debbie, and I've known for years. I don't pity you. I'm sorry it happened to you, and if I could do anything to erase that experience, I would, but I don't feel sorry for Brian Kinney. You are successful, rich as all fuck, have an amazing circle of friends who love you to death and a smart, sexy partner with a great ass."

Brian smiled, placing his open palm on my chest and pressing me backward onto the mattress. He kissed me tenderly. "I don't know."

"You don't know what?"

"Anything. About this shit, I mean."

I puckered my lips and gave him a peck on the tip of the nose. "I know. But promise me you'll try?"

"I'll try to be more open, Justin." He looked frustrated with himself. "But don't expect me to grow a twat and come to you crying all the time. That won't happen."

"I don't want you to feel as if lowering your defenses for me means you have to become a sensitive, blubbing idiot." I took a deep breath. "I'm just asking that if something is bothering you, like if something during your day upsets you, that you come home and tell me about it. I'm asking that you don't hold in anything and keep it from me. We're partners, and as two people in a relationship, it is our job to take care of each other, not just you taking care of me. I want to take care of you."

He nodded slowly, rolling his lips inward.

I closed the gap between our mouths and kissed him firmly. "I love you so much."

We kissed for a few minutes, slowly and tenderly, lips whispering against each other.

"I want you to tell me things. I want you to trust me with your feelings." I slid my lips from his mouth, past his chin, down his throat.

"We're together, Brian. I want you to be more open and emotional with me. It'll make us closer."

I leaned into his chest, inhaling his scent. His t-shirt smelled of detergent, cologne and his warm, comforting natural smell.

"Tell me what you feel right now." I leaned my head up and looked at him. "The truth. Everything."

He leaned down slightly and kissed the center of my scalp, then rolled his eyes. "I feel..."

"Hm?" I gave his chin a peck of a kiss.

"I feel mostly...happy. I'm happy to...be here." He swallowed. "And I'm nervous about all the other shit we're going to talk about."

"You're happy to be here?" I cracked a half smile.

He gave me a look I had grown to learn as signifying "don't push it."

"With me?"

Eye roll. Deep breath. "Yeah."

"Why Brian," I declared in a southern drawl, wrapping an arm around him. "That's incredibly romantic."

He bit my nose lightly. "Don't get used to it."

I rolled my lips inward and reached for the bottle of water. "I know, I know."

"That was my romantic gesture for the day. I'll allot you one."

"Just one?" I took a sip of the water and smiled.

"Just one spontaneous gesture. After-fuck talk doesn't count."

"That wasn't spontaneous."

"It was."

"No, it wasn't. You were prompted."

Brian stuck his tongue out at me and pinched my arm. "What do you consider spontaneous?"

"Spontaneous is..." I thought for a second, smiling up into his face. "Hm. Spontaneous would be you just randomly walking up to me and declaring your love."

"Oh really?"

"Yes."

"Okay." He kissed me wetly, our mouths making a loud, suctioning sound.

"So you'll do that? Randomly walk up to me and declare your love?"

Brian shrugged, grabbing the bottle of Evian out of my hands and taking a drink himself. "Who knows what the future has in store?"

Monday, May 26, 2008

8:02 PM

"So..." I started, heaving a sigh of relief that the worst part was over. The whole trust issue was what I had been dreading discussing. I figured that out of all the subjects I had thought of to talk about, that one would be the most likely to induce yelling and pissiness from Brian. "My next topic of discussion was actually monogamy, but we've mostly covered that already. I'd still like to talk about it some, though."

Brian nodded, sticking his index finger into his mouth and scraping a grape skin from his back tooth. "Shoot."

I took a sip of Evian from the bottle Brian and I were sharing and swallowed, feeling the cool liquid slide down my throat. "I loved your e-mail." I smiled at him.

His cheeks colored and he began to blink excessively. "Last night was horrible. I knew I was being a shit while I was holed up in the bathroom. I overreacted for no reason and I really think I hurt you. I hope we're okay now..."

"We're okay." I kissed his soft lips. "You did hurt me. I cried for a while after, but I think I also knew you didn't mean it. I think what made me feel so bad was when you said you wouldn't give up fucking anyone you wanted just to fuck me..."

"And that's not true. At all." Brian's breathing quickened with nervousness. I could almost hear his pounding heart. "I..."

"I know. While I was lying there after you went into the bathroom, my heart was telling me you didn't mean it. If you would've meant it, you would've left or kicked me out or pushed me out of bed or something. I know you love me, Brian, and I know that you were just pissed about the subject and it slipped out. That shit happens."

"That's all it was." He kissed me. "And I fucking hate saying this shit, you know I do, but I just want you to know that..." He closed his eyes and took a deep, slow breath. "...you're the only... I don't need anyone else." He opened his eyes, rolling his lips inward and wincing, as if it were painful to speak anything even remotely romantic. "But at the same time, I want some anonymous ass every once in a while. Not all the time, not nearly all the time, but on occasion. Since you've been back, I've gone as much as three weeks in a row without tricking."

I smiled.

Brian bit his bottom lip, breathing deeply and continuing very slowly and softly. "Unlike a few years ago, I think if we had to be monogamous right now, I could do it without too much trouble. That's if we had to be. I just don't want it right now. I'd be lying if I said I didn't want you to be monogamous. I know it's not fair of me, but I don't want anyone else even touching you." Eye roll. Deep breath. "You're mine, Justin, and I honestly don't think I could stand even having a threesome with you right now, unless I was the only one...doing anything to you."

I laughed sarcastically yet good-naturedly. "That's how I am with you! Can you not understand that? Shit like this makes me feel like the girlfriend."

"But the difference is that you rarely, if ever, trick. You build relationships with people. Like that Jimmie guy. You were friends with him. I'm not like that. I just borrow the asses and mouths of others for ten minutes and I'm done. Like I wrote in the letter, tricking is nothing to me but release. I don't feel anything but an orgasm."

"You're not being fair." I bit the inside of my cheek. "I'm perfectly capable of fucking without strings. I do prefer the relational side of things, but that's who I am most of the time. I'm not always like that."

"Whatever. It's just different."

I rolled my eyes. "So, when do you think you'll be ready to take the plunge into monogamy?"

Brian lowered his eyebrows. "Don't hold your breath. I don't know. Tricking is still fun right now, and I don't want to give it up yet.

I'm fairly young and damn sexy." Two beats with a chuckle. "Just know that the day will come, and we can get tested and then fuck long and hard and raw all night." He smiled naughtily.

"That's really hot. But please don't plan on making it the day that you turn sixty. I'd still like to be fucked by a youngish stud without gray hair and an enlarged prostate."

"I will never have gray hair. But I promise it won't be."

I laughed, biting his cheek playfully. "Have you ever fucked raw?" I raised an eyebrow at him and pressed him back against the pillows, curling against his chest.

He shook his head. "Never."

"I wonder what it feels like. I mean, I know it has to be amazing, but..."

"It's probably pretty intense."

"Yeah. I can't wait." I smiled at him and kissed his neck. "I love you."

He pressed his lips together and smiled boyishly. "No more monogamy discussion. It'll happen. End of story."

"I'm so tired," I breathed against the skin of his cheek, stifling a yawn.

"Too tired to fuck?"

"Maybe." Yawn. "But we're not done with our talk yet. No fucking until we're finished."

"Jesus, Justin. Talk fast."

"We can finish tomorrow. I slept like, none last night. You didn't either. I know you're tired."

"It's not even eight-thirty."

"I know. I'm getting old. My youth is failing me."

Brian sat up some, pulling me up with him. "Are you seriously going to sleep?"

"Yes, and you're going with me."

"I bet Gus isn't in bed yet. I know he's not."

"Come on. If you don't want to go to sleep, just hold me while I do." I smiled sleepily.

"Whatever, you pussy." He tapped my ass and kissed my neck. "I guess I'll just have to lay with you all night."

"Too bad, right?"

"Mmhm." He kissed my lips roughly.

We cleaned the towels and food from the bed, undressed and climbed under the covers, Brian wrapping his strong arms around my body. His chest was warm and smooth against my face as I snuggled against him, burrowing as close as possible. I loved him.

Tuesday, May 27, 2008

8:03 AM

"Can we please have sex?" Brian asked in a baby voice, rubbing his sleepy eyes and snuggling up to me. We had just woken up after sleeping for almost twelve hours. For all the whining Brian had done the night before about going to bed so early, I actually think he fell asleep before I did.

"Not until we're done." I tickled his side, causing him to squirm boyishly. "Are you going to work today? You usually leave at 8:30."

"Nope. I called Ted while you were still knocked out, and snoring very loudly might I add, and told him I'd be taking the day off."

I smiled, loving that he would do that for me.

"Simply because," he continued, wrapping an arm around my body, "I don't think I can put on a pair of pants with this fucking hard on." We laughed. "And this isn't just any stiffy, either. It cannot be solved by my right hand. It needs the ass of a blonde Taylor boy."

"I'll call my cousin Matt and let him know you'll be stopping by."

Brian slid his hand down the curve of my back, moving his fingers closer and closer to my ass.

"No!" I shrieked happily, pulling his hand away and climbing out of his arm.

He smiled devilishly. "Let's finish this so we can fuck."

We rolled onto our backs and snuggled close together, fingers entwining between us and heads leaned together. "What's next on your list?"

"This is actually the last thing..."

"Hallelujah."

"But I'm not sure if you'll like this subject or not."

"...why?"

I shrugged, rolling to my side and slipping a leg over his waist. "You 'hate this shit.'"

"Don't make me."

"Yes."

"You can't make me do anything I don't want to do." He stuck his tongue out at me like a five year old and laughed.
"No, seriously. Is this necessary?"

"Yes. Maybe not for you, the man who can live without words of love in his romantic relationship, but for me."

Brian sighed loudly, rubbing his cheek against my nose. "Let's get this over with so I can head to the store for fucking tampons. We'll probably need them by then."

"First we're getting food."

"No, first we're fucking."

I pinched him, pressing my lips against his and kissing lightly. "Okay, so I don't really know how to start this."

"Let's just not start this and say we did."

"Shut up. Be serious." Two beats. "I don't really want to have a conversation per se about this with you. I don't want to force anything."

I just want to let you know how I feel, and then we'll be done."

Brian raised an eyebrow. "You tell me how you feel all the time..."

"And you never listen. You tell me to stop being a lesbian."

He rolled his eyes. "I proooooomise not to call you a muncher. Now get on with it before I attempt to give myself head. I've never been so fucking horny in my life."

I slapped my forehead and closed my eyes, laughing. "You're ridiculous, you know that?"

"Not ridiculous. Hard as a steel rod and possibly capable of having a spontaneous orgasm."

I grabbed his crotch, teasingly. "You're not that hard."

He pushed up into my hand.

"No!" I giggled, pulling away and propping myself up on my arm. "Not till we're done."

"Well, go for it. Tell me you love me and all that shit."

I rolled my eyes. "I think I just want to know why it's so hard for you to tell me things."

"We already went over this. I'll try harder."

"No, not those things."

He raised an eyebrow.

"I know this sounds stupid and probably 'offends your sensibilities', but hear me out, okay?" Deep breath. "I know that as a person in a relationship, you don't need to hear an 'I love you' every once in a while. You're okay with togetherness. You're okay with just meaningful sex. I'm okay with that stuff too, but along with spending time together and making love comes a third part to complete the triangle."

"Let me guess: Is it a pink triangle?" He rolled his eyes.

I snorted. "Brian, you're the most homophobic gay man I've ever met." I gave him a smack on the arm and continued. "I know I tell you I love you a lot, probably more than I should because I've most likely spoiled you." Laugh. "But it's just something so true that I have to say it. You are romantic with me sometimes, but more often than not it's either after we've had sex or online. I know our relationship isn't built on romance like those of a lot of people. Our relationship is built on need. I fucking need you, Brian. We were never two star-crossed lovers. I may've been in love from the start, but our foundation is more than just immediate 'I love you.' Our love doesn't fade over time. We're spiritually connected."

"Oh my God."

I rolled my eyes. "And since we're not this 'date-night,' 'flowers and chocolate' couple, we've never had those heartfelt 'I love you's' under the stars or any of that shit. We don't want that. So we have to find another way to do it."

Brian appeared repulsed. He knew fully well that the 'we' I was speaking of was really 'him.'

"And some of us," I smiled teasingly, "say it a lot, some of us don't say it at all."

"What do you mean by 'another way to do it?'"

"I mean, we need to find a happy medium."

He raised an eyebrow.

"'I love you' is three little words, Brian. You have no problem showing me you love me, so why can't you just fucking say it? Even just once a day or once a week?" Deep breath. "I know it's not your thing, and submitting to saying such a phrase is completely anti-Brian, because you've lived your entire life chanting the 'I don't believe in love, I believe in fucking' mantra. But after all this, I don't understand why there is still that wall between us. Are you afraid of saying it?"

"Why the fuck would I be afraid?"

"Well, there's some reason you have issue."

"I just don't know why I have to say all that pussy shit when I..." He sighed loudly. "I try to show you, Justin. Sometimes I fuck up, sometimes I do things and say things I shouldn't, but I try to show you how I feel as much as I can."

"And I love how you show me, Brian. I understand that while I'm mostly verbal, you tend to be physical. The way you hold me and touch me and make love to me shows how much you care."

"Then why...?"

"Because for you, verbally admitting to being in love is huge. It means your last wall is destroyed, and you have finally given yourself to me. I'm fucking selfish, Brian. I want you."

"You have me."

"Then why don't I feel that way sometimes?" I blinked slowly.

Brian shrugged. "I don't know. I've said the words to you before. Do you remember after the bombing?"

"Yes. I remember every fucking time you've ever said 'I love you' to me. The problem is that I shouldn't be able to remember every time. Even back then, when we were 'engaged,' it was like Halley's Comet. And the words aren't my

issue. I know you feel love for me, Brian, but it's what it means for you to say them and your reservations with it that makes me a little...sad, maybe?"

"Don't..." Brian leaned down and planted a soft kiss on my lips. "Fuck, Justin." He rubbed his fingers through his hair. He gave me a look that oozed seriousness. "You drive me nuts, you know that? You have absolutely no idea how much I...feel for you, okay?" Deep breath. "And if we're talking about things that make us, I don't know what the fuck I'm saying but...sad, then what about how I feel when you constantly act like you don't believe me when I show you how much I want you?"

He rolled off me, turning on his side so I couldn't see his face. His breathing was loud and intensified. "And I've said way too fucking much than I ever wanted, and I'm going to hate myself for it, but I don't really care. Let's turn the tables and talk about trust. You are constantly fucking hammering on about how I don't 'trust' you, all the while you don't trust me. You don't trust my goddamn feelings when I show them to you. You act like just because I don't say them verbally, something I've never fucking done and something I might not ever become completely accustomed to, I don't really feel them."

My eyes widened at his breathing. He sounded as if he had just run a marathon. It was wild.

He turned over to finally face me again.

"I know I don't say the words, okay? I'm not forgetting, I'm not thinking you don't need them. You do need to hear them and I know that. You don't have to keep fucking telling me again and again that you want me to say it. Do you not think I know that by now?"

Swallow. He took a deep breath and rubbed his face with his palms. "This 'wall' you keep talking about... It's not there, okay? It hasn't been there since you returned."

Brian sat up, pulling his knees into his chest and leaning back against the headboard of the bed. "I have never said the words in a certain fashion to anyone but you. The fact that I said them at all still surprises me, not because I don't feel them, but because of who I am. I'm not going to make fucking excuses for my personality, Justin. I'm not you. I'm not Michael or Emmett. Just because I've only told you how I feel a couple times does not mean I have reservations. I do not have reservations." Heavy sigh. "I swear to God I don't know what I'm fucking saying, but... 'we' are the only thing I have ever been completely goddamn sure of in my entire life. If I have to say the words to prove to you how much I feel them, I will. I will say them to you and I won't want to take them back ever."

He swallowed, leaning down and hovering over my body. He grasped my wrists with his hands and kissed me tenderly on the lips.

"Justin Taylor, I love you, okay? I love you and I have never meant anything more in my entire, fucking life."

Our mouths crushed together.

I don't know who started it, how it started, when it started, but in a matter of seconds we were writhing and shaking and pulling off clothing in a frenzy.

"Justin, I..." Brian stroked my hair with one hand as he pulled my pajama pants down with the other. In a flash his shorts were to his ankles and a condom was pulled on. "I...Goddammit, I fucking love you."

He pushed into me, the pulsations and utter want causing me to seize up. We rocked together, my legs around his waist, his hands fumbling in my hair, lips glued to mine, noses rubbing with every kiss.

"Shit, Brian. Fuck!" I screamed, pulling him as close to me as I could. He looked wild, manic. "I love you!"

Everything was a blur. My eyes were running furiously with tears, chest heaving from emotion, legs wrapped so tightly around Brian that my ankles felt as if they would break from their locked position. I had never felt this way before. The intensity was almost blinding.

"Justin!" He hollered, biting into the flesh of my shoulder, probably breaking the fucking skin but I didn't care.

Nothing could've pushed me off the mountaintop. Everything inside me seemed to explode with relief and joy and sheer love.

My spine tingled, sparks shooting from head to toe, body tensing and clenching and squirming from pleasure. "Brian...!"

"Jus...!" He came, collapsing on top of me, never ceasing his constant thrusting.

My come shot out between us, coating our stomachs and chests, gluing us together.

Brian was still thrusting shallowly, even after our climaxes, and it took my kisses and strokes to his back and shoulders to calm his body.

We didn't say anything immediately, and instead, simply laid there, holding each other tightly, warm and wet and sticky with sweat and come.

"I'm sorry," I whispered against his neck, pressing a tender kiss below his ear. His skin was hot and feverish. "You don't have to prove anything to me."

"I hope not."

"What, no 'sorry's bullshit?'" I smiled.

"Sorry is still bullshit. But I ventured into the land of apology yesterday so you can do it today." His red, swollen lips upturned.

"You're fucking crazy." I placed my palms on either side of his head and pulled his face down to meet mine. We kissed softly, smiling against each other's lips.

"Don't even call me crazy. When we're eighty and living in a beach house in Key West, I'll be able write a goddamn book on deviant behavior."

"You'll be eighty. I'll only be..."

"Sixty-eight. I know."

He nuzzled his nose against mine.

"Well, I guess that's my confirmation that we'll be together until we're both in need of geriatric care." I giggled.

"Where else would we be?" I felt his fingers entwine with mine, and he rubbed his thumbs against the joints in my fingers, massaging and touching lovingly.

I beamed, heart thumping madly in my chest. The love that I felt for the man above me was so strong, I felt as if I would pass out. It was all encompassing.

"Do you realize how fucking easy this is?" I smiled.

"What?"

"To just...be like this."

He raised an eyebrow. "Like how?"

"Like..." I rubbed my legs, still locked around his waist, along his sides. "Just lying here, talking about silly things and loving each other."

He bit my nose playfully. "I'm difficult."

"And I love you."

He kissed me roughly, passionately. "Talk's over, right?"

"Yes. As if that wasn't clear from our furious lovemaking. You can fuck me freely now." I laughed happily.

"I'm not going to fuck you."

"...what?"

"I'm going to make love to you again, then I'll fuck you, then we can get some food..."

"...and I have to leave for work at one."

"You're not going today."

"I have to!"

"Sorry. You're on house arrest. No fucking way am I letting you leave."

"Brian, you don't understand. I'm supposed to give a notice hours before..."

He reached over and grabbed my cell phone from the bedside table. "Here. Give your notice."

I sighed with a smile, taking my phone from him and searching through my contacts for Jane.

"...and after we get food and then make love, I don't know, fifty or sixty more times..." He paused, chewing his bottom lip and reaching up to run his fingers through my hair. "I want to tell you something."

Tuesday, May 27, 2008

11:43 AM

"Holy shit. Oh shit. Brian!" I held onto his body for dear life, bouncing furiously up and down on his lap, his cock up my ass, pounding against my prostate with each movement. My entire body was limp, only functioning because Brian was wrapped around me, both of us in a seated position in the center of the bed, my legs wrapped around his waist, his arms wrapped around my ribs, tugging me up and down, harder and harder, both of us panting, panting, panting, screaming, moaning, sweat dripping from every pore, eyes watering, drooling, cocks red and impossibly hard, asses clenched, balls full, Jesus it felt good. "Holy...fuck!"

"Justin!"

"Right there...right there...that's..." I squeezed my eyes shut, wrapping my sweaty arms around Brian's neck, quivering at the hot wetness of his mouth against the center of my chest. I was about to come and come hard. "I'm...Now..."

"Yes...!"

"Uh!" My ass clenched around Brian's cock as I came, fiery and excessively all over my stomach, all over Brian's chest and his neck in hot, white ribbons.

He panted, moving under me furiously, body going rigid and as stiff as a board. "Mother of...Ah!" He fell backwards, body shaking with his powerful climax, breath puffing out his mouth loudly and powerfully. "Goddamn." Sweat dripped from his temples and trickled down his cheeks to his chin.

I leaned in and kissed him, or tried to, the process made difficult by his erratic breathing and our exhaustion. "That was..."

"Holy fuck."

"I know."

"Fuck."

"Yeah."

We were panting like we had been running for hours, faces red and feverish, our mouths white around the lips like I used to get in PE class as a child.

"That was the hottest we've ever..."

I nodded, opening my mouth and placing it against the hollow of Brian's throat, tasting his salty sweat. "I felt like I was having an orgasm the entire time we were fucking...like it was all one...continuous..."

"Damn, Sunshine."

I smiled, kissing his lips. We lay like that for a long while, holding each other and listening to inhales and exhales.

I made a move to roll off him.

"Mm. Don't go."

He pulled my body back against him and kissed my cheek.

After a while, I felt the condom loosen around Brian's softened penis.

"Brian..." I nuzzled him with my nose. His eyes were sleepy and lips were red and swollen.

"I know."

I bit my bottom lip, wanting more than anything to take the condom off him and put his naked penis back up me, but we couldn't. Not yet.

Slowly, I raised up, holding the condom in place at the base and climbed off, sighing at the emptiness I felt. "I hate that," I whispered, settling down at his side and pulling him closer.

"Me too."

We laid in silence for a few minutes, caressing each other's skin, kissing, and just resting after our marathon fuck session.

Tuesday, May 27, 2008

1:38 PM

"Thank God!" I yelled, climbing out of the computer chair at the sound of the buzzer, almost tripping over my plaid pajama pants on the way to the door. "Food!"

"You're a beast, you know that?" Brian laughed, flipping the page of his record keeping book for Kinnetik and outstretching his legs on the couch.

"That's okay. You still love me."

"Until you attack me in a fit of rage and eat me for dinner."

"Shut up." I smiled jovially, pressing the button to send the delivery on up.

"What'd you order?"

"Hamburgers and fries. I'm sick of Chinese and Thai."

"Great. Now I'll gain fifty pounds. Call Jenny for me, please."

I stuck my tongue out at him and opened the door to the loft when I heard approaching footsteps.

"This is fucking amazing."

"It's okay."

"Stop pretending you don't like fattening food. I hate it when people do that. It's so annoying when people are like, 'Eew, I don't like french fries. They're too fatty!' I mean, come on. Just because they're bad for you doesn't mean they're not fucking good. I love French fries, hamburgers, cheesy spaghetti and half-melted M&Ms. I'm not going to lie and say..."

Brian dropped his mouth. "Do you ever shut up? What the fuck are you on?"

I took a bite of my burger and scrunched my nose at him. "I'm just happy, that's all. I love you."

"Yeah, yeah."

"Don't do it again."

Brian raised an eyebrow. "What?"

"Go a long time without telling me you love me."

"Was it that big a deal?"

"Yes, Brian." I swallowed. "Maybe you don't need to be told all the time, but I do. I need it."

"Okay."

We ate in silence for a few minutes, enjoying each other's company. The air had never felt so light and happy.

"I love you," I said with a smile, precisely to see what reaction I would get, shoving three fries into my mouth.

"No one's going to love you back if you gain fifty pounds from this shit."

I laughed, leaning over and kissing his salty lips, tasting ketchup and pickles.

"Do my numerous declarations of 'I love you' today count as my romantic gesture?"

"Nope."

"You sure?"

"Yep."

He tossed the last bit of hamburger in his mouth and grabbed his half-empty french fry holder, dropping it into the paper bag the food came in. "What if..."

"What if...?"

"What if I did this..." He walked around to where I was sitting on the bar stool and wrapped his arms around me, holding my body to his chest. "And this..." He kissed me softly on the lips. "And said that I love you so much it makes me crazy..."

My heart pounded loudly against my chest. I kissed his lips and his cheeks and his nose and chin and neck. "You are amazing." Kiss, kiss, kiss. "And I love you more than anything. Ever."

"How was that for a romantic gesture?" He smiled goofily. "Does that work?"

I nodded, rolling my lips into my mouth. "That works." Kiss. "But it doesn't count."

"What?"

"You were prompted."

"No fucking way."

"You were."

"Justin..." he leaned in and bit my nose lightly, dipping his mouth some and kissing my lips. "That fucking counts."

"Nope."

"Well, we'll see about that..." He grabbed me, pulling me off the stool and wrapping his arms around my body wrestling-style.

"Brian!" I laughed, trying to squirm out of his grip.

"I'm not letting go. To the bedroom with you, little boy. I believe a punishment is in order."

"A spanking?"

"A fucking so hard you won't be able to see straight."

"Remind me to be bad more often."

"Mm. If you're extra bad in bed, you might have to be punished twice."

"Really?" I giggled against his chest as he pulled me up into the bedroom. "And held afterwards?"

"That's quite probable."

He pushed me onto the bed and attacked with crushing kisses.

Tuesday, May 27, 2008

11:04 PM

"Damn I'm tired," Brian announced as we entered the loft. "Sunshine, you wore me out today."

I smiled happily, closing the door. Around dinner time, we had taken a break from constant fucking and sucking to make a stop by the diner, play a game of pool with the boys at Woody's, and then a half-hour stop by Babylon for Brian to check up on things and check his office messages. I asked him if he wanted to make a pit-stop, and by pit-stop I meant backroom, but he told me 'no,' and that he wanted to get home. I had smiled, silently counting that as his romantic gesture for the day.

"But it was so good," I said, walking up behind him and massaging his shoulders. "We're amazing together when things get passionate."

"We're always amazing together."

"Agreed."

Brian unbuttoned his shirt, slipping out of it and tossing it on the chair by the bed.

"So, what did you want to tell me?"

"Hm?" We both pulled off our pants and tugged back the duvet.

"You know." I licked my lips and slid under the covers, pulling my shirt off as I climbed in. "You said you wanted to tell me something after our fifty or sixty fucks."

He nodded, rolling his lips into his mouth and climbing in bed beside me. "Yeah."

My eyes widened. "It's not bad, is it? Are you okay?"

"No, no. Nothing like that."

I heaved a sigh of relief, rolling onto my side and wrapping a leg around his. "Then what?"

"I don't really want to tell you anything specific. Maybe I was misleading with what I said, but...I've decided that...if you would like to ask me things...about my childhood, I probably wouldn't get mad and I might answer."

My heart beat rapidly. I couldn't believe it! He was offering to talk about something he had refused to discuss with me before.

"Wha...Really?" Frankly, I was shocked. I honestly thought Brian would never tell me.

"Yeah." He blinked slowly, leaning down and kissing my neck. "I was thinking...after what we talked about yesterday and today, and I decided that...even though it has nothing to do with you, you still deserve to know." Two beats. "Well, you don't deserve to know, because I really don't want you to be affected by it, but it is your right as my...partner-like person...to be included in all aspects of my life. And unfortunately, that's a part of it. Or it was."

I nodded, a small smile on my face. As much as I wanted him to talk about it with me, I didn't want to ask him anything. That felt a bit too intrusive.

"I don't want to ask you about it," I whispered, leaning in to his chest and kissing the bare flesh. "I just want you to tell me. Tell me what you feel comfortable with. Give me some of the burden you're carrying around."

"I don't..." He sighed, giving in. "Alright."

I wrapped an arm around him, holding his body close. His heart beat soundly.

"My parents were assholes." Swallow. "My father was a drunk bastard, my mother was, and still is for that matter, a frigid bitch. Dad used to hit my sister Claire and I around a lot...Well, I got most of it." Pause. Deep breath. "It started when I was about six or seven. I remember it. I mean...well, before that I got yelled at a lot. They told me they hated me, how they wished I'd never been born, how Dad wished Mom had gotten the abortion he wanted her to..." He rolled his lips in, looking around at the walls. "Anyway, when I was six or seven, I remember I came home from school. The bus was late or something, and I wasn't home at exactly three-thirty like I usually was. It was probably three forty-five or maybe a little later than that. I came in the house carrying all my shit from school, pictures I'd drawn for my mommy and daddy, my homework folder, backpack with Tonka trucks on it..."

I smiled, imagining a little Brian.

"I had all this shit in my hands, and I remember just walking in and Dad was standing there on the phone with a fucking bottle in his hand, drinking and slurring his words when he talked. He said something like, 'I gotta go,' and slammed the phone down, then said: 'Sonny Boy! Where the fuck have you been?' I just kind of stood there, not knowing what to say, shit just piled up in my arms. He came closer to me and I could smell him and it was awful. He grabbed the collar of my shirt and started pulling so it was cutting into the back of my neck, I remember I had an awful rash after that, and started just fucking screaming into my face. He pushed me and I dropped some of my papers, particularly this little purple heart I had cut out with little pictures of my family drawn with markers, and he called me an idiot or something, and pushed me down to pick it up. I got down and tried to grab it, but it was stuck flat to the linoleum and was hard to pick up. Dad kicked me in the side and..." He took a deep breath, licking his lips. "...and I just laid there crying. He kicked me four or five times in the ribs, probably broke one of them, and then left."

"Brian..."

"It just got bad from there. One time he hit me in the head with one of those orange plastic bats when I was about thirteen because I was being a lazy teenager and said something to Mom about not wanting to wash the dishes."

"Shit..."

"And once he came into my bedroom while I was sleeping and punched me in the mouth. He was so fucking drunk. I just woke up to a fist pounding into my mouth and two of my baby teeth came out."

"Did someone call the police?" My heart was pounding.

"Are you kidding? If Ol' Jack hit me, according to Mom, I usually deserved it. Claire was only two years older than me and she was whipped into shape. She got hit some too, but it wasn't as bad. Once she had a shoe thrown at her and it gave her a black eye, but that was the worst of it. Most of the time she was yelling at me, too. She loved Dad. No matter how much he yelled at her, called her a 'cunt' and a 'bitch,' she was still a daddy's girl." He rolled his eyes.

"Did you love him?"

"All kids love their parents. Until you're twelve or thirteen and know enough to think otherwise, you always love them." Swallow.

"And they weren't abusive all the time. A lot of the time I had a normal, middle-class childhood. They took Claire and I to amusement parks, the swimming pool, toy stores, and sometimes Mom would read me bedtime stories when I was small." He had a bit of a glint in his eye. "But other times, they were... I remember when I started finding out I was gay. I had this magazine, some idiotic teen mag from the eighties that was probably Claire's or I stole it from a street vendor or something. I kept it under my mattress so I could look at the boys and jerk off, and I was terrified Mom or Dad would find out. I used to lock my bedroom door at night when I started having...feelings...until the latch broke from being kicked at some point, and I remember just jerking off and shaking I was so afraid someone would come in. I don't know why I still did it if I was so afraid, but I did. Jesus, I don't even want to think about what would happen if Mom or Dad came in and found me whacking off to some boy."

"Did you ever tell your dad?"

"Yeah." Brian inhaled shakily, chewing at his lips. His eyes were sparkling. "Right before he died. He told me I should be the one dying."

"Oh my God." I lowered my eyebrows, leaning up and kissing at his lips. "Brian..."

"Mm." He looked down at me as if he were in a daze.

"This still hurts you, doesn't it?" I asked carefully, stroking his back. "Your memories, I mean."

He swallowed loudly, sniffing a little. "I just ignore it. Joan can go fuck herself, Jack can rot in Hell."

"I know that some of the things you have trouble with, or had trouble with, are because of what happened to you. You just need to talk about it sometimes, Brian. When you're feeling bad or hurt, you can talk to me. If you don't want any input, I'll be happy to just listen. I'll hold you and I won't say anything. It'll make you feel better to give some of the shit on you to someone else." I kissed him, long and slow.

"I used to do that with Mikey when Jack was still alive. I'd go and meet Dad and afterwards, would just go over to Michael's, piss drunk and crying and a fucking mess."

"Why did you still meet him? Even after all he did to you?"

Brian sniffed wetly, tensing up a little before allowing himself to go limp in my arms. "I don't know. I guess..."

"You still loved him." I kissed his neck, feeling a slight shake of his shoulders. "He was your dad, Brian. It's okay to love your parents."

You were a part of him."

"I don't love my parents." His voice was broken, and I could tell he was crying though I couldn't see his face.

"They hurt you and caused you so much pain, but there's something inside of you that just makes you feel some sort of..." I pulled out of our embrace, determined to look him in the eye. There were two tears on his cheeks and one teetering on the edge of his eyelid. His eyes were red and bloodshot. "It's like my dad. He's done so much shit to me, but I still love him. I'd still be distraught if he died."

Brian wiped his cheeks, sniffing and trying to regain his composure. I grabbed his hands and pulled them off his face. "Don't worry about it. You can cry in front of me. I promise not to alert the press."

"Shit, Justin."

"It's okay." I settled into his arms, tears of my own puddling in my eyes. "I love you, and I want to thank you for sharing this with me." Two beats. "I'll just hold you. Do what you need to do."

Brian nodded, bottom lip quivering, and settled back into the pillows, his grip around my body impossibly tight.

We lay like that for what seemed like an hour, wrapped in each other and crying. Brian cried steadily, tears dripping down his neck and falling onto my forehead. At times he gasped for air, chest shuddering and shaking, crying hard. His sobs were quiet, usually nothing but loud puffs of air, but I could tell that if he weren't holding them in, they would be loud. "I love you, I love you," I whispered against him, rubbing his back and kissing at his chest. I hoped that crying it out would help some.

I knew that, as much as he denied the fact, he still had a lot of emotional attachment to his parents. I was willing to bet anything that if his mother were to just come out and say she had finally learned to accept him for how he was, though he would act to the contrary, he would be elated.

Brian needed that emotional release. I would always be there and willing to hold him and help him through it. Though bringing up the subject of his parents stirred and unsettled him, it was something that just had to be done.

We fell asleep, a tangle of half-naked limbs, twisted in a lovers' knot.

3 Months Later

Sunday, August 10, 2008

3:17 PM

"Do you want to get out the photo album?" I asked Brian, reaching over and lazily tracing a random pattern on his stomach through his gray t-shirt.

It was a hot, dry, lazy Sunday, and we had just returned from lunch at Deb and Carl's house with the gang. Brian was lying on his back, smoking a joint in the middle of the loft and I was beside him on my stomach, sketching a rough draft of a project for school on a cheap drawing pad.

"God, you're a lesbian."

"No. I don't like pussy." Two beats. "Do you want to? Come on, it'll be fun." I propped myself up on my elbows and leaned over his face, smiling at him. He blew smoke at me.

"Go get it..." He rolled his eyes, lifting his right leg and using it to rock himself into an upright position. "It's on the bookshelf, I think."

"Imagine that." I rolled my eyes teasingly, sticking my tongue out at him and jogging across the loft to get it.

During my break from school around the Fourth of July, Daphne and I had found a box of old photos stashed away in the bottom of Brian's closet. As a surprise, I had placed all the photos in a new photo album, adding in the more recent pictures, plus others that I had gathered throughout the years and my personal photos. I knew Brian would think it was cheesy, sentimental and lesbionic, but I wanted to do it. If not for him, for me. I wanted something to look at when we are old and gray. Correction: When Brian is old and I am gray.

I had given it to Brian the week before and he had kissed me and told me it was great, but we didn't have time to look through it together.

"Okay," I said, plopping down on the couch, the large, leather-bound photo album clutched against my chest.

Brian took a final drag on his joint and climbed up onto his feet, walking over to the ashtray and crushing the butt. "Let's take a walk down Memory Lane..." He smiled, pushing his tongue against the inside of his cheek.

I patted the empty cushion beside me. "You'll love it, I promise."

After Brian was settled beside me, I opened the album, the spine cracking happily.

"Oh my God," he laughed, covering his smiling mouth. "What the fuck is that?"

I laughed heartily, leaning my head against his arm. "It's our baby pictures!"

"Justin. What the fuck?" He was laughing uncontrollably, loudly, pulling his legs up and curling them against his body, leaning down and snorting with laughter.

"What?"

"You look like E.T. I swear to God, Justin."

I opened my mouth, making a face in faux offense. "I was cute!"

"Justin, I'm serious."

I whacked him upside the head with my open hand. "I was not an ugly baby."

"You're cute now, but what the fuck?" He rolled over on top of me, laughing like a hyena.

On the page were four photos, two of Brian, two of me, when we were newborns and toddlers. In one of Brian's photos, he was lying, wrapped in a blue blanket on a bed, a messy mop of light brown hair on his head, yawning adorably. In the photo of mine Brian was laughing at, I was propped up on a pillow, head bald as a cue ball, skin pink and wrinkly like a baby pig.

"Let me see some more. I hope to God you were a cute toddler."

I flipped the page, smiling at the photos presented. They were some of my favorites. On the left page was a huge professional photo of Brian around the age of one, dressed in pinstriped overalls and tiny white Keds, grinning at the camera, front teeth not fully grown in.

His hair was long and curly at the ends, eyes shining in the flash. "You were so fucking cute. Gus looked a lot like you when he was that age."

He leaned over the album to get a closer look at the photo of me and grinned. "Okay, that's really cute. You must've grown out of the 'Phone Home' look you had going there when you were tiny."

I slapped him on the arm. The right page had a large professional photo of me, dressed in a blue jumper, standing barefoot on a platform, a yellow toy telephone held up to my ear. My hair was white-blonde and curly, lips were smiling.

Brian flipped through, examining the pictures scattered over the next few pages. There were photos of him in his early childhood, brown as a berry with a suntan, many of him shirtless, barefoot and in shorts, sticking his tongue out at the camera, showing his missing front teeth, smiling adorably in a collared shirt for his first, second and third grade school pictures, and holding a tiny popgun with black lines drawn under his eyes and a fluorescent yellow baseball cap on backwards.

"You were really masculine as a kid, weren't you?" I asked, pointing to a photo of him with a suction cup bow and arrow, dressed in a white undershirt and jean shorts, knees scabbed and dirty.

"And apparently you weren't," he laughed, pointing to a picture of me Dad had taken one morning before church when I was eight. I was dressed in a pale yellow collared shirt, perfectly pressed khakis, shiny brown shoes and holding a white Bible.

"I don't really remember much, but I think I was one of those kids you could tell were gay from the time they had formed any personality at all." I smiled.

"A born twink."

When we got past the childhood pictures and entered the teenage years, my heart began to speed. Brian was gorgeous.

"That's so hot," I whispered, poking at a picture of an eighteen-year-old Brian dressed in a forest green sweater, leaned up against the side of someone's car, unlit cigarette pressed between his lips.

"So is that." He pointed to a photo of me taken by Deb. I was dressed in my white 'too busy to fcuk' shirt, lying on the couch like I had just woken up from a nap.

"It's funny how the picture of me at eighteen was taken in oh-one, and the photo of you was taken in what, eighty-nine?"

"Is that an age crack?" He thumped the side of my head and leaned in, pressing a quick kiss against my cheek.

"Maybe. You'll have to punish me later."

"I'll look forward to it."

I flipped the page, smiling brightly at one of my personal photos I had placed there. "This is one of my favorites."

Brian pulled the album out of my hands and held it up, studying the picture with a nostalgic smile. It was taken in 2003, right after we had gotten back together. We were sitting at the bar at Woody's, faces pushed closely together, smiling goofily. My tongue was partially sticking out and Brian was grinning like an evil little boy that had just stolen the cookies from the jar. He had held the camera out, taking it himself.

"And this one." I turned the page, knowing which picture I had put on the other side. It was another photo Brian had taken of us sometime after my buzz cut, this time at the diner, me snuggled against his neck, playfully biting at his throat.

We sifted through the pages, stopping every once in a while to make comments, until we came to one particular photo taken in March, right after our reunion.

Brian stared at it, reaching out to stroke his fingers over the surface. "I want this framed."

It was beautiful. Brian had taken it with the black and white camera setting after we had made love. It was a head and shoulders shot of us lying, facing each other, eyes closed, my lips parted and pressed up against Brian's throat, his face buried in my hair.

"We look so in love," I whispered, turning my head and kissing his cheek.

"I really want this blown up and hung." He reached his fingers under the clear plastic covering and pulled it out, holding it up to his face. "Maybe crop a bit so you can't tell I took it..."

"Where would you hang it?"

"In the house."

I smiled, parting my lips to his kiss.

I flipped the page, laughing at the look on Brian's face. "I'm taking this out!" He made a grab for the first photo on the page, trying to pull it out of the album.

"No fucking way!" I giggled, pulling his fingers off of the plastic covering.

"That's embarrassing!"

"It's cute. I love it."

It was a photo of Brian I had taken in June while he was in the bathroom shaving. He had a red towel wrapped around his waist, a smear of shaving cream across his jaw and his mouth was open, arm outstretched playfully. He had been singing along to 'Picture Book' from his Kinks album secretly in the bathroom, and when I had walked in with the camera, prepared to take a candid shot intended to embarrass him, he had turned to me and sang. Snap.

"I let you take it, but it was just for us to keep on the computer or something. Take it out." He made another grab for it.

"I will later. Don't worry about it."

"Yeah, right." He rolled his eyes good-naturedly. "I'll get it out when we're done."

I flipped the page to the last photo, smiling brightly.

"I want this one too, for my desk at work." Brian rubbed the pad of his finger across.

I had taken it only a few days prior and placed it in the album the day before after printing it out on photo paper. A photo Daphne snapped, it was a close up of just the sides of our faces as we kissed, lips puckered and pressed together, eyes closed, noses squished.

"I love this." We turned to each other and kissed, mimicking the photo.

"Me too."

I smiled, closing the album and snuggling into Brian's arm.

"Let me see the E.T. picture again!"

"No!" I pulled the album against my chest.

"Give it here."

"Nope. You're going to make fun of me."

"Because you look like a fucking alien. Let me see."

"I was only like, three months old! I was tiny."

"You look like a hairless mouse or something. I swear to God, I'm surprised your mother even took you home from the hospital."

I leaned in and bit his cheek. "Shut up. You admitted it, I got cute when I was about two."

"After you grew hair and your skin got...normal."

I slapped his arm. "Just for that, I'm blowing up the picture of you singing The Kinks."

"Great. Need some dynamite?"

"Shut up!" I laughed, gripping the album more tightly. "You'll go to work one day and find it hanging, framed above your desk."

He stuck his tongue out at me.

"It's really cute, though. That was fun."

"Fun?"

"Watching you dance."

He raised an eyebrow, cheeks coloring. "I did no such thing..."

I bopped around on the couch, singing in a high pitched voice.

"You're going to pay for that..."

I grabbed the album and climbed off the couch, jogging toward the bed.

Leaping onto the bed, I laughed loudly as Brian climbed on behind me and wrapped his arms around my waist, pulling me tightly against his body.

"You're in trouble, E.T...!"

Friday, September 19, 2008

7:54 PM

"Daddy!" Gus yelled, dashing through the living room of Debbie and Carl's house and leaping into Brian's arms. My heart soared at the sight. Brian loved him so much.

It was the first time he had seen him in four months. It was Gus's eighth birthday, and Lindsay and Melanie had flown down with him and four-year-old JR in tow to celebrate with a family dinner on Friday.

"Gus," Brian said, squeezing him to his body and standing up, holding him against his chest and swinging him in a circle as they hugged. He kissed his cheek with a growl, like he was a dinosaur taking a bite out of his prey, and then sat him down. "You're getting so tall!"

"I'm the tallest on my basketball team!"

"Really?" Brian raised his eyebrows in an exaggerated fashion, reaching out to tousle his son's hair. "You better stop growing. You're going to be taller than me by the time you're nine."

Gus smiled, baring his gleaming white teeth. "Hey Justin!"

"Hi Gus!" I gave him a one-armed hug and a kiss on the head. "Happy birthday!"

"Thanks."

"What'd you get so far?"

Gus scrunched his nose and crossed his arms. "Nothing yet. My mommies wanted me to wait till I got here."

"Aw." I stuck out my bottom lip. "I'm sorry. But you'll get lots of presents all at once that way."

"Yeah."

The front door opened and Michael walked in with Ben, a look of fatherly panic on his face. "Where's my daughter?" His arms were already outstretched.

"Oh," Melanie jumped, surprised at Michael's sudden burst into the room. "Uh...she's...JR!"

A small voice came from up the stairs. "Huh?"

"Come down! Your daddy's here!"

A tiny thump sounded on the landing at the top of the staircase and down came JR, dressed in pink overalls, dark brown pigtails bouncing with each step.

"Hey, baby!" Michael cooed, jogging up the stairs to meet his daughter halfway. He grabbed her, everyone else in the room apparently gone from his vision, and began to hug her like he hadn't seen her in years.

"Christ, Mikey. Don't crush her!" Brian rolled his eyes, as if he didn't just hug Gus in a very similar fashion.

"I'm not, I'm not." He carried Jenny Rebecca down the stairs and sat her down, grabbing her hand and pulling her over to the couch so they could talk.

"This is so exciting," Emmett giggled happily from the kitchen where he was setting the table. "The whole family's back together!"

Two beats, enough time for him to place a fan of napkins in the center of the table. "Brian and Justin are together again, Lindsay and Melanie with Gus and JR are here, Michael and Ben, Deb and Carl..." He smiled at them from their resting place on the couch, Gus snuggled in between them, Brian squatted on his knees in front. "...Teddy..." Ted raised the red plastic cup of water he was holding, lifting an eyebrow in confirmation of his presence. "...Blake. If Hunter were here it'd be all of us."

"Hunter just got moved into his dorm for the school year the other day and he wasn't able to make it," Ben announced, adding he and Michael's gift bag for Gus to the pile in the corner of the living room.

"And where's your man, Em?" Michael asked, arms wrapped around JR, who was perched on his lap.

Emmett smiled dreamily, placing the last of the silverware on the table. "My big, sexy doctor had to work."

Emmett was dating a doctor at the hospital named Robert Lahaie, whom he met at a dinner party he had planned for one of his friends.

"Ready to eat?" Debbie called, climbing up off the couch and straightening her clothing, a leopard print t-shirt over black leggings.

Friday, September 19, 2008

8:28 PM

"And then James threw the ball to me...and I grabbed it and dribbled real fast...and I ran and threw it up in the air...and you know what?" Gus took a deep breath, staring intently at Brian, a look of complete and total childish excitement on his face.

"What?"

"I made a basket!"

"Way to go, Gus!" Brian cheered, clearly proud. He leaned down and kissed Gus's spaghetti-sauce stained nose, before grabbing a napkin and blotting at the food all over his son's face. "Are you going to play soccer in the spring?"

"Uh huh! Mommy said you were a great player when you were little."

"When I was little?" Brian rolled his eyes with a laugh. "I'm still a great player. I may be a little rusty, but I can still kick ass at it..."

Gus's eyes widened. "Daddy..."

"Hm?"

"You used a word!"

Brian laughed. "Alright, which one of you is enforcing the no potty mouth rule? Because I'm not censoring myself..." He looked over at Mel and Lindsay, giggling happily.

"Brian." Melanie rolled her eyes disapprovingly.

"He's too young to be swearing," Lindsay confirmed, dipping the tip of a napkin in her glass of water and using it to wipe the rest of the spaghetti sauce off Gus's face.

"He is not." Brian gave everyone an annoyed look. "I can't even remember not throwing around a 'fuck' every once in a while."

"Brian!" I slapped his leg under the table. "Don't even expect us to believe you were allowed to cuss at eight. When I was eight, I'd be sent to my room for hours if I said something like that."

Brian sighed, resigning. "Whatever." He turned to Gus. "Sonny Boy, whenever you're visiting me for the summer, you can say whatever the fuck you want."

Gus's eyes widened.

I covered my face with my hands disbelievingly.

"Talking like that is really going to change me and Lindsay's minds about him being too young to be away from us," Melanie said with an eye roll, taking a sip of wine.

"He can't get any more warped than he does living in a house full of munchers. You're going to make him straight."

"What's straight?" Little Gus looked up at his father expectantly.

"It's when you like to fu--"

"Don't you dare!" Melanie raised her fork at Brian, threateningly.

"What?" Brian laughed. "I really wasn't going to." He looked around, meeting disbelieving eyes. "I swear I wasn't. I just wanted to see what you'd do."

Everyone rolled their eyes.

Brian looked down to Gus and said, very softly, "Straight is what a boy is when he likes a girl, or a girl when she likes a boy."

"You like boys."

"Yes."

"And my mommies like girls." Gus swallowed. "And that's called gay."

Brian laughed. "Yep. And lesbian."

"I like girls."

The room went silent. Even Emmett, Ted, Blake, Debbie and Carl, who were engaged in their own separate conversations, stopped talking. Michael jabbered on to JR about something or another, but his ears perked up.

"You don't know that, Sonny Boy," Brian said quickly.

"I have a girlfriend at school!" Gus looked at Brian like it was the most obvious thing in the world.

I patted Brian's knee soothingly. We had discussed it before, and Brian had told me that he wouldn't care what sexuality Gus turned out to be, as long as he had good taste in attire, but I knew he secretly wished he would turn out to be gay.

"But you don't know if you really like girls or boys until you're a little older."

"He's obsessed with Miley Cyrus," Melanie said with a laugh, taking a bite of garlic bread.

"I love Miley Cyrus!" Emmett cooed, smiling brightly.

Brian snorted. "I rest my case."

"He told us the other day that she was the hottest girl he'd ever seen." Lindsay giggled, patting her son on the head affectionately.

"And my girlfriend's name is Hannah. I like to call her Hannah Montana."

"Oh my god." Brian closed his eyes, turning and giving me an 'oh shit!' look.

I laughed and patted his shoulder.

"And she has blonde hair, too! She's a cheerleader and plays soccer!"

"Why wasn't I informed of this little girlfriend?" Brian asked Lindsay and Melanie, raising his eyebrows.

Lindsay gave Brian a look. "They're eight. Gus's definition of 'girlfriend' is someone he sits beside at lunch."

"Still..."

I snorted.

"What are you laughing at, little twat?" He leaned in and gave me an affectionate kiss on the corner of my mouth.

"Nothing."

"Who's ready for cake?" Debbie asked, hopping up out of her chair and scrambling over to the counter.

"Me, me!" Gus yelled, bouncing up and down in his seat. "Daddy!"

"Hm?" Brian smiled at his son, obviously secretly loving being called 'Daddy.'

"Guess what I have on my cake?"

Brian scrunched up his face, thinking. "Hm. Spongebob?"

"No! That was my sixth birthday!"

"Superman?"

"That was my seventh birthday!"

"I'm stumped. What's on it?"

"Soccer!"

Brian smiled brightly. He stroked Gus's hair and stared down at him proudly.

Friday, September 19, 2008

10:23 PM

After the cake was eaten, the presents were opened and Brian and Michael had tucked their children in Michael's old bed, all the adults had lounged around the living room, drinking and catching up.

"Gus and JR are getting so big!" Debbie said, smiling proudly.

"Yeah," Brian murmured, leaning his head against my shoulder. "It seems like only yesterday I was shooting my load into a cup."

"It probably was yesterday. I know you're into that kinky business."

Brian stuck his tongue out at her.

"I can't believe Jenny Rebecca is already four. God, she'll be starting kindergarten next year!" Michael shook his head in disbelief, snuggling further into Ben's arms. "And she's smart, too!"

"Gus loved his gifts," I whispered privately to Brian, leaning over and kissing his lips. He had gotten him, among other things, a soccer goal and absolutely anything and everything a soccer player could dream of owning.

He smiled, reaching around and placing his fingers on the back of my head, pulling my face back to his. We kissed slowly, playfully.

"Will you two cut it out?" Debbie hollered, picking up a pillow and tossing it at our heads.

"Relax," Brian breathed, coming up for air. "It's not like we're, I don't know, doing this..." He pushed me down flat against the recliner we were sharing and reached down to cup my crotch.

"Brian!" I sat up, pushing his hand away and laughing, face red as a beet.

The whole room groaned, mostly in annoyance, with the exception of Emmett, who slurped on his straw forcefully and watched on.

Brian laughed loudly, leaning down to kiss me once more and then settling back down in a proper seated position.

"Don't you two get enough at home?" Carl asked, a slightly disgusted look on his face.

"We never get enough."

"Excuse me while I puke up my dinner." Melanie covered her face with her hands and rolled her eyes.

"You two coming to Babylon?" Michael asked us later, reaching over the back of the couch and grabbing his jacket.

Brian looked at me and I nodded.

"Yeah," he said, climbing out of the armchair and standing up. He reached down and grabbed my hand, pulling me up with him.

"We'll be there later."

"Just come on now."

Brian looked around nervously, his grip on my hand bordering painful. "We'll be there later."

"Uh. Okay?" Michael gave us a look and started scrambling, along with Emmett, Ted, Blake and Ben, to the door. "See you later, Ma!

Carl."

"Alright, honey!"

"Later, Deb and Carl! Thanks for the food."

"Bye!"

"What the fuck are you two doing?" Melanie asked me, settling back into Lindsay's arms.

I gave her an 'I have no idea' look and shrugged. Brian tightened his grip on my hand even more, causing me to wince, and started to pull me toward the door after the fleeting group of people.

"I thought we weren't going yet?"

"We're not."

I lowered my eyebrows, waving to Deb, Carl, Linds and Mel as Brian dragged me across the threshold.

"Where are we going?" I asked him once we were in the Corvette. He reached over me and buckled my seat belt, hands shaking.

Nervous.

"The loft."

"Why?"

"You're not dressed for Babylon."

I squinted at him in the dark. "What?"

"You're not dressed for dancing."

"What's up with you? You're acting really strange. I've been to Babylon hundreds of times in my casual clothes. It's never been a problem before, Mr. Owner Of The Club."

"Just shut up."

I bit my lip. What the fuck?

Friday, September 19, 2008

11:06 PM

"Brian, what...?" I asked, trudging into the loft and pulling off my jacket, tossing it on the couch. "You're acting frigid, and honestly, you're kind of freaking me the fuck out."

He shrugged, walking slowly through the door and making his way across the living room, toward the bedroom.

"Is something wrong? Did I piss you off?" I racked my brain, trying to think of anything, anything I could've done to make him angry.

"Was it the hetero thing? Because I'm so fucking sorry. I was just laughing at your expression..."

"Nope." He paused. "But you're still getting punished for that."

"Then what...?"

"Come here."

I heard him rummaging in a drawer of his dresser.

"Brian...?" I took a deep breath, slowly walking toward the bedroom. To be honest, I was a little scared. He had never acted all weird like that before. It was a different kind of odd. He didn't seem particularly distressed or anything bad. It was as if he was keeping a dangerous secret from me. It was rather frightening. "You're not going to like, scare me are you?"

"No."

I climbed up the stairs, blue Pumas slap-slapping against the hardwood floors.

Brian was standing near the bed, hands behind his back, giving me a nervous smile.

"What's behind your back?" This was what horror movies were made of. My heart pounded. "You haven't gone psycho have you?"

"You're not going to push me into the shower and stab me?"

"Justin..." He rolled his eyes with a smile. "Sit."

I tensed, limbs wobbling as I stepped over to the bed, gently lowering myself down onto the mattress. "What's up?"

He sat down beside me, cupping whatever he was hiding in his right hand and turning to me, breathing shakily. "I...don't know how to..." He was nervous.

My stomach bottomed out. "You're not..." I felt like crying. "You're not breaking up with me, are you? Because..."

He breathed a laugh, shaking his head. "No." He kissed me. "Never."

I closed my eyes, taking a deep breath. "Then...? If it's something bad, just tell me now and get it over with. I don't know if I can take it, but I want it out in the open and..."

"Open your fucking eyes, Justin."

I did.

And gasped. My heart jumped into my throat, attempting to escape and run around the loft in circles. Brian had pulled out the little wooden box with our wedding rings.

"Oh my god."

He stared at me intently.

"You're...do you...? I'm not sure we should..."

Brian placed the box in his lap and reached out and grabbed my shoulders, squeezing them lovingly. "I'm not proposing again."

I lowered my eyebrows. "Then what are you doing?"

"I don't want to get married. I don't want a ceremony or another stag party or any of that shit."

"What...?"

"But I'd like to..." He picked up the box again and began rolling it in his hands, back and forth, back and forth. "Ugh."

I raised an eyebrow with a slight smile. "What are you...?"

"I just want you to know that this is... For me, at least... I don't know about you, but..." Sigh. "Justin, this is forever."

I breathed loudly. "It's always been forever."

"And I want to..."

"You want to get married? Because I don't know if..."

"I already told you no."

I bit my lip. "Then what...?"

"I don't know, Justin." He stood up and began to pace. "You're the one with all the words. Not me. I just..."

"Tell me what you want."

"I want us to finally wear our fucking rings that I paid for a long time ago and just be..."

"Together forever." I giggled sillily. "Joined?"

Brian laughed, rolling his eyes. "I would never be such a lesbian to use those terms." His face straightened. "But...sort of. I just want us to know that this is...this is it. I'm not going anywhere, and I hope to fuck you're not." He paused.

"Brian, I would never leave you again."

"And I want us to move into our goddamn house, Justin, because it's sitting out there collecting dust..."

I couldn't believe what I was hearing.

"Are you serious?" My eyes were wide.

He took a deep, nervous breath. "Absolutely."

"Brian..." I hugged him, arms so tight around his body that I felt as if I could crush his bones. "This is...I don't know what to say."

"Feel free to tell me you want this too. Or to fuck off."

"Oh...!" I smiled, still in his arms. "Do you actually think I would ever say 'no?' Brian, this is... I want this. More than anything."

He smiled brightly, heaving a sigh of relief and standing up, walking around to stand in front of me, knees touching mine.

His face fell serious and voice went quiet, into an almost whisper. "I love you, Justin."

He pushed me backwards, climbing on top and straddling my waist. We were both hard, but I wasn't paying attention to my body. I was paying attention to him, this beautiful, wonderful man that was mine. Completely. For always. I couldn't believe it.

He gently pressed my arms up above my head, sliding his hands into mine and lacing our fingers together. He kissed me slowly, lovingly, caressing my mouth with his lips.

I was in heaven, absolute heaven.

"I love you too." Passionate kiss. "So much I can't stand..."

He silenced me with another kiss. "Shhh."

We made love slowly, slower than we ever had before. Brian barely moved as he thrust into me, body simply rocking gently against mine as we kissed, mouths never separating for more than a few seconds. This wasn't sex. This wasn't fucking. This wasn't about the technicalities. I didn't think of what we were doing. I didn't think about the fact that he was inside me, I didn't think about coming, I didn't think about anything but how much I loved him. It was raw emotion.

"Brian...!" I groaned against his lips, feeling the tingle at the base of my spine letting me know I was close. His thrusts never sped, but kisses just increased in intensity.

"Oh god," he whispered, pulling his mouth away and moving his face to the side of mine, tangling my hair in his fingers and pushing himself as close to me as he could. I felt as if he was trying to crawl inside my body. "I...Justin...!"

My legs wrapped around his waist, sweat pouring off our bodies, hearts pounding, my back sliding up and down on the bed-sheets, up and down, up and down. "I love you...!"

"Love..." He groaned, thrusts suddenly picking up speed, as if gas had been poured on the fire. "...you...!"

"Oh god, oh god, oh my god!" I couldn't feel anything but him. It was as if every one of my senses had disappeared except for feeling.

I felt everything, every bead of sweat on his chest mixing with mine, every follicle of hair on his head as I ran my hands across his scalp, pushing my body up to meet him half-way, taking his thrusts, the most incredible feeling rising inside me.

We came almost simultaneously, intensely satisfyingly.

Later, as we exchanged rings, our bodies sweaty and limp from furious lovemaking, I felt something I never had with him before:

Closure.

I finally felt safe and filled and satisfied.

Our relationship may've not been perfect. We still had our share of problems and disagreements. But this time it felt healthy. Natural.

We needed each other and were both willing to admit that.

"Happy anniversary," Brian whispered with a silly smile, dipping his face to mine and kissing my eyelids as he stroked my hair. He knew he was being ridiculously cheesy.

"What? Anniv..." I paused. "Oh! It is!"

"Eight years."

"Shit."

"How have I put up with you for so fucking long?" He laughed, flattening himself against me, our limp penises resting sleepily between us.

"Because you love me."

"Is that why?"

"Yep."

"You're probably right." He smiled boyishly and kissed me again, this time on the lips, long and slow.

Building a life together was going to take work, but I was confident we would get through it.

Together.

Where we belonged.

END