

Sammi slipped between the shadows of the houses that bordered the avenue. His heart thudded in his chest as he pressed his back against the rough brick and with a quick swipe pushed back the hair that fell over his eyes. There was no way he was going back to Donovan.

Enough was enough.

With his teeth clenched so tight they ached, Sammy watched for the black Towncar. Donovan and his men would be looking for him again tonight. Sammi didn't know how much longer he could survive on the streets of Houston. For someone with no money, no identity, and no friends, they could be deadly.

The bar was just half a block away.

If he ran, he could be inside before the traffic light at the corner changed. He bent, his lean body coiled to spring from his position, when Donovan's black Lincoln slid around the corner and like a shark looking for prey, cruised towards him.

With a sharp inhale, he held his breath, blocked off his mind and disappeared into the shadows.

The car slowed, pulled to the curb, and stopped in front of the bar.

Sammi exhaled. Three breaths later, the passenger door opened. Sammi watched as Donovan's muscle Moretti pried his massive body from the seat and then disappeared inside the nightclub. Moretti would be getting some odd looks, but it wouldn't be the first time the big goon had cruised bars looking for boys for his boss.

Edging closer to the corner of the house, Sammi peeked around it. Moretti had been in there for several minutes. Probably scanning the place. Maybe even barging in on

the back rooms to see if Sammy was giving some pick-up head. Moretti's timing sucked tonight.

Fifteen minutes later, and Moretti would have caught Sammi.

The club's door opened and Moretti exited. With a shake of his cue ball head, he wedged himself back in the car and slammed the door shut. The Towncar pulled away from the curb and headed towards Sammi, hidden in the shadows. Holding his breath, terrified he'd give away his hiding place, he slipped the small folding knife from his pocket and flipped it open. He'd rather die than go back to Donovan.

His only hope for safety lay inside the bar. Once there, he'd open his mind, find a willing partner and get off the streets for the night.

The car stopped at the light. Sammi let out his breath in a slow exhale. The light changed and the traffic began moving. With another four deep breaths, the Towncar was lost in the heavy traffic of Montrose. He closed the knife with a click and shoved it back into his jeans.

Sammi broke from the shadows and raced to the bar's entry.

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Mitchell sat at the bar and nursed his scotch. All around him, music pulsed and men moved in and out of the shadows. The dance floor seethed with bodies. Couples danced, some with tentative touches and gentle caresses, while others gyrated, their hips in sync with the rhythm of the pounding bass. Still, some danced alone, feeling the freedom of movement and no necessity for a partner.

What the hell am I doing here?

He wasn't going to pick up anyone. Not tonight. Not any night. He'd sworn off the fast life, it was far too dangerous.

Who was he kidding? He was the king of denial.

Crown me.

Mitchell scanned the men.

Even if he saw someone he liked, and he hadn't in a very long time, he wouldn't break his rule and take anyone home. It wasn't safe. There was no telling who he might bring home. Time was he only worried about serial killers but, these days, he had to deal with gay bashers.

Besides, he really hated that awkward parting in the morning. Should he serve breakfast or just put the guy out? A kiss goodbye, or lie and tell him he'd call?

A quick blowjob in the back rooms of the bar would avoid all that trouble.

If he was looking. And he wasn't.

His gaze raked over several younger men standing at the end of the bar. Tight leather snuggled over tight asses, dark liner around their hungry eyes.

He liked younger but, tonight there wasn't a flicker of arousal. He looked down between his denim-clad legs at his package. Not even half-mast, much less fully flying the colors. What was wrong with him? There were some very good-looking men here tonight and if he put out the effort, he could pick up one of them and head to the back.

He just couldn't stand another empty fuck.

Sammi leaned against the wall of the bar and closed his eyes. Opening his mind, he listened. The music faded away and indistinct voices floated in blackness, pieces of

soft conversations, snips of laughter, a few suggestive words, all faint whispers in the night. All he had to do was pick one out, focus on it and make his move.

What the hell am I doing here?

Sammi jumped as the words shouted in his mind. Blinking his eyes open, Sammi scanned the darkened room for the man who'd thought them. Like the wicked sharp blade of his knife, the voice had sliced through all the chatter like butter. A voice that set his body quivering and brought his cock to rigid attention.

I'm better off alone.

Effortlessly, he locked onto a man sitting at the bar. It had never been that easy before. Sammi's heart hammered at the chance he'd found him. The one. His soul bond. He shook his head, took a deep breath to quell the excitement, and stared at the man whose voice had risen above all the others, pushing them into nothing more than background noise, mere static on the constant radio that played in Sammy's head.

Long legs clad in faded blue jeans. A white t-shirt peeked from under a brown leather jacket. Loafers, no socks. Dark wavy hair, broad shoulders. Early thirties.

Sammi drew closer, weaved in and out of the gyrating dancers as he crossed the dance floor. Unable, unwilling, to take his eyes off the man.

A young man slid onto the chair next to Mitchell. A cross between male musk and some citrus aftershave enveloped Mitchell, as if the guy were shooting off pheromones meant for him alone. *Nice.*

The bartender walked over. "What can I get you?"

“I’ll have what he’s drinking and put it on his tab.” A soft, yet damned sexy voice filled Mitchell’s ears, shot through his body and landed in his cock.

He turned to look at the man who’d given him an instant hard-on.

The bartender raised an eyebrow. “That okay?”

“Yeah. It’s fine,” Mitchell said without taking his eyes off the stranger.

The young man faced him, pushed the long forelock of straight dark hair from his eyes and their gazes locked. As if he’d leaned too far over the top rail of a skyscraper, Mitchell plummeted into endless dark eyes. Aware of the sudden pounding of his heart and the tightness of his jeans, he swallowed, afraid to speak. Afraid he’d chase away this remarkable creature.

He was the sweetest thing Mitchell had seen in a long time.

“You think I’m the best thing you’ve seen in a while.” He offered a soft smile and placed his hand on Mitchell’s thigh. The gentle touch seared him and he caught fire.

“Yeah.” Mitchell gave a grunt.

His heat-filled gaze raked over the man. Young, maybe mid-twenties, lean but muscled. Despite the dead sexy mop of bangs that fell over his face, his hair was cut short on the sides and back.

What did Mitchell’s rules have to say about this?

Goddamn, he couldn’t recall a single one, but he knew he’d be breaking most of them before the sun rose. “What else am I thinking?”

“That you want to break all your rules with me.”

Mitchell's foot slipped off the rung. Almost falling off the chair, his hand reached for the edge of the bar to hold himself upright. How the hell did this guy know what he was thinking?

"Look, I don't know what game you're playing, but..." Mitchell growled, his body tensing along with his fists.

"No game." He shook his head and the bangs swayed, giving Mitchell a peak at those eyes again. "Are you always such a hard ass?"

Placing his knees between Mitchell's, he leaned closer and laid his smaller hand over Mitchell's tight fist. It relaxed beneath the touch like butter on a summer day. The guy's other hand slid along Mitchell's thigh trailing fire.

Stopping where thigh met hip, he glanced down between Mitchell's legs. "This is the only thing that should be hard." His thumb brushed over the lump in Mitchell's too-tight jeans.

Mitchell's cock twitched in happy greeting to the hand that touched it and his balls pulled in so tight, he thought they'd disappear. Not in a bad way. But in a way that said oh yeah, this would be a fuck he'd never forget. A fuck he wanted more than anything on earth. More than his next breath. And he wanted it right now.

"Let's go to your place." That voice sent delighted shivers down Mitchell's spine. Goddamn, he was fucking helpless against it.

"What's your name?" He didn't know what else to say.

"Sammi. What's yours?"

"Mitchell."

“Well, Mitchell,” Sammi purred as he slid off the chair and into the space directly in front of Mitchell. Mitchell stood, rising a head taller than Sammi. Looking down into liquid brown eyes, Mitchell grabbed the young man’s narrow hips, pulled him to his body and ground his hard-on against Sammi’s belly. “I think we’re on the same wavelength.” Sammi finished, as he tilted his head back and offered his lips.

“Yeah.” Mitchell leaned down, took the kiss, and broke his rule about not kissing strange men he met at bars. Soft at first, then as Sammi’s tongue flicked against his lips to ask for admittance, Mitchell opened to him. They deepened the kiss.

Goddamn, Sammi was sinfully delicious, a blend of vanilla and sugar cookies with a chocolate aftertaste. What would his skin taste like? Or his cock? A firestorm erupted inside Mitchell. He didn’t want to wait until he got Sammi home to find out. He’d do him against the bar right now if he could.

This was insane.

He wanted Sammi and Sammi wanted him. That message was coming through to Mitchell loud and clear, as if Sammi had spoken the words. Of all the men the guy could have, and Mitchell knew Sammi could take his pick, he’d picked him. Why was he so damned lucky?

“You’re the only man in this place worth a damn,” Sammi answered Mitchell’s doubts. “Let’s get out of here.”

“Oh, yeah.”

Fuck. There went the rule about bringing strangers home. Mitchell dug into his pocket and tossed a twenty on the bar. Taking Sammi’s hand, he led the way to the door, pulled it open, and stepped out, towing Sammi behind him.

“I live just up the street and around the corner.”

Like a dog follows its master, like summer follows spring, Sammi followed Mitchell. If Sammi had had a tail, it would have been wagging. He was definitely panting in anticipation.

Mitchell’s voice had captured his heart the first time he’d heard it in his mind and it had gone straight to his soul. And when he’d touched Mitchell, he’d burned with a desire he’d often faked but had never known.

He’d gone into the bar in hopes of swapping his body for a night’s brief protection from the man who hunted him, just as he’d done the last five nights. Instead, he’d found his destiny.

Mitchell. The one person who could hear Sammi as well as Sammi heard him. No words would be needed between them, only thoughts and emotions. If they made love, gave themselves to each other, the connection between them would be forged.

Strong. Lasting. Unbreakable.

They hurried through the night. By the time they’d turned the corner, they were running, hand-in-hand, down the street to Mitchell’s four-plex.

Flying up the stairs to the second floor apartment, Mitchell slammed into the front door.

“Fuck! My keys.” Chest heaving, he dug them out of his pocket, fumbled with the lock, and then pushed the door open.

They fell inside, tumbling together in a lust-driven rush to get to each other’s bodies. Mitchell kicked the door shut and stripped off his jacket. Frenzied, two sets of

hands pulled on belts, unbuttoned buttons, slid zippers down, and jerked jeans open as lips kissed, teeth nipped, and tongues sparred.

Sammi won.

Falling to his knees, he pulled Mitchell's cock free. He wanted Mitchell to fuck him, but first, he wanted Mitchell in his mouth.

Every pleasure zone in Sammi's body tingled at the glorious sight of it, thick and long. Velvet headed, brown sheathed, his heavy balls pulled tight to his body, Mitchell was every fantasy Sammi had ever closed his eyes and jerked off to.

Sammi's tongue laved the engorged head.

"Goddamn!" Mitchell cried out and fell back against the wall, burying his hands in Sammi's hair as Sammi's hand wrapped the base of Mitchell's prick.

As pleasure poured off Mitchell, Sammi opened himself to it and drank it in. It filled Sammi's cock as he licked, sucked, teased, and taunted Mitchell's magnificent prick and swamped his pleasure centers. Near madness, Sammi gathered Mitchell's pleasure and folded it into his own.

Mitchell held nothing back and Sammi took everything he was given.

"Fuck, I'm coming," Mitchell groaned.

"Not yet." Still on his knees, Sammi ringed the head of Mitchell's cock with his thumb and forefinger and squeezed, cutting off the impending orgasm.

"Shit," Mitchell groaned.

Sammi felt Mitchell's pain, pleasure, and frustration at not coming. Using all his talents, all his experience, all his passion, he'd give Mitchell the best orgasm of his life.

It would rock both of them.

It would bond them together forever.

It would free Sammi from Donovan.

“Fuck me,” Sammi begged.

“Oh, yeah,” Mitchell rasped.

Sammi’s tongue had been doing the most incredible things to Mitchell’s cock and having to stop nearly killed him, but the pain was fucking delicious.

Goddamn, he wanted more of Sammi. He pulled Sammi to his feet and kissed him, driving him across the hall. They thudded against the wall and sent a picture crashing to the floor.

Sammi climbed Mitchell as if he were a mountain, legs wrapped around his waist, arms looped around his shoulders, his smaller body easily held in the larger man’s arms.

Still dressed, Mitchell’s pants were undone. Still rigid, his cock stood painfully trapped between Sammi’s body and his own belly. Raining kisses on Sammi’s face, Mitchell carried him down the hall to his bedroom.

Once in the room, Mitchell peeled Sammi from him. “Take off your clothes or I’ll rip them off,” he growled.

“No, wait! They’re the only ones I have,” Sammi cried out. He broke away long enough to undress, as Mitchell kicked off his shoes, shucked out of his jeans and pulled his t-shirt over his head.

Scooping Sammi up, he tossed him on the bed. Sammi rolled and came up on his knees. “I know what you want,” he rasped.

“Good.” Mitchell climbed on the bed and pushed Sammie down. Stretching over Sammi as if he were about to do a set of pushups, Mitchell’s muscled arms held him suspended in air.

Their eyes locked. Mitchell lowered himself. Skin met skin. Caught and ignited. Heat scorched them. Both men gasped as the flames of their mutual pleasure danced over their skins, raising the fine hairs on both their bodies.

“Do you feel that?” Sammi asked, as his hands stroked over Mitchell’s back.

Mitchell pulled Sammi over on top of him. “Goddamn, yeah. Like nothing I’ve ever felt.” Mitchell’s hands cupped Sammi’s firm ass and pulled it against him. Sammi’s cock ground into Mitchell’s belly.

“This is how it could be forever, with us,” Sammi whispered.

“It’s so good.” And it was. Better than anything Mitchell had ever felt, or dreamed of feeling. How could it be? So fast, so soon? What the hell was happening?

“It gets better.”

Sammi wrapped his arms around Mitchell and rolled over, bringing Mitchell back on top. His legs spread open, and Mitchell’s hips and legs fell in between them. Pushing up on one arm as he reached down, Mitchell guided his straining cock to Sammi’s sweet opening, then froze.

“Fuck, no lube and no condoms.” Mitchell rolled to the side. Yanking open the nightstand drawer, he snatched up the bottle of lube and tossed it on the bed. His hand scrambled in the drawer searching for a condom.

“Fuck,” he swore when his hand came up empty.

“Forget it, just use the lube, and fuck me.” Sammi’s voice wavered.

Mitchell was on the edge of breaking the gay man's golden rule. It was insane. It was playing with death. He was clean, but Sammi? Racking his brain, he remembered seeing a box in the bathroom.

"No, wait," he gasped as he lurched off the bed and into the bathroom. After searching the second drawer he opened, he found the condoms. Rushing back into the room, the box raised as if he'd discovered something marvelous and precious, he jumped back into bed.

Kneeling beside Sammi, he watched as Sammi pumped his beautiful cock with one hand and stroked the skin behind his balls with the fingertips of the other. Sammi's pubic hair had been trimmed short into a neat dark patch, and his balls were smooth, free of any hair.

Goddamn, it turned Mitchell on.

"You like watching me touch myself, don't you?" Sammi purred. Squeezing a dab of lube onto his fingertips, he reached lower and bathed his tunnel with it. Slipping a finger into his own backdoor, Sammi groaned, his eyes never leaving Mitchell's.

Mitchell groaned back, "Yeah." Could his cock get any harder? As Sammi's finger slipped in and out of his ass, he had this fuck-me look on his face, eyes slitted, lips parted, his pink tongue just visible that drove Mitchell wild.

Unable to stand it another second, Mitchell ripped open the condom, rolled it on and leaned forward. "Take your finger out, Sammi. I have something better to fuck you with."

"Oh God, yes." Sammi pulled out his finger.

Mitchell caught Sammi's knee in the crook of his arm, leaned forward, and opened him wider. He found Sammi's tight portal, pressed the head of his cock against it, and sunk in. Both men cried out as Mitchell filled Sammi.

Mitchell's body covered Sammi as he shuddered beneath him and it reverberated through both of them. They hung on the edge of a cliff, eternity stretching out before them.

Mitchell began to pump.

He couldn't take his eyes off Sammi as his lean, sculpted body writhed on the bed, the sheets fisted in his hands. Goddamn, he was achingly beautiful in the throes of pleasure, yet with a vulnerability that tore into Mitchell's heart.

Sammi's chest was well-defined and smooth, his belly rippled as if he'd spent time in the gym. Two dark, small rigid nipples tempted Mitchell and that wild forelock of dark hair fell over Sammi's face, cloaking his eyes. His full lips parted as he panted and his pink tongue darted out to moisten them in a slow swipe.

Everything about Sammi drove Mitchell insane with desire and lust, as if this creature had been created solely for Mitchell's pleasure.

As Mitchell pounded into him, Sammi's body rocked with each thrust. Wrapped in the hot velvet of Sammi's tight tunnel, Mitchell's cock stroked in and out, sending pleasure shooting straight to Mitchell's balls.

Lost in a haze of arousal, Mitchell experienced both their pleasures, as if he could feel what Sammi felt as well as his own pleasure.

"Do you feel that? It's wild," Mitchell gasped.

“Oh God, yes, it’s so good. This is it, Mitch. This is you and me together. You belong to me and I belong to you. Can’t you feel it?” Sammi cried out, his hands clutching Mitchell’s shoulders.

“Goddamn. This is crazy.” He’d just met Sammi, he didn’t even know him. Mitch shook his head. Had he lost his mind?

“None of that matters. Only this.” *Only us.*

Mitchell held Sammi’s hips and thrust harder and deeper as if he wanted to bury himself inside Sammi and never come out. *Yeah, only us.*

Sammi keened deep in his throat as Mitch fucked him, then gasped, “Say it. You’re mine. You belong to me and I belong to you.”

“I belong to you,” Mitch conceded as he closed his eyes and let all their combined feelings fill him up, pushing him to the brink of coming. “You are mine,” he growled, his fingers dug into Sammi’s flesh, slamming into Sammi’s ass like a pile driver.

Mitchell lost reason. Lost all sense and in that moment, broke his ultimate rule.

He fell in love.

Together, they rode a tidal wave that swelled, built momentum, climbed upwards, higher than either of them had ever been before. Poised on the crest of that sweet wave, they opened their eyes and locked gazes.

This was it, the moment Sammi had waited, dreamed, hoped for.

The bonding.

He opened his soul and stripped his heart bare as he poured his love into Mitchell. A vortex of emotion whirled around them like a tornado, sweeping the lovers up in its maelstrom.

Burying his hands in Mitch's hair, Sammi pulled him down into a soul-searing kiss. Eyes open, they clung to each other as if their lives depended on it.

Sammi's did. Once joined, so would Mitchell's.

Building in intensity, their bodies seemed to melt into each other and their hearts beat in perfect syncopation. Sammi's breath was Mitchell's breath. They rode the rising crest of a mutual orgasm that promised to open a new world for both of them.

With a final surge, the tidal wave broke over them and they shattered on the rocks.