

A painting of a park scene. In the foreground, a large tree with dense green leaves dominates the left side. In the middle ground, a vibrant rainbow arches across the sky. Several people are visible: a person in a red shirt and dark pants stands near the base of the tree, another person in a blue shirt is further back, and a person in a white shirt is on the right. The background shows more trees and a building. The overall style is impressionistic with visible brushstrokes.

I'll Kiss You in the Rain

William King

Three young lives, three different experiences,
best friends, coming out, first love.

I'll Kiss You in the Rain,

by William King.

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Chapter 1 - An Unknown Country.

"Can you ever be serious?" Matty looked at me across the little coffee table that sat in the middle of his room.

"Well I hope not." I looked up at him, a smile forming across my face.

"I've got something important to say!" He looked kind of tense, was he frowning?

"OK, well just say it." I leaned forward resting my chin on my hand, looking up at him. There was silence, the only sounds came from the street outside, the gentle rumbling noise of traffic and the clinking sounds from the kitchen downstairs as Matty's mum emptied the plates and glasses from the dishwasher. The silence continued, I waited, time could almost have stopped. "Well, tell me what you got to say." More silence as he fidgeted about in the chair in front of me.

Finally, as if the silence was never actually there, he continued, "I'm gay!"

"Is that it?" My smile broadened into one of those huge white teeth smiles spread right across my face. I took my hand from my chin, leaned closer towards him and slowly moved my arm over his shoulder, my hand resting on the back of his neck. With a sure, but gentle pressure I pulled his head towards mine, turned to one side and in a scene worthy of the best motion picture I closed the gap between us and kissed him full on the lips.

Releasing my hold I sat back, sinking into the old armchair, watching his reactions, the little movements his body made, the expression on his face. I heard once more those faint background noises which had all but disappeared during that moment of intimacy. Like a lightning bolt from nowhere the thought entered my head that never again would we be just best friends. Two boys who had grown up together as virtual neighbours had crossed some kind of invisible barrier, a frontier to an unknown country.

The silence had returned, this was a comfortable silence between us, the sort of silence that allowed each of us to savour the moment. Watching Matty relax, seeing him look back at me in that cheeky mischievous way of his, I wondered why I had never said anything to him, I was after all older than he was, wasn't it me who should have been the one to tell him, wasn't it in some way my responsibility, hadn't I, by saying nothing caused my best friend undue fear and anguish.

Just as my head was filling with thousands of questioning thoughts, as if Matty could

some how see inside my mind, the silence was broken as music filled the room, I had never even noticed him do anything. "You know this has always been one of my favourites!" Matty's voice joined with the music.

'I, I will be king

And you, you will be queen

Though nothing will drive them away.'

Heroes, I just couldn't prevent another huge smile as I looked Matty straight in the eyes and he looked back with a similar smile breaking right across his face and then we were laughing together, the laughter that bounces from one person to the other reaching an unbearable climax with tears forming and wetting my face, I tried to speak, but couldn't form any coherent words and he made it worse rolling about like a contorted acrobat holding his sides.

The whole event was only calmed by a knock at the door. "Uh, yes." Matty managed to get out in between the now subsiding bouts of hysteric laughter. The door opened slightly and Matty's mum peered in.

"You two seem to be amusing yourselves, I could hear you from the bottom of the stairs."

"Hello Mrs T, sorry if we were making too much noise." I had regained just enough composure to give a semblance of talking normally.

"Hello Alex," Mrs T acknowledged. Then turned to Matty, "I thought you might like some tea and cookies?"

It took a supreme effort and purposely avoiding looking at Matty, to not burst back into laughter.

"We're not eleven years old mum, but thanks." Matty smiled at his mother, he had the smile of an impish angel, which almost always won his mother over and would no doubt charm hundreds of people, just as he did at school with friends and teachers alike.

"I know you're not." Mrs T was placing the tray with two mugs and a plate of chocolate chip cookies on the little coffee table. She stood up, turned to leave and in parting glanced back. "Although I'm not so sure, with all that laughter going on." She smiled and slipped back out through the half open door, closing it gently with the click of the door catch.

Matty called out after her, "Thanks mum." We were once again alone.

I leaned forward out of the old armchair and picked up my mug of tea, not forgetting a couple of those chocolate cookies Mrs T had left. Matty was lying on his bed tea on the bedside table, already munching on a cookie. "Matty!" I broke the silence. "Like, since when did you know you were, uh... gay?" I finished a cookie and cradled the mug of tea between both hands, it was warm and comforting, some how reassuring to feel something so familiar.

"Don't exactly know," he replied, "I mean, it's difficult to say...." He paused. I could see he was thinking about how he should answer. "Like, when you are a kid," he continued, "you never really think about it, do you?" That was clearly a rhetorical question, "I mean, you don't really know about sex...." He paused again. "So it's only later you see that, well, oh yeah, I'm gay, that's me, that's it, I guess I always have been."

So many questions were buzzing around inside my head, but I knew it just wasn't fair on him to get too deep into some quasi psycho analysis, which was actually taking on the form of a cross examination. For Christ's sake, I thought to myself, he had after all taken the huge step of announcing this to me and my questioning him was feeling more and more like I was actually asking myself the questions, why, when, how come, even perhaps, why me? That's always a good one, the why me.

*'Baby, I'll never let you go
All I see is all I know'*

Bowie was still singing, I stopped a moment, catching the lyrics. Funny how sometimes you can interpret songs as though the artist wrote the words just for you, just for this moment.

"So... Matty, why... uh... I mean why now, why tell me now?" I looked over at him across the space of his bedroom, looked at him lying there on his bed and caught his grin as he looked back.

"Well I could say, because I couldn't wait on you forever." His grin turned into a full on broad smile. "But, nah... that's not true, it's actually because... and I've been thinking about it, telling you that is, for a couple of days now... and well, it's because of this dream I had."

Now it was getting interesting, I loved the times we spent together, just the two of us, talking about any number of things and sharing our thoughts and telling each other our little secrets. That, I suppose, if you think about it, is how you become so close to

someone and sometimes you don't even realise it, it just happens.

"It was one of those really vivid dreams." I was listening, this would be good, I thought. "You know, I don't usually remember my dreams," he continued, "but if I wake up from it, well often I remember then... and well I woke up from this one." He looked down, was that a hint of some uncomfortable emotion, not sure, anyway, he brushed it aside. "Well, in this dream it was a really warm summers day and I was walking down a country lane with someone. The lane had steep grassy banks on each side, it was... almost like a secret tunnel." He stopped, he was thinking about what to say, or how to say it, I knew him so well, I could see his brain ticking. "OK," he said, "this is like a very personal dream."

"Hey Matty, jeez, I mean we're best friends, we're more than that now." I smiled at him, my best reassuring smile. "You can't stop now, come on, tell me the dream... please." I smiled again.

"Alright, so I had a really strong hard on," he said, "and like, well, all I wanted to do was to take this guy I was with and..."

"Yeah, yeah, so what happened, go on."

He took up the story again. "So I took this guy and pushed him facing into the soft grassy bank... and well you know, even in vivid dreams it's not exactly like reality... so he was lying in front of me, his face pressed into the bank and he was naked and I was going to do what I'd dreamed about, thought about, for what seems like forever... I was going to have sex with a boy... and I did, it was great and it seemed so real and that's why I woke up and remembered everything, because it was a wet dream, my first and so fucking good I just shot load after load and woke up covered in creamy gooey sperm."

Fuck, fuck, fuck, I thought, that was so bloody hot I was sitting in the old armchair, vaguely aware the music was still playing and definitely aware of the hard on I had from listening to Matty's wet dream. "You should write fucking porno," I said. "You've just given me a massive hard on listening to you." I smiled and Matty smiled back. Wherever it went from here, I thought, it can only get better. And Bowie was still there frantically singing...

I've nothing to lose, nothing to gain

I'll kiss you in the rain

Kiss you in the rain

Kiss you in the rain'.....

Chapter 2 - The Incident.

"Hold up!" I called out. No reaction, so then at the top of my voice, "John boy, John boy, wait up!" He stopped, turned around and waited for me to catch him up.

I trotted down the road after him, "Hey, John boy, how's it going?"

"OK," he replied. "I'm about 95% fit, so I should be alright for the match this afternoon, that is so long as you and the rest of the guys take it easy."

We walked on down the road together, side by side.

I loved Friday's, not just because it's the start of the weekend, but because most of the afternoon was given over to sports. On the the downside, we had double maths in the morning, but just one period of economics after lunch, then sports.

We arrived at the school entrance and crossed the car park together.

"Well I'll see you this afternoon then... for the match," I said.

"Yeah, later Alex... don't work too hard!" John boy smiled and walked off towards the science lab.

We were in the rugby team together, but not in the same class. John boy was captain, since the start of the season and this afternoon was the training match before the semi-final next week. Yep, we were not doing badly this year.

The morning dragged by slowly like usual. When you're looking forward to something it's always like that. I couldn't wait to escape the classroom. In fact the only thing that cheered me up all morning was seeing Matty during break, but that was short lived, because at school he hung out with his own friends, he was a year below me.

I sat in class half listening to what Mr Adams, the maths teacher was saying, and half thinking about Matty and his revelation, wondering about us, wondering what would happen. I snapped out of this semi-consciousness when the bell sounded for the end of period and lunch break. Suddenly, there was a clutter of noise, books banging against the little wooden desks, the scrapping of chairs against the floor as everyone stood up and packed away their stuff exiting out into the corridor in one mad rush to escape.

I was not really a mad keen rugby player, but I gave my best effort to the team. It was

my speed that was my asset, I guess that came from my kind of slim build and long legs. I used to wonder when growing up whether it was normal to have the bottom half of your body bigger than the top. I was not one of the heavy weight jocks in the scrum, although we all got on well as a team, even with huge differences physically and I suppose you might say intellectually.

At least I thought we all got on well, until that Friday afternoon when the practice was over. The game had gone well and I was just saying the same to John boy. Almost everyone in the team had a nick name, which is why I always called John, John boy, when his real name was John Richter. John boy said he needed to talk to the coach and he'd catch me up after.

I went to take a shower and get changed, I preferred to hang back on taking a shower until nearly everyone had finished. Not at all because of embarrassment at being naked with loads of other guys, but out of fear I'd get a hard on and that really would be embarrassing. I would purposely avoid looking at the other guys, both anyone left in the showers and in the changing rooms where guys were drying themselves off.

I heard raised voices even before entering the changing rooms, whatever was going on it was loud and sounded aggressive. Something was up, I thought to myself. There was no one in the changing area, the two double rows of low wooden benches were empty, clothes and sports gear were scattered about.

"Fuck you, asshole!" I heard someone shout. I thought it was Ryan, but I wasn't certain.

"Perve!" That was Stewpot, Stewart Evans, the second row forward.

"Queer boy!" Bulldog chipped in. He was the scrum half, Brandon Mc Cauley.

I raced past the benches and was standing in the entrance to the showers. Half way down the white tiled corridor a group had Ryan surrounded. Well it must have been Ryan, I couldn't see him, but I knew his voice.

"You're all crazy fucking half wits!" Ryan's voice had a slight quivering in it, but was strong.

What should I do? Thoughts raced through my head one after another like express trains shooting through the station without stopping.

Bulldog, Stewpot, James and Enzo had Ryan surrounded and were prodding and

pushing him. I walked along the steamy showers to where the group was gathered, but before I could react, John boy appeared from the other end, he must not have been far behind me to get there so fast.

"What the fuck are you guys doing?" He pushed aside Bulldog and Stewpot, the other two stepped back in the wake of John boy's near explosive entry.

"I don't know what your problem is with Ryan," he said. "But listen..." He paused, looked from Bulldog, to Stewpot, to James and finally, Enzo. "If there is one... yes, one thing, I will never ever tolerate, it's bullying... picking on someone for whatever reason."

I'd never seen John boy so wound up and I've known him a long time, we went through school together.

"I don't care if someone is gay, straight, brown or yellow, Muslim or Jew... I don't care what your problem is... but if you ever, ever, do anything like this again... your out!"

That last word he emphasised in no uncertain terms, paused, took a breath. I really think he was calling up every last bit of self restraint to stop himself lashing out.

"Out," he shouted the word, spat it in their faces. "Out of the team, out of the school."

A deep silence descended, all anyone could hear was the water draining slowly away and the faint dripping from one of the shower heads. The silence was as thick as the steam that was now seeping away.

"Now get out, get dressed... and go."

The four of them left, didn't speak, didn't say a word, but crept out and faded away, disappearing like the steam from the showers.

"You OK Ryan?" John boy asked.

"Yes boss, they're idiots" Ryan looked to be getting back to his normal self.

"Good... and yes they are, don't let them get to you, if anything else happens with them, tell me, I'll deal with it... alright?" John boy was facing Ryan and he gave him a nice smile.

Then he moved close to me and said quietly, "Have a chat with him Alex, find out

what's going on."

"OK," he spoke out louder. "I've got to get cleaned up and out of here."

I looked at Ryan and said, "Will you wait for me Ryan, we need to talk?"

I don't think looking at his reaction that he was too enthusiastic, but he nodded, which I took to be a yes. Then it was just me and John boy in the showers and as the dirt flowed away with the last of the hot water so my thoughts started to stack up, one on top of the other.

Were those guys really saying Ryan was gay? Why? What happened? Was he gay? Now what you have to realise is that Ryan was good looking, no I mean really good looking, he was beautiful, a Greek god. The words from that song by Robbie Williams just came into my head.

' Caught a plane and flew away.
And all the best women are married.
All the handsome men are gay.'

I followed John boy out of the showers into the changing rooms, Ryan was still there. Good I thought, I'll get a chance to find out.

John and I got dressed quickly, picked up our stuff and the three of us walked out. Just as we were leaving coach came in. I wondered if John boy would say anything, but coach, Mr Mathews, spoke first.

"See ya guys... enjoy your weekend," he said.

"Thanks coach, you too," John boy replied.

"Yeah, bye coach," I chipped in. Ryan didn't speak, he maintained his silence right across the playing fields up to the gates.

It was John boy who broke the silence, stopping at the gates. "Doing anything special over the weekend, Alex?"

I think he was trying to lighten the atmosphere a bit.

"No, not really," I replied. "My uncle and his family are coming over on Sunday, I hate family get togethers."

"Well, I'm off this way," John boy said, indicating the opposite direction to us. "See you Monday, I guess"

"Yes, see you on Monday," I answered.

"Bye." Ryan spoke for the first time. We turned and started off down the street towards the bus stop, but it was a fair old walk. Time enough to question Ryan I thought.

Chapter 3 - Revelations.

Ryan and I walked in silence for a bit, before I decided I had to speak. Firstly, because John boy had asked me to find out what was going on and secondly, well simply because I wanted to know, I really was curious to know if Ryan was gay.

"What happened back there?" I glanced sideways at Ryan. There was no immediate reply. "Why were the guys picking on you? That ain't cool."

"They're a bunch of losers, not worth the space..." Ryan's reply trailed off to silence.

Obviously, he was still angry about what happened. Maybe I thought, he was scared to talk about it, frightened to talk about himself, because he had no idea what my reaction would be. Of course he had no need to worry on that account, but he didn't know that, how could he.

Spots of rain hit the pavement, one, then another, a few heavy drops, splat, splat, leaving tiny little dark patches. A car drove past and the sound of it's passing fading into the distance. The thought entered my head that this time it should be me that was first with the revelation, I shouldn't hold back like I had with Matty, waiting until it was safe because he had made the first move.

Just as I was contemplating what to say, Ryan spoke. "I think Brandon has got it in for me, he just doesn't like me."

"Yeah, OK, but why?" I questioned.

"Umm... well I think it's to do with something that happened last week." It looked like Ryan was opening up and if I gave him the space, didn't rush it, he would explain himself.

I no longer paid any attention to the outside world, I was completely gripped listening to Ryan and wondering, still not yet knowing.

"You see I've got a girl friend" Ryan continued. What!... that wasn't what I'd expected to hear, this beautiful guy was straight, not gay after all and just a few seconds ago I nearly revealed everything about myself thinking he was gay.

"I can't remember exactly what was said," Ryan paused, it looked like he was trying to

recall the event. "Something like, not too many guys our age have got a real girl friend," Ryan added. "That was aimed at Brandon, Bulldog." He stopped again. "I told him he was a loser..." He paused, "I don't even know how it started, but I must have touched a nerve or something, because since then he's had it in for me."

The thing in the showers was starting to make some sense now.

"He got his little group of friends with him and started on with the gay insults and pushing me around in the showers back there." Ryan was in full flow, I nodded, indicating I was following, but not wanting to interrupt I stayed quiet, listening, thinking to myself I'm glad I never said anything about me.

"If anyone has a problem it's Brandon... maybe he's the one who's gay?" Ryan let the question hang in the air.

I don't know why, but I suddenly felt the overwhelming urge to change the subject. I just didn't want to go down the road of who was or who might be gay... I wasn't ready for that.

"Well maybe Bulldog has a problem, who knows, but anyway I think John boy sorted those goons. I can't see them coming back at you."

The drops of rain had stopped, but the air was heavy and sticky. We arrived at the bus stop and didn't have long to wait until the bus rolled up.

Ryan stepped onboard ahead of me, we showed our passes and I followed him towards the rear of the bus. The back row of seats were empty, in fact, looking around there weren't too many people on the bus.

Just as Ryan was turning, squeezing into the back window seat dragging his bag after him, my attention was caught by the guy occupying the seat in front on the opposite side. He was hot, really good looking, he caught me looking and smiled.

Ryan was starrng out of the window, I sat down next to him just as the bus started to pull away. I started to think about everything that had happened these past couple of days, then my attention went back to the guy in front who I noticed was writing something in a little note book he'd taken out of his bag which was resting on the floor in front of him, half in, half out of the aisle.

He finished writing and then carefully, slowly, started to tear the small sheet of paper from the note book. The bus pulled in at a stop, jerking to halt, the engine vibrating as

the doors clanked open, an elderly couple climbed onboard. My attention went back to the guy in front who had finished removing the sheet from his note pad and was crumpling it up into a ball.

Fascinated I continued watching. Was he going to throw it away? What had he written that he was now going to discard? He half turned back in his seat and launched the crumpled ball of paper in my direction. I watched as it landed just in front of my foot. I was about to ignore it, when he caught my eye and I saw he was grinning.

He turned fully back in his seat. The bus started to pull away from the stop, the elderly couple had taken their seats right at the front. Ryan was still looking out of the window. I leaned forward and picked up the ball of paper, checked that Ryan wasn't looking and unfolded it. I looked at what was written, 'Call me,' it said, with a phone number underneath and a name, Jake. I stuffed it quickly into my pocket.

My stop was next, I got up, turned to Ryan, "See you Monday," I said. He looked up, nodded and I reached out to push the button for the bell to get the driver to stop and started down the bus. The guy sitting in front casually let his hand drift towards the aisle and he touched my thigh as I brushed past him stepping over his bag.

I was off the bus, down the street and home. I took the front door key from my pocket, with the little metal football that it was attached to. Pushed the key into the lock, turned it and opened the door.

"Anyone home!" I called out. There was no reply, then I remembered mum had said they were picking my little brother up and would be back around half six. I went into the kitchen, looked at the clock on the wall, it was 5:20, an hour or so then. I opened the fridge door, peered inside, saw a carton of juice, took it out, unscrewed the top and drank. Mum would always say, 'Get a glass!' But she wasn't there.

I replaced the fruit juice and sped up the stairs two at a time, opened my bedroom door, threw my sports bag in the corner and collapsed on my bed. Lying there on my back, alone, silent, the only sounds being some faint noise from outside, down the road somewhere. I took the crumpled piece of paper out of my pocket and stared at it, 'Call me.' That was exciting, the guy was obviously older than me, twenty something I guessed. I thought about the touch of his hand on my thigh, it was electric.

I suddenly realised my cock was getting hard, it was pushing against my trousers. I needed to get changed out of the school uniform we were obliged to wear all week. I slid over to sit on the side of the bed, undid my shoe laces and kicked off my shoes, one, then the other. I undid my trouser button, pulled down the zipper and stepped out of my

trousers. I folded them to hang up in the wardrobe. My cock was making a pyramid in my pants, sticking straight out. As I took off my shirt and tie, the temptation to do something with my cock was almost overwhelming. Images of Matty, Ryan and the guy on the bus all mixed up floated around in my head and my cock responded to my thoughts by getting harder.

No, not the right time I thought to myself, wait. Then I thought wait for what? Asking myself the question for which I didn't yet have the answer. The bubble burst with the music from my phone. I reached over to my trousers and retrieved it from the pocket. I answered straightaway, it was Matty, he had his own music, no need to look.

"What's up?" He asked.

"Just got in Matty." I answered.

"How was rugby?" Matty was my number one fan.

"Interesting," I said. "There was nearly a fight in the showers after practice," I explained. Then I went on to tell him everything that had happened with Ryan, how I thought he was gay, but found out he has a girl friend. The only thing I didn't tell Matty about was Jake, the guy on the bus.

We continued talking as I got dressed, put away my school uniform and managed to pull my jeans on despite my hard cock. And, oh yes I told Matty about that too!

His response was, "Ah, well, we might just have to do something about that."

We talked for ages, I told him I had to go shopping with mum for some new shoes on Saturday, that my uncle was coming over with his family on Sunday, so I don't know if I'll get to see him this weekend. Finally, I said I have to go because the folks would be back and I needed to tidy my room.

"Talk later then," he said.

"Yeah, I'll call you." I replied and hung up.

I wasn't great on keeping my room tidy, but I'd promised mum that morning, over breakfast, that I would sort it out, so I just got on with it, just trying to make it look halfway decent. It didn't take so long, but what mum would think, or say, I wasn't so sure. I heard the front door open and voices downstairs, the family were back.

Later that evening I was alone again in my bedroom, I had some music playing, but I wasn't really listening, it was just there in the background. I picked up my phone and took that little crumpled piece of paper from my pocket. I lay back on my bed and stared at it, stared for a long time.

Then I tapped in the number and started writing.

hi this is alex from the bus

The reply from Jake came back quick.

alex so thats your name..where r u

home

what u doing

nothing where r u

just up the hill from u

really

yes

what u doing

listening to music

me 2

how old r u

guess

idk 15

yes

really haha

u

20...21 next week

your birthday

clever

lol

can we meet

difficult this weekend

next week

yes maybe

come on

yes ok next week

call u

ok

next week certain

yes

nite beautiful

nite

Wow, what did I just do I thought to myself, did I just make my first date? It was scary, exciting, loads of emotions floated through me. I can't believe that happened.

Chapter 4 - Deception.

Saturday morning I rolled out of bed and looked at the little digital numbers on my bedside clock, 08:22 it read. I could easily have stayed in bed, but not this Saturday, I had to go shopping with mum for those new shoes. Not one of my favourite activities, shopping, and Saturday was the worst day, always crowded.

I threw off my pyjamas and now naked, but still bleary eyed and half asleep, walked into the shower, turned on the tap and let the spray of hot water caress my body and wake me up. Twenty minutes later, I was dressed and downstairs going into the kitchen. I could hear mum moving about in one of the bedrooms, my brother Michael was sitting at the table eating his cereal, the plastic bottle of semi skimmed milk next to his bowl and a glass of fruit juice.

He looked up as I entered, I walked over to the coffee machine, opened the cupboard took out the coffee packet and then the little round bag of coffee that I put in the machine. A few seconds or so and the coffee was gurgling and spitting, dripping the final drops into the little glass. I carefully picked up the hot glass, walked over to the table next to Michael and picked up the milk. It was empty, I turned back to the kitchen cupboards, opened the one where we kept the milk, no milk.

"Shit, Michael, you took the last of the milk!" He ignored me and carried on scooping up his cereal.

That pissed me off, I shut the cupboard door, walked back to the table and tapped him on the back of the head as I passed him to sit down.

"You little shit, you could of left some milk." I said.

"Mum... mum!" He called out.

"Shut it you little rat." I told him.

"What is it Michael?" Mum called back, still moving around busily upstairs. "You know I'm busy here!" She added.

I gave Michael one of my mean stares, the sort that meant, say anything and you'll pay the price later, which was exactly what I was thinking.

"Nothing, mum!" Michael replied.

I think he must have sensed that I was not in the best of moods and so he decided not to push his luck with me, at least not this Saturday morning. I guess probably like most brothers we were always disputing over something or other, it was good we each had our own bedroom. There was not a big age difference between the two of us and despite the disputes we generally got along with each other, but little brothers can still be little shits when they want and really annoy you.

Around half an hour later I'd finished breakfast, mum had finished upstairs and we were set to go shopping. I was not too pleased to see Michael ready and waiting by the front door.

"Is he coming as well?" I asked mum.

"Yes Alex, I have a lot of shopping to do, not just buying you some shoes and Michael can help," she replied.

Without another word we were out of the house and in the car on the way to the retail park. It wasn't far, but like I said, Saturdays were always busy and crowded. This Saturday was no exception and we had to queue for a ticket even before we got into the multi storey car park and then it took ages to find an empty spot.

Walking along the large hall in the centre of the shopping mall I was not really paying attention to anything, just thinking to myself that there were a lot of people, people I looked at, but without really seeing them. It was like my vision was on auto pilot and the crowds were just vague unknown figures.

I was snapped out of this semi conscious state by Michael's voice.

"Those two men are kissing," he said nonchalantly, but in a way that got our attention.

I looked and I sort of did a double take.

"Ah, um," mum responded in her fashion. "They could be a little more discreet," she added.

"Yeah," said Michael. "They should get a room!"

"Michael...!" Mum responded, emphasising his name. "Really, that's no way to talk. Where do you learn these phrases? Not from your brother, I hope." She looked at me,

but I made no response, I was in a state of shock only half hearing what was being said.

I couldn't believe it, but there not 20 metres away in front of me, on a bench just before the escalators and fountain, surrounded by some green spiky palm tree, was Jake. Yes, no doubting it, Jake was sitting there kissing another guy.

"Alex, Alex, come on we've got things to do, don't dawdle." She jolted me back to reality, but my mind was doing hula hoops, thoughts popping up one after the other, Jake's got a boyfriend, who was that other guy and thrown into the pot was, that's the first time my mum's said anything about gays, what does she think, one day I will have to tell her. One day I might come home with my boyfriend, how would she react? What would she do when I opened the front door and walked in with my boyfriend and said 'Mum, this is my boyfriend.' In any case I don't think that boyfriend will be Jake, the cheater.

"Alex, what is the matter with you today?" My mother's voice sounded a little tired, a little irritated.

"Nothing... nothing mum," I replied. "Sorry, I was just... thinking about stuff."

"Well, can you think about your shoes and perhaps we can get something done today." Mum had a way of using words that managed to put everyone and everything exactly in their place, right where they should be.

That Saturday morning passed in a haze of crowds, shopping and mixed up thoughts, I did get the shoes and the grocery shopping got done and we were back home. I was determined to confront Jake, I wasn't just going to let it go, he owed me an explanation. No, more than that, an apology. Yes, I thought to myself, it's not right, you can't go around picking someone up when you've already got a boyfriend.

I was upset, I was feeling somehow betrayed, let down, deceived. I wanted to share all this with the only person in the world whom I could confide in, Matty, but I couldn't, I just couldn't tell him. I felt very alone.

Dad came home and we all had lunch together. I don't really recall either the conversation or what we ate. Actually, I think it was chicken, but it doesn't matter. I was really preoccupied with thinking about seeing Jake kissing his boyfriend, who he just happened to forget to mention to me. I was thinking that maybe I could sneak out of the house this afternoon and go over to see Matty.

Then just as we were finishing lunch, the phone rang and my dad got up to answer it. I

could hear from what he was saying that it was uncle Jeff he was talking to about when he was coming over tomorrow.

My mum got up and looked over at me. "Don't forget Alex your dad asked you to help him clear out the shed this afternoon." Well that put paid to any idea of sneaking out, I was starting to feel miserable.

"Michael, help me clear the table please," my mother told my little brother, but even seeing that he had to do a bit of work didn't really cheer me up much.

That Saturday afternoon passed with me and dad tackling all the accumulated junk in the shed at the bottom of our garden. Sorting it out, tidying up what was to be kept and putting the stuff to be thrown out into the trailer to take to the dump later. I didn't mind working alongside my dad, besides it took my mind off things, although not completely.

I still managed the time to think to myself, what would my dad say if he knew I was gay. He worked in logistics for a big national company that dispatched cargo all over Europe. It was pretty much a macho environment, I mean truck drivers and that, I don't know how it would work out for dad having a gay son.

Chapter 5 - Calling Matty.

That evening after dinner mum sat down with Michael to watch a film or something on the TV, dad had some paperwork to do and went off to his study. I just said I wasn't really into watching television and escaped upstairs to my bedroom.

I flopped down on my bed, leaned over and put some music on. Finally, a bit of time to myself, I lay back listening to the sounds, but somehow Jake still managed to pop into my head. It was disconcerting because I was angry with him from what happened today, but at the same time when I thought about him I started to get hard and then my thoughts drifted to sex.

It's probably pretty normal I suppose, at least at my age, I got hard all the time and thought about sex a lot. I think I read somewhere once that men think about sex every two minutes. I don't know if that's true or not, but sometimes I wondered if I had a brain at all or if I just followed my dick!

To turn off thinking about sex, which it seemed my body craved for, but my mind told me there was too much going on, too much stuff needed sorting out, I picked up my phone and decided to see what was happening in Clash.

I opened the game, turned off the volume, I didn't like listening to the same bits of background sounds over and over. Besides it sounded tinny on my phone, music was only good with headphones, the speakers on the phone itself were crap.

I was not long in the game when the little number 1 popped up next to the chat, so I clicked the button to open the chat to read the message. It was Matty, dark warrior, was his in game name:

you on alex

was the message.

I didn't feel too much like talking, but this was Matty, which cheered me up.

sup

I wrote.

can u skype me

he asked.

sure give me a minute

I answered, closed the chat and exited the game.

I really was happy to hear from Matty and straightaway I clicked the Skype button and called him. It rang a couple of times, then Matty's face appeared with my own image in a little box in the bottom corner of the screen.

"So hows things?" Matty asked.

"Let's just say it's been a long day," I replied. "And you?" I asked him back.

"Me..." he replied and paused. "Me... well Alex I'm in my bedroom lying here and thinking about you and you know what?" He posed a question that needed my response.

"What, Matty." I said.

"Well I'm lying here... thinking about you... Alex... and I've got a hard on!" Wow, now that was exciting, that snapped me out of my morosity.

"Show me." I said. I don't know why I said that, maybe because I was feeling as horny as he was.

"OK, look." He grinned and the image blurred, he moved his phone and the screen came back into focus showing a view from his chest down the length of his body.

"I don't see much with your clothes on." I told him.

"Wait a minute," he said.

The image became blurred jumpy images as it looked like he was moving the phone around his bedroom. Then a large out of focus hand in front of the camera, finally the screen cleared and in focus I saw Matty lie back down on his bed. I don't know where he'd put the phone but the view point of the camera was from the foot of his bed and I could see him lying there.

He was fixing his earphone on. "This is so I can hear you and talk... can you see me?" He asked.

"Yes, all of you," I replied. "But still with your clothes on."

"I'm gonna fix that for you Alex," he replied.

Then I watched him as his hands went down to the belt buckle on his jeans. He undid the belt, then popped the top button and slowly, deliberately slowly, pulled down the zipper. I felt my cock responding to what I was seeing.

His two hands gripped each side of his jeans and he pushed them down, raising his hips, then bending forwards to take them off, first one leg, then the other. He pulled off his T shirt and laid back down, now in just his pants and socks and there was a big bulge in his pants.

I put my phone down and undid my own jeans pulling them off. I picked up the phone again to watch Matty. He stood up off his bed moving towards the camera, the image grew larger, now I had a close up from his belly button to halfway down his legs.

"This is just for you Alex," he said. "I hope you're enjoying it?"

"I'm loving it Matty, my cock is hard as a rock."

That was no exaggeration, last night I'd ignored it, but tonight I had to give it my full attention, it was begging for me to touch it. I watched the image of Matty as he pulled down his pants to display his manhood in all it's glory, sticking straight out.

My own hands reached down to remove my pants and I took my cock in my hand. I held the phone in my left hand watching as Matty touched his cock and then cupped his balls in his hand and arched his hips so his penis was pointing at the ceiling. I started moving my hand up and down the hard shaft of my cock. Nothing existed at this point in time other than Matty and me.

Matty turned to face away from the camera and I could see his beautiful little round arse. I started moving my hand quicker and quicker as I felt the tension building. Matty was really putting on a show. I could just make out his arm moving in front of him. He was moving his hips, I could imagine the frontal view with his hand gripping his cock and his hips thrusting into his hand.

I could feel the climax approaching. "Matty... oh Matty." I said as I continued to watch him. He turned back around to face the camera and I watched his hand pumping his cock just as I was doing the same here. I saw his cock jump, he moved in closer, not too close, his hand was around the base of his shaft. His cock jumped again and he shot his load in several spurts arching towards the camera. Three or four times more I pumped my own dick to it's long awaited climax.

"Matty," I said finally when I had caught my breath. "Matty, that was great."

"For me too," he replied. "I got to clean up, OK."

"OK Matty, goodnight then," I said.

"Goodnight Alex." The call ended, I put down the phone and lay back for a minute on my bed.

That, I thought to myself and smiled, that was great phone sex.

Chapter 6 - Sunday Bloody Sunday.

I didn't get up early Sunday morning, at least one day, I thought to myself, I have the right to stay in bed a bit longer, even if my uncle and his family would be here later. It was 09:50 when I looked over at the little clock on the bedside table. Just as I was getting out of bed the door opened and Michael peered in.

"You could knock," I told him.

"Why?" He replied and walked in through the door. "What are you doing?" He grinned at me.

"What's it look like?" I replied. "I'm getting up, idiot!" He was already starting to irritate me and the day hadn't properly begun.

"Mum says to get up and tidy your room." Michael was looking around the room, I watched him.

"I just said, I am getting up and the room is tidy, so get out I wanna take a shower." He turned his attention back to me.

"Ooh, wow, bad mood!" He said and turned around, walked back out and closed the door.

At least he closed the door after him, usually he'd leave it ajar on purpose just to annoy me by making me go over and close it. Little brothers it seems to me have a multitude of ways to irritate and annoy their older siblings.

Around 20 minutes later I was showered, dressed and downstairs in the kitchen drinking a coffee, with milk today! Now that I had woken up and washed I was feeling much better, I couldn't help wondering if it was part of my nature to be irritable in the morning.

Michael came into the kitchen, mum was there, I don't know what dad was doing.

"I want you both on your best behaviour when Uncle Jeff arrives," my mother looked at us. "No squabbling and be nice with Mathilde and Jed, if not I will be cross with you... both of you. Now clear up and get out of the kitchen I have a lot to do. They will be here in an hour. I don't want you under my feet."

Coffee finished I put my empty glass in the dishwasher and followed Michael out of the kitchen.

It must have been about quarter to 12 when the door bell rang and Michael opened it. There was Uncle Jeff, his wife Suzanne, Mathilde and Jed. Mum came flying out of the kitchen to greet them and we all said our hellos and asked the usual questions, good journey, how are you, etc. Mum ushered Jeff and Suzanne into the lounge.

She turned to us. "You boys look after Mathilde and Jed until lunch is ready." Then half turning back to Jeff and Suzanne. "I'm sure you two would like a drink before we sit down to eat." As all four of us were leaving, she called after me, "Alex, get your dad out of the study and tell him they've arrived."

I poked my head into the study, the door was slightly open. "Dad," I said. "Uncle Jeff is here."

"Ah, OK son," he replied. "Thanks."

I told Michael to go and play with Jed in his room and invited Mathilde to my bedroom.

"Can we sit in the garden?" She asked. "It's a shame to be inside when the sun's shining."

"Sure, good idea." I said. I was making an effort to be nice although I always felt a bit uncomfortable around Mathilde. I'm not sure why that was, if it was down to me or her, I mean her manner, or perhaps because she was a year older, or more probably it was sexual. Mathilde liked boys, she was the kind of girl who was well mannered, perhaps a little superior acting or maybe just very confident, but she knew how to go about getting what she wanted and that included getting the boys she liked.

It must have been a year ago, when, if we were both a bit older, you would have said she made a pass at me. Anyway, it was obvious back then that she liked me, which was kind of flattering in a way and she managed to kiss me, like I said she knew how to get what she wanted. I'm sure she would have gone further than kissing, but I wasn't going to let that happen. Even if I was in the closet, as they say, meaning that I hadn't told anyone about my sexual preferences and I wanted to keep being gay a secret. Despite carrying around that really big secret, I wasn't about to let my first sexual experience be with a girl, even if it would have been easy. By that I mean easy because I really could put being attracted to boys in the background if I'd lost my virginity to a girl and easy because Mathilde wanted it.

Ever since then, although Mathilde brushed aside her disappointment and kind of carried on like nothing had happened, things between us were all a bit strained. That was maybe because of my rejection of her advances, maybe because I was gay but didn't want to say.

Mathilde sat down in one of the garden chairs and I sat on the little brick wall next to the path. We chatted a bit, polite conversation about nothing in particular. Then, as if bored with my company, she stopped talking and kind of ignored me. I had the strong urge to get up and leave her to herself, but I didn't. I stayed keeping silent company, aimlessly looking around the garden until mum opened the patio doors from the lounge and called my name.

"Alex... Alex, will you go and find the two boys and come in for lunch please," she called out.

Without replying or saying anything to Mathilde, I got up and went into the house to look for Michael and Jed. The thought suddenly struck me that they had odd names, Uncle Jeff's children. Mathilde I could understand, because Suzanne, their mother, had French origins, her grandmother I think, and she was named after her or another family member, I forget exactly who. Then Jed, no explanation there I thought, who the hell names their son Jed? I dismissed the question and went upstairs to Mathew's bedroom.

I did exactly like he did this morning, opened the door and walked straight in. Maybe I should have knocked or called out first, but I don't think it would have made a difference. They were lying on Michael's bed, side by side, the two of them, both naked from the waste down and Jed was holding his penis.

Despite being taken aback by the scene that confronted me I managed to speak very normally.

"Guys... get up, get dressed and downstairs, lunch is nearly ready."

Michael looked just a little embarrassed, I think he was starting to blush.

"Ah... Alex," he said.

"Never mind," I replied. "Just get downstairs." I didn't want my little brother to dig himself into a hole, getting more embarrassed trying to explain what the two of them were doing and I didn't want to make a big thing out of it. After all, I'm two years older, I know a bit about boys and sex and exploring your body and so on. I left the room and

closed the door behind me. I asked myself, no it couldn't be possible could it? My little brother couldn't be gay? No, it's not possible, you can't have two brothers both gay can you?

Lunch passed in the usual way with lots of chitter chatter and mum getting up to bring in the food from the kitchen, dad carving the roast, all very civilised and not very interesting, but then Uncle Jeff put me on the spot.

"So, Alex my man, have you got a girl friend?" He posed the question. Mathilde looked up, perhaps she was curious to know my answer, I don't think Uncle Jeff was. It was just one of those awkward questions adults could ask without really thinking, because after all whether I did or did not have a girl friend really didn't concern him. It did of course have to be answered.

"No, Uncle Jeff." I replied. "I don't have a girl friend." I didn't add to that, simple, to the point, he got his answer and so did Mathilde, I just left it like that. It did, however, make me feel a bit uncomfortable and think to myself that if I had the courage to tell them all I wouldn't have to deal with these sort of situations. Then I imagined myself, in another reality, replying to Uncle Jeff's question by saying, 'No Uncle Jeff, I don't have a girl friend, I prefer boys.'

"Alex... Alex, pass the bread please," my mother was saying, which jogged me back into the here and now.

I picked up the wicker bread basket and passed it to her. She gave me a curious little smile and said, "Thank you, darling."

The meal continued with the cheese course and desert, more talking and of course drinking, I was actually allowed a glass of wine which was a turn up for the books. I think it was again my Uncle Jeff saying something like, 'He's nearly a man now' that persuaded my parents to allow it. It's funny really, but you could easily interpret Uncle Jeff's comments over lunch in several ways, of course only someone with my big untold secret would think like this, but for a minute I did wonder if he was questioning whether or not I was a real man. You know, has a girl friend and can take his drink. I dismissed those thoughts, because I knew that was the rocky road to paranoia which ended with you assuming people were talking about you behind your back and whispering snide comments.

Like all the other family get togethers Sunday lunch dragged on into Sunday evening. Michael and Jed were allowed to escape and went off to amuse themselves, doing what, I could only imagine. Perhaps they picked up where they left off this morning, but for

me I was obliged to stay and continue being polite with the adults.

When Uncle Jeff and his half of the Weston's clan had finally packed up and left, I helped clear the table and it must have been about 10PM when I went upstairs to my bedroom. Michael followed me up and mum called out after us, "Don't stay up too late boys, it's a school day tomorrow."

As I got to the top of the stairs I was about to open my bedroom door when Michael stopped me and asked, "Can I ask you something?"

"Yes, sure," I replied. "What is it?"

"It's kind of private." He said.

"Well come in here." I opened my bedroom door. "Sit down." I said, indicating the bed.

He sat down on the edge of the bed, silent. I sat down next to him and waited for him to say something. He didn't speak, so I thought I should say something.

"Has this got something to do with you and Jed today?" I asked. I was thinking to myself what else could it be?

Finally he spoke. "Yeah, it was a bit embarrassing when you came into the bedroom," he said. Then quickly added, "But we weren't doing anything."

"Yes, OK, so what's your question?" I asked. I wanted to be nice with my little brother, but I didn't want him to be here all night, I had other things on my mind.

It took him awhile, then he spoke up, "Do you think my dick is normal?" He asked. "I mean the size?" He added.

So that's what all that was about, comparing the size of their dicks. So I explained to him that he had nothing to worry about, his penis was normal, no one has the same size of dick they come in all shapes and sizes, can be straight, can be curved. Hell I was no expert, but I'd seen other boys naked and I'd watched enough porno. He was a bit more reassured I thought as I was explaining all this, but then he told me that Jed had a dick that was longer and thicker.

"You mean when it's hard?" I asked him.

"Yeah, I guess so," he replied.

I'm sure that's what he was talking about, but he didn't want to come straight out with it because that would have meant that they had been lying on the bed together playing with their cocks until they were both hard.

I brushed past the reply and just told him again that his cock was perfectly normal in size and it didn't really matter at all if Jed's was bigger, it made no difference to anybody. I think he was reassured, but I had no way to really know, or to know if that was all he wanted to ask or there was more. Anyway he stood up and left, saying good night as he closed the door. Sometimes, I thought, little brothers can be so sweet and cute, I smiled to myself.

Now that was taken care of I needed to deal with the other matter that had been bugging me since yesterday in the shopping mall, I had to find out what Jake was playing at. Lying on my bed I reached over for the phone and found his number, then pressed call. He answered straight away, I could hear music playing in the background.

"Hello Alex," he said.

"Jake, how did you know it was me?" I asked.

"I saved your number," he replied. "Remember, I said I would call you?"

"Ah, yes... that's right you did." I really wanted to get straight to the point, it had been a long day and I wanted some answers. "Who was the guy you were kissing in the mall on Saturday?" I didn't even give him time to respond. "It was your boyfriend, right?" I continued. "How the hell can you go around picking up someone when you already have a boyfriend?" I was really letting my feelings of deception and hurt out.

"Woah... hold on there Alex!" He just managed to get in.

"Hold on, hold on, why the bloody hell should I hold on?" I was building up a rage.

He must have heard the intensity in my voice. He said, "Calm down a minute please... please Alex." He added, "Let me at least explain."

Well, yes, that was why I was calling him, I had to listen to what he had to say. "OK," I snapped. "This better be good."

"Alex... one, Jonathan, the guy you saw me with on Saturday, isn't my boyfriend. Two, I wasn't kissing him."

What, I thought to myself. "Look, I'm not stupid, I saw you both, not 20 meters away from me. How can you tell me you weren't kissing him?"

"Because," he said. "Because, it's true..." he paused. "Things aren't always what they seem at first glance."

"What the hell does that mean? You were kissing or not? I suppose I just imagined it, no wait, I didn't just imagine it, it happened, but it wasn't you there kissing." I was getting angry again and irritated by him trying to worm his way out when I thought he should have just straight up admitted it.

"Alex," he said. "Yes of course it was me there kissing, but what I wanted to tell you is that Jonathan kissed me. I never wanted him to, I never encouraged him, but he just did it anyway... and the worse thing of all was you were there to see it." He carried on, I listened, "You have to believe me when I tell you I never wanted to hurt you Alex... I wouldn't cheat, I wouldn't lie to you about something as important as this... believe me please, Jonathan kissed me and not the other way around and there wasn't much I could have done to stop it."

I was thinking, I didn't know what to say. Was he telling the truth and if so who was Jonathan, what was going on between the two of them?

After a long silence Jake spoke, "Alex, Alex, you still there?"

"Yes, I'm still here," I answered.

"You do believe me, don't you?" He pleaded.

"I... I don't know, really I don't know." I said the truth, I didn't know if I should believe him or not. One part of me desperately wanted what he was saying to be true and the other, more logical side, was telling me it's not believable, don't be fooled.

"Alex... let me see you, please, face to face. I promise to answer all your questions, anything you want to ask me." He seemed sincere in what he was saying. "I like you Alex... I like you a lot."

"Look, it's late, I've got school in the morning, I've got to get some sleep." I told him.

"OK, alright, but can I call you tomorrow? Can we meet up?" He asked.

"I don't know," I replied. Then I added, "Alright, you can call me."

"Thank you, Alex," he said. "Goodnight."

"Goodnight." I replied and ended the call.

I got undressed and into my pyjamas, pulled back the duvet and slid under the covers. As I was falling asleep I was thinking it could be true what he had said, I mean that's what happened between me and Mathilde a year ago. I never wanted to kiss Mathilde but that didn't stop her kissing me!

I was glad when Monday was over, I never did like the first day of the school week and today was no exception. Walking slowly out of school and up the street to the bus stop I had to run when I saw the bus arriving. I just made it, last to get on, I showed the driver my pass as he closed the doors and the bus pulled away.

Making my way down the aisle towards the back I noticed Ryan, who called out, "Alex, you just made it!"

"Yeah...had to run." I replied.

Squeezing into the empty seat next to him, he turned to me and asked, "How was your weekend?"

"Oh, it was OK," I answered. "We had my uncle and his family visit."

"Yes, I know." He said, which kind of puzzled me, because how could he know that?

So I asked him, "How did you know, I never said?" The bus pulled in at the next stop, the doors opened and more people got on, it was filling up.

"Ah!" Exclaimed Ryan. "We have our sources." He grinned, without saying more.

"Yeah well, whatever," I replied, not really being in the mood to quiz him to find out how he knew what I'd been doing Sunday.

The doors clanked shut and the bus carried on. Couple more stops and I'd be home.

"So, what about you?" I asked him.

"What about me?" That was his reply.

"Your weekend?" I was rapidly losing interest in the conversation and just thinking about getting off the bus and being home.

Someone rang the bell for the next stop.

"It was OK." Ryan replied, without adding anything or saying more about what he did over the weekend.

I let the conversation drop. Ryan looked away gazing out the window and I was happy to continue the journey in silence, lost in my own thoughts.

I replayed events in my head, the screwed up paper note with the message from Jake, seeing him kissing someone else in the shopping mall on Saturday. Then I started thinking about Matty, I hadn't seen much of him or talked much, I should call him.

A nudge in the side from Ryan jolted me out of this revelry. "Your stop, you dreaming?"

"Oh yeah, see ya." I grabbed my bag and rushed down the bus, scooting off through the open doors, they closed behind me. I watched the bus pull away and had the image of Ryan gazing out the window in my head. He never said much, I started up the hill to home, but he'd always been like that as long as I'd known him, kind of enigmatic, but beautiful. I suppose he was someone to look at and admire for his good looks, not someone to ever have a deep conversation with.

Arriving at the front door, I fumbled for the key in my pocket, took it out, inserted it in the round metal lock, turned it and pushed open the door.

Mum was home, she called out from the kitchen, "That you Alex?"

"Yeah mum," I replied. "I'm going up to my room to change."

I heard talking and then music from the kitchen so whatever she was doing she must have had the radio on. I went straight to my bedroom, threw my bag into the corner of the room, took off my school jacket and sat down on the bed.

I kicked off my shoes and at the same time I took my phone, deciding to call Matty, but just then it rang.

"Hi Jake," I answered seeing his name appear.

"Hello Alex, everything OK with you?" I'm sure he wanted to know if I believed him about Jonathan, that I wasn't going to dump him and have nothing more to do with him, but then I thought, in that case I wouldn't even have answered.

"Alex," Jake said again. "Are you talking to me?" I suppose the silence was a bit long.

"Yeah, yeah, I'm talking to you," I said.

"You're not saying much."

"I was just... thinking, that's all."

"About what... about me?" Of course it had to be about him, what else. What did he want me to tell him?

"Of course about you." I answered.

"Oh..." He said that kind of innocently, his 'oh' was the sort of 'oh' that said, I hope you've forgiven me because it wasn't my fault and you know I'm a really nice person. Yes it was all of that in one tiny word.

"Are we good?" He continued probing.

I thought about what to say, but yes of course we were good, because despite everything that's happened he was still a real sexy guy and I was very attracted to him.

"Yes," I replied simply.

"Look Alex it would be great if we could meet... maybe one day this week, what do you think?" I knew he was going to ask to meet up, that I guess was what he wanted from day one and I have to admit so did I.

"Wednesday," I suggested. It was a good day for me because I had the last period free so could get home a bit early. "Where?" I asked.

"Well... if you wanted to you could come to my place, it's not far from you... what do you think?" I didn't really need to think about it, it was the best possible solution. If I was going to meet with Jake then in private, alone, suited me just as much as it probably did him.

"Yes OK," I replied. Adding, "Send me a text with your address."

"Will do... what time?"

"Has to be after school, so around 5, 5:30?"

"Yeah, that's great, I'll send the address"

"OK, see you Wednesday."

"Bye babe."

"Bye," I ended the call, now it was done, no going back. Well I suppose I could always just not turn up, but I knew I wouldn't do that, I think I'd made my choice the very first time I called him.

The phone sounded the little beeps for an SMS, I looked at the message, Jake's address, I knew where it was and he was right, it wasn't far from me.

I undid my tie and finished changing out of my school clothes, putting on jeans and a sweat, then flopped back on the bed and picked up the phone again. I decided to check out Clash, the game, I was just getting started on farming for my town hall upgrade. Then the phone rang again and this time it was Matty.

"Hi Matty, I was about to call you, but I got side tracked in Clash."

"You in it now?" He asked.

"No, I was, I closed it when you called."

"I'm seriously thinking of joining another clan," he said. "I found this level 5 gay clan, it's international and I thought it might be nice to be in a clan with other gay players."

"Yeah maybe," I said.

"If I leave and join it, will you come too?"

"Yes, of course Matty, where you go I go." I smiled to myself as I said this.

"OK well I'm going to check them out, it's invite only, so I'll let you know and if it's good I'll text you."

"What's the clan called?" I asked.

"GAYOK," he answered. Then added, "I'm going there now, talk later."

"OK, later." The call ended.

It was always so easy with Matty, you could chat like that, not see him for days and just pick up the conversation like it was five minutes ago. Maybe it's because we've known each other so long, maybe just because we fit well together, I don't know, but whatever the reason it's nice to be like that with someone.

* * * * *

Wednesday at school it was hard to pay attention during lessons because all I could think about was meeting up with Jake that evening. Until the actual day arrived I had managed not to think about it much and carry on life normally, but now I was becoming more and more anxious. It was a strange mixture of emotions, apprehension mixed with excitement, I didn't know what would happen although I had played the scene of arriving at Jake's place over and over in my head.

When the bell sounded for the last period I packed my stuff into my bag and I was out of the school gates and on my way to the bus stop in record time. I had to wait ages for the bus to arrive, which was frustrating, but, I thought, it's always like that when you have something important to do or somewhere you need to be.

By the time I arrived home it was not really much earlier than usual. Mum was there and as I closed the front door I called out to her. "Mum, I'm going out to meet up with some friends, OK?" I asked, knowing she wouldn't object.

"Just make sure you're back by 7 and don't neglect your school work," she said.

"All in hand mum and back by 7," I replied.

I went straight upstairs to my room, threw the bag in the corner and got out of my school clothes. I never usually bothered with a shower, but this evening was different. Before getting dressed I showered and put on some deodorant, I wanted to smell nice. Putting on my jeans and picking up my sweat shirt which I had discarded the night before, I smelt it before putting it on and decided it would be better to take a clean one.

I was back downstairs and about to leave the house, it was five minutes to five, OK for time I thought, no need to rush, calm down. I called out to mum, "See you later, mum." Without waiting for her reply I was on my way to Jake's.

He lived in this little courtyard of small apartment blocks, three stories high, with footpaths leading to each block and the car park. They were fairly new and the ground backed onto the park. Jake was in the second block on the ground floor, I rang the front door bell, now I was feeling nervous. The door opened and Jake was standing there, a big grin on his face. He stepped back to let me enter, he lightly took hold of my upper arm guided me along the hall, pushing the front door shut behind us.

"I'm so pleased you're here," he said. "I thought maybe you might not show up," he

added.

An open door at the end of the little hall led into a small room with a sofa against the wall on my left and two windows looking out in front over a small lawn and hedge bordering the path I had arrived by.

"Sit down," he said, indicating the sofa.

I sat down and continued looking around me. Through an arch on my right was a kitchen and in front of me against the other wall a little black rectangular table and wooden chair. What particularly caught my attention was the picture on that wall. It was a modern graphic painting in bright primary colours, mostly blue, yellow and red. It showed a boy leaning over another boy, his head turned towards the boy he was leaning over and he had his tongue sticking out, his tongue was of course bright red. I liked it, it was a great painting, it was also quite gay, no very gay.

"You're not saying much," Jake spoke again. "You OK?" He asked.

"Yes... yes... sorry." I replied. "I... I'm a bit kind of nervous and I don't know, sort of don't know what to say." It was exactly true, now I was in Jake's apartment and we were alone, I was flooded with emotions that I didn't know how to deal with, because this had never happened to me before.

I guess that Jake understood something of what I was going through. He sat down on the sofa next to me, turned to me and moved his hand through my hair and gently kissed me on the cheek.

"It's all fine, Alex," he said. "No pressure, just chill." He added, "Maybe you'd like a beer?"

Jake's manner and voice was having it's effect and I was starting to feel my old self and more at ease.

"Yes," I said. "A beer would be great, thanks." I smiled.

He stood up and went into the kitchen, coming back with two beers. I'd taken off my jacket and left it on the floor next to my side of the sofa.

"Space is a bit limited here," he said. "Take the beers, I'll hang your jacket in the hall."

When he returned he put some music on, quietly, sat down again next to me and I

handed him one of the beers. We touched the bottles.

"Cheers, Alex."

"Cheers, Jake" I replied and for some reason I just couldn't help but smile.

We sat there for a while just sipping our beers in silence. Then I said, "Where's the bed Jake?"

He laughed and suddenly I realised what I had just said and how that sounded.

"You don't waste much time," he said jokingly.

"No Jake, don't make fun of me," I replied. "You know what I meant."

His laughter turned to a smile. "You're sitting on it," he told me. "It's a sofa bed, but don't bother about that."

Then he leaned towards me and placed his hand on my thigh, it felt electric, I got an instant hard on.

"Let's get rid of these beers for now," he said standing up.

I handed him my beer and he went into the kitchen and left the half finished beers on the counter top. He sat back down next to me, put his arm over my shoulder and resting the palm of his hand on the back of my head he turned his head towards me and kissed me.

I kissed him back and his tongue was inside my mouth, I'd never kissed like this before. My cock responded by pushing against my jeans. Jake's free hand once again was on the inside of my thigh, we broke off the kissing and his hand moved from my thigh to cover the huge bulge in my jeans. This time I kissed him, a long deep lingering kiss.

I was starting to relax, it was good he'd got rid of the beers, I was afraid my hand would shake so much I'd spill beer all over myself or all over his place.

Looking in his eyes, feeling his body close to mine, this was amazing. He led the way, I followed. We touched, we kissed. His touches were gently and firm at the same time. My body sort of melted into his. He licked my ear lobe, moved his hand under my T shirt and touched my skin.

We embraced and we made love, it was... fantastic!

At some point we ended up on the floor, it was a chaotic scene of cushions, clothes and two naked bodies. Then we both started laughing, I rolled off him onto my side and he pulled me close into his wonderfully strong warm body. Oh God I thought, that was real sex!

Chapter 8 - Answers.

I got back home just after seven, in time to eat and to not get in trouble. After eating I said I needed to get some school work done and retreated to my bedroom. Actually I didn't even bother to get the books out and do any work. I just thought to myself why

the hell didn't I question Jake. Of course I knew why, although I'd made a big thing out of it when I'd called him on Sunday I didn't want it getting in the way. From the very first moment on the bus I was attracted to Jake and after having sex with him that attraction was even stronger.

I lay there thinking about it, I had the sensation that I could still feel him inside me. I don't know if I was in love with him, probably not, but I definitely wanted more, more sex, it was just too good. I closed my eyes and imagined I was still with him, that we were lying side by side naked in his bed and that we could have a whole night of love making together. I was getting hard just thinking about him and what he could do to me.

My brain entered onto the scene and told me I had to find out if I could trust him. Problem was, you could say it was like opening Pandora's box, now that I had had real sex, I wanted more and more experiences. I just couldn't help thinking that Jake was perfect, I know it probably would sound completely stupid to anybody else, but right then, at that moment it was what I felt.

Anyway I decided to call him just to hear his voice. I found my phone, picked it up and called. It rang about five times and went to the automated reply: "Hi, you've reached Jake, but I'm not around, leave me a message."

Why isn't he around, shit I only left him a few hours ago, he can't have gone out. I hung up, no point to leave a message, but I was disappointed not to be able to talk to him.

Five minutes later, just as I was wondering if I should get down to doing the school work, the phone rang. For a second I thought it would be Jake calling me back, but it wasn't, it was Matty.

"Hi Matty, hows things?" I asked.

"Alright," he replied. "Listen Alex, what do you think about coming back to my house after the match on Saturday and sleeping over?"

"Yeah, sounds good Matty, is it OK with your parents?"

"My parents are away Saturday night, they said I can have you over to stay, but no one else."

"Ha ha," I said. "No parties then."

"No, no parties, but anyway Alex, I'd really like it to be just the two of us."

This made me realise Matty wanted to be alone with me, that maybe he wanted to pick up from where we left off with the phone sex. My mind started imagining loads of things that could happen.

"Well me too, Matty, it sounds great, I'll tell my folks, but they will be cool."

"Fantastic," he replied enthusiastically. Now I really did think that we would sleep together on Saturday night and as I thought about it my cock started to respond.

I decided to change the subject and asked him, "Did you check out that new clan?"

"Yes," he replied. "And it's good, cool people, different ages, but mostly young, teenage or twenties. The leader is in Sweden he's 26, nice guy, he said you are welcome to join too."

"OK, I will go there."

"Great, I meant to tell you before, but you know, you've been busy so I never got the chance."

"Well, you told me now and Saturday with you will be fun."

"Yeah, I think so."

"It's getting late and I need to get some school work done."

"Yeah, me too. Goodnight Alex."

"Night" I ended the call.

I couldn't help thinking I had too much going on in my life, does every 15 year old have a life as complicated as mine? I don't think so, they don't anyway have to deal with being gay and they don't have to deal with having two relationships at the same time.

I didn't get much work done and after around half an hour I put the books away, got undressed, put on my pyjamas and slid under the duvet. As I was falling asleep I started imagining having sex with Matty. It had been good on the phone, but actually being with him, next to next, touching him, that would be a hundred times better.

* * * * *

Thursday lunch time when I looked at my phone there was a message from Jake.

It said: sorry I missed your call phone died call me tonight.

What does that mean? I asked myself, then considered the answer, he had no battery. Well that works if he wasn't at home because at home he just needed to plug it in to recharge it. So either he switched it off or if the battery really was empty he was out. Why should I care anyway, I don't know, but it bugged be.

When I got in from school I went straight up to my room and called Jake.

"Alex," he answered immediately.

"Hi, I got your message," I said.

"Yes Alex, sorry about last night, but after you left I put the phone on charge and switched it off"

There was the explanation, he didn't go out, he just turned the phone off when recharging it.

"It was great," he continued. "Being with you last night, really great Alex."

"For me too," I replied.

"I wish we could have spent the whole night together, I missed you as soon as you left."

It was like he had some sort of special power, he always seemed to say exactly what I was thinking. How did he manage to do that?

"Jake, I..." I hesitated bringing the subject up.

"What Alex?"

"I wanted, but never got around to asking you who is Jonathan."

"Well Alex, I suppose you could say he's an ex, but that's not exactly true."

"What do you mean, not exactly true?"

"I've known him a while, over a year, ever since I moved here, I suppose we're good

friends." I waited for him to continue, I didn't interrupt. "Thing is he always wanted more than just friendship and... well one time, I made a mistake, I slept with him. I never should have because I more or less knew what he was like, but I did."

"What he was like, what do you mean?" I asked.

"Umm... well he likes stuff that I'm not at all into. Do I have to tell you all this?" It seemed like I had put Jake on the spot, he'd started telling me and I wanted to know more, but I was pretty much convinced now that Jake was telling the truth. He was opening up a bit of his personal history which is something I was sure he would never have done if our relationship held no importance for him.

"You don't have to, but you started it so..."

"OK then, Jonathan is into pretty weird stuff, weird for me anyway. He is sort of into S&M type stuff, that's his thing, when we slept together he wanted to tie me to the bed, but I wasn't into it. That's why I said it was a mistake." I was starting to discover who Jonathan was now.

"So if you weren't into it and it's over, how come he was kissing you in the shopping mall?" Here was the question Jake needed to answer.

"I knew you'd get back to that," he replied. "Jonathan is a bit obsessed with me, that's also his character. I suppose you could say he falls for someone and then he can't let it go even when it doesn't work out and the other person doesn't feel the same."

"So he's obsessed with you?" I repeated what Jake had just said.

"He was, he's changed now, he's found someone else, I just hope that guy knows what he's getting into. I mean I don't mind playing about a bit, but I wouldn't be into real pain, hurting someone, sadomasochism, that's not me."

"Oh!" That was all I could say. I thought about when Jake smacked my arse which I kind of liked, but I knew he was talking about something more than that when he was describing Jonathan. I had my answer.

"You've gone quiet again Alex," he said.

"Yes, I was just thinking that's all."

"Well don't think too much about Jonathan, think about us. When can I see you again?"

This weekend?"

I felt a bit guilty now because I was going to spend the weekend with Matty. "This weekend I can't Jake. I really want to see you again, but it will just have to be next week, I'm sorry."

"I don't think I can wait that long," he said joking.

"Jake, I'm sorry," I repeated.

"It's OK Alex, it's OK, I guess I will just have to hold on until I can get that sexy young body of yours in my bed again."

"And me too," I said. "I really want to be with you again, I'll call you, OK."

"Sure babe, but don't forget."

"Of course not."

"Bye then sexy."

"Bye Jake." The call ended.

I was left asking myself who the hell is actually cheating here, it's not Jake and it's definitely not Matty. No, it's me who's the one carrying on two relationships, me who's the one living a secret life, it's me doing all the cheating and lies. It seemed to come so easy to me, but I knew there would be a price to pay, but I also knew I liked both Jake and Matty, I hoped I would never have to chose between them, that would be the worst thing ever.

Chapter 9 - Drugs.

Thursday evening I finally took out my school books and got down to some serious work. There were some things I needed to finish including a history project to hand in tomorrow and some other stuff needed to be done for Monday. Given that Saturday was the match and then I was staying over at Matty's, it had to get done tonight or I'd be left

doing it on Friday.

By around 11PM I had cracked it and with some satisfaction I closed my books and put them back in my bag ready for tomorrow morning. Finally, I thought it's nearly the weekend, I flopped down on my bed and was just lying there thinking about Saturday's match and about Matty when Michael poked his head round the door.

"You'll never guess what I heard from Jed..." he said, kind of baiting me in that way that only little brothers can tease.

"Yeah, well what did he tell you then? I asked.

"What's it worth?" He replied.

"Nothing, Michael... tell me or not, why should I care?"

"You might care if you knew" He was obviously enjoying the moment, playing his game of I know something you don't. It made me think about the fights this sort of stuff used to start when we were younger. I would lose my cool and we'd end up scrapping, rolling about on the floor, but being older and stronger I would always come out on top. Literally, it would usually finish with me on top of him, sitting on his chest and pinning his arms down so he couldn't fight back.

"So you wanna know... or not?" He grinned that little impish grin of his.

"OK then, tell me, come on."

"What do I get in return?" He asked.

"You'll get a smack in a minute if you don't either say what it is or get out." He'd opened the door and entered my bedroom whilst talking, but I wasn't that interested and like always he was starting to annoy me.

I guess he understood from the tone of my voice that I wasn't in the mood to play his little game. "Well Jed told me Mathilde's got a boy friend."

"So," I replied. "What's the big deal and why should I care?"

"Because... because," he started saying. "You and her used to have a thing going on."

"No we didn't Michael, I have never had a thing going on with Mathilde, why would

you think that?"

"Coz... Jed said that, he said you and her kissed... he saw you one time when they were round here."

"Yeah, well OK, that happened, but it was over a year ago and we never had anything going on between us."

"But it's true, you kissed her?"

He had a way of manipulating information out of me, he was very good at that was my little brother and that was also very annoying. I would end up telling him things I never wanted him to know exactly like now.

"Actually she kissed me and that's all... happy now you know?"

"If you say so," he said.

That was so annoying little brother, he'd worm his way around to finding out something then even after I told him he would still question the answer and wind me up. You can see how we ended up fighting.

"Anyway," he continued with his history about Mathilde. "That's not the best part."

He liked to drag it out. "Oh, so what is the best bit then, come on, I can't wait to hear it."

"Alright, but you owe me." I think he was trying hard to get something from me in exchange, I wondered what he wanted. "The best bit then is this..." Dramatic pause, it made me smile, he was such a play actor. "Her boyfriend goes to our school and... it gets better... he's even in your class!"

Yes, that made me think. If it was true and why wouldn't it be, then who was the boyfriend. I started picturing the boys in my class, one by one.

"Come on then Michael, who?"

"It's Ryan."

I should have known I thought, that explains how he knew what I was doing over the weekend, because Mathilde had told him. I wondered what else she had told him about me. Michael looked pleased with himself, he turned around and scooted out the door. I

got up, walked over and closed it.

* * * * *

Friday was always a great day, I've said it before, just the morning to get through and then most of the afternoon was sport. I handed in the history work I'd completed last night and there's not much else to say, the rest of the morning passed normally.

On the way to the playing fields, for the final practice before the match, I saw John boy up ahead and trotted to catch him up.

"How's it going Alex?" He asked when I joined him.

"Good," I replied.

"I think we are in with a good chance tomorrow." He smiled looking pleased about things.

"Yeah, so long as the team pulls together we should win it, but if we do then the final will be another matter altogether."

"Well, one thing at a time."

The sun was peaking through the clouds, it wasn't cold, almost a pleasantly warm day and dry.

"Thanks for chatting to Ryan last week, that whole thing should be sorted now."

"Yes," I said. "I don't even know what it was all about and all Ryan could say was that he and Bulldog, Brandon, were not the best of chums."

"I know it's stupid and especially to bring up the gay thing, I cannot allow that sort of bullying and prejudice, not in the team and not in the school."

"Brandon can be a real idiot sometimes."

"More than sometimes and why did he think Ryan was gay? Not that I care one way or another."

"I don't really think that he thought Ryan was gay." I replied. "It was just a way of getting at him. As it happens Ryan is going out with my cousin Mathilde."

"Good for him. Brandon is probably peeved that Ryan has a girl friend and he doesn't, probably resents his good looks, probably all about jealousy."

"Yeah, jealousy, I never looked at it like that."

We arrived at the playing fields and were entering the changing rooms, "I just need a quick word with coach Alex, see you out there."

"OK," I replied and went off to get changed.

The practice went well, we weren't pushing things too hard, because coach didn't want any injuries on the eve of the important semi-final. He called a halt earlier than usual and said he wanted to see everyone together before we went home. No doubt the usual Mr Mathews pep talk.

Finally when everyone was cleaned up and changed we waited for the speech from coach.

"Well boys," he started. "I have two important subjects to talk to you about before I let you go home. The first concerns tomorrow's match." He looked around making sure people were paying attention. "We have a very good chance of going through to the final. As a team you are all playing well and when I say team, I am including the reserves, because even if you are on the bench you are just as important a part of this team. It is my intention to pull some players off after half time, I want to get some of the reserves on the field and bring some fresh players to the second half. Of course I can't say who or when this will happen, because it depends how things play out. Right what you have been eager to see, here is the starting line up and reserves." He then read the team list and there were some sounds of approval, maybe some of disappointment, but anyway I was on the team. I hadn't really doubted that I would be, there were few surprises with the line up.

"OK," Mr Mathews continued. "I will pin this up." He turned and pinned the list to the board a few paces behind him.

"Now before you go I want to talk to you all about something that has happened and which is very serious and concerns you all." At this point I thought maybe John boy had told coach about the bullying incident.

"I am talking to you now, in confidence, I don't want you going away gossiping or repeating to anyone what I am about to say. So I hope I am not misplacing my trust in

you." There were a few murmurs of 'yes coach', 'sure', 'def', etc.

"There will be an assembly at school first thing Monday morning when the whole school will be addressed." Now I was thinking this can't be about the bullying, it must be something else.

"A boy, I won't give his name, but he's a year above you has been suspended from school." There was a hushed silence, it had to be very serious for that to have happened. "The reason is that it is believed he was involved in drug dealing... as you know our school has a zero tolerance policy where drugs are concerned. It would appear that drugs have been sold or exchanged outside the school and brought onto school premises. The police have been informed and are making their investigations. A letter will be going out to your parents." He looked around again, watching reactions, making sure we looked like we understood how serious it was.

"I have every confidence in each and everyone of you here," he continued. "But if anyone knows anything about this, if you have seen anything unusual happening, perhaps in the school car park or outside the gates, then you need to come forward with that information." He stopped, again looking at faces. "You need to come forward even if it concerns boys in school, it is much too serious an affair and you must not think of it as telling tales. It's about protecting everyone at your school and you are all old enough to take your responsibilities seriously." He stopped there and waited what seemed a long time, but it probably wasn't, he was just giving everyone time to take in what had been said. The atmosphere was heavy and still.

"OK boys," he broke the silence. "See you all bright and fresh for the match tomorrow. Off home now."

On the way home I hooked up with Ryan. "So what do you make of that then?" I asked.

"I don't know, I haven't seen anything going on," he replied.

I let it drop. "So you're going out with Mathilde?" I asked.

"Yes, who told you?"

I repeated the line he gave me the other day on the bus home. "We have our sources."

"Ha ha, very funny, I guess you do."

We took the bus home together not saying too much, like usual Ryan preferred gazing

out the window and that suited me fine.

Before I got up the road and home my phone rang, it was Jake. "Hi Jake, what's up?"

"You mean other than missing you babe?"

"Yeah, other than missing me."

"I just wanted to ask if you happened to see Jonathan hanging around when you left my place Wednesday?"

"No, I'm not even sure I would recognise him, I only saw him that one time with you in the mall. Why do ask?"

"Oh it's nothing, I just want to make sure he doesn't bother you, we had a bit of an argument and well I wanted just to check things with you. Anyway it's nothing. I mainly called to wish you good luck for tomorrow and the match."

"Thanks Jake, that's real nice of you."

"OK, bye then beautiful and don't forget I'll be waiting for you to call me."

"I won't forget, bye Jake."

Once inside the house and back upstairs in my room I thought that call from Jake asking about Jonathan was a bit odd, but I dismissed it. I didn't see any argument he had with Jonathan effected me. Actually it was good if Jake got rid of him, specially considering he was a kind of weird guy.

Chapter 10 - Semi-Final Day.

It was a clear dry day for the semi-final and half the school had turned out to support the team. Getting ready before the match in the changing rooms there was a definite buzz in the air, I think everyone was hyped up for this game.

The atmosphere is so different when you are playing in a real stadium and not just on a playing field. Add the supporters in the stands, the shouting, singing and all the rest of the noise, it's really special. Standing there in the line up waiting for the start you just look around and soak it all up.

The game went well as we took a quick lead and kept it right through to half time, but it was close, they were only a few points behind and it could have gone either way in the second half. Just as he had said he would, coach brought on some fresh players off the bench for the second half.

That formula and all those practices paid off and we won the match, but it wasn't easy and was touch and go right up to the final whistle.

After the usual celebrations in the changing rooms I found Matty waiting by the team entrance. He was talking to Michael and my parents were there as well, of course. Everyone was in a good mood and dad said he would drop me and Matty off on the way home. So we all piled into the car and passed the whole journey talking about the match.

"Enjoy the rest of the weekend." My dad said as Matty and I got out of the car. "See you Sunday afternoon, be good." Mum added in her inimitable style and just to round it off Michael chimed in with his own, "Yeah, be good." They drove away and Matty opened the front door and we were in. The whole house to ourselves for the best part of the weekend, his parents were not due back until 5 on Sunday.

I just had a small bag with me, I'd left my sports gear in another bag in the car for mum to wash.

"Leave your stuff here." Matty said as we stood in the hall. I dropped my bag on the floor and followed him into the lounge. "I don't know what you want to do this evening. Mum left us something to eat, I only need to heat it up. " It was funny listening to Matty play the host, I mean he was just so sweet and so damned cute.

We were both standing in the lounge and I just reached out with both arms and pulled him towards me, "I want to do this first." I hugged him tight, dropped my head to one side and kissed him full on the mouth. My tongue went between his lips and I held him in a deep kiss, tongues touching.

It was like a scene from a movie, I felt him melt in my arms, it was like every care in the world had dissolved, we had been so long building up to this moment. I kind of half pulled him down with me to sit side by side on the sofa, well he was actually half way

across me as I kissed him again and then a third time before I backed off and let him sit back down, I still had my arm around his shoulders.

"Wow Alex." That was all he could manage to get out. I looked at him, brushed my hand through his hair. I thought to myself as we both fell silent, that this would be fantastic, something I would always remember, that finally I had Matty alone and all to myself. He was mine! My cock was already hard. Just thinking that thought, 'Matty was all mine,' made it even harder.

There was no rush, we had all evening and better still all night together. For the first time in my life I could spend the whole night with my lover, I could fall asleep and wake up next to him and we could have as much sex as we liked, until we were exhausted. I started to think about the sex and what we could do together.

My thoughts were interrupted when Matty spoke, "Do you want a drink Alex?"

"What do you recommend?" I replied.

"Well I was thinking some fruit juice... with just a touch of vodka to give it some punch."

"Sounds good Matty, but go easy on the vodka."

"Of course." He looked at me as he got up and smiled. "I need you with all your strength, don't I?"

He went out to the kitchen and came back with two tumblers of fruit juice with some ice cubes floating in them. He put them down on the coffee table and placed a little round coaster under each one, then went to open the drinks cabinet. He lifted out a two thirds full bottle of Smirnoff.

"I hope your dad won't notice a bit of his vodka has gone missing."

He poured a little into each tumbler. "Nah, he won't miss it, he doesn't mark lines on the bottles." He grinned at me.

Matty put the bottle of vodka back and sat down next to me on the sofa. We both reached for our glasses and touched them together. "Cheers Matty," I said.

"Cheers Alex."

Matty sat back on the sofa, he sipped his drink, looked at me and said, "Do you think you would keep that hard on if I put some of this ice on it?" He picked an ice cube out of the top of his tumbler and moved to put it down the front of my jeans.

"Careful Matty," I said. "I might have to smack you if you're going to be naughty."

"Oh yes please," he replied laughing and I started laughing along side him.

We finished rolling around on the sofa laughing and playing with ice cubes, well it's only water. Sitting up he broke out of my grip and turned to look at me, "I think we could eat Alex, you hungry?"

"Yeah, OK, we can eat in the kitchen, I'll bring the drinks." We both went into the kitchen which had one of those long breakfast bars with tall bar stools you climb onto. Matty went around the counter, opened the fridge and took out a plastic container which he put in the microwave. Then he laid out knives and forks.

A couple of minutes later and the microwave beeped, dinner was ready. Matty took two dinner plates from the cupboard and shared out the contents from the plastic box which he had removed from the microwave. He brought the two dinner plates, steaming hot, to the counter and came around to climb on the stool next to me.

"It's my mum's chicken casserole," he said.

"Smells good," I replied.

"It's hot!" He warned.

"Like you." I smiled.

"You gonna keep this up all night?"

"I hope so." Then we were both laughing again.

I carefully tasted the chicken casserole, blowing on the piece on my fork before putting it in my mouth.

"It's hot!"

"I warned you Alex."

I waved my hand from side to side to fan my half open mouth. Matty laughed again.

"It's good though... just needs to cool down."

Matty was still laughing, "Like you then... too hot."

A little while later we were finishing off the chicken casserole, when Matty, being really impish, picked up a small piece of chicken on the end of his fork and moved it slowly towards my mouth. I closed my lips around the piece and he slid the fork back, it was very sexy. Maybe the food had boosted my energy and the little bit of vodka relaxed us, we were having a good time.

We spent the whole evening doing nothing in particular just teasing and joking around. By the time it got to around 11PM I still had a raging hard on. Now I was determined to satisfy it.

"Let's go to your bedroom," I suggested.

"Yeah, OK," Matty answered.

So together we went upstairs and into his bedroom. I felt incredibly sexy, I'm sure Matty felt the same. Let's see how this plays out I thought. I turned to face Matty.

"Take your clothes off," I said and my cock bounced against my jeans in anticipation of seeing him naked. He didn't reply, but instead sat down on the chair by his bed and took off his trainers and socks. He stood up, smiled and pulled his T shirt up and off over his head, then discarded it. His hands went to the belt of his jeans, I'm sure my heart was beating fast, he undid his belt, the top button on his jeans, then pulled the zipper down. His hands gripped his jeans as he pulled them down over his hips and let them drop to the floor. It was a replay of his striping on the phone.

He stepped out of his jeans, bent down to pick them up and folded them. All the time I was watching his every move, but mostly enjoying looking at his hard on. His hands now took each side of his pants and he pulled them down over his hard cock. He picked them up and placed them with his jeans. As he turned around to do that I admired his neat little arse. I couldn't stop myself thinking just how much I wanted him, of course my cock was responding like mad. He turned back to face me, completely, beautifully naked, with a fantastic erection.

As I was admiring his fit young body he looked me straight in the eye, "Your turn," he said.

Now I followed him in taking off my own clothes, sweat shirt, shoes and socks, jeans and finally as I watched him watching me, my pants. I was facing him totally naked and my cock was bouncing up and down. I moved to stand very close, our cocks touched, I learned in to give him a long deep kiss. I nibbled his right ear lobe and I whispered in his ear.

It was just fantastic, no it was better than fantastic, incredible. We played with each other, we kissed and touched, when we came together it was explosive!

I put my hands on his shoulders and turned him around to face me. I brushed my hand through his hair and I kissed him. We stood like that awhile, kissing gently and touching each others body.

"I think we should take a shower and go to bed" I said.

"Yeah," he answered.

We got in the shower together, the warm water cascaded over our bodies. I washed Matty all over my hands caressing his skin and he did the same to me. He took my cock in his hands and soaped it all over. I started to get hard again when he did that. Then he washed off the soap and kneeled down and he kissed my cock, put his tongue on the tip and licked it. Then he took my cock in his mouth and sucked. He was very good, but I didn't want to come again so soon. I lifted him up and kissed him, my hands reaching around to grip and squeeze his arse. I pulled him close to me, then stood back and took his cock in one hand and soaped his cock, my other hand cupped and gently squeezed his balls. He was starting to get hard with this attention to his cock.

I stopped and kissed him again. "I think we should go to bed," I said. He nodded. I turned off the water and we dried each other, walked back to his room and slipped under the duvet naked together. We kissed and I held him in my arms, now I'm in love I thought and I whispered, "I love you, Matty."

He hugged me tight and I thought I saw a little tear in the corner of his eye, "I love you too, Alex, I always have." I gently wiped the little tear away and kissed him again. We fell asleep like that our bodies entwined.

Chapter 11 - In The Park.

I don't know what time we woke up, I didn't even bother to look, it felt so incredibly nice to wake up next to Matty. I stroked his hair and looked at him, he stirred, turned towards me and opened his eyes. He smiled, what a beautiful smile he had, what a beautiful boy.

"I guess we should get up," I said the obvious thing.

"I think you're already up!" He joked and his hand moved underneath the duvet to touch my cock which was hard.

"Ha ha, very funny," I smiled, took hold of his hand and moved it away from my hard on. "I need to piss." I climbed out of the bed.

He looked at my cock sticking straight out. "I thought you needed to do something else." He was still smiling.

"Later Matty, later." I turned away and walked out of the bedroom.

We met in the bathroom, took a shower together, brushed our teeth and kept playing around the whole time, touching each other and joking about, like little kids. We eventually got back to the bedroom and got dressed, but not before a tumble on the bed where we rolled around wrestling. It finished with me on top of Matty, just like it used to finish with my little brother Michael. I kissed him right on the lips before we got up and went downstairs into the kitchen to get some breakfast.

"Let's go for a walk in the park," I said as we were finishing eating our toast. "It looks like being a nice day and I need some fresh air."

"Don't tell me it stinks in here." Matty replied grinning.

"Matty, Matty, you're not going to do the witty repartee all day long are you?"

"No, OK, let's go out." He hopped off his stool and gave me a little kiss on the cheek.

We tidied away the breakfast stuff and he switched on the dishwasher.

The park was not far, Matty lived at the bottom of the hill completely the other side of the park to me. We walked down his street and around to the big old iron gates, which were always open. Walking across the bottom part of the park before following the path that wound up the hill, it felt warm in the early morning sun.

There were not many people around, a road ran up the hill through the park and I heard a car pass, but it was completely the other side of the trees. At about halfway we stopped, I looked back and saw someone jogging along the bottom path where it's flat. As we turned and carried on up hill I saw two guys near the top by one of the park benches.

"That looks like Brandon," Matty said.

"Shit, I really don't want to see him today." Thinking about it there was no way to avoid them unless we went back the way we came.

"Who's that with him?" Matty asked.

"I don't know." Although I thought I might have seen the other guy somewhere before, I wasn't sure.

"What are they doing here?" Matty was in his curious mood, he wanted to find out, that was certain. We carried on walking towards them, Matty turned to me. "Did you see... that guy just gave Brandon a little packet? Did you see that?"

"Yes Matty, I saw."

Now we were up at the top almost next to them. "Hi Brandon," I greeted them, looking first at Brandon then the other guy who was a bit older.

"Hello," Matty chipped in. "What you doing here?" He had to get his question in.

"Hi Alex, Matty," Brandon replied. He ignored Matty's question, "This is my cousin Jonathan, we're second cousins actually."

So I had seen him before, I was still not 100% certain, but it must be the same Jonathan I saw in the Mall kissing Jake.

Jonathan smiled first at Matty then at me. "So you're Alex?" That was all he said.

I nodded. I thought to myself he doesn't look like the macho man Jake described, someone who would be into all the stuff Jake said.

He looked at Matty. "Matty that must be short for Mathew or is it just Matt?"

"No it's Mathew, but everyone calls me Matty."

"Well it suits you, Matty, that's a good name for such a handsome young man."

Brandon nudged Jonathan with his elbow. "Don't pay him any attention he's putting on his charm act."

Was Jonathan coming on to Matty, I felt a sudden pang of jealousy. If Brandon had not said that he was his cousin, second cousin, I would seriously have wondered what the two of them were doing together.

"So what are you doing here then?" Matty was persistent.

"I could ask you two the same question," Brandon replied, looking first at me, then at Matty and sort of nodding his head.

"Come on," Jonathan said to Brandon. "We'll be late if we don't get a move on." Then turning to look at me and Matty. "We will have to leave you I'm afraid, nice to have met you both."

"Yeah OK then," I said.

"Bye, see you around." Matty added and we walked on past them.

"See ya guys," Brandon called after us.

As soon as we were out of earshot Matty spoke, "They're going to the carpark. What do you think they were doing?"

"I don't know," I said. I felt uncomfortable meeting Jonathan when I was with Matty and I kept repeating in my head his greeting, 'So you're Alex.' How could he know who I was, that meant Jake told him about me, but I only saw Jonathan that one time so I could have been a different Alex. If he knew it was me who was seeing Jake then would he have told Brandon, because if Brandon knows the whole school could know. I felt a sick feeling in my stomach.

"Do you think there were drugs in that packet he gave Brandon?" Matty asked.

"I don't know, maybe."

"Maybe they're the ones dealing drugs at school, what do you think?"

"I don't know Matty, really I have no idea, it could have been anything in that packet."

"Yes, but it's kind of suspicious, I mean meeting in the park to hand over a package, discreetly, out of sight." He continued with his theory. "And... he didn't want to say what they were doing, did he?"

"No, I guess not."

I think Matty could see I wasn't being very helpful in figuring out what was going on, so he changed the subject. "He's very gay, Brandon's second cousin."

"You noticed," I said.

"Be hard not to, wouldn't it?"

We were nearly at the lake now which was at the top around the other side of the carpark.

"Well yes, I guess it would be."

"He knew who you were, how come?" Matty asked. I thought he should join the police or something with all his questions. It was making things difficult, but I had to give him an answer.

"Probably Brandon told him, perhaps they were talking about the rugby match."

Finally, Matty shut up and we entered through the little gate to the lake, walking around on the path in silence. We sat down together on one of the lakeside benches and I watched the reflections of the sunlight on the water. It was peaceful.

Chapter 12 - Brandon.

When I arrived at school on Monday morning all I was thinking about was that I had to find out what Jonathan had said to Brandon. Matty and I had spent all day Sunday together and I had put bumping into Brandon and Jonathan out of my thoughts, but now not knowing what Brandon might know was making me nervous.

When the bell went to start classes there was the usual hustle and chaos as everyone went into the school building, along the wide corridor or up the main staircase to their classrooms. Though unlike a normal Monday instead of starting lessons, each classroom filed out and went off to the assembly which was being held in the gym.

That Monday morning the Principal addressed the whole school about the incident of drugs being sold outside the school gates, or even being brought onto school premises. He emphasised the seriousness of the matter, reiterated the school policy on zero tolerance and said that one boy, Terrance Wright was his name, had been suspended. The police, he said, had been brought in and were pursuing their investigations. He finished more or less saying exactly what coach had said on Friday, that if anyone knows anything at all, or has seen anything odd, unusual or out of the ordinary then they needed to come forward with the information and talk to one of their teachers.

When we were dismissed and going back to classes I found Brandon and told him I needed to talk to him. He said we could meet up after school, we can't talk here were his actual words. So I said I would see him on the way home. Back in class before lessons began I started wondering about Brandon and thinking about the drugs thing and the package Jonathan had handed him in the park, but more than that I was worried for myself and if he knew I was gay.

It was difficult to concentrate I was too concerned about Brandon and when the final bell went at the end of the day I found myself stuffing my school books into my bag eager to get off and meet up, but with a real feeling of apprehension, like butterflies in my stomach.

I didn't want to hang around in the carpark or by the school gates, not with everything that was going on. So I walked out of school as slowly as I could and was relieved when Brandon caught up to me just at the gates.

"Let's go to the gardens," he said and I nodded. There were some public gardens near to our school, a little green area with four small flower beds and a couple of benches. It was a small detour from my usual way home. The gardens were deserted and the benches empty, we sat down together on one of them.

I wanted of course to find out exactly what Brandon knew, what he knew about me and if he had told anyone else anything, but I didn't want to come straight out and ask because maybe he knew nothing. I thought it's best to work around it and so I started with the little package.

"What was in that package Jonathan gave you in the park?" I looked at him.

"What has that got to do with you?" He replied pretty much annoyed that I had brought that up. "You haven't gone around mouthing off to people about that, have you?"

"No of course not, but Matty and me... well we were just wondering, I mean with

everything that's going on."

"Fuck, you haven't talked to any teachers have you?" He was getting a bit worked up over it, I couldn't help wondering if Matty was right about it being drugs.

"No I haven't, I said I haven't talked to anyone."

"And Matty, he hasn't talked either?"

"No I'm sure he hasn't said anything either."

"You can be such a prick..." Brandon said. "You don't know nothing about nothing, but you think you do."

"Maybe I can be a prick, but I'm not a fucking bully like you that goes round calling people gay!" He was making me angry now.

"You're talking about Ryan, but you don't know that story either. I admit I was wrong to play the gay card, but I was really pissed with him and I could have ended up hitting him."

"You were just jealous of him and Mathilde and wanted to get back at him."

"Yeah, but with reason. I was with Mathilde before Ryan came along and she dumped me because Ryan told her I already had a girl friend. I heard that later from Mathilde's best friend. So you see I had reason to hate Ryan. Still, I over reacted in a bad way and that was wrong."

I was silently listening as Brandon explained everything, it did throw a different light on what happened even if like he said himself, there was no excuse for his over reaction and inventing the gay thing to get his own back.

"I don't think you just wanted to see me to play Sherlock over what you saw in the park. I'll tell you straight Alex," Brandon was about to say something I knew was important, I think I even knew what he was going to say and it was about me. "I know you're gay... Jonathan was in a relationship with your buddy Jake before you came along. He saw you leaving Jake's apartment. Listen, it doesn't matter to me... not one little bit. I've known Jonathan all my life, he's gay and we are very close, I don't care and your secret is safe, I'm not about to go around telling everyone... no that's up to you to do."

Although I was half expecting Brandon might say something like this it still hit me head

on like an express train, because I secretly hoped that he didn't know anything. Silence descended again, I had no reply, I couldn't speak. I don't know if it made it any better that he said my secret was safe, it seemed inevitable that it would come out, everything was pointing in that direction.

Brandon broke the silence, "You may not think so Alex, but I do know it's a big deal for you." I sort of nodded my head agreeing with what he was saying. "You should talk to Jonathan, maybe he will tell you some stuff about Jake that you ought to know, he knows the guy well enough and I'm sure like everything else, you don't know shit."

Then Brandon took a little package out of his bag and handed it to Alex. "Go on... take it," he said. It looked exactly like the package in the park. Alex hesitated, but took it. "Open it, take a look." Brandon insisted. Alex carefully opened the package which contained a small cardboard box. He opened the box and there inside was a watch.

Brandon who had been watching him all the time, spoke. "So there, you see, no drugs... just a watch." Alex was beginning to realise that you can too easily judge people. Things are not always what they appear to be at first sight. He had a whole new image of Brandon now he knew a bit more about him.

"I bought a box of 25 watches on Ebay," Brandon explained. "They are connected watches that link to most mobiles using bluetooth. The only thing is that they are blocked, or were, so unusable. Jonathan is a wiz with computer stuff and I gave him a watch to unblock. He did it, the genius, so now I can sell the watches and that was what you saw him give me on Sunday."

"Sorry Brandon." That was all I could say. "I probably jumped to conclusions about you, but I never really believed you were involved in drugs. I've miss-judged you and I'm sorry."

He smiled, "Yep, happens all the time." He took out a little note pad from his bag and a pen, then wrote something down. "This is Jonathan's phone number," he said and tore the page from the note pad and handed it to me. "Call him Alex, it's always good to talk."

I put the paper in my pocket, handed him back his watch. We said goodbye and I set off to catch the bus home. On the way I wondered if I should call Jonathan, I don't know him at all I thought, wouldn't it be a bit weird.

Later that evening in my bedroom after supper I was laying on my bed still wondering if I should call Jonathan, but instead I decided to call Matty and tell him about Brandon

and the watches. I picked up my mobile and called, it rang a few times before he picked up.

"Alex," he answered. "Pretty heavy stuff this morning in the school assembly."

"Yeah, it was, but no surprise," I said. I had already told Matty what coach had said about drugs at the school. I know we were supposed to keep it to ourselves, but I trusted Matty.

"Accept now we know who was suspended. Do you know him?" Matty asked.

"No, not really, I might have seen him around school, but I don't know him. Anyway it's one reason I phoned you."

"What... about the guy who was suspended?"

"No, not about him, about Brandon in the park yesterday."

"Oh yeah, that was suspicious, him and his cousin... if it really was his cousin."

"Matty, you watch too many of those crime programmes on TV, Jonathan is his cousin."

"Yeah, OK then, so what?"

"I had a talk with Brandon today after school, the little package was a watch, one of those digital watches that connects with your mobile. Well Brandon bought a few of them off Ebay, but they were blocked and his cousin Jonathan is good with computer stuff and he unblocked them. That's it, nothing sinister."

Matty didn't reply, maybe he was thinking about what I had said. "So you were just as curious to find out as I was?" He said finally.

"Well I suppose." I didn't want to tell him my real reason for seeing Brandon was to find out what Jonathan had told him about me."

"When can we see each other again Alex?" Matty changed the conversation.

"You mean get some time alone."

"Yeah, of course, when?"

"I don't know Matty, it's not easy. You could come over here, but there's always a risk Michael is hanging around."

"I hate it not being able to be alone with you," he said.

"Me too, we need to think of a solution."

"OK, but I don't know what. Listen I have some school work to do so I need to go."

"Bye then Matty."

"Bye," he replied and ended the call.

I lay there thinking that really is a big problem for us. I put off calling Jonathan, I wasn't sure what I would say to him, but I had made up my mind to talk to him, just not now.

Chapter 13 - Jonathan and Jake.

Tuesday morning passed with me still thinking about calling Jonathan, it was at lunch time I finally took the little scrap of paper with his telephone number on and made the call. I hoped he would answer because now I had made my mind up I wanted to see him straight away and not have to put it off any longer. I had way too many unresolved things in my life that needed to be dealt with.

I suppose that I was in luck, he answered. I spoke first, "Jonathan, this is Alex."

"Oh yes, hi Alex," he replied.

"Brandon gave me your number and said it would be a good idea if we talked."

"Well... I suppose it can't hurt can it?"

"Brandon said that there were some things I ought to know."

"Indeed Alex, there probably are, I think it is better discussed face to face, do you agree?"

How could I not agree and anyway he was right, it would be better to meet. "I get out of school around 4, can we meet then or not?" I asked.

"Sure, that would be fine. How about in the cafe by the roundabout, Instant Snack?" He suggested.

It was only a few stops further on the bus from me so that was good. "About 4:30 then, the time for me to get there?"

"Yes, fine. 4:30 Alex, see you later." He ended the call.

Of course I couldn't help thinking about Jonathan during the afternoon and on the bus journey home. It was just after 4:30 when I got to the cafe. I looked around inside and saw Jonathan was sitting at a table towards the back against the wall. There was only one other person in the cafe.

He saw me enter and kind of waved me over. When I was at the table he asked, "Would you like a drink?"

"Yes, thank you, can I have a coke?"

He stood up and went over to the counter, coming back a short moment later with a glass and a can of coke. I had sat down opposite to him, sliding onto the red plastic bench seat which had its back against the wall.

"One coke." He smiled putting the can and glass down on the table.

I took the can, flipped it open and poured half into the tilted glass. I looked at Jonathan, "Thanks," I said.

"For the coke or for meeting you?" He grinned.

"Both, I guess."

"So why did you want to see me, not that I couldn't guess."

"Well... to find out about you and Jake, if you don't mind talking to me that is."

"OK, so I met Jake just after he moved here, about a year ago. It was in a gay bar, towards the end of the evening we got talking, neither of us had picked anyone up, I guess it was a quiet night." He had a cappuccino in front of him, he paused to sip the coffee. "When he told me where he lived I offered to give him a lift home, Jake doesn't have any transport. After that we just became friends who would go to clubs and bars together, but we weren't sleeping together. We got on well though and it was nice, I think, for both of us to have a gay friend, more so for Jake perhaps, being new he didn't know anyone."

Now I was contemplating the gay life style which I had never really thought about, but which these guys seemed to epitomise. Jonathan was still recounting his history with Jake. "On one of those nights when I was taking Jake home, he invited me in. Maybe he'd had a little more than usual to drink, maybe he was feeling lonely, I don't know, but we ended up in bed. I guess I always fancied him, he is attractive."

Jonathan sipped more coffee and I watched him curious to know more. "So you became boy friends?" I asked him.

"Not really Alex," he said. "We slept together one time, as I remember nothing much happened except Jake fell asleep. It was over two months later when it happened next, he invited me in again and he wanted to have sex and he wanted to tie me up."

"He told me..." I interrupted him. "He told me that was your idea and he split up with you because you were into heavy S&M stuff which wasn't for him. He said you were obsessed with him and couldn't let him go."

I got the impression that Jonathan was trying hard not to laugh, which made me feel a bit annoyed.

"Alex, it was the exact opposite of that. Jake likes a bit of..." He stopped, like he was thinking what he should say.

"He likes a bit of what?" I asked.

"He likes to mix pleasure and pain, he likes to dominate and he likes guys like you."

"So you're saying it's him and he lied to me?" I was thinking quickly here, Jake lied about Jonathan, Jake is into S&M not Jonathan, Jake likes guys like me, what does that mean?

"We all lie sometimes Alex, you, me, Jake. He's not a bad person, he wouldn't harm you or anyone else, but he's my age, that's quite a bit older than you."

I was still thinking fast, lots of things rushing through my head, Jake won't harm you, he's not bad, he's older, I know that, I like that.

"So why did you two split up, I saw you both kissing one time in the Mall?"

"Because of you, Alex, that's why we split up and me kissing Alex in the Mall was when I wanted him to drop you and be with me." He picked up his coffee cup and cradled it between both palms. "We would probably have split up anyway because there was no real relationship there, we were better off as friends, but being dumped for a young guy like you made me angry and upset, so I tried to win him back. It didn't work."

"I'm sorry," I said and I meant it. I was beginning to like Jonathan, as a person he was straightforward and honest, he didn't seem to hide, no he was being really nice and I was sorry to have been the cause of his break up with Jake.

"Alex, if it wasn't you, sooner or later there would have been someone else, like I said, if I am being honest with myself, Jake and I were never really in a relationship."

"Thanks Jonathan, thank you for being open with me, thank you for talking about this."

"Well you know Alex, it's not for me to give you advice, but I will anyway." He smiled and finished his coffee. "You would be better off with Matty, someone your own age, plus he's ever so cute and obviously likes you."

I didn't want to talk about Matty, I needed to think about Jake, yes I know Matty loves me and I love him but there's something else with Jake. "Life is complicated," I replied. I didn't know what else to say, I could neither agree nor disagree with Jonathan about being better off with Matty.

"I need to make a move," Jonathan said. Which made me look at the clock behind the counter and realise we'd been chatting a long time.

"Yeah, I have to get home too."

Jonathan stood, he held out his hand which I took to shake, then he covered my hand between both his hands and said, "You have my number, keep it, if you ever need to talk to someone, you know, someone as a friend, then call me."

"I'll keep it, no worries, thanks Jonathan".

I slid out of the bench, followed him out of the door and we parted.

That evening at home after dinner I started to replay the conversation with Jonathan in my head. It seemed any relationship with Jake might be doomed from the start, that with Jake it was sex, but he had been friends with Jonathan and he wasn't someone bad. Sex with Jake was what I liked I wanted more, I liked what he did, I liked it that he was older and if it was just sex, no relationship, then my proper relationship could be with Matty. The more I thought about it the more stupid that sounded.

Just as I was about to go to bed the phone rang and it was Jake. "Haven't heard from you Alex, he said.

"Well you know... I was going to call you," I told him.

"Can we meet up, you could come round here tomorrow? How about it?"

"Yeah, I could, but I won't be able to stay long."

"That's alright, I just want to see you babe."

"You sure that's all and stop saying babe will ya?"

"I'm just being affectionate, but if you don't like it I'll just call you Alex... Alex."

"Yeah, yeah, Jake, Jake," I replied.

"Tomorrow then around 4:30... Alex."

"Yes... Jake," using each others names was getting silly, but I wasn't about to stop until he did.

"I can't wait to see you," he said.

"Me too, tomorrow then, goodnight."

"Night." He ended the call.

I switched off the phone, got undressed and into bed. As I was falling asleep I was thinking about meeting Jake tomorrow.

* * * * *

Standing outside Jake's apartment I felt excited at the idea of meeting him again, touching him, but I also knew I had some questions to get answers to. He opened the door and let me in. When I entered the living room the bed was down, so I went over and sat down on it.

"You look sexy in your school uniform," Jake said as he went into the kitchen.

"You got a thing for school boys then Jake?" I asked him.

He came back from the kitchen with two beers, handed me one and sat down on the chair by the little table and smiled. "I got a thing for you Alex, in or out of your uniform." He raised his bottle of beer, "Cheers," he said.

I did the same, "Cheers," I replied and took a sip. It was bitter and cold, I still don't know if I liked beer, but I drunk it all the same. "You've got some explaining to do Jake," I continued. "I met Jonathan, he's the second cousin of a friend of mine from the rugby team."

"Oh, OK then," he lifted his bottle of beer and drank. "Fire away."

"The stuff you told me about Jonathan wasn't true, was it?"

"Not exactly, no. You see if I had told you everything about Jonathan you would never have slept with me, would you?"

"I don't know, but you lied to me."

"I lied only because I like you and I didn't want to lose you. My relationship with Jonathan was all but over, that is the sleeping together."

"Yeah, but you didn't just lie about that, there was the S&M thing as well."

"You know how it is Alex, you tell one lie and then you have to justify and explain how things happened. The lie gets bigger. Yes Jonathan and S&M wasn't true."

"More than that though, it's you who likes S&M."

"I kind of already explained that, because that part, what I said before was true. I like to play a bit but nothing heavy."

"Can I believe you, can I trust you?"

"Of course you can. What did we do when we slept together? I smacked your arse a couple of times and you liked it didn't you?"

Jake had a way of turning everything around. You ask him a question, he throws you one back. Now I was thinking yes, I liked it. As I thought about it I felt my cock getting hard. It occurred to me that I don't know myself, so much stuff was mixed up in my head.

"I'd like us to make love again," Jake said. He put his beer down and came over to sit next to me on the bed. He took my beer from me, leaned across me and stood it on the bedside table. He kissed me on the mouth, his tongue moving around mine. He leaned back and moved to lick my earlobe, I was getting excited. He whispered in my ear, "I want you."

My cock answered as he took hold of my jacket and pulled it off, I let my arms slide out. Next he knelt down in front of me, undid the laces of each shoe and took them off. "Stand up," he said and I did. His hands went to the collar of my shirt, he opened it, loosened my tie, which he pulled away from my shirt so it hang directly around my neck.

He stepped back a little, then one by one undid the buttons of my shirt and again I let him slide it off my arms. I stood there with a bare chest and my tie hanging down in front. My cock was hard as a rock, I couldn't resist Jake.

His right hand felt my hard on through the material of my school trousers and he rubbed it with the palm of his hand. All I could think was that I wanted his hand to grip it. He undid the top button pulled down the zipper and gripping my trousers and pants together pulled both down to my ankles. My cock sprang out straight, I stepped out of my trousers which he picked up and placed aside.

I was standing in front of the bed completely naked with the exception of my socks and

tie. Jake took hold of my tie and pulled me towards him, his free hand found my cock and balls. Leaning in he whispered, "I think naughty school boys deserve to be spanked, don't you." My mind was lost now thinking he's going to spank me, my cock was responding to everything Jake did and said.

"Yes," I replied, I wanted Jake, I wanted him so badly. He was passionate and I was lost, a slave to sex, my body responded to every move until we both reached that final moment.

Afterwards Jake said I could take a shower to clean up before leaving. I called home just to say I would be bit late when I realised the time. I said I had been helping on an end of term project.

On the way home from Jake's I just kept thinking it really is great sex.

Chapter 14 - Matty.

Wednesday on the way to school I bumped into Matty, I was pleased to see him and told him so. He said that he really would like to see me, alone of course. I decided the only way was for him to come round to my house this evening and we agreed to meet after school.

When the final bell went I packed my books away and headed out of school, we had agreed to wait for each other by the gate and as I crossed the carpark I saw Matty was already there. He smiled as I drew close to him. "How was your day?" I asked.

"OK, like usual," he replied.

"Let's go then, you can call your mum and tell her you will be at my house this evening."

"Already did," he told me.

We didn't say much whilst waiting for the bus or on the way home. I had the strong feeling that Matty was holding everything in and once we were alone he would open up. Myself, I was in an odd mood, both happy and gloomy. Happy to be going home with Matty and gloomy about everything else. I wanted to be alone with Matty like that first time at his house over the weekend, but I knew that wasn't possible. There would be the family and Michael, then Matty would have to go home, but as well as that situation I kept thinking that I would have to say something about Jake.

When we got in I asked mum, "Is it alright if Matty stays for supper, we're doing some school work together?"

"Of course it's alright," she replied and added, "You know Matty is always welcome here."

We went up to my room, I closed the door and as usual threw my bag in the corner. "Sit down," I said and Matty moved over to the old armchair. "I'm just going to get changed." I took off my shoes, shirt, tie and trousers. Matty hadn't actually sat down in the armchair, he was standing next to it watching me. I folded my school trousers and hung them in the wardrobe, turning back I found Matty right next to me. He flung his arms around me and held me close, he looked up into my eyes and I could see he looked sort of sad.

"I love you Alex," he said quietly and it was so touching I felt like crying. As he stood there hugging me, with those four simple words I felt all the emotion and all the pain of not being free and not being honest. I thought I could break his heart and as I was thinking that tears welled up in my eyes. I realised at that moment how much he truly loved me and I asked myself if I deserved his love.

Ever so gently I kissed his lips, he's such a perfect innocent boy I thought. I gently took his arms from around my waist and guided him into the armchair. I couldn't help my cock growing hard and I couldn't hide it either, so I turned away and quickly put on my jeans and grabbed a sweat shirt. Now I had to talk about Jake, but I had to try to explain so as not to hurt Matty, how I wondered can I do that, it's impossible.

"Matty," I said. "I need to tell you about something that's happened." He was sitting there looking at me with those innocent pale blue eyes, like a little boy that had maybe done something wrong. Oh god, I thought, it's me who is the villain in this tragedy, how can I make things right.

"What do you have to tell me?" He asked. "We're alright aren't we?" Like some weird universal comedy it was as if he knew I was going to say something dreadful.

I didn't answer his question, I couldn't. "I met this guy, he's a bit older, we met on the bus going home, his name is Jake." I looked at Matty, but it was very difficult to look at him and tell him. I had never had to do anything like this in my life. Matty and I had had some arguments, but this was something else entirely.

"Well... I don't know how to say this." I looked down at Matty sitting in the armchair, but I kept my gaze fixed on the wing of the chair. "I slept with Jake. It was my first time with anyone and it was before you and I..." My explication trailed off like the trail from an aeroplane disappearing after it's passage. What did it matter about when I slept with Jake, I slept with him and that's it. I can't justify or explain it.

Matty looked up at me, caught my eyes, "I know," he said.

I was shocked, how could he know? Is that why he needed to see me? Is it over between us? With that last thought I felt a pang of emotion in my chest. If it was over, if it was over... I had no answer for myself. I felt sick, that feeling of butterflies in the stomach. He didn't wait for me to reply, but continued, "Brandon came to see me, to make sure I hadn't said anything about the watches. He had no idea I was gay or that you and I were anything more than best friends. Anyway it all came out, Jonathan, Jake, you."

"Do you hate me?" I asked.

"No, I don't hate you Alex, we've known each other too long."

"If you can say that you are more mature than me."

"When Brandon told me it hurt, it wasn't Brandon who hurt me, it was you Alex, I was sad, jealous, angry, worried, every kind of emotion."

"I really do love you Matty," I told him and it was true despite everything.

"I know," he replied. "That's why I'm still here."

I wanted to pick him up out of the armchair and carry him onto the bed. Instead I bent down and kissed him on the cheek. I climbed onto the bed and motioned for him to join me. He got up and came over and lay down next to me.

I brushed my hand through his hair kissed, his forehead and I whispered, "I want to make love with you."

He turned his head to look at me. I put my arm across his waist. "No Alex," he said. "Not here, not now."

"You don't really forgive me do you?" I thought he doesn't forgive me if he doesn't want me.

"Alex, it's not that." Matty pushed himself up to sit on the bed. "If we make love that might make you feel better about things, but not me. You can't resolve everything by having sex. There's more to a relationship than fucking."

That hit home and hurt, but I deserved it and he was right. "Where does that leave us then?" I asked him.

"I don't know, maybe that's up to you."

There was a knock at the door, I got up went over and opened it. Michael was standing there. "Mum says to come down, supper's ready"

"OK thanks, be right there."

We ate together, mum, Michael, Matty and me. Dad was going to be home late today. After eating we all helped clear away the dishes, Matty said his goodbyes and I accompanied him to the door. As he was leaving I said to him, "I'm sorry if I hurt you Matty." He turned, walked down the path and was gone.

I went back upstairs to my bedroom and lay on the bed thinking, thinking about Matty. I needed to do something, but I was not sure what. This whole situation was my fault, I hurt Matty and put our relationship at risk. I decided to call him. I picked up the phone and called, he picked up straightaway, "Matty," I said.

"Who else?" He replied.

"You home?" I asked.

"Not yet, I'll call you back." He ended the call.

I sat on the bed my phone in my hand, now I had to wait for his call. I put the phone down next to me and folded my hands behind my head on the pillow. I had to talk to him, I picked up the phone again and looked at the time, then I looked at the time of the call, 3 minutes ago. How long before he got home, he never said where he was. Should I call him? No, I had to wait, I looked at the phone. It was like I was willing it to ring. He sounded normal when he answered, he would ring me, he would, I just needed to wait.

The phone rang, I grabbed it, I almost launched it across the bedroom in my haste, "Matty," I answered.

I must have sounded weird because he replied saying, "Alex, chill!" Maybe he felt the anxiety in my voice.

"Matty, Matty, I love you, I do Matty, I can't lose you, I'm sorry, I'm stupid, I'm bad, Matty, Matty." The more I rambled on talking nonsense the more emotional I was getting. I was about to cry.

"Alex, calm down, calm down." I couldn't answer there was a long silence. I thought I would burst into tears, I couldn't talk. "Alex, you're still there?"

I managed to say, "Yes." Realising you can't nod on the phone.

"Alex." How I loved to hear Matty say my name. "Alex, it's OK, it's OK." I was sniffing, my eyes were filled with tears, a cold wet streak ran down my face over my cheek. It was certain he heard me, certain he felt my emotion. "Alex, I wanted you to suffer a bit... you can understand, you hurt me, I wanted to hurt you back. I wanted you to feel what I felt when I found out."

I recovered a bit, now I knew it wasn't over, at least that's what I was thinking, he wanted to hurt me, I understood that, but I needed to hear him tell me it wasn't over. "I deserved it." I said.

"I think you did." There was another silence.

"Matty." I'm not sure how I was going to ask him, but as if he could read my thoughts, he interrupted me.

"It's not over Alex, I love you." Oh wow, that's what I wanted him to say I started crying

again, I couldn't help it. "I love you Alex," he repeated. "Stop crying," he added. He could have been in the room right next to me, that's how much he was in tune with what was going on.

"Thank you Matty, I love you, I do." I managed to say that in between crying and sniffing.

"Alex, please stop crying now." I couldn't, when he said that the tears came back again. The emotion was so great I had no control. There was a long silence. "Alex," he said again, "Please calm down, please, take a breath."

"Yes, OK," I replied. "It's OK, yes..."

Another silence, "Alex, you're alright now."

"Yes, yes Matty. I love you. I don't think I could live without you. You're my life."

"Now you're being dramatic. Don't exaggerate. Don't take it too far."

"Yeah OK." The tears had stopped, I was into recovery mode. "But you see what I said it's true, I can't lie to you, everybody else maybe, because I'm a shitty person, but not you."

"Alex, you're not a shitty person," he said. "Well sometimes you are," he added.

The atmosphere had lifted and lightened, I felt reassured, I felt things were back in place, I felt a huge relief.

"I'll call you tomorrow after school, OK?" He asked me.

"Yes Matty, that would be great."

"Good night then Alex."

"Good night Matty."

The call ended, I put down the phone and went into the bathroom to wash the tears from my face. I looked up into the mirror, my eyes were red from crying. I stared into the mirror and my reflection looked straight back at me. "You deserved that," I spoke to myself and thought, yes I really did.

Chapter 15 - A Secret Revealed.

Thursday lunch time Brandon caught me, he wanted to know if I could come back to his house after school because we needed to talk about things. He said Jonathan would pick us up. I told him I needed to check first, but it should be OK.

I called home and mum picked up. "Hello mum," I said. "I'm just calling to ask if it's OK for me to go to Brandon's after school?"

"Yes, it's fine Alex. Will you be back home for supper?" She asked.

"No mum, a bit later, I'm eating there."

"Not too late, Alex," she said.

"No mum, not too late, bye." I ended the call.

I saw Brandon going into the science lab and told him it was OK for tonight.

During afternoon lessons I was thinking about Matty and decided I should let him know what was going on. I didn't want any more secrets between us, I needed to win back his trust. In between lessons I sent him an SMS, saying Jonathan was going to pick me up to go to Brandon's because they wanted to talk and I would call him when I got home.

Brandon and I had the same last class so when the bell went we packed up and walked to the carpark together. Jonathan was waiting, he had a little red mini cooper, two door coupé, it had a sticker in the bottom of the rear window, 'Kiss FM' and on the other side a white oval with 'GB' in black letters. When he saw us arriving, he got out of the car.

"Hello Alex," he said. "Glad you could make it." He moved the back of his seat forward so I could squeeze into the back, I threw my bag in first. Brandon went around to the passenger side and Jonathan fixed back the driver's seat and got in.

"Is everything OK?" I asked Jonathan talking to the back of his head.

"Yes Alex, it's fine, I just wanted to have a chat and Brandon suggested we talk at his house."

He started the engine, drove out of the school carpark and up to the main road, turning in the opposite direction to my way home. Brandon turned the radio on and we listened to music as we navigated through the early evening traffic towards Brandon's house.

It was not very busy at this time and about 20 minutes or so later we were turning into the tree lined street where Brandon lived. It was impressive compared to where I lived, mainly because all the houses were large and detached, standing in their own sizeable plots.

Jonathan turned into the drive and pulled up in front of the garage. We tumbled out and walked across to the front door. Once inside we went first into the lounge where we were greeted by Mrs Mc Cauley, Brandon's mum. "Hello Mrs Mc Cauley," I said.

"Hello Alex," she replied then looked to Jonathan and Brandon. "Hello boys." She smiled and turned back to me. "You'll be staying for tea now won't you, Alex?" She asked the question in such a way that the only reply could be yes.

"Thank you, Mrs Mc Cauley," I said.

Before I could say anything more she posed another question, " And how's your mother Alex?" Again there was only one possible reply.

"Oh she's very well, thank you," I said.

I noticed all this time neither Brandon nor Jonathan had said a word. It suddenly occurred to me, I have no idea why, but I wondered if Brandon's mum knew Jonathan was gay. The niceties over Brandon said we would go to his room until tea was ready, so we went back out to the hall and up the large, quite grand, staircase to the first floor. Down the hall to the back of the house and Brandon opened the door to his bedroom. It must have been twice the size of my own room at home, he had a huge bed, a large sofa and a leather armchair, desk with his computer, plus he had his own huge television. Large bay windows with heavy curtains looked out over the rear garden which was huge with a large old oak tree off to one side.

We each found a place, Brandon on his bed, Jonathan the leather armchair and I took the sofa. "Do you want something to drink?" Brandon asked and it was then, looking around his bedroom, I noticed he also had a fridge.

"A coke if you've got one, please," I said.

"The same Brandon," Jonathan added.

Brandon got up and fetched two cans of coke, they were cold, he didn't bother about glasses.

"Class Brandon," Jonathan smiled at him whilst taking the can.

"I suppose you wanted a tall glass with ice and lemon and a little coloured umbrella in it" Brandon replied.

"Now that I need to see you do some time." Jonathan retorted.

I was thinking they are very good friends it's obvious by the way they are so easy in each others company.

I wondered what it was they wanted to tell me. "So what's the big deal, what is it you want to say?"

Brandon replied, "The other day Jonathan was at the school to pick me up, just like today he was waiting in the carpark. He had fixed all the rest of the watches and had them in the car to give to me. We drove out of the carpark up the street and turned into the main road. Then there was a police car behind us, you know, flashing lights and everything. We stopped and the police came round to the car, asked who we were, our names, what we were doing."

Jonathan was sitting in the leather armchair sipping his coke, he didn't interrupt. Brandon carried on, "So they asked for Jonathan's driving licence, car insurance, all that stuff. I explained Jonathan was my cousin. They were very suspicious, it was like we were criminals. One of them asked what was in the box on the back seat and I told him Jonathan had picked up some watches for me which I bought on Ebay, I didn't say anything about him unblocking them."

I was thinking this is like a scene from one of those TV programmes, real crimes, Matty will love this when I tell him.

Brandon was still explaining what happened, "So he checked inside the box, took a look at the watches. The other guy was back in the police car, on the radio I guess, confirming information. It all went on for quite awhile. Finally, they told us that we had been stopped because of criminal activities being investigated at the school, but we could go."

"They thought Jonathan was the drugs dealer?" I asked.

"Yeah of course," Brandon replied. "They must be watching the school."

Jonathan put his coke down and spoke for the first time. "I think I know the guy they are after, he's called Zippo, not his real name of course."

I was surprised, how did Jonathan know the drugs dealer. "How do you know the guy selling drugs?" I was curious to know.

"I said I think I know who it is. I can't be certain because I haven't seen him hanging around the school or anything. I suspect it's him because he used to sell drugs in one of the gay bars Jake and I go to. The last thing any bar or club owner wants is drugs being sold on the premises. They could lose their licence or get closed down. So the guy got

banned and the bar owner probably told the police because for a couple of weeks the police were quite often outside the bar." He paused and took a sip from his can of coke.

He continued, "I think he's started selling around the schools because he got kicked out of the clubs and bars. It makes sense, but I don't have proof and anyway you need to be very careful when you talk to the police."

I wondered why you needed to be careful if it wasn't you who was the criminal and at school they asked us to report anything we know.

"But Jonathan," I said. "At school they asked us to tell if we knew anything."

"Brandon doesn't want to say anything do you?" He looked across at Brandon.

"No," Brandon, replied. "I've got all these watches I want to sell and anyway you don't know for sure, it's just a guess."

"I don't want to get involved either," Jonathan said. "We're telling you as a friend, but you shouldn't repeat it and definitely don't tell a teacher."

"But why not?" I asked him.

"Like I said, you have to be very careful. Look, think about what could happen. You tell a teacher, the school informs the police. Next thing you got the police round your house talking to your parents asking you loads of questions."

"Yes, but that's kind of normal, isn't it?"

"Yes it's normal, but you don't really know anything so you end up explaining that I told you and then you give my theory. So now you got the police thinking gay clubs and bars, you got your parents thinking our sons involved in drugs or maybe what's he doing with Jonathan who's gay. Worse still, you blurt out Jake's name, now it's not just that you know me who's gay, but at least I'm related to Brandon, but you know Jake, another gay adult."

Now I'm thinking isn't he taking this a bit far, he's getting paranoid.

"Final nail in the coffin," Jonathan continues. "Because the police never let anything drop. Is that you are a schoolboy aged 15 in a relationship with Jake who's a 21 year old and that is suspicious and if you are having sex, which you are, it's also illegal."

"Oh!" That's all I could say. I'd never thought about it like that. I would have preferred he never said all this and I still thought he was being a bit over the top. Never mind, there was no need to say anything to anybody, except I'd tell Matty, but I'd tell him to say nothing as well.

"You see what I'm saying?" Jonathan asked.

"You're not gonna say anything are you?" Brandon added.

"No, of course not, I won't say anything if that's how you feel about it all." I reassured them.

"Good," Brandon replied.

"You should still be careful about things with Jake though." Jonathan was determined I understood about the underage thing even if I didn't care about it.

"Yeah of course," I said, just to keep him happy. I was still thinking to myself that he's being a bit of an old woman or, maybe, he was trying to put me off seeing Jake, I don't know.

Suddenly all three of us were silent until Brandon looked at me and said, "Also... I wanted to tell you I'm sorry about landing you in it with Matty." He paused again, as if searching for the right words. "I had no idea you and him were..." Another brief silence. "That you and Matty were, uh, together, you know."

"What he's trying to tell you," Jonathan interrupted. "Is, he had no idea you and Matty were a couple because had he known he would not have blurted out to him about Jake and you."

"What actually happened?" I wanted to know what took place when Brandon went to see Matty about the watches.

"I just wanted to make sure he didn't say anything to anyone, you know teachers." Brandon explained. "I needed to be sure. So I told him Jonathan, who he'd seen in the park, was my cousin, second cousin, that he was unblocking the watches, all that. Anyway, and I don't really know how it came up, but it became a topic of the conversation that Jonathan was gay."

I was imagining the scene and I could see that Matty could easily have mentioned that, it would be just like him with his hundreds of questions for people.

"So that sort of got things around to you Alex and I think I asked Matty how long he'd known you were gay."

"Brandon," Jonathan said. "For fuck sake, you don't think you asked him, you bloody well did."

"Yes alright," Brandon replied. "I asked him and he said not very long. Then I put my big foot in it and asked him how long he knew about Jake and what he thought about your relationship. Maybe it didn't click into place immediately, because he replied something like 'you mean what I think about Alex and Jake?' Then of course the coup de grâce like an idiot I said yes, Alex sleeping with Jake who's like 6 years older than him."

He paused, there was silence again. "Go on," I said.

"He tried to hide his reaction, his emotions, but he couldn't, he was shocked, almost distraught, I think he was close to tears. There was like a terrible silent empty space in the room after I'd said that. Even I'm not so stupid not to realise that he knew nothing about you and Jake, but more than that he reacted to the news not with the surprise of a best friend finding out, but like someone in a couple who just discovered the other person was cheating on them. I knew then that Matty was gay, he didn't need to tell me, either he had a secret crush on you and was devastated to find out you had a lover or you were seeing him and Jake both."

I was feeling ashamed, terribly guilty and sad. Brandon hadn't finished yet. "When I talked to Jonathan it became pretty clear you were cheating on Matty, but I wasn't sure at the time. I felt very sorry for him. He made some kind of lame excuse to go. I was certain he wanted to get away somewhere alone and then he would burst into tears."

After listening to this I felt the tears starting to well up inside me. I asked myself how I could be so cruel. I imagined Matty hiding away somewhere sobbing his heart out over me. What a fucking bastard I am. I wanted to go and find Matty right now, to put my arms around him and hug him close to me and never ever let him go.

It was all clear now that when he said he needed to see me and he came around to my house he had all his emotions pent up inside of him, all his fear of losing me, although god only knows how a selfish pig like me deserves his love. So when he put his arms around me and held me he was holding me hoping that he wouldn't lose the person he loved, when he asked me if we were OK he was desperately seeking reassurance that it wasn't over.

I was crying again now, it was just too much, how could you meet the love of your life and hurt him so bad. Jonathan stood up and came over, he put his arms around me and held me, I didn't deserve his sympathy and caring.

Whilst I was sobbing uncontrollably in Jonathan's arms, Brandon did something quite unexpected. He called Matty and told him what was going on and he told him how when he explained about what had happened the day when he had discovered about Jake I had burst into tears.

I was still crying when Brandon came over holding his phone. "Alex," he said. "Matty is on the phone."

He handed the phone to me, "Matty," I said and started crying again.

Matty spoke and I listened through my sobbing. "Alex, I love you..." he said.

"Matty," I said again and sobbed. "I'm so very sorry to have hurt you." More tears, more crying, "I love you and I want so much to hold you and hug you." The tears were just rolling down my face, "I need you, I know how much it must have hurt. I can't stop crying thinking about when you found out, all alone. Matty please forgive me."

"It's OK Alex, it's OK," he said.

Brandon took the phone from me and spoke to Matty. "He'll be alright Matty, I wanted you to hear him, because in a way this all happened because of me. It's obvious he genuinely loves you, you don't need to be here to know that. Listen he's staying for tea then Jonathan will take him home and he can call you later."

I slowly recovered, I was a bit embarrassed really. "Use the bathroom to clean up," Brandon said. "There's a clean towel next to the sink."

Jonathan took me into the bathroom and stood there silently watching as I splashed water on my face. When I picked up the towel and turned off the tap I looked at his reflection in the bathroom mirror. "You're very lucky to have someone like Matty," he said, then he left me alone drying my face.

When I first met Brandon I thought of him as a macho rugby playing arsehole, but he isn't that at all, he is a sensitive caring guy and actually a good friend. It's amazing how you can judge people without ever knowing them and be so completely wrong.

We all had tea together at Brandon's before Jonathan drove me home. He was a really nice guy as well. As I got out of the car I said to him, "Thanks Jonathan, thanks for everything." He smiled before driving away and I thought it's a shame he doesn't have a boyfriend.

Back in my bedroom I picked up the phone and called Matty. We talked for ages, I told him the whole story of the police and then we just talked about everything and nothing. I told him how selfish I was, that I realised that now. I wished we were together and it was hard not being there right next to him, but what could we do?

Chapter 16 - Ryan.

Friday came and went with no time to do anything except preparation for the rugby final on Saturday. We had the usual practice, team talk and tactics from coach, we all knew it would be incredibly difficult to win.

I've said it before, but nothing beats entering a stadium packed full of supporters, singing, shouting, waving banners, the atmosphere on this Saturday afternoon was electric. I felt a real sense of pride walking out onto the field with the rest of our team

and knowing that somewhere up there in the stadium watching me, as well as my family and friends, was Matty.

We gave that match everything we had right up until the dying minutes and final whistle. We clawed our way back to within a few points, but we neither had the chance nor enough time to draw even. We lost, not by much, it was still a proud team that stood on the sidelines whilst the winners celebrated their victory. We received applause and cheers from all around the stadium as we climbed up to receive our runners up medals. Next year I thought, next year we'll be stronger.

Back in the dressing room coach came to see us and he told us that he was very impressed by the team performance and we should not be too disheartened. "All I can ever ask of you boys," he said. "Is that you give you're best and don't give up. Today... that is exactly what each and everyone of you did. Well done."

With that he left us to shower and get changed. I have to say that despite coach's after match speech the guys were not very talkative and the overall sense I got was that everyone just wanted to go home. I had a few words with John boy and Brandon, but it was just to say enjoy the rest of your weekend the match is over no need to dwell on it.

As usual I hung back on taking a shower and there was practically no one left when I stripped off and walked naked into the hot steaming showers. I say practically no one left because Ryan followed me into the showers. I thought that was odd because he was usually the first in and first out. He was the last person I would have wanted to be with in the showers, he was just too beautiful and if you saw him naked, well he had a perfect body.

"You're a bit late getting off," I called to him from where I was standing, two showers down from him. I purposely didn't turn to look at him, but carried on letting the hot water caress my body raising my head towards the water streaming out of the shower head. So I didn't notice him move next to me and I was startled when he spoke.

"I guess so," he said and I looked round. He was standing right up close. At least that close I didn't see his whole beautiful body, just his face and chest. But of course I made the mistake of looking down and he saw that, how could he not. I couldn't help but see he had a fantastic hard on. Oh shit I couldn't help either my own cock starting to get hard. "You like what you see?" Ryan asked.

"Look, cut it out," I replied.

He just stood there looking at me. "Touch it, go on," he said.

"Ryan, I'm not touching your cock," I told him.

"Why not, I can see you like it, you're almost as hard as I am?" It was true what he said. My own cock would be sticking straight out any second now. I turned away from him, trying to ignore him and ridiculously hide my erection. I think that was another mistake because he moved closer, so close that his body was almost touching mine, almost, no it was, I felt his hard cock touching my thigh. He put his hand on my shoulder. "Come on Alex," he said. "Don't be a spoil sport." He pressed his body up against my back.

Oh god I thought I could have sex with this Adonis and it would be great, like a fantasy come true, all I had to do was say yes to him. I couldn't stop myself thinking those thoughts and of course like always my cock responded. Things had changed for me though, I thought about Matty and in that instant I knew what I had to do.

"Ryan," I said. "You'll have to take care of that alone." I looked at his erect cock, it was beautifully tempting. I turned away from him and walked out of the showers, grabbing my towel on the way and leaving him behind. I dried off and got changed quickly and was out of there. For the first time in my life my cock didn't rule my head, but I sure as hell felt like finding Matty and fucking him brainless.

On the way out of the stadium I saw him standing by the team entrance waiting for me. "Matty," I called out to him. I jogged up to him and put my arm around his waist and gave him a little sideways hug. "You didn't have to wait for me." Then my arm went over his shoulder, I looked around to check nobody was about, then I leaned in and kissed him on the mouth.

"Wow Alex," he said. "You're in a good mood for someone who just lost the final."

"I'm in a good mood because I've got my arm round my boyfriend" I said. "Let's go and I'll tell you about what happened after the match."

"Ah," he said looking at me and smiling. It was obvious he was happy and that made me happy too. "More intrigue?" He asked.

"No, not exactly, but when I tell you don't be angry with me, OK?" Now he gave me one of his funny inquisitive looks.

As we walked to get the bus I told him the history of Ryan in the showers, but I was very sure to tell him that I left him there to take care of his hard on alone.

"I can prove it to you, if you don't believe me," I said.

"And how can you do that. You're not gonna tell me you had a camera with you in the showers, coz I'll never believe that." He was being mischievous.

We arrived at the bus stop, there was no one else waiting for the bus so we must have just missed one. I took my arm from around Matty's shoulder then I stood real close in front of him. I undid the zipper on my jeans, took hold of his hand and brought his hand towards me leaving it resting on my crotch in front of the open zipper.

"What are you doing?" He seemed just a little nervous.

I said to him, "Feel the massive hard on I've got." He slid his hand through the open zip and it rested on my super hard cock. "There's your proof," I said. "I'd never have a hard on like that if I'd done anything with Ryan."

"I suppose not," he replied and smiled. He moved his hand away, but not before he gave my cock a little squeeze."

I zipped up my jeans just as the bus pulled up. We got on and found a seat together near the back. The doors closed and the bus pulled away.

"I'll tell you what I'd like to do with my hard on," I spoke quietly to him.

He looked at me grinning, "Oh yeah, what?"

I leant over and cupped my hand around my mouth to whisper in his ear. "What I'd like to do Matty, is to take you home, strip you naked and throw you on my bed. Then I'd take my hard on and fuck your arse until...."

I didn't finish because the bus had pulled up at a stop and two boys had come to sit down in the seat in front. I didn't want to chance that they might overhear, even if I was whispering. We sat in silence together for the next few stops.

Then the boys in front of us got off the bus and we were alone together. Matty whispered to me, "So you want to take me home and do what to me?"

"You heard," I said.

"But you didn't finish" He was grinning again.

"I'll finish when I get you alone."

"I hope you will," he said and looked at me with his cute angel eyes.

"It's our stop next," I moved to ring the bell. "You coming back to my place?" I asked as we got off the bus.

"I can't Alex, I said I'd be home after the match and it's already late."

"I hate not being able to be with you," I said.

"Me too," Matty replied. "But what can we do?"

"I don't know, but I'll have to think of something."

"OK, I really got to get back now," he said and turned to leave.

"Bye Matty, I'll call you." He turned and waved, I watched him walk down the hill in the direction of his house. I stayed watching him until he disappeared from view, then I turned in the opposite direction and headed home.

On the way I thought to myself now stuff is getting sorted between Matty and me what can I do to be with him. I didn't have the answer.

* * * * *

It was late on Saturday night, I was just about ready to go to bed when Matty rang. "What's up Matty," I said a little worried something might have happened.

"Oh nothing," he replied. "I was just thinking about things, everything that's happened this past week. You know about you, me, the stuff that happened with Brandon, but most of all about Jake."

"About Jake?" I was surprised. "What were you thinking about him for?"

"I was thinking that you didn't just sleep with him for nothing," he answered. "I mean I don't think you would just jump into bed with anyone. Would you?"

"No, of course not." Although actually I wasn't that sure. Maybe not now that I valued our relationship, Matty and I, but before, I didn't really know.

"That's exactly what I was thinking." I was finding it difficult to follow this conversation and where Matty was going with it.

"What do you mean?" I desperately needed some clarification here.

"I mean," he started to explain. "You told me you resisted Ryan naked in the showers."

"I did, I didn't lie about it, it happened just like I told you." I was getting a little worried that he didn't believe me. I thought, maybe I should never have told him.

"Yeah, I believe you," he said. I felt relieved to hear him say that. "It's not that. It's about Jake, he must mean something for you or you never would have slept with him, right?"

Matty's continued questioning could become difficult to deal with, especially as it was late. "I suppose so." I told him.

"That's what I was thinking about." I wasn't sure any of this was making any sense, but I thought he wouldn't call if he didn't have something on his mind.

"Let me get this straight," I said. "You're saying I don't just sleep with anyone, so if I had sex with Jake, it means that he isn't just anyone and that he means something to me. Is that it, is that what you're saying?" I was tired, trying to think through all this when I just wanted to sleep.

"Yeah, that's about it." Silence, I was thinking about what I should say.

"Alright, you have a point, but that was then and now I'm with you Matty."

"I'd like to meet Jake," he said. That shocked me. Why would he want to meet Jake. I couldn't work it out, I couldn't think that through.

"You want to meet Jake?" I repeated like some kind of dummy.

"Yes Alex, I'd like to meet him."

What could I say? "OK I'll call him, but not now Matty, it's late, alright."

"Yeah it is, late... but I was thinking about it all evening."

"OK Matty, if it's important to you. Now I need to get some shut eye, I'm knackered."

"You weren't knackered on the way home after the match. Only kidding, goodnight Alex."

"Goodnight Matty." He ended the call and I switched off the phone and got into bed.

As I was falling asleep I was thinking that a lot has happened today, the match, then Ryan and now Matty wants to see Jake.

Chapter 17 - Matty Meets Jake.

Sundays were both good and bad, good because it was a whole day with no school, bad because you might just get dragged into some all day family thing and bad because, well, it's the end of the weekend. This Sunday though was all mine to do whatever, within reason that is, whatever I wanted. Having a whole day free was great, but for the fact Matty wanted to meet Jake. I definitely wasn't sure this was a good idea, but I would have to do it anyway.

It was around 10AM when I made the call to Jake. He picked up saying, "Alex, great to hear from you."

"Jake... I have to ask you something."

"Sure Alex, go ahead." It seemed like he was in a really good mood, was that because I'd called him or he was just feeling happy today. I didn't know which.

"Well Jake you might not like what I'm going to ask and what I have to tell you."

"Just tell me Alex and let's see," he replied.

"I have a boyfriend, he's called Matty and he would like to meet you."

"You've got a boyfriend, when did that happen? You don't know anyone how can you suddenly have a boyfriend?"

"Matty and I have been best friends for like forever and well now we are more than just best friends."

"I get it," he said. "What you're telling me is you slept with your best friend who I suppose just happens to be gay, right?"

"That's right," I told him. "But it didn't just happen like that. I mean, like I said we're best friends and when he said he was gay, well later, I mean of course I always liked him. Shit Jake, you know what I'm telling you why are you making me explain it all, like as if I know how it happened. I don't OK, it just did. Then he found out about you and well now he wants to meet you."

"Why?" That was all Jake said and really I didn't know why.

"Hell I don't know why, he just does."

"No, come on Alex, you aren't giving me the whole story. Your friend wouldn't just ask to meet the other guy you've been screwing around with, without giving some reason."

"Alright," I said. "He told me that he didn't think I was the kind of guy who would just sleep with anyone. So if we had sex then you weren't just anyone but someone who means something to me."

"I suppose your best friend, Matty, is the same age as you?" He asked, I didn't see what

that had to do with anything, but I told him anyway.

"Actually he's a year younger."

"Surprising, he's not stupid your best friend." What did that mean I wondered, but I had no intention of prolonging this call with more discussion if I could avoid it, so I ignored Jake's comment.

"So can we meet up?" I asked him hoping to get a yes to that question.

"Sure, how about you both come over to my place this afternoon. Let's make it 2 o'clock, OK?"

I wasn't expecting that. I mean I wanted him to say yes, but maybe for next week sometime or even next weekend, not today, immediately. Of course I didn't want to risk Jake changing his mind and besides, as I said, he seemed like he was in a good mood, plus I had Matty to consider.

"2 o'clock it is then, see you later." I tried sounding casual and confident when I said that, but anxiety was creeping into my voice. Whether or not Jake noticed, I'm not sure.

"Look forward to it," he said and hung up.

Look forward to it I repeated to myself, why would he say that? Why didn't he just say bye? Why would he look forward to meeting my boyfriend, that's weird.

I called Matty and told him we'd meet up after lunch to go and see Jake at 2, he was fine with that, he had nothing to do this afternoon and was happy we could spend time together.

I met Matty in the park which saved me going all the way down to his house and back up the hill. He seemed cheerful enough, but I was nervous about meeting Jake. We walked back across the park the way I had come, under the old railway bridge and out onto the street. The street followed the side of the park, separated by the old railway that was now a footpath and cycle route, actually the railway path passed right next to where Jake's apartment was. His little group of studios and one bedroom apartments was built on what used to be railway sidings and an engine shed.

I pressed the buzzer on Jake's door, he opened it and gestured for us to come in. "Hello Alex and... you're Matty."

"Hi Jake," I replied and Matty kind of just nodded.

All three of us stood in the middle of Jake's tiny living room. "Please sit down, can I offer you both a coke?" Jake seemed to be in exactly the same bubbly good mood as when we spoke on the phone.

"Yes, thanks that would be great," I replied.

"Yeah thanks," Matty added.

We sat down together on the sofa, Matty looked around the apartment, just like I had that first time. I watched Jake in the kitchen, open the fridge and come back with three bottles of coke. He handed me one, then Matty and pulled up the desk chair to sit down in front of us.

"So Matty, Alex said you wanted to meet me," he addressed himself directly to Matty. I was still feeling nervous about this encounter between the three of us.

"Yeah, that's right," Matty answered without giving any reason.

"Well here I am, what do you want to say?" Jake wasn't making this any easier.

"I don't know," Matty replied. "I wanted... want to find out a bit about you, who you are. I didn't come here to shout and scream at you because you slept with my boyfriend. Anyway, he wasn't exactly my boyfriend when that happened and he's been faithful since."

Jake looked over at me, I knew what he was thinking, I just hoped he wouldn't spoil things, everyone makes mistakes in their life, no one's perfect are they? He turned his attention back to Matty. "You're very cute, you know," he said completely changing the subject in typical Jake style.

It seemed to me like I was standing on a rocky precipice and could fall at any moment. Now I thought Matty might get angry at that remark, but to my great relief he was very cool. "I like you too Jake, your a good looking guy," he replied.

"Cool," Jake said. "It's so much better if we all get on together."

Where the hell was this conversation, this encounter between Jake and Matty going? If I didn't have the background history to this I would think the two of them were coming on to one another.

"So Jake," Matty smiled his incredible angelic boy smile at Jake. "Can you tell me a little bit about yourself?" Here we go I thought, this is Matty in questioning mode. I started to feel just a little bit easier for the first time since we arrived.

"Well what would you like to know?" Jake asked and it did seem he was in a very good mood, laid back and easy with Matty being here.

"Anything you are willing to share, though to be fair to you I should maybe kick things off myself." I was back up there on the precipice, what the hell was Matty going to talk about. "Just yesterday," he began. "After the rugby match this guy Ryan who we both know, Alex and me, well he comes on to Alex in the showers, which is really odd because he's going out with Alex's cousin Mathilde. Well nothing happened and I believe Alex when he said that. My point is this and Alex knows already, I don't think he would go around just sleeping with anyone, so you Jake must count as kind of special."

I was feeling a bit embarrassed now, it was almost like Matty was laying everything that had happened this last couple of weeks out on the table. It didn't make me at all comfortable.

Jake sipped his bottle of coke, looked first at me then towards Matty. "You know I think most people are bisexual, what I mean is the vast majority of men anyway, if they are not hung up on religion or whatever, they would just as easily have sex with another man as with a woman. It probably even applies much more strongly to young men and boys. Basically the male of the species wants to fuck and to have sex with someone else is much better than jerking off on your own." Matty and I were both silent, listening to Jake. I didn't want to speak because I was too uneasy still with the whole situation and knowing Matty, well he just loves to get people talking.

"You look at those countries, like Muslim countries, where women can't be touched until you get married. All those randy young men and boys just end up fucking each other, well mostly the young men fucking the boys, that's how it goes. So you see they are all bisexual, but not gay, I think there is a big difference here. Actually, I think the word bisexual embraces too big a spectrum. For me there are two types of bisexual, the guy who fucks another guy is not at all the same as the guy who fucks a woman but who also likes to get fucked."

He stopped, picked up his coke again, there was silence. Then Matty spoke, "So what about your own history Jake?" He asked. I don't know how Matty managed to do it, but he had this incredible way of putting people at ease and asking little questions, that

turned into bigger questions and you ended up talking about stuff you never intended. And that is just where this was going.

"My own history," Jake repeated the words. "I'm not sure I want to talk about my own history now, maybe we'll get around to it, but after all Matty, I just met you like 5 minutes ago."

Jake was no push over, he would share what he wanted to share, but he wouldn't let Matty be in charge of the game. "When I know you a little better Matty, I'll tell you my story, but what about you?" He asked Matty.

Now I was thinking I'm sure Jake wants to get Matty in his bed, what else could he mean by 'when I know you better'. Jake is one sexy guy, I know how much he turns me on, what about Matty, I thought.

"There is nothing much to say about me," Matty replied. "I'm 14 years old, I haven't done much so what is there to tell you?"

"You could tell me what you like, what your fantasies are, what you dream and wish would happen." Jake was pushing him to reveal himself, I was wondering what he would say and at the same time I was thinking, I don't know Matty's fantasies either.

"I could tell you," Matty was playing again, I could see that. "But it's the same as you said, I would have to know you better."

Now I was intrigued and wanted to find out Matty's fantasies, Jake probably wanted to know as well, but for Jake it's all about sex. Why is it, I wondered.

I put my coke down and put my arm around Matty. "Jake," I said opening my mouth for the first time since we got here. "Thanks."

"For what Alex. I haven't done anything." He looked over at me.

"You have, in your own way, you invited us both over here and... well you've been nice."

"Yes," Matty said. "You have been nice and I'm glad we met."

"You could both come round again. We could talk some more. Maybe just hang out a bit. What do think?" Listening to Jake say this it suddenly occurred to me that maybe he's lonely. Now that hit me like a revelation.

"Yeah we could," Matty answered and I was so pleased he said that. I know it's completely weird because the whole encounter between the three of us had put me on tenter hooks, but Jake had been nice, Matty also and it was just such a nice thing to say. I wanted to say it myself, but never would have in case it sounded wrong. You know what I mean, just in case Matty thought things weren't over between me and Jake.

"Maybe one evening during the week if you are both free?" Jake asked.

"Yes Jake," I replied. "I'll check with Matty and call you."

With that sort of half arranged, Jake still seeming happy, Matty looking like Matty, which means he was OK with everything and me feeling relieved we said our goodbyes and left.

Chapter 18 - Questions and Answers.

Getting up and into school on Monday morning is never easy, but I kept telling myself it's the end of term very soon and the holidays, it cheered me up a bit, but not much. I was still trying to figure out how Matty and me could get some time alone, I was searching hard for an answer that I just couldn't find.

Brandon caught me up as I went through the school gates and was crossing the carpark. "Have you heard what's happened," he asked.

"No, what?" I replied. He snapped me out of my morosity, but I had no idea what he was talking about.

"They caught the guy," he continued. I still wasn't really with it.

"Caught the guy?" I repeated inanely like an imbecile.

"Alex, Alex, what's with you? Yes they caught the guy dealing drugs." He explained along with questioning my mood.

"Oh good," was all I said.

"You're looking down in the dumps mate. I know it's Monday, but snap out of it, the hols will be here soon enough." He was trying his best to cheer me up, which was nice. He deserved a positive response.

"Yeah you're right sorry, just a lot going on right now." I gave him a half hearted smile. He tapped me in the shoulder playfully with a clenched fist.

"That's better... see you later," he was off heading across from me over to the science lab, we weren't in the same classes Brandon and me.

First thing before lessons began that Monday morning our teacher announced the news officially that the police had made an arrest over the drugs affair and that should be an end to the matter, but he added that we should always be vigilant and never ever get involved in drugs.

I was glad when the day was over and I was on the bus home, except who did I see on the same bus, yep you guessed it Ryan. That was the last person I felt like meeting. Like usual he was staring out the window, normally I would have gone over and sat next to him, but I didn't, I sat on the opposite side of the bus right at the back. He probably saw me avoid him, but who cares.

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Lying down on my bed I picked up my phone and called Matty. "Hi Alex, what's up?" He asked.

"Nothing much... you know... just wanted to talk to you and maybe see when we could go see Jake."

"You sound a bit down, can't just be because it's Monday, the day's almost over. You're not upset about me and Jake are you?" He asked the question.

"I don't know Matty, I'm depressed because we can't be together. Then... well you and Jake, it was odd, I don't know what to think about that." I told him the honest truth, I was feeling a bit lost, like I had started a voyage with a storm, but I'd made it through to calmer waters. The problem now was what might be lurking beneath the surface of these calm waters and there was no land in sight.

"Alex, you don't have to worry about us because I love you. Things happen sometimes, maybe things you don't expect, but have a little faith." He sounded like he was older than me listening to him talk and not that it was the other way around. I couldn't shake off my feelings of apprehension or my gloomy mood, so I just ignored them for a minute.

"I was thinking to call Jake and say we could see him Wednesday or Thursday after school, what do you think?" I asked.

"Thursday is better Alex, see what he says, but it can't be for too long."

"No, I know," I replied. "I'll call him and text you later."

"OK, bye then Alex and... please try to cheer up."

"Yes Matty, bye," I ended the call, put the phone down and started thinking about Jake, about Jake and Matty, about seeing him again. I knew it had to happen I just fantasised that Matty and I could sail off together into the sunset. Oh yeah I thought, that would be the best ending ever, but real life is not like an American movie, it doesn't always have a good ending.

I put off calling Jake until late, just before going to bed. When he answered all I could hear was a lot of noise. "Jake, can you hear me, Jake?" Then I just made out his voice, the background noise had got just a little less loud.

"Alex, hi, I'm out on the town, it's mad here tonight... a birthday party."

"I wanted to ask if we, Matty and me could come round on Thursday?" The noise had picked up again.

"What? Wait, wait a minute, I can't hear a thing." I thought this is impossible, I'll call

him tomorrow maybe. Then the noise faded a lot, finally I could hear him. "Sorry Alex I'm at a birthday party. Can you hear me now?"

"Yes, it's fine now," I replied.

"Jonathan says hi, he took me out on the town to this party and well you can imagine it's pretty lively."

"Yes," I said. "I can still hear it in the background. I just wanted to see if Matty and I could come round on Thursday after school."

"Yes, that would be great." A door must have opened and closed, because suddenly there was a wave of noise which disappeared as quickly as it had arrived.

"OK, see you Thursday. Enjoy your party and tell Jonathan hello from me too."

"Bye." He hung up and I thought, so he got back with Jonathan, I'm sure just as friends, but that's good if Jake's got a friend.

* * * * *

Wednesday morning who was on the bus as I got on, Ryan. I thought I'm going to have to sort things with him, I can't keep avoiding him, so I went and sat next to him.

"Morning, how's things?" I said.

He looked at me and he didn't look happy, I thought he can't still be pissed off about the thing in the showers, can he? "You're a vindictive little bastard Alex," he growled out the words which shook me, completely surprised me.

"Why? What did I do?" I asked.

"You know perfectly well what you did and I could quite easily smack you in the mouth if you keep this up." He was angry, very angry, that much was clear.

"OK, you're angry, I'm sorry, but I don't know what the fuck you're talking about, coz I haven't done anything." I thought he might actually hit me.

"I'm talking about you telling your cousin, you fucking little shit, that's what I'm talking about" He literally spat the words at me.

"Ryan, the last time I saw Mathilde was over two weeks ago, we don't talk on the phone so we haven't spoken since then."

"Well... " He paused, he was thinking, what to say. "If it wasn't you then who the fuck was it? You must have told someone."

"First up Ryan, explain what you're talking about."

"Mathilde dumped me because she heard about me and you in the showers after the match."

"There wasn't any me and you after the match and besides I haven't told anyone, why would I?" But actually I had, I told Matty, although I wasn't about to tell Ryan that.

The bus pulled up at our stop, getting off gave both of us time to think. We let the rest of the kids that had gotten off at the same time, head off towards school. Then he started up the conversation where we had left off. "There was no one else there just us."

I was thinking hard what to say, if no one else was there then that meant I told someone and he would want to know who. " Are you absolutely sure there was no one else around?" I wanted to sow the seeds of doubt, it was the only escape route. At the same time I felt like smacking Matty myself for opening his big mouth when I told him in confidence. Jeez, I thought how many people has the little idiot told, I know he told Jake, but obviously Jake is not the only one. I was pretty damned angry with him.

"I definitely never saw anyone," Ryan replied. " And anyway how would it get back to Mathilde?"

"I don't know Ryan, but it wasn't me." We had arrived at school and dropped the conversation to head off for classes.

* * * * *

I sent Matty a text message to meet me on the way home after school, I really was cross with him. I was waiting for him by the gates at 4 o'clock and when he arrived about 5 minutes later I said we needed to talk and took him to the benches in the nearby public garden. Like usual we had the place to ourselves, nobody was around.

"What's so important that you brought me here to talk?" Matty asked. I had no idea if he felt I was angry or not, but I was about to change all that.

"Matty I told you in confidence about what happened between me and Ryan, I didn't want you to go mouthing off like some stupid little arsehole kid telling everyone. So... why the fuck did you?" Now he knew I was angry.

We were sitting side by side on one of the empty benches. He was looking down at the ground in front of his feet. "You're not just talking about Jake are you?" He kind of mumbled those words like a scolded child.

"No I'm not just talking about Jake." He started playing with the corner of his school jacket, aimlessly moving it between his fingers. There was a long silence, I was waiting for him to explain.

"I didn't think about it very carefully," he said. I was tempted, very tempted to shout at him, no actually to pick him up and shake him, but I controlled myself, just about. "I thought Ryan had treated Brandon badly telling lies to take Mathilde from him. My school friend Edmund, well his sister goes to the same school as Mathilde, they're not in the same class, but she knows Mathilde. So I told Edmund to tell his sister to tell Mathilde coz I thought Ryan deserved it."

"You thought Ryan deserved it, why is that? Is that really because of Brandon and Mathilde or is it because you wanted to punish Ryan for coming on to me. You know Matty, basically you were jealous." He was still looking at his feet and fiddling nervously.

"Alright, I was... I was... jealous." Now I thought for a moment he was about to cry.

"Because of that Matty you've created a shit storm that's hurt Ryan, probably done nothing for Brandon, because that was over before it began and worse still you hurt me especially if your little school mate does just like you and starts telling people." I was still being very stern with him and venting a lot of my frustration over the whole mess he'd created, who knows where it could end.

But for here and now it ended with Matty crying. Yep, he started sobbing staring at his feet, his shoulders making little movements up and down. Of course I'm not so heartless as not to realise he was sorry, he didn't have to say it, that much was obvious. Jealousy can be a terrible thing and all things considered, that is thinking about me and Jake, it was easy to understand that Matty felt hurt and wanted to strike back at someone who might be stealing the guy he loved.

I put my arm around him and hugged him, hugged him real close to me. "I'm sorry," he said.

"Yes I know you are, it's OK. I'm sorry too, I was angry," I told him and I squeezed him close. I realised in that moment that Matty was a child still, just like me and sometimes we do idiotic things without ever thinking about the consequences. He'd stopped crying and had taken a hanky from his pocket to blow his nose and wipe away the tears.

I lifted him up from the bench, made sure there was no one around still and kissed him on the cheek. "Come on, let's go home," I said. "You can come home with me, mum said you're always welcome. I'll say we're finishing that school project." We started back to the bus stop. "Give your mum a call to tell her."

Matty took out his phone and called his mum. He told her he forgot about finishing the school project with me and was it alright if he had supper at my place and came home afterwards. "It's fine," he told me. "She said that she needed to pop round to see her sister, my aunt, and she probably wouldn't be there when I got home, but she would be back a bit later, by 10 she said."

That was Matty back to his old self telling me his mum's sister was his aunt, so cute. I don't know why, but suddenly I was happy.

When we got in I told my mum Matty was staying for supper and then we went up to my bedroom. I shut the door behind us, threw my bag in the corner, flung my arms around Matty and kissed him wildly on the lips. I would have desperately loved to have made mad crazy passionate love with him, but instead we just passed our time kissing and touching and hugging.

Michael knocked on the door to say supper was ready, he didn't even bother to open the door or come in, which was a bit odd, but I paid it no attention. I didn't even pay any attention when he said over supper, "You two look pretty happy." It was just so nice being together with Matty. Supper over and as he was leaving to go home I told him I'd fixed Thursday for Jake. As I opened the front door to let Matty out I realised Michael was standing in the hall. "Bye Matty," he said with a big smile on his face.

"Bye Michael," Matty replied, then he was through the door and off, on his way home.

I turned back to Michael. "What's up with you tonight?" I asked him.

"Nothing," he said. "But you two make a nice couple." He smiled at me now and looked shy. I grabbed him in a playful headlock and messed up his hair before I let go.

"You're a cheeky little brother," I said to him. "But I love you... most of the time."

"Don't go all soft," he replied. Then smiling he whispered softly, "Me too, most of the time." He turned and disappeared up the stairs before I could say another word. I was just thinking for a completely disastrous day it's ended pretty well.

Chapter 19 - Jake and Us.

There we were, outside Jake's apartment, "Go on then," Matty said, "Ring!"

I can't say why I hesitated to press the buzzer on his front door. I'd got past the gloom of the past few days, I had decided I no longer cared if the rumour spread around the school about me and Ryan. I didn't even care what might happen here tonight at Jake's, even though I couldn't help a sort of premonition that everything was going to change. I felt I had to deal with things as they happened, before, I spent too much time thinking

about myself, I realised that when Michael said 'you two make a nice couple'. This was the new me, let's see what happens.

I rang and Jake was there smiling, happy and looking good. In we went and sat down on the sofa, Jake followed us and stood waiting a moment. Because I just felt like it, I put my arm round Matty, lent over and kissed him. He was surprised, but he smiled, Jake was still standing there. I stood up, went over to him and kissed him on the cheek. Matty watched this of course, he was still smiling when I came back to sit next to him again.

What happened next you won't believe it. Jake walked over to the sofa, bent down and kissed Matty on the cheek, then he returned my kiss. This scene happened in silence and that's just how it happened. Matty was smiling, so was I and Jake started laughing and we joined in. I knew it, I knew something was in the air.

Jake looked across at us, now we had more or less stopped laughing, he spoke, "So, can I get you guys a drink?"

Matty replied, "Yeah, anything is fine, a coke, whatever you got."

He fetched three bottles of coke from the kitchen fridge. "What the hell is going on?" He said with a feigned annoyance, a big grin on his face.

"I'm happy," I answered. "I'm here with Matty... and you. I just realised whatever happens happens, so we will deal with the shit stuff when it arrives, but it won't stop us enjoying our lives."

"I agree," Matty smiled and looked at me. "I've been a bit stupid and jealous, but I'm sorry about that now and I love you Alex... and... well yeah." A huge grin on his face he looked at Jake. "Well yeah... actually I like you too Jake."

And Jake who had probably, like I told you before, been in a pretty good mood since at least last Sunday when we saw him, just seemed to look even happier, if that's possible.

"I like you guys too," he replied.

We sat there again in silence, enjoying just being there and being happy. You see it might seem very strange to anyone else, that is anyone who wasn't there in that room at the time, but it was I think a sanctuary, it was the one place, never mind all the things that had gone on before between us or what had happened outside. No, this was the one place we could just relax and feel safe and at ease. I believe everyone needs a space like

that and this was ours, Jake's little studio apartment was our safe haven. Maybe I had finally found land after crossing the ocean.

"Tell me then," Jake broke the silence. "What's been happening?"

"You remember we told you about Ryan?" I asked him.

"Yeah," he replied. "The guy in the showers with you who's bi"

"Well, Matty told his friend at school about it and my cousin Mathilde split up with Ryan when the news got back to her. Ryan of course was really pissed with me, coz he thought I told her. Now the story could easily go all round the school."

Matty chipped in. "Yeah, I was pretty stupid, never thought about it."

"So are you worried about people finding out you're gay?" Jake said. He didn't beat around the bush, straight to the jugular.

"I have always been worried Jake, I'm a coward."

"You're not a coward Alex," Matty interrupted. "You never told Ryan it was me when he could've hit you."

That's why I loved Matty, he was always so cute, defending his boyfriend's courage, I love it.

"Don't pay any attention to it," Jake said. "Don't deny it, if someone asks, just say yes so what." We were both listening, he had our full attention. "People, gay people that is, get hung up on this whole coming out thing. It's past, it's from the last century, not for today. Before, yeah, gays had to fight for their rights, band together, protest, whatever. OK it's not over, but how the hell did coming out become some sort of right of passage for every gay person?"

This was interesting I thought, "So you never did your coming out?" I asked him.

"No," he answered. "I didn't see why I had to. Actually, that's not exactly true, but I'll come back to that. What I want to say is and you can choose not to agree, I don't see why a gay person has to go round telling everybody, family, friends, the whole bunch, announcing I'm gay. Why? I think you do what you want, you hold your boyfriend, kiss your boyfriend, tell your family, 'hey mum, dad, I've got a boyfriend'. Not 'I got something to tell you 'I'm gay'. You don't have to do that, let them ask you. Never, ever

deny it, that's where the courage is."

Wow, I was a bit taken aback by that, I don't know if I agreed or not. It seemed like a sort of easy way out. So I asked him, "Isn't that just an easy way out?"

"Yes, maybe, but so what," he replied. "I did tell people I was gay, but I never went round doing a big coming out thing. This one time with a guy I was working with, we were talking about what we'd done at the weekend. I mentioned I was at a club and gave the name, to which he replied, that's a gay club. I said yes, it is, I'm gay! What do think his reaction was? Well he said, no you're not gay, so I had to repeat it, yes I'm gay. We dropped the conversation because we both had to get back to work, but that guy just wouldn't believe I was gay. I mean that's fucking incredible, isn't it? I did the whole coming out thing to him and he didn't believe me. After that I just thought why bother. So yes, I told my parents, but that was because I had to, something happened, I told a couple of close friends, but after the guy at work I just never bothered telling anyone else unless they asked or it come up. I mean if someone said are you married or you got a girlfriend, then I'd say no, I'm gay."

"OK, I get it and I can understand" I said.

Matty smiled at Jake. "I told Alex," he said.

"Yeah he did, he had more courage than me." That was true because it must've been a hard thing to do.

"I admire you for that Matty," Jake looked across at him. "I think that perhaps was something you had to do because... because you love Alex." Matty looked at me, you would have to be blind not to see that was true.

"Jake," Matty said. "I know you said we haven't known each other more than five minutes and that's true, but I don't feel like that. From the moment I met you I felt good about you, I felt like I already knew you. I know, it's really crazy, especially as you slept with Alex and I should be a hundred times more jealous of you than of Ryan. I think I was and that's why I had to see you, but when I met you all that just faded away."

I don't think I'd ever heard Matty talk like that to someone before, I mean reveal so much. Of course we talked together sharing loads of thoughts about ourselves, that's what best friends do, but this was new, doing the same thing with another person.

"If you don't mind Jake," Matty continued. "I really would like to hear more about you."

I wondered at this point what Jake's reaction would be. Matty wasn't doing his questioning thing, but it's a lot to ask someone.

Jake smiled again. "I think you won't be happy until you know" he said. "When I was about your age, no I was younger by a year, 13. I met a guy who was 27, more than twice my age, I fell in love with him. Yeah, I know the law says I was abused but no, I don't feel I was, it was my free choice. I had a huge crush on him and I could think of nothing better than for him to pick me up in his arms, carry me away and make love with him."

We looked at each other, then back at Jake, we didn't say a word, just listened.

"Well it happened, we made love, we had great sex, he taught me a lot, a lot about everything. About myself, my body, what I liked. What could be better, I enjoyed all the time we were together, but one day we got found out and that was terrible for him. It was terrible for me too, it was then that I told my parents I was gay. I don't know what happened after, I never found out, I never saw him again. I cried for days, was depressed, shut myself in my room, my parents even took me to see a child psychologist. It was probably the worst moment of my life."

I had the overwhelming feeling that Jake had just shared much much more than Matty or I could have imagined and I was overcome with emotion. I had tears welling up in my eyes, I stood up went over to Jake, he looked up at me. He stood up and at that moment I had this picture of the loneliest 13 year old boy in the world, I couldn't stop myself, I burst out crying. I flung my arms around him. Matty must have joined us, because there we were, all three of us in one big hug standing there in the middle of that little living room, all three crying together.

We both knew a whole lot more about Jake now, more than we ever knew before. I realised that what Matty had said before he met Jake, when he said he wanted to meet him because he must be someone I cared about, well he was right. I do care about him and Matty cares as well, you can't ever know a person until you really know them, you shouldn't go round judging everybody else, better look at yourself first.

That evening Jake had surprised us both and it wasn't quite finished. He told us before we left to go back home that he was away next weekend to visit his parents and he gave me a key to his apartment. "You can both come here and use the place whilst I'm away," he said. He kissed me then he kissed Matty. "I love you guys. If you're here Sunday when I get back, I'll see you then. If not, well, next week some time."

"Thank you Jake," I said and Matty also thanked him.

As we were leaving Jake's I was already thinking at last Matty and I get to be together, but I was also thinking about Jake.

Matty looked at me before we parted to go our separate ways home.

He said, "You know Alex, you can wish and wish and if you wish hard enough for something you can make it happen, but the funny thing is, it never turns out quite as you imagined it."

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