Devil's Playground

by Caroaimezoe

Summary

When love is given to the highest bidder, there can be no trust, and without trust, can there really be love? Raphael it is just a butterfly, flying too close to a carnivorous plant? It was not at all the mission he had to fulfill. Is Leo going to be his fate or will it be the opposite? New pictures (chapter 1, 2, 3, 10 and 16) and a lot of edits done in the last weeks.

!!~~Winner in the Universal TMNT Fanfiction Competition 2017: (Mature Ballot) Most Compelling AU 1st Place; ~~!!

Notes

Im not an english speaking person, so be indulgent. I have Kerry Ann as beta, but somethimes i add things after, in my english writting attemps and she doesnt know french, too.

In Rise of TMNT, in 2018, Raph will be the leader and the eldest. Its shocked me to the core, but that give me the idea for this. All the important TMNT characters are there, but with
slight differences, in the personality / role. (Yes, Leo is a strip-teaser, but this a most serious and dark that it seems to be.)

Leo and Raph seems very different, but not that much. You'll see.

Thanks to P-JoArt for the picture and Kerry-Anne for the english beta.
First meeting
Raphael pulled his raincoat tighter, uncomfortable in the unusual costume. He was more accustomed to his leather jacket or his sergeant’s uniform, but if he wanted to enter the Ikebana House incognito and come out alive, he had no choice. And the raincoat was useful because it was raining. Finally, the club came into sight. It didn’t seem to hide a nest of pleasure and perdition. The place where he had to spend his off-duty evening. He mentally recited the fake story his bosses had invented in case anyone questioned why he was there.

His name was Peter and he was an accountant at Sony. Raphael found this story ridiculous. He didn’t look like an accountant at all, being so muscular. His boss asserted that it was the best cover, hence the stupid tortoise-shell glasses which kept sliding down his nose. Obviously, his bosses thought that an accountant had to wear glasses.

And a fucking ugly tie.

All in all, it was meant to disguise the fact that he was an NYPD sergeant working undercover. Commissioner Hamato wanted to arrest Oroku at any cost. His name kept coming up while questioning suspects.

Suspects who would die, strangely, within two days of their confession.

The commissioner had made the goal of this operation clear. Oroku Saki had to control so much more than the strip club because it didn’t justify the man’s notoriety. According to Hamato, Oroku
was pulling the strings of all crime in New York, but they would have to be cautious to pin down evidence. Raphael had been chosen for the job because he’d just changed precincts after moving to Manhattan. Therefore, his face wouldn’t be associated with the police force. Moreover, he’d proved himself. He was known to never lose his calm in an emergency, he was an expert in martial arts, an excellent marksman, and all were confident he could defend himself if there was danger... even without his service revolver. Each client was scrupulously searched as they entered the club. Several in the office had taunted him about how dangerous the mission would be, but Raphael lived for danger. The thought sent shivers down his spine. He’d volunteered.

It wasn’t as if anyone was waiting for him at home.

The nerdy suit and shirt collar were choking him. The evening would be a long one. He had nothing against bars, but playing pool with friends in casual clothes was more his scene. He was no stranger to titty bars, but the vagueness of what he could or not do in this mysterious front perplexed him. He’d only been asked to gather information and testimonials, and evidence if he could find any. This would be his first mission undercover. His job usually dealt with night fights and similar banal stuff.

To trap Oroku, the office had been generous, but not so much that it attracted suspicion. Raphael was supposed to be some two-bit schlub with a calculator. The department had given him a wallet with a MasterCard in the name of Peter O’Neil, as well as fake business cards and ID. They paid the annual subscription fee to enter the club, and in their generosity, they’d approved expenses per diem of $100. In this place, that’d buy roughly 5 or 6 drinks during the evening. Of course, the goal wasn’t for Raph to get drunk or for him to ask for private dances. He had to stay alert and focused on his mission.

Although he didn’t dislike alcohol, he detested sex workers, so he didn’t mind. The very idea of a girl rubbing against him and pretending to enjoy it, especially for the money, was repugnant.

Suddenly, he remembered that same slow bump and grind with Lisa, back when she had loved him. He was in front of the doorman now and dismissed the memory of their painful breakup. He had a job to do.

He slid into the club without difficulty and went to the cloakroom to hang up the horrible raincoat. The reception desk welcomed their new customer and asked Raph’s bland questions, though he already knew all there was to know. Instinctively, he asked whether his annual subscription could be refunded if he disliked the place. A cautious and uncertain man would be less suspicious.

This didn’t prevent the Japanese guy at the desk from asking him some difficult questions after he’d taken the money. The questions including his credentials and why he was there.

"I just got dumped after two years,” Raphael said and the veracity of his assertion appeared in his face, because the clerk bowed and strapped on a bracelet, then reached for the purple silk curtain.

"I'm confident our club will make you smile and forget all your grief, Mr. O'Neil. Welcome."

Raphael crossed the curtain without responding. The atmosphere was stunning. Even he could feel its exotic charm. All his reading in preparation couldn’t stop the feeling that he’d been transported to a clandestine club in Shanghai of the 30s, or an underground opium place.

The size of the place was difficult to judge from the outside. Inside, it was just as confusing. Curtains of dark red brocade hid tables and rooms, with perhaps more curtains behind them. The unmappable room made even the solid curve of the stairs seem shadowy, as they climbed up to only God knows what. Hamato had the feeling that the place trafficked narcotics in addition to prostitution.
A charming hostess in an exquisite red silk ensemble led him to the bar. Leaning casually at the granite counter, he studied the menu. It was perplexing, listing cryptic names without description. He liked anything with gin. The bar shone, the bottles highlighted like chemicals in a laboratory. To his quickly-stifled astonishment, the bartender handed him an elegant glass. It seemed to be made of genuine crystal, and the liquor inside made the glass gleam like a jewel.

"Devil's Playground. On the house, for new customers," announced the bartender.

Once again, Raphael’s air of "I don’t care" attracted attention, and the bartender started asking questions

"You're new, right? I've never seen you here," he inquired, polishing a glass. He examined the newcomer curiously. Raphael succinctly recounted his cover story, leaving out details so it wouldn’t appear rehearsed. He came from San Francisco and had just arrived in New York, following a better job offer. His girlfriend didn’t like Manhattan and had stayed on the west coast.

It was almost true, except that Lisa had dumped him out of nowhere for her boss, a dentist who earned triple Raph’s income, and she was only as far west as New Jersey. His promotion to sergeant in another precinct had caused the death of their already rocky relationship. That and… other issues. It wasn’t the time nor the place to get distracted by bad memories.

Raph took his time nursing his drink, studying the environment and the clientele, which was composed of well-dressed men and women all carefully maintaining a detached air. This club was the only club in the city that offered performances of high quality for both sexes. Men and women alike danced for the whole audience, and privately for a select clientele. This business could explain Oroku’s wealth, but not his power.

Raphael kept watching and bought a pack of cigarettes from a strolling salesgirl, who seemed to have come out of a pre-war film.

The stage wasn’t much larger than any regular club, but it was very far from the tables. It was impossible for a client to reach out and caress a passing ankle. Raph also counted five big guys in the room, who were probably bouncers.

The atmosphere was old-fashioned, but only on the surface. The club had a state-of-the-art surveillance system and an iPad appeared to be on every table.

"You can sit at any table. You have a VIP member bracelet. The hostess assumed that, because you’re alone or new, you didn’t know the choices on the menu."

Raph nudged his glass forward for a refill, and the bartender complied.

"Oh yeah? Can you tell me about these choices?" Raphael asked, but he quickly realized his question may have been too direct.

“You’ll see,” the bartender said simply and went to take care of the other customers.

The lights dimmed slowly and the first notes of sensual music played. He immediately recognized Madonna's "Erotica" and rolled his eyes at the kitschy choice. Suddenly, two dancers, a man and a woman dressed in leather, sprang up from the floor. The smoke swirled around them as the lighting turned the stage violet.

Raphael sipped his second Devil's Playground and remained cool. The girl wore a cat mask, but by her narrow slenderness, Raph could immediately tell that she was Asian. The man was a splendid specimen, Raph noted immediately despite himself. He wore only peacock blue boxers, probably
encasing the most beautiful buttocks he had ever seen.

The duo began an intense erotic dance, staging a power struggle that captivated the sergeant’s attention. These two dancers were remarkably gifted as far as he could tell, sensuality conveyed in every movement. On the other hand, the cat mask and the man’s face were inexpressive and serious. The young man, barely of age, had raven-black hair and light blue eyes under such long eyelashes that Raph suspected they were false. The pale and dark contrast was attractive, as was his flawless body. Raphael was no stranger to male love, though he’d practiced it very little. He hadn’t wanted a person of the same gender as himself in years, but this young man’s look was mesmerizing. His gestures were irreproachable, as elegant as a poem, and a call to the most bestial sexuality.

The sergeant in disguise took off his glasses, to better appreciate the sensual show. At one point, the girl grabbed a whip and dragged it slowly along the young male’s lower back. Raphael’s throat grew dry. The barman filled his third glass, without waiting for a signal.

"Leo and Karai always give a good show. They are very much in demand."

Raphael swallowed heavily, his eyes never leaving the pair onstage. “To have that chemistry, they’ve got to be a couple, right?”

The bartender shook his head. “No. Brother and sister, but not biologically. They’re so close they call each other family."

The young man regained his power in the dance and peeled the cat mask off his partner’s face. Raphael saw that she was truly Eastern, while the young man, despite his slightly almond-shaped eyes, wasn’t. The man held a blade under her throat, licking and nibbling her neck, and Raphael’s jeans suddenly felt too tight. He’d never seen such an erotic scene. The boy’s teeth shone white against his pink tongue, and with a thrill of anticipatory pleasure, Raphael noticed a tongue piercing sparkle while the dancer titillated his partner’s throat.

"If you want them, you can have them sent to a table or a cabin."

Raphael, hypnotized in spite of himself, asked how much. After all, he could stop drinking and take the dance. Maybe he was seduced and subjugated by this body with the flexibility of a climbing vine and the ferocity of a panther.

"It will be $60 at the table for one song with both of them, and 35$ for a song with just one. If you want them in the cabin, up close and quiet, it’ll be more expensive,” he explained, his voice heavy with implied meaning.

Raphael shuddered at the utterance of the sum. At the same moment, the dance finished. Shit! He was on a mission, not for fun.

The bartender quickly whispered, mistaking his silence, “If you find that expensive and you only want one, take Leo. He puts a lot more heart into the work and is more eager, but only you can judge,” he added carefully.

Raphael had a dizzying vision of the handsome stranger giving him a mind-blowing blowjob behind the crimson curtains. His shapely mouth seemed made for that. He imagined the bar of metal, so cold, touching his hot dick. It had been a while since…Then he shook himself. He despised whores and all beings of their ilk. He was on duty for God’s sake!

"Bah. Maybe some other time. I'm not in the mood,” he replied, shrugging his shoulders with a deceptively detached air.
"Up to you!"

Raphael brought the glass to his lips without adding anything further. No doubt, a man who’d paid $800 for a membership card could only afford a few cocktails without looking suspicious, he convinced himself. Spending too much would fuck his cover and Commissioner Hamato was hoping for convincing results in the coming weeks. New to the precinct, he didn’t want to disappoint, but he didn’t know what would be the more embarrassing, the table or the cabin. He didn’t feel comfortable alone or in public. Raphael, therefore, opted for a middle ground which was morally acceptable and would make him less suspicious.

"The guy, Leo, can I offer him something to drink?"

The bartender raised his eyebrows but nodded.

"Whatever he wants, then!"

The bartender smiled and made a drink.

"Leo drinks little but is very selective. Just like with his customers."

Without knowing why Raphael felt his stomach drop at the mention of the handsome man’s customers. Was he really paying to drink with a prostitute?

The bartender handed Raphael a drink that glinted jade. Before Raph could stop him, he gestured for the young dancer who’d just left the stage to approach.

Raphael bit his lip. He was by no means shy, but while on a mission and not in his element, he didn’t know how to interact with the attractive man, who moved with feline grace.

He had to play the game.

"Leo, this customer wants to buy you your favorite cocktail,” The bartender said and left them alone. The young dancer slipped onto the stool next to Raphael's and stretched out a hand towards the glass.

"Thank you,” Leo whispered, his unfathomable blue eyes fixed on Raph, waiting for him to do or say anything. The young man, judging that he had shown enough gratitude, took the glass in his hand without a question. He swirled the green liquid languidly. His face was young, smooth and pure, which confirmed Raphael’s assumption that the young man was barely 21 if that. Returning Raphael’s silent observation, the blue eyes pierced through the dark eyelashes, glancing from the side with a strange delicacy in someone whom Raphael would at first have thought to be intoxicated or degraded.

"You’re not like the others. You came here for something,” he murmured in a low voice. "No matter what it is, let's make a toast,” he added with a lascivious wink.

Raphael tried to keep a poker face. It was impossible for the dancer to know he was a police officer. He had told the same story to everyone, to make them believe it was solid. He raised his glass. What was he supposed to do? He might have overestimated himself when he volunteered for the mission. He loved and was trained for, dodging bullets, not suggestive looks.

They drank in silence for a few minutes.

"Next time, make me dance,” the dancer offered with a cocky smile. "You will get a lot more for value for your money. I am the best at what I do. I would make you shiver,” he boasted with a last
salacious look, lowering his eyes to gaze at Raph through his lashes, though Raphael found the sapphire glitter in his eyes too cold compared to his seductive expression.

The offer left Raphael unmoved. The calculated look reminded him that this was business after all. Selling not just drinks, but flesh. Something he didn’t want at this price. Raph knew he was a handsome man. He could easily find a partner for a relationship more meaningful than a few mercantile caresses in an institution on the edge of legality.

He’d refused to go into debt for Lisa and thus had lost her to the moronic dentist. He wouldn’t pay out of his pocket for a stranger to rub his dick three inches from his face, even if it would help his cover. He’d already almost reached his per diem limit. He was certain that if anyone learned he’d paid for dances with the department’s money, it wouldn’t go over well and that was an understatement. He also didn’t want to be too dry with someone who might be able to give him information about Oroku Saki.

"Maybe next time."

Leo nodded, in no way disappointed, probably already calculating the fee for next time. He stood up. “See you soon, and thanks for the drink.”

As the dark-haired young man left, Raphael found that he hadn’t really drunk even a sip. The dancer didn’t look intoxicated at all. He was probably more of a businessman than a hedonist, refusing to spend more than ten minutes with someone who wouldn’t buy his services.

Raphael watched the dancer and his partner disappear with another man a few minutes later.

Onstage, a blonde woman squirmed with a snake.

"You missed your chance. Leo and Karai will be taken for the evening -especially him. He is a very sensual creature and extremely popular."

Raphael tried to justify his actions. His conduct couldn’t seem too reserved and out of place for the first evening.

"I’m not ready. Still in shock. It’s only been five days since Lisa left.”

After glancing at his watch, Raphael decided to leave. He’d been there for more than two hours. It was enough for a first evening. His bosses had asked him to be there at least three times a week. He’d return the following day or in two days’ time. For now, he was fed up. He could still masturbate thinking of the handsome dancer. It was free, more ethically acceptable, and above all, more discreet.

Leo counted the money he’d earned that evening and grimaced.

Only $350, clearly insufficient to finally make the deposit on his apartment and pull Mikey out of the clutches of social services. He sighed in despair. Yesterday, he’d seen Mikey outside of his high school and had seen marks on his youthful face. Mikey was obviously suffering the same abuse he’d endured in the youth home. Leo had to get him out of there, but Miss O’Neil from Children’s Services had been clear. Leo had to have a fixed home with a fixed income obtained by a reputable employer. Without this, he couldn’t be his little brother’s legal guardian. Leo worried that Mikey would be molested, if he hadn’t already been.

His anguish for his little brother was accentuated by the memory of the abuse he had himself endured for 3 long years since his mother’s death. Those visions were his fuel at the club. Every dollar extracted from a customer was a step closer to Mikey’s freedom. That still wasn’t all. He wanted to
have a nice, small, quiet home in a decent neighborhood. Mikey would have a cat, and could take classes at a culinary or art institute. For that, Leo had to apply more conviction, more talent, more eroticism, and mostly, more lies.

Karai wrapped an arm around his shoulders and whispered, “Ototo, courage. We'll get there. Mikey will be out soon."

Karai, who left the same home two months before him, but didn’t have a sibling to worry about, was in a similar situation. Living above the club and being at the mercy of her boss didn’t fit with her independent nature. Without planning to be a couple one day, they’d sworn not to leave each other, and Karai adopted Leo’s goal. Neither Leo nor Karai had anything. Saving enough money for the plan was a long-term project. Necessities, furniture, clothes - it was cheaper to buy for two.

In six months, Leo had already saved almost $11,000, but that wasn’t enough. Karai had the same amount, but it still wasn’t enough. He couldn’t put off action until graduation. Mikey's situation was too urgent. Karai and Leo knew there was another solution, but the girl didn’t dare to push Leo to take that path. She knew that the young man who offered help was loathsome. Leo had already put up with a lot from this man, in exchange for paying his university fees. The dancer wouldn’t finish his studies for four more years’ time and Karai wondered what her friend would do to hold on that long.

"He's not that bad, Leo,” she said. “He's young, not ugly, smart, and he seems to love you a lot. And he’s very patient. You haven’t really given in to anything, yet, and ..."

"He wants me a lot, you mean,” Leo chuckled darkly. With reluctance, he confessed "Karai, I feel such an aversion to him. He paid for our television, our winter coats, your contact lenses, your boots and my sessions. Soliciting money from him costs me more than anything else. Don’t ask me to explain why."

The young Japanese woman bowed her head, defeated.

"We'll do better tomorrow,” she promised and kissed his cheek.

The blue eyes, deadened for a moment, revived as Leo remembered something.

"I met a man. It’s too early to tell if he is promising or not, but sometimes the ones who resist at first spend the most money later.”

Karai raised a thin eyebrow.

"Was he cute, at least?"

Leo shrugged nonchalantly as he prepared tea. He hated falling asleep with the taste of alcohol in his mouth. Toothpaste wasn’t enough to wash it out.

"Enough. Light brown hair, very muscular, and clear eyes. On the other hand, his style was awful. But if he's stingy for himself, it doesn’t mean he's stingy with others,” Leo concluded with a knowing smile. “I didn’t push it. Being desired is a much better strategy. He will crave me very soon.”

The female dancer smiled, her amber eyes mocking. "Of that, I’m positive.”
Raphael had been summoned to his boss’s office, where he’d given a rather feeble report. Commissioner Hamato was on edge. At the port, a crate containing highly dangerous chemicals had been found, and everything seemed to indicate that they were being delivered to Oroku. No one in the office had any what his plans could be. No one was even sure whether his identity was real or created. Even the bar was owned through a small corporation, which smelled fishy. Of course, no one had expected Raph to solve every mystery in one shot, but Raphael couldn’t help noticing the disappointed frowns.

"That's all? How long did you stay there, Jones?"

Raphael sighed. He couldn’t admit to feeling uncomfortable around strippers without being reprimanded. He explained that the place was a thriving business and only active customers were truly welcome.

The commissioner straightened up in his chair at the sergeant's comment, but many in the room thought that Raphael’s request for a bigger expense account was a great idea.

The police chief had made a few calls and had told Raphael his expectations. He must go to the bar 4 times a week and stay there for at least 6 hours a night. His budget had been more than doubled. It was enough to make him a regular quickly, just another lonely barfly. In exchange, the Commissioner expected solid results before spring. It was now mid-November. That left 4 months for Raphael to find solid proof to trap Oroku. Raph could only hope to make a break in the case. After all, if he was looking for a promotion and the salary increase that came with it, he had to satisfy his boss.

He had been promised camera glasses as early as next week, in order to put a face to the name Oroku Saki. Raphael hadn’t seen any sign of the boss on his first visit, but it was unlikely that such a powerful man would spend his evenings in his own strip club.

It was nearly 9 pm as Raphael trudged towards Idate. The policeman refused to allow any excitement at the thought of seeing Leo. He wasn’t worth it. He was just another sex worker, even if he was even more beautiful, more talented and far more interesting than the others. Raphael would have to get a complete overview of the club’s employees, anyway.

Last night had been Thursday, probably not the busiest evening for any business that was open from Wednesdays to Sundays, from 4 p.m. to 4 a.m. He hadn’t wanted to arrive so early. After all, he wasn’t a man who hid his questionable hobbies from his wife under the pretext of a meeting at work.
Raphael considered that the hours between 8:40 p.m. and 2:40 a.m. were the times when he was most likely to notice something interesting, so he timed his visit accordingly.

His boss had ordered him to interact with the other customers as well, so the employees and the regular crowd would have more confidence and trust in him. Raphael asked for a table after the host quickly glanced over his identification bracelet. He pulled the hostess aside to find out about how the iPad worked. It was ingenious. When he entered the 5-digit code written on his bracelet, his file appeared so that he could enter his preferences, she explained, without much detail. Depending on what he wanted, he could explore the entertainment or menu tabs and order whatever he desired without having to ask the waitress. He’d only have to pay his bill when he left. The woman bowed to leave, appearing overwhelmed or perhaps simply embarrassed, saying that Raphael would quickly understand the process. She advised him to fill in his personal form as soon as possible and disappeared behind a curtain.

As soon as he was alone, Raphael decided to order a drink. A menu for beverages and snacks was displayed. He ordered the same cocktail as the night before, thinking how well the name of the cocktail, The Devil’s Playground, fit the club. A pretty waitress approached a few minutes later with the crystal glass. While he waited, Raphael had time to take a closer look at what the entertainment menu had to offer.

Each dancer was listed with a short description. He soon saw Leo’s photo.

*Leonardo, ****
21 years old.
6’1, 190 lb
Bisexual
Multilingual: English, French, Spanish, Italian, German, Mandarin, and Japanese.
Strengths: Flexibility, agility, excellent physical shape.
Limit: No drunk/intoxicated patrons. Do not kiss.

There was then a choice between beginner, intermediate and connoisseur levels, and the dancer was indicated as a suitable choice for connoisseurs. That made Raphael frown. What did that mean?

In spite of himself, Raphael was impressed that a dancer, who’d probably dropped out of school at 17, could speak so many languages. In a cosmopolitan city like New York, it had to provide him with a larger clientele. No doubt the man was paid to do more with his tongue than talk. The stipulation about no drunks made sense. Leo had barely touched his glass the previous night, and Raph guessed he wasn’t the type to waste his time binge drinking.

The number of stars intrigued Raphael. Was it a customer rating? Looking over other profiles and the price page, he understood. The dancers were divided into three categories. Leo was considered “premium”, and charged a rate double that of Tony, who was the next highest rated dancer.

Premium dances cost $35 for a table dance and $60 for 5 minutes alone in the cabin. There was the "Kouen" package of 5 songs, just over 20 minutes, which was a bargain at $250. Tony, handsome and brown-skinned, or Allison, a pretty redhead, only charged $100 for the same package. There were also a couple of options with noticeably vague wording.

To rent a room and enjoy the full extent of the dancer’s "company" was $500 for 1 hour.

Raphael suspected that the real package was a combo of the two offers, but listed separately it sounded less like prostitution. According to the notice, just being in a room with Leo in a room for
two hours would cost him $1050 without the tip that was “strongly recommended”. The black-haired man was an expensive bitch. Raphael would rather jerk off at that price. He’d told Lisa the same thing before she started packing her bags.

In any case, he’d never climb the stairs to the second floor. He would never fuck a sex worker. He was there for information and not for pleasure. He could bear buying dances to look normal, but no more. It was immoral and disgusting.

The lights dimmed as he perused the dance schedule. A dancer took the stage every quarter hour. From what he saw, everyone danced with a partner once and then solo once. The rest of the time, they were all available for rent. He gazed around, seeing half-dressed creatures wandering among the customers and distributing smiles and suggestive glances. Each one hoping to leave with a little more green. Raphael was far from a saint, but this kind of business had always deeply revolted him, even in concept. To be in the middle of a sex market, to pretend to participate in it, repulsed him. He should never have volunteered to take this case.

Leo and Karai were scheduled to perform at 11:15. Then Leo, alone, was expected to return on stage at 1:15. It must be a long day for the beautiful stripper. Raph chastised himself and thought, what could it matter to him? This Leo guy just had to find a normal job.

The same purple smoke emanated from the stage as the night before, as the dancers rose from the ground. Both wore more clothes than the previous day. Leonardo wore rather loose trousers, although the clinging fabric divinely molded his buttocks. The straps on his chest held swords behind his back. Raphael didn’t have time to be astonished by the choice of accessories, because in one quick movement Leo pulled the two katanas from their sheaths. Between the brilliance of the blades and the muscular tension of the handsome male, Raphael concluded that they were genuine swords. More surprisingly, the young man handled them with the ease of a well-trained ninja.

The scene that he and Karai mimed with great talent showed the young man trying to defend his girlfriend against invisible aggressors. Leo still brandished his katanas with the mastery of someone with many years of practice, but not to dance. To fight. The blows in real combat would have been effective. It couldn’t be only a natural gift. The boy must have taken martial art lessons for about fifteen years to reach that point of perfection, Raphael thought. He, himself, had started at 8, 20 years ago. Raphael had to admit that he wouldn’t have delivered such a remarkable show. The young dancer was breathtaking, even glorious. His muscles stretched under the effort, and the light reflected on his well-cut, half-naked body. Raphael, from where he was, could see the sweat bead like iridescent pearls along the face and neck of the young man. As his movements continued to flow under the heat of the spotlight, the drops trickled down the taut skin to the hollow of his arched back. Raphael saw himself following them with his tongue, savoring the salty taste. He wondered what Leo’s flesh tasted like, and how soft his skin was that shone like ivory satin. Raphael had to admit that he had never seen a show that aroused him so much. No boy, girl, woman, or any person in any case.

Then, he noticed that the dancer had a tattoo. It covered his scapula and upper arm, but with the reflection from his fakes’ accountant glasses, Raphael couldn’t make out what the pink and green represented. Strange colors for a man’s tattoo, especially a man handling swords with such skill and dexterity.

Leo cut his imaginary opponents into pieces, while his partner sensually contorted herself to escape them. When they were all finally defeated, Leo ran his tongue along the edge of the blade of the katana, as if to lick the blood off, in the most powerfully erotic way Raphael had ever seen. The young woman rewarded him for his victory with lascivious caresses that made the policeman squirm on his chair. The lithe Asian girl was in no way involved in the meteoric rise of his excitement. In fact, that was not entirely true. Raphael wanted to be her as she licked Leo’s finely chiseled abs and caressed his
firm ass. He noticed the bulge in the dancer's black pants and mentally pictured a big, hard cock. His mouth became dry at the idea and he took a large swig of water. He had had two adventures with male colleagues at the Academy, but Raphael didn’t remember having wanted to touch either one so much. He couldn’t recall any woman with the same power, not even Lisa at the beginning of their relationship.

The dance ended and Raph ordered a second drink. He had to turn his thoughts onto something else. The dancer was too expensive, in spite of the increased generosity of his budget. As some police had pointed out to him with a hint of jealousy, although he was new, he was still being paid his usual hourly rate to drink and watch some naked, horny girls. Despite the danger of the mission, it was still a very attractive assignment for some other people at work.

Yes, Commissioner Hamato had given him the implicit permission to pay for dances to look like a regular customer, but he couldn’t justify needing extra money to pay for a particular, sexier dancer. It would be much more profitable to take the pretty redhead first, and then the guy, Tony, two or three hours later, to justify his presence for six hours.

Unless he used his own money. He couldn’t use his real credit card in his own name, but just before going to the club, he’d withdrawn $160 from an ATM. Maybe…

No. He’d refused Lisa’s extravagances, so he couldn’t do that.

Raph thought he’d been insane to even consider the possibility, while reviewing his "entertainment" choices on the iPad. It would be best to organize his evening to always look pretty busy. Maybe sitting at the bar and trying to start conversations with the bartender or other guests would be more productive.

And he had to stop thinking of his ex, who made him sad.

Raphael was about to stand when, smiling, Leo sat down on the chair next to him. "I noticed you in the audience. You seem to have greatly appreciated my performance," he whispered with a knowing glance, his blue eyes roving over Raphael's body and lingering at his crotch.

Raphael blushed, and then he became angry. He wouldn’t let himself be unnerved by the dancer, who was nearly eight years his junior. "Your partner is very good. And you… You handle your swords very well. Do you do martial arts?" he asked in an indifferent tone.

Leo shrugged, seeming unimpressed by Raphael's detachment.

"I do that to stay fit. That and other things… The bartender said that your coming here was after a breakup? That it makes you reluctant to touch anybody? If you want my opinion, that’s silly," Leo concluded, tilting his head to one side as if reflecting on Raphael's enigma. The confidence in his blue eyes suggested that Raphael not rushing to touch him was abnormal.

"Yeah. Well, I don’t give five stars to your club’s discretion, and anyway I never asked for your damn opinion," the fake accountant muttered.

"I can make you forget about her in one night," Leo boasted.

What a cocky son of the bitch, Raphael thought furiously. As if a whore could make him forget about a real girlfriend! Did the bitch have to rub it in his face that he’d been dumped less than a week ago?

To give himself time to think and to calm down before he exploded in indignant fury, the policeman raised his glass to his lips, trying not to notice the heat rising from the desirable body next to him.

Why was he so unsettled by this boy? He had had a dozen of girlfriends. He had lost his virginity at
13 to a high school cheerleader. He wasn’t a gullible virgin, easy to handle. Leo wanted his money and was showing off in a very unsubtle way to acquire it. Raph could clearly see what Leo’s game was, so why wasn’t he able to answer? Shit! Was it because he hadn’t had sex in more than two months? Lisa had ignored him for the last few weeks of their relationship.

The dancer, seeing his silence, decided to be pro-active.

"Are you wondering how it works for bookings? Employees here don’t spend enough time with customers. Let me show you,” the young man suggested, reaching for the iPad. "First of all, you have to fill in your form. It's important for me or for any employee to know your preferences. We can consult the customer cards from our iPhones when we are given our commitments for the evening.”

Without waiting for permission, Leo touched the "client" button on the iPad's screen. Immediately he turned his head, his eyes fixed on Raphael’s.

"Is your name O'Neil? Do you know an April O'Neil?” he asked in a carefully neutral voice, still staring at him.

The truth was, yes, Raphael knew April. He’d suggested the name for that very reason. April had been Casey’s girlfriend for over four years. Casey intended to propose to her at Christmas. Of course, Raph couldn’t admit any of these details without revealing that O’Neil was only an alias. He confessed to himself, although he respected the young woman, to be a little worried that the magnificent dancer seemed to know his future sister-in-law so well.

"She's my sister," he lied. "Where do you know her from?”

"High school ... I think she was in my math class,” the young man replied. Raph clearly saw the impossibility of the answer. It was absolute bullshit. April was 25 years old. When Leo had finished high school, his sister-in-law was already at University.

"I look younger than my age, because of the lighting," Leo explained as if reading his thoughts. “I’m 25.”

It could be possible, but Raph doubted it. There was no time to ask more questions. The dancer tapped the keys on the iPad, going into his own file and clicking on "Cabin" "Package 5 dances" and "reservation.”

"Hey!” Raphael protested, outraged that the dancer had the nerve to make this decision for him.

"If you're not satisfied, I'll pay you back, okay? I guarantee you a very good time,” Leo said and the policeman, shocked, let himself go along. Raph didn’t know if it was a sales method to make the appointment, while proposing a refund, but he had to admit: this lust wasn’t any ordinary feeling. Raph was dying with desire to touch the other man, as if Leo had cast a spell on him.

The young man led him into a cabin and quickly pulled the curtains closed.

"Unzip your pants, but be silent. If someone sees what I'm doing here, I'll be in big trouble,” the dancer said in low voice, peeling off his clothes and putting a random song on the stereo.

Raphael resisted despite his cock hardening at the thought of what could happen. He’d always had a problem with authority, and obeying a stranger who might only be teasing him was loathsome. This stripper wasn’t his boss, Goddammit.
Disregarding the outrage on Raph’s face, the dancer sat astride him completely naked, wrapping his arms around the policeman’s neck. A quivering Raph removed them. Such proximity, so quickly, displeased him. He hated having no control. Leo was too rapacious and it reminded Raph that he was paying for a service. A service he hadn’t even asked for.

"Let yourself go, you idiot!" the boy said, and kissed him fiercely, the metallic taste of the tongue piercing mingling with his own sweet breath. Suddenly, Raphael’s spirit rose up at being treated against his will and became…

Blank.

Except for one fact, Raphael had read, that refused to be set aside.

Leo didn’t kiss his customers.

And yet Leo’s lips were pressed against his with the burning passion of a reunion, like a marine back from WW2 to his wife, communicating a feverish longing.

Stunned and overwhelmed by the rapid sequence of events, by the bewitching gestures, the deep voice, the hot breath of his forceful partner, Raphael let the dancer pull his cock out of his jeans and start to stroke him with great vigor.

"You can touch me too if you want, but you must not tell anyone about it. It is forbidden in the cabins," Leo whispered, removing Raphael’s shirt and seeming to appreciate by his eyes and hands how muscular the fake accountant was.

Raph was used to being admired when he was naked, but Leonardo’s admiration pleased him differently without Raph being able to explain why. How the man had turned him upside down was a friggin mystery.

At his partner’s encouragement, Raph lost himself in lust. The policeman grabbed Leo’s hard dick and rubbed it against his own belly. The dancer threw back his head, uttering a stifled moan. He bit his lip, and Raph wondered if it was another of Leonardo's tactics. Was he pretending to give a privilege, so that Raph would feel grateful? Was he faking the danger of being caught doing a forbidden thing to turn him on even more?

Raphael’s suspicious mind went numb when he felt Leo’s tongue slide up his neck to his jaw. Leo nibbled him like a playful kitten as he thumbed the head of Raphael’s cock, spreading pre-cum over and around him. The nibbles became lascivious murmurs about how big and hard Raph cock was, and how eager Leo was to feel it deep inside him. Raphael’s easily flammable blood flared up. Who cared what this was going to cost him, he was going to take advantage of the opportunity. Raph accelerated the pace of his wrist and began to whisper rough promises back to the young man, swearing to ravage him at the first opportunity, so rough, raw and deep that Leo could not dance for anyone anymore.

Raphael had no choice. He felt as helpless as if he’d been tied up and threatened with a revolver. He had to cum or he was going to implode. Feeling the pulsating sex of the dancer in his hand, his hot breath tickling the hollow of his neck, hearing such naughty things, it all drove him as crazy as hell. In the hollow of this slender neck, there was a mole, and Raph’s instinct yelled to him to suck it hard to let a mark showing all his ownership. A part of his mind was telling him it was crazy talk, but he was even too horny to care about logic.

Finally, no longer holding, as much to avoid shouting his ecstasy, feeling the edge of a titanic
orgasm, he bit Leo’s neck. Leo uttered a stifled cry and threw his head back, and came on both of their abdomens.

Raphael had never seen anything as hot as Leo’s handsome face as it was transfigured by pleasure. The movements of Leo’s wrist had slowed while he enjoyed his orgasm, and Raph frantically pulled him downward. The dancer understood the message and took the engorged member in his mouth. The soft heat of his tongue stroked under the head of Raph’s cock, tickling it with the hard and cold metal bar piercing his tongue. Raphael, overwhelmed, came in the welcoming mouth. Pressing the dancer’s head against his belly, his essence flowing down Leo’s obliging throat, he let out a sigh of satisfaction. Prolonging his pleasure, Leo licked Raphael’s dick to clean up every last drop. His orgasm seemed endless. It was difficult to open his eyes to look at the other man. He had never felt such intensity before.

"The fifth song ends in less than a minute. You have to get dressed," Leo urged, throwing Raphael’s shirt at him. His mouth still numb, the policeman could barely articulate an intelligible response. Leo, in any case, didn’t seem to be listening.

"I can give you pleasure every night and even more..." the dancer insisted, now dressed again. "I can be your lover and fulfill your fantasies. All of them. You just have to ask." Raphael was still on cloud nine, but he managed to mumble "Why me? There are richer men."

Leo didn’t answer immediately, helping him to button his shirt. The policeman could barely feel the tips of his own fingers.

"I have the right to have my preferences too," he finished, without further explanation. Satisfied with the irreproachable appearance of his client, Leo opened the curtains to go back into the main room.

Raphael tried to take firm steps as he followed the dancer. His legs felt like jelly. This sexy interlude had just cost him $250. More exactly, $160 from him and $90 from the NYPD. Raph had to admit that he didn’t regret anything, even though it had only lasted 25 minutes. This climax was worth it! The most mind-blowing 25 minutes of his life. He couldn’t pretend to the dancer that he wasn’t satisfied and that he wanted a refund. It was too obvious that Raph had enjoyed their time together. He finally arrived at his table and gestured to the cigarette seller. He wasn’t a big smoker, a pack could last him for weeks, but it seemed like the only thing he could do to stay awake, feeling so relaxed and numb.

"Do you want a drink?" Raph asked while offering the packet of cigarettes, as the laws of etiquette required after receiving such pleasure from someone.

Leo shook his head.

"I don’t smoke. I don’t really drink either, to tell the truth. Apart from water, I mostly drink green tea, but I can’t do that here. It gives me too serious an image for this place. Get me a Shirley Temple, that will do." Raphael was as astonished by the nature of the confidence as by the fact of receiving it. Leonardo really seemed to find something distinctive about Raph, to tell him his true preferences about drinks. He ordered the drink and turned back to the dancer. It was then that Leo watched the stage, and Raphael took a chance to examine the tattoo.

It was a Venus Flytrap, a carnivorous plant, and Raphael took it as a bad omen. The flower reminded him of what the young man was. Leo was a professional and notorious gold digger, not hesitating to
suck his victims dry, literally and figuratively.

He didn’t know if he should explain that he didn’t have the cash to take Leo to the booth every night, or use the special appreciation of the dancer to draw out information. Suddenly, the dancer went pale. Surprised, since Leonardo seemed so comfortable a few moments ago, Raphael followed his gaze.

A man about his age had just entered the place. Tall, slender, with brown hair in a tidy ponytail, dressed elegantly and wearing fashionable designer glasses. The newly entered man went to sit down with the ease of a regular, to a seat that was closer than the others to the stage.

Facing them but not looking at them yet, Raphael examined the new person of interest, already writing his nightly report in his mind. The man’s face was soft and had a kind expression, with large dark eyes with a tender and dreamy look. Without his tailored, professional clothes, Raph could have mistaken him for a poet. There seemed to be nothing that justified Leo’s expression.

"Who’s that, your jealous boyfriend?" The fake accountant asked, frowning. Though he often heard the hookers talk about their boyfriends in the drunk tank, the idea that a sex worker could have a lover still seemed ridiculous. He could never bear knowing that his lover was fucking someone else for money. It was beyond him that some people could. Raphael was too possessive in nature.

Leo shook his head vehemently.

“No. I don’t have a boyfriend. Take me for the night before he sees me!"

The whole night? Startled by the daring demand, the policeman couldn’t ignore the vehemence of the young man. Was he playing with his head, wanting to force him to pay for time again? Raph wasn’t going to pay another $1000 or more. One, he didn’t have it on him, and two, he thought Leo had had enough by already making him pay $250. Leo just wanted to trap another naïve client.

Raphael shook his head and began to explain that he wasn’t dumb or a millionaire, despite the apparent distress in the young man’s eyes. But he didn’t have time to finish. The brown-haired man front of them made eye contact, his eyes brightening at the sight of the stripper, his smile showing how fond of Leo he was.

A buzz was heard right afterwards, and Leo pulled his cell phone from his belt, to see a schedule alert on the screen.

“Too late. He saw me.” Leonardo miserably slid the device back into his belt.

If “he” meant the guy with glasses, Raph didn’t comprehend the dancer’s reluctance. He was pretty good-looking for an intellectual type, tidy and seemingly harmless. And rich. The kind of customer that Raph wouldn’t mind doing if he were a whore.

Leo got up with a last reproachful look at Raph. He walked with all the joy of a condemned man to the ponytailed customer, who’d just received champagne in an ice bucket.

The unknown man smiled sadly at the dancer, beckoning him to sit down at the table. He handed him a champagne flute that Leo reluctantly accepted. The customer gave a toast, but the dancer didn’t drink. That didn’t surprise Raphael. The bartender had just delivered the beautiful dancer’s virgin drink, five minutes too late.

The brown-haired leaned toward Leo. The policeman distinctly saw him frowning behind his
expensive glasses. He pointed to the young man's neck and Raph realized that he had to question him about the presence of bite marks due to Raph’s teeth on Leo’s collarbone. He saw the dancer move his mouth, no doubt talking nonsense and the man’s face twisted in displeasure. The customer dipped the napkin in the icy water of the bucket and placed it on Leo’s neck as if to erase his brand. Raphael raised an incredulous eyebrow at the gesture. If the man was possessive, it wasn’t in this kind of establishment, where the employees gave themselves to the highest bidder, that he had to look for conquests. If he wanted to keep his dancer for him, he just had to leave him locked up in his fancy apartment.

The man pressed the iPad on his table and pulled the young man after him and Raph, curious consulted the dancer’s schedule.
Leo was actually taken until 4 a.m. and even his solo performance was canceled, which disappointed him. Was it usual? He then saw the customer climb upstairs, Leo following him, and a flash of jealousy overcome him. The man was going to caress, take and mark the body he was stroking a quarter of an hour ago. The thought sickened him.
But why?
Leonardo was only a whore, an escort, someone who sold his body without morality for money. He wasn’t going to be jealous of someone like him!
Curious despite everything and wanting to change the course of his thoughts, he went to the bar and casually told the bartender that he was disappointed about Leo’s canceled dance and asked if that was usual.
The bartender questioned him about the appearance of the customer and he nodded.

"It’s Mr. Donnie, who is the right arm of the owner and the official protector of Leonardo. He has all power here. If he wants to be alone with his protégé, he will be. Sorry for you, but he will not come down soon. Choose another dancer. We’ve plenty of them” he said, with philosophy.

Raphael nodded and took a sip, trying not to think about what was happening to Leo on the floor above. But now he would feel less guilty about pursuing the black-haired dancer. He had a good reason now to do it.

The Donnie guy seemed very fond of his stripper. Leo being fucked by the number two of the Oroku organization was bound to have a lot of privileged information and he seemed to like Raph. The commissioner was going to be satisfied and the cherry on the top, Raph would have a very good time.
An encounter with Dr. D. Hudson
Raphael was back and he was almost starting to show the ease of a regular. He sat at the same table as the previous day, but this time it was only 7:30 PM. It had barely been dark outside for two hours and the streets were still swarming with passers-by, but it was without shame that he went inside the establishment.
Raph was extremely eager to see Leo again, his conscience finally having an excuse to take a close look at the handsome male. It was only strictly professional. But it was also a nice bonus that he’d fallen asleep the previous evening without thinking about Lisa and his cold, empty bed, his mind too busy picturing Leonardo and his pierced tongue, caressing him, making him feel more alive than he’d been in weeks.
He’d masturbated during his shower the next day, thinking about Leonardo and he thought about Leonardo while he jogged.
And tonight, to hell with his damn accountant cover, he was going to dress better.
Raphael had been told that Saturday was the busiest night and he realized that the room was packed and with the customers, who hadn’t paid their annual subscription, and therefore, they had no right to sit at the tables. But the huge crowd amazed him anyway and while receiving his usual cocktail, he questioned the waitress about it.
A new dancer was about to debut. There was going to be a public "initiation", which was a very popular event. To his puzzled questions about the nature of the initiation, the waitress said simply that the performance was more realistic.
Knowing that the waitresses always answered vaguely, Raphael dropped the subject, thinking he’d see soon enough. He noticed that, despite the lack of seating, Leo's protector's table was empty, but it
had a reserved sign on it. So, the man with the ponytail was going to come and that meant Leo was probably working that evening. Raphael didn’t know Leo’s schedule, having asked him no questions during their encounter.

He looked at the catalog of choices for the evening and his insides twitched with excitement when he saw Leo’s photo. The latter, outside the periods, when it was available for booking, would deliver a group performance at 8h30pm. Then, he’d be back with Karai by 11 p.m. and then he was free all night long. Raph swallowed his saliva.

He hadn’t made a decision yet about what he planned to do. His daily budget didn’t accumulate. He couldn’t save one night when Leo wasn’t working and spend double another night for him.

In case the duty would justify it, he’d gone to the ATM, withdrawing from his personal savings $2000. To drown his guilt, he’d convinced himself that he’d get information from Leo and then, a promotion and with that a salary increase, so it would be a good investment. And, he didn’t have to waste the whole sum in one night. It was just a precaution, which might not even have to be used.

He avoided thinking about his refusal to pay back the $ 5,000 Visa card of Lisa’s, which had been the death of his relationship. He’d loved her, but had told her no. Yet, he was willing to pay more than $2000 dollars to fuck a stranger. It didn’t make sense to him. What was it about the stranger that made him want to do that?

Twenty minutes after his arrival, Donnie, arrived with the air of a lord, despite his romantic troubadour allure. Raph saw the special attention he received and that his champagne was at his table before he’d even sat down.

Raph scanned Leo’s file, fearing that the young man would be monopolized by his protector all evening again, but so far Leo wasn’t booked. Donnie sipped his champagne, looking more nervous than concupiscent. He wondered briefly if it was a joke about Donnie being a criminal. The man didn’t appear to be more than thirty-years-old and looked incredibly sweet. He couldn’t possibly be the right-hand man of a crime lord. Shit! He seemed as harmless as a nerd, living in a fantasy world in his mother’s basement.

However, Leo had seemed sincerely frightened or disgusted by the character. Raph couldn’t define it with certainty. He wondered if the handsome dancer still had a grudge about the previous evening. Leonardo really seemed hurt by his desertion. He stared at the man and wondered why he repulsed Leo.

He decided not to cause any possible antagonism and stopped looking at him in order to focus on reading the dancers’ files. There seemed to be more than usual and Raph, without the mentioned "new" under the dancer’s name, couldn’t see who the new dancer, all dancer looking alike to him, except for Leo.

The new dancer emerged from the floor, alone, dressed in clothes of an ancient Middle Eastern king. Raph thought the guy could be deemed cute, but there was nothing about him that radiated eroticism and certainly not the kind Leo radiated with just one glance from his blue eyes. Other dancers came from the floor a few moments later. They all wore little clothing and the same style Adrien wore. Leo was third to emerge and seeing him, Raphael’s heart pounded.

Raphael was vaguely aware that Donnie was mirroring his gestures, leaning his tall frame over the table, magnetized by the desirable body that was so close.

Raphael quickly understood what the waitress had meant by realistic.

The dancers, except Adrien, had sex. It wasn’t even 9 p.m. and an orgy was on stage and none of the dancers were shy about it. Raph’s co-workers wouldn’t believe it! He wished he had his camera there, so he’d have proof of his claims.

It wasn’t a simulation. The raven-haired dancer was giving his partner an cunnilingus. Raph distinctly saw the net of saliva that separated Leo’s tongue from the Japanese’s sex, when the boy looked up, his blue eyes lascivious, half-closed and his lips so wet and shining. Leo broke it by licking his lips, grabbing his dick, erect in its splendor, to enter the dancer.
But the fake accountant only had eyes for Leo’s dick, which plunged and emerged from that of the Japanese, their juices merging and glistening. Raph realized that Leo wasn’t wearing a condom. He reluctantly glanced at the other males on the stage and saw that they were all wearing condoms. Only Leo wasn’t.

Raph’s mouth was dry and his mind was possessed by Leo’s image. Unable to tear his eyes away, he stared, entranced, his mouth open, at Leo’s vigorous thrusts, the woman twisting with pleasure beneath him. She didn’t even fake her orgasm, Raph thought, as she saw Karai arch her back off of the ground and her mouth wide open, as she moaned in pleasure.

Raphael had to admit that he’d never seen any of his partners experience so much pleasure. Leo was obviously an exceptional lover. Raph shook his head as he finished his drink. He didn’t have to have an inferiority complex. Shit. He was a wonderful lover and none of his partners had complained.

Leonardo was a professional and it was just his job! It was normal that he performed, Raphael thought, his eyes focusing on the carnivorous plant covering Leo’s scapula and arm. What a creepy tattoo, but that was a reminder of Leo’s real nature.

The couples changed on stage, alternating partners, making combinations of three or four, but suddenly the "king" Adrien noticed Leo, who closed his eyes and completely lost in the moment, seemed to have forgotten everything around him. Raph wondered again if Karai and Leo were just "friends", who loved each other with a sibling love. Their sex scene was the most credible, credible in terms of passion, so he had great doubts.

But his thoughts changed when the new dancer rubbed Leo’s lips with his dick to get his attention and to make him open his mouth. Leo barely opened his eyes to see the identity of the owner of the cock in question and took it into his mouth, sucking it eagerly.

Raphael felt a rumble escape from his throat. Did Leo need to be so convinced? Had he been obliged to accept? The black-haired head moved like a boa, Adrien’s dick in his mouth, synchronously giving a pleasure crescendo to his two partners and Raphael, although he knew it was dumb and insane and not even understanding why he was so pissed off at the sight, squeezed his glass so hard, he could have broken it.

Then he shook his head, realizing that he didn’t have to take everything personally, Leo was doing it to advance his career and he was an expensive pleasure object. Period. But, disgusted with the spectacle, Raphael looked away and it was then that he almost saw his reflection.

The lights from the stage reflected in Donnie’s glasses and so Raphael couldn’t see his eyes, but his face showed his fury and jealousy. He was as pale as a ghost and, no doubt unable to endure the show; he suddenly stood and stalked off to the bathroom.

Raphael only hesitated a moment. Decency would have been to let Donnie be alone to have his nervous breakdown, but his mission was to discover what was going on in the business, so he had to go and talk to Orokù’s second in command and not avoid him.

He waited a minute, so it didn’t seem too coincidental he needed the bathroom too and returned his gaze to the stage. The beautiful dancer had just offered simultaneous orgasm to his partners. Adrien leaned over to capture Leo's lips, which, apart from an almost imperceptible stiffness, let himself be, and Raph, disgusted, rose in his turn, passing the stage without another glance.

He wasn’t special to Leo and had been naïve believing he was. Everyone probably had been kissed by Leo. Why did he expect anything from a hooker?

Raphael opened the bathroom door and quickly recognized Donnie's slender figure at the sink. The man had undone his ponytail, his dark brown hair messy and hanging down his shoulders. Raph saw that Donnie was at least one inch taller than his own impressive 6’5 size.

Donnie spoke on the phone in a language that Raphael guessed was Japanese. He wondered if Donnie had learned it to Leo. Without appearing to pay any attention, he went to the urinals. Leo's protector paid him no attention and Raph suddenly noticed the man wasn’t wearing his glasses. Maybe he hadn’t wanted them to be misted with his tears. Raph pulled his cock out of his pants and
without seeming to notice the other man, began to pee. Then Donnie's voice changed in tone and he
grew angry and commanding. Raphael was stunned. He hadn’t imagined that such a kind looking
man could be so authoritative.

" Doesn’t matter to me, ” Don said now in English. “ It is an affront too much and I refuse to bear it
any more. Anyway, I’m not asking anything. I’ll take care of it like I do everything else. ”
Raphael wondered what he meant by that. He zipped up his pants and went to the sink to wash his
hands. It was then that he noticed the scarlet streaks and flecks in the basin next to him. He wondered
if the man had thought about committing suicide there and had then stopped himself, but there wasn’t
enough blood and despite his rage, Donnie seemed too in control to do that.
As if to wash away the evidence, Donnie opened the tap to wash his hands and Raph noticed the
cuts in his palms, then he noticed something metallic and twisted on the counter.
Glasses.

A few chips were missing in the mirror facing Donnie as if an angry fist had smashed it, which was
probably the case.
In his fit of jealousy, the man had almost torn his hair, crushed his glasses in his hands, twisted them
furiously and then hit the mirror, not bothering to hurt himself. Raph suddenly felt sorry for him. He,
himself, having seen Leo giving someone else a blowjob, had almost crushed his glass. They were
both morons. Donnie being a bigger one because Leo’s lack of enthusiasm for him was more
obvious.

" Are you hurt? " Raph asked softly.
The other jumped as if he hadn’t sensed that someone else was in the room with him and stared
intently at him.
The man’s eyes were a very rich brown, which reminded Raphael of the earth and the wood, of a deep
hazelnut with a hint of mahogany. He seemed startled for a moment. Then, he narrowed his eyes,
while straightening himself by almost two meters.

" I’m a doctor. I am able to take care of myself, thank you, ” he said icily.
Raphael frowned at the sour answer. He had only wanted to be nice. Obviously, the guy might
deserve what was happening to him. To react so violently, perhaps Leo wasn’t wrong in wanting to
escape him.
Without answering, Raph turned off the tap and turned his back on the " doctor ” to leave, when the
door suddenly opened and Leo entered, smiling at Raphael lasciviously.

" I was looking for you, ” he started, but his smile quickly died, when he suddenly saw Donnie. Leo
had come for him alone and Raphael hated how his heart swelled at the realization.
The doctor turned quickly at Leo’s voice and narrowed his eyes. He asked, his voice vibrating with
hope, so different from the coldness he had when addressing Raphael,

" Leo? You were looking for me, my adored? ”

The beautiful face grimaced at the tender nickname and Raphael understood. Without his glasses,
Donnie couldn’t see his protégé’s expression. He hadn’t noticed that he had addressed Raphael. The
man hadn’t seen them go to the cabin together the previous day and he didn’t know that they “ knew ”
each other. The way he was squinting was proof of his myopia.

Raph saw how Leonardo was trying to act professionally in his posture and voice. He didn’t like his
protector, but Raphael reasoned, he had too much practical sense that he didn’t want to lose his
protection.

" Mr. Hudson. You lost your glasses? ” Leo asked calmly. " Do you need my help finding them? ”
The doctor, his eyes blurred, moved toward his protégé and took Leo’s handsome face in his hands, not worrying if he left bloody marks, and tried to kiss him, but Leo ducked away.

"You forget the rules. No contact on this floor,” Leo whispered, and Donnie turned to Raphael, exasperated as if his presence caused his treasured lover’s refusal.

The so-called doctor sighed nervously and turned to the mirror. Then, he quickly issued orders, running a trembling hand through his hair to smooth it into a ponytail, his sweet mahogany eyes blazing.

"Go to your room and have a shower. Wash everywhere. Then, brush your teeth and tongue. Take away your jewel, I will disinfect it myself. And change clothes. I’m going to burn those afterward. I have things to do, but then I’m keeping you all night. "

Leo didn’t say a word, not daring to look at Raphael and, like a grounded child, he left the bathroom.

Raph remained paralyzed for a moment at Donnie’s treatment of Leo. Okay. If his girlfriend had sucked a guy off, he’d have taken it badly too. But he wouldn’t have acted in that insane manner. He had discovered that Lisa was cheating on him. Unsatisfied with money or even the sex. He had been furious and had confronted her. Lisa hadn’t regretted anything and had preferred to tell Raph that she was leaving him. He had been upset and hurt. Of course, he still was, but he preferred that than being cheated on.

Casey had praised him for his mature and moderate reaction. Managing his emotions, his rage, and his pain and respecting himself enough not to chase a bitch unworthy of him and letting her go, without screaming, breaking furniture, self-harming and binge drinking.

Why did this man, so obviously not happy, not find a more virtuous person? The doctor looked good, was rich and powerful. He was probably smart, the kind of man that women like Lisa seemed to enjoy. Certainly, he seemed controlling, but with a faithful person, he probably wouldn’t be, because he’d be assured his love was returned. He wouldn’t have to act neurotic to the point of burning his clothes and almost bleaching his lover clean.

He thought about offering that advice, while the doctor removed a container from the inside pocket of his jacket, swallowed two pills and without looking at him said,

"Forget what you saw or heard. You can’t judge me. You don’t even know what love is... "

Raph, wiping his hands, turned, stung.

"How could ya know ‘bout that, Doc? Ya don’t know me!” he snapped, his accent showing as each time he becomes emotional about something.

Donnie turned his back in disgust and said frostily before he left the bathroom,

"You sicken me! All of you here who come to repent of human misery. You think you know everything and yet you know nothing! "

“Don’t talk ta me as if I was friggin’ Jon Snow. Damn it!” Raph roared, but the doctor was already gone.

Raph’s blood boiled and it took all of his self-control not to run out of the door and grab the other man’s throat. He tried to remember what he’d learned at his emotion management therapy. His mother had enrolled him when he was 15, to learn how to control his anger, after his umpteen expulsion from school. It was that or the military. It had been a very long three years. Therapy four times a week, but he had to admit, it had paid off. Without it, he would never have been able to keep
a job or would be in jail, because his temperament had been explosive at the time.

So he returned to his seat, not very interested now, knowing that Leo couldn’t dance. His schedule change hadn’t been reflected on the iPad yet, but Raph knew it was just a matter of time before it was. Should he choose another dancer? He looked at the files, scrolling through them disinterestedly. They all seemed bland and a waste of time and money. Then he stopped at Karai’s files. The Japanese woman seemed very close to her dance partner. Maybe she could provide him with information. He was thinking about it when Adrien, the new dancer, and the one responsible for Leo’s punishment, he thought irately, approached him.

"A handsome man like you..."

Adrien was immediately interrupted by a bouncer, who tapped his shoulder.

"You're wanted in the office. Right now."

The young man, surprised, got up and Raph thought he was going to be told off for touching Leo too closely.

Raph waited, wondering how far the new kind would be admonished, and then thought it didn’t matter. So he went back to the iPad to choose Karai. As soon as he touched the screen, pressing the "alphabetical order" option to avoid going around the 50 dancers, he was shocked. The first card was for "Alisson"

There was no more Adrien.

But he was there just 10 minutes ago.

Worried, but especially curious, he went to the bar, the waitresses being too unhelpful to his liking.

"I wanted the new one, but I can’t find it. He was at my table and then he left. I think it was to have a talk in the office."

"You really have no luck, man. Yesterday, the stunning Leo and today Adrien, the thief."

Raphael opened his eyes.

"Yeah. Mr. Donnie offered a very expensive white gold Cartier’s watch to his protégé. Something that costs more than 30 000 Dollars and with his name engraved on it. Someone saw Adrien put it in his pocket. We searched his things and found the watch, as well as drugs. Drugs from the outside,” he specified, in a whisper. “Mr. Donnie sent him away. He can do it. The boss approves all of his decisions,” the bartender added, filling a glass that Raph hadn’t even asked for. Raphael suddenly remembered the conversation in the bathroom.

This poor Adrien initially had nothing in his pockets, except for maybe a subway ticket. It was bullshit and his "crime" was different.

Leo had sucked him off.

But to begin with, wasn’t that Leo’s job? Did Donnie do the same thing to each of his damn clients? It was insane. No wonder Leo was so nervous in the doctor's presence.

The Doc Hudson guy had serious jealousy issues, an emotional management problem, was possessive as hell and had the biggest obsessional compulsive disorder Raph had ever heard about. People were locked in solitary confinement for far less.

He suddenly understood why Leo was almost scared of him. Raph thought of the poor dancer, who had to rub his skin almost raw to please the maniac fucker. Suddenly, the rebellious nature of Raph, that first his mother and then the NYPD had tried to tame, reared its head.
The deranged bastard was planting evidence, because he couldn’t control his all too consuming jealousy, and kicking poor, innocent Adrien out. Shit! He pretended to be a doctor! How ironic. Raph downed his glass and returned to his to his table. He touched the screen again and scrolled through the cards to Leo’s.

He wanted to teach the pretentious doctor a lesson. He wanted to express his pent-up rage. The monster inside of him had been caged for far too long and he needed some release.

He didn’t think about his work or the price and had forgotten the mission. Everything was trivial. Raph booked Leo for the night, in room number two. If Donnie wanted to oppose it, he would have to fight. Yes, he was going to teach him a good lesson and enjoy Leo’s beautiful and sculpted body beneath him as a bonus. He shivered in anticipation.
Doubt

Raphael’s stomach was in knots, as he followed the hostess upstairs. The hostesses accompanied guests that had reserved a room for the first time. She told him to enter the medium sized room that was lavish. The bed was wide enough for him to fuck five or six Leo’s and a glass cabinet contained various sex toys and accessories. It reminded him of a visit to the Sex Museum, he reflected, puzzled.

The hostess allowed him to stare to his contentment and then discreetly left, so he’d feel more comfortable.

The sight of the many dildos reminded him that Leo would soon come through the door and then, he could legitimately do all he wanted to him, making him squirm and writhe in pleasure and satisfaction.

Raph remembered when he wanted to try anal sex with Lisa. It hadn’t ended well, but Leo wouldn’t refuse him anything. He would be like his master and Leo would have to obey his every wish. The idea stunned him and he fell onto the bed. Did he really buy someone for a few hours of a good time, as if it were a pair of tickets for the Yankees? Doubt and regret overcame him, but the door suddenly opened and Leonardo, who only wore black jeans, entered.

"Do you really have the money to pay for me? You can’t do that! If you don’t have it, tell me and I will cancel your reservation on the pretext that you made a mistake."

Raph frowned at the abruptness and threw his wallet filled with green notes onto the bed. "Satisfied? I am not a sucker."

Leo's face relaxed at the sight and he typed in a code on a small machine near the entrance to the room. Raphael’s face darkened, as he thought that it was probably a ticket machine and Leo punching in that he was starting his next shift.

“Good. Dr. Hudson always finds a way of collecting his debts from bad payers. I was afraid that by doing me a favor, you would be hurt.”

Before Raph could comment, the dancer rushed over to him and gave him a passionate kiss, his breath smelling minty. Leonardo had obeyed his protector and had brushed his teeth. Leo gazed at him intently and said, “Take me!”

Raphael suddenly had reservations. He wanted to accept the offer, but he didn’t know how to accept it. Nor what to do with it. It was too fast, it lacked the usual predictability of his previous experiences and he was unsettled.

Usually, Raph was dragging a girl for X time and bringing her back home for a period of X. He had “won” her. But, Leo had been bought for a given period. Should he treat it differently?

The nervousness must have been evident on his face because, Leo removed his glasses and ran his hands through his short hair, as he kissed him.

“You are right. We have our time and there’s no rush. I’ll have to go down at 11 p.m. for my presentation. Don’t worry, we’ll stop the clock while I dance and your time resumes when I’m back here.”

Leo had a reassuring smile, but that wasn’t enough to make the policeman feel comfortable. Then, an exit door appeared to him. If he could extract information from him, he would seem to have at least some control over the situation. And not having acted like a caveman on adrenaline by hiring the services of a prostitute. He’d been too impulsive, acting without thinking, like he’d done when he
was a teenager and letting his emotions and the indignation he felt about the doctor’s ways control
him and his behavior.

"You don’t fear that your doctor will use a flame to disinfect you? What does it do when your
customers touch you more intimately? Does he give you an enema?" He chuckled to hide his
discomfort.

"Don’t ask," Leo said simply and Raph swallowed heavily. In making fun of him, he’d probably
guessed right. Uncomfortable, he continued.

"But what's his problem, huh? What does he expect from you? If you work here, then of course that ...
"
Leonardo cut him off abruptly.

"I don’t think you paid $ 2,000 to tell me about Dr. Hudson. You still haven’t filled in your card.
Lay down. I'm going to massage you; uh ... what's your name? I only remember O'Neil. "

Raph actually remembered the dancer’s quick reaction to that name and wondered again how
Leonardo knew April. As he’d suspected, what the dancer had claimed about his age was bullshit.
He could see it better now, the lighting in the room not yet dimmed.
Leo’s face was youthful, smooth, in his barely twenties, and there was no trace of abuse visible on
his features. His ebony hair, mid-long, was still wet from the shower from which he’d just emerged.
The thin, but sensual lips sketched a predatory smile, accenting his split eyes like those of a cat with a
vampire’s hypnotic power. A face of a dark angel, by a Master of the Renaissance. Raph was
himself quite sexy, with his green eyes and muscles, according to his exes, but not in this fuck up
perfection.

"I make you forget your name, is that it?" Leo asked, mocking, with a cocky smile and Raph
mentally slapped himself.

"Peter. It’s Peter O'Neil. "

Leo began to unbutton his shirt, murmuring lasciviously, while sliding it along the arms of the
policeman.

"Yes. Peter O'Neil, accountant. Still, you don’t look like an accountant at all," Leo continued,
enjoying the biceps under his hand, an appreciative smile on his lips. “You’re built like a stallion or a
bull. Massive and so strong. You have nothing to do with a pencil in hand, to add or subtract
columns of numbers. You're better with your huge cock, trying to breach me, making me beg you to
stop teasing me and fuck me already,” he whispered seductively.

Raphael forced himself to calm down. It was only a compliment. And silly talk. No risk that Leo had
found out about his cover. And he must keep his eyes on the real prize: Job. Mission. Information.
Yeah, right.
So why was he still picturing Leo spread out beneath him, begging him with his dirty talk? Why
didn’t he question him? Damn it!

"Like I said, you didn’t fill in your card. What do you like?" Leo asked with a knowing smile as if he
could read his mind.

Raph remained quiet for a moment, too lost in naughty thoughts, and then replied without thinking.

"Uh, well, sport, action movies, spaghetti with meatballs ..."
Leo burst out laughing, his eyes shining in real amusement

"You're so cute in your naïveté! I'm talking about what you'd like to do here with me. What turns you on sexually?"

Leo pointed at the glass cabinet with all the sex accessories and Raphael was embarrassed. He didn’t want anything but the dancer himself. Leo turned him on enough, thank you. He shrugged to hide his discomfort.

"I don’t know. What do you like?"

Leo stared at him for a moment, looking surprised.

"Nobody has ever asked me that."

Raph didn’t say anything and wondered if that was positive or not.

“I'm kinky most of the time,” Leo continued. “But I don’t think I am that mood tonight. I only want passion

Leo kissed Raphael again, so passionately that Raphael’s heart raced. The dancer's lips tasted like ripe strawberries, as fresh and delicious as they were the real, harvested berries. And they were soft as a fruit too. It was an addictive taste and texture, and the only kisses worth money.

He’d never felt so much love in a kiss before and he didn’t know how to welcome that realization. Perplexed, nervous, upset, he tried to regain control of his senses. His blood boiled too much and he had to stay calm. It was only a game. A dangerous game, but one supposed to be meaningless. He must, therefore, back off now.

"Why are you kissing me? That’s one of your limits, right?” He said, slowly disengaging himself.

Leo thought for a moment before he answered.

"Because you’re special to me."

Raphael jumped, startled. Then, he turned upset. It was a lie and he refused to believe it even for a nanosecond. It would hurt him if he let himself go. He was distressed enough by his recent breakup. “I call it bullshit!” Raphael snapped. “Ya kissed the guy on the stage earlier and that damn doctor wouldn’t be so jealous if ya hadn’t given him nothin’ either. Why bother ta disinfect ya?”

Leo’s face darkened in rage at being questioned.

“You said it! I was on stage! What was I supposed to do? Punch him? It wouldn’t have done either of us any good,” he fiercely defended himself, forgetting his immutable mask of beautiful ice statue. “And regarding Dr. Hudson, that’s none of your business,” Leo said irately. “You paid to use me physically, so you could have fun. And not to know anything about the doctor’s life.”

Raphael was impressed with his outburst and was surprised by one being so young and in a “submissive” position to be that authoritative. He had some nerve. Raphael could respect that.

The discomfort remained for a full minute. Raph couldn’t continue the subject, without looking very suspicious. He could return to the subject of the doctor later. Leo seemed like an angry cat, bristling, his eyes colder than his protector’s.

"You talked about massaging me,” the policeman yielded and Leo smirked, his indignation
"Yes. When the muscles are relaxed, the orgasms are better. Let me do it."

Leo stood up, opened the cupboard and took out a bottle.

"Massage oil and lube, mint chocolate flavor. I will dim the lighting if you don’t mind."

Raphael nodded in silence, lying on his stomach.

The massage began with a rubbing of the shoulders and Raphael grunted in appreciation, feeling his tension melt away.

"Damn. Where did you learn to massage so well? You’re very skilled."

"I’m a fast learner and I’m good with my hands. Don’t speak. You must be completely relaxed. Lay still and enjoy. I promise you will love it," Leo whispered, rubbing him with sensuality, and Raphael thought that the massage was already money worth.

It was a while before the massage took a more erotic turn, but Raphael felt so relaxed, that it seemed natural to him. Leo massaged the area between the thighs and then he whispered, "Turn around." Raphael did as he was told with no argument. His cock had become too hard to remain trapped under him anyway.

"I’m going to give you a blow-job and ride you if that’s ok." Raphael only nodded, closing his eyes, too lost in pleasure to reply, abandoning himself to the handsome male’s expert mouth.

His head feeling heavy, Raphael barely opened his eyes when Leo stopped and he heard a tearing sound. Leo held a condom in his hand and approached his dick.

Suddenly Raphael found words and said, "Why didn’t you wear it on stage with the girl?"

The stripper looked surprised. "You noticed? I’m not afraid of catching a disease from Karai. We are tested twice a week and she has an anovulant prescription."

Raphael chuckled sardonically. "I don’t doubt that with the nut case doctor, but what surprises me is that he lets you have such intimate relations with someone else."

Leo seemed displeased. "Do you have a grudge against Dr. Hudson?" he asked, crossly,"Are you with me just to spite him? You’ve talked about him twice tonight with sarcasm and even jealousy."

Leo glared at him and folded his arms.

Indignant, Raphael said vehemently denying it, "I'm not fucking jealous of the pathetic, evil doctor!"

Leo smiled sadly while stroking Raphael's softened cock. "He's not "evil”. Just... You know. A kind of Nikola Tesla."

The name meant nothing to the policeman, except that it was an electric car brand, but he refused to appear more ignorant than a stripper. "What do you mean? A mad scientist or a virgin geek plagued by OCD?"

Leo burst out laughing. "Admit it. You’re so jealous of the doctor, the dancer and of Karai! You’re so cute when you’re possessive and in denial."

“No! I’m not jealous, I’m not possessive and I’m damn not in denial," Raphael snapped. “But I may worry ‘bout this damn protector of yers! He kicked out this dancer, pretendin’ he stole yer watch.”
“What do you mean? I don’t have any watch!”

Raph explained that that was the point. The watch and the drugs were only a pretext. The real motive was because Leo had swallowed the poor guy’s cum and the doc wanted to keep Leo’s holes for himself, as silly as it was in a stripper club.

The stripper exploded in indignation. “I don’t have sex with Dr. Hudson like you so strongly believe,” he denied again, furiously. “I’m not his lover, only his pupil. I can’t refute he wants more from me, but I haven’t given him anything yet and he is still respectful! And, more importantly, Dr. Hudson would never plant false evidence in an innocent person’s pockets. He’s a good man. The watch must be a gift he wants to give to me and Adrien really tried to steal it or it was a misunderstanding.” Raphael was far from convinced, even though Leo seemed to believe the made-up bullshit.

“If he’s such a good person, why are you afraid as hell of him?” Raph asked, trying not to show how happy he was that Leo wasn’t the doctor’s lover.

Leo dodged the matter. “I have sex for money. Karai has sex for money. Nobody gives us sex out of love, so, we make love to each other. This is a way of showing ourselves that we care for each other and have trust in each other even if nobody does. I explained my choice to the doctor. He understands and respects it”

The sergeant frowned. “What do you mean by ‘nobody cares?’ I don’t want to talk about him all night long and I hate his guts, but he loves you. He really does. I can’t blame him. You’re so beautiful, sexy and talented. You’re a smart guy too, I can tell. Get out of here and you’ll find someone who loves you deeply.” He didn’t want to say that, but his tongue didn’t want to stay silent and it was as if everything he’d learned about self-control was forgotten.

“You will find someone. A better someone,” Raphael said with all of his heart. “A sane someone. Quit this life and you could have anyone you want. You’re not like the other dancers. You said so yourself. You drank tea, not margaritas. You don’t smoke or do drugs. You don’t belong here. Don’t take me wrong. You’re great at what you do, but you can do it out of love with your real boyfriend or girlfriend’s bed. Why don’t you quit?”

“Because I can’t,” Leo said in a voice so full of pain and anguish that Raph winced. Something was off about the dancer. The boy was clearly being threatened and that struck Raph to the core. He had to do something. The guy reached him in a way nobody had ever done.

Impulsively, Raph pressed the dancer, still with the unused condom in hand, looked at him and said, “Don’t put in on. I swear I don’t have a disease. I want to feel you and then I want to show you that I trust you and that I care. You don’t have to love me, just be. Relax. I want the real you with me tonight. Not a kind of sex doll.”

Leo remained silent a full minute, his blue eyes shining with uncertainty in the dim room. Then, he whispered an “ok” in a shaky breath. “But, please don’t tell.”

With this simple acceptance, self-confidence returned to the policeman, so he leaned heavily over Leonardo as his mouth latched onto his collarbone.

“I won’t. Your doc will won’t know. Not this part.”

Leo looked at him quizzically, but with as much hunger and desire as his.

“I don’t do this ta spite him. I’m doin’ this because I want ya. Want ya ta be mine,” Raph rumbled.” Not his. He’s a lunatic and ya know it. Ya deserve better.”
“Make me yours, then,” the stripper answered in a strangled voice, his eyes flashing with need.

Not needing to be told twice, Raph was already grabbing at Leo, as if he was his lifeline. It has been a while since he’d had sex with a male, but he didn’t feel nervous at all. The stripper was prepping himself and he let himself go down, then impale on Raph’s dick, wet with saliva and still dripping.

Raphael did not have sex with a male partner in a while, but he did not remember that this was so good. The heat encasing his cock was deliciously painful and intoxicating. Leo was incredibly tight for a whore but he keeps the thought for himself. Anyway, he was not able to think straight.

Sitting face to face, Leo straddling him, Raph guiding him, with his hands around his loins, sweat dripping and their lips shining with the drool exchanged with their hungry kisses, Raph thought that Leo was more eager than Lisa had ever been. Leo was bucking his hips, moaning and stroking himself in sync. Never he had a so thrilling partner, seeming hornier than Raph himself.

The only things preventing Raph from cumming right now was the name “Peter” escaping his lover’s mouth. If only Leo could know his real name, Raph refused to think he was lying to him. His real name wasn’t really important and his mission had nothing directly to do with Leo. So, nothing will do real damage to the stunning dancer. Although, he thought, if the doctor was stuck in prison, Leo would be freed from his frenzied protector. The thought made him buck his hips more vigorously. Leo will be his. And every night, the dreamy creature could share his bed and his life. He wouldn’t be lonely anymore and nobody would ever frighten Leonardo.

Leo was whispering naughty things to his ear, his hot breath tickling him. His toes curled, as he felt waves of pleasure course through his body. He was about to cum, marking Leo as his in a way that the doctor, ignoring it, couldn’t remove. He was right there, Leo trembling like a metronome; about to cum too and suddenly there was a knock on the door.

“Leo, it’s time! Are you alright?” the doctor asked from the other side of the door, with so much worry and pain. Maybe he’d been there a while. If so, he must have heard every whisper of the stripper’s pleasure and each cry must have pierced his heart. Raph cursed despite that.

“I’m… I’m coming,” Leo answered, shivering, ready to leave.

Raph held him in place, pressing him against his body and said, murmuring lasciviously, “Oh you bet you do.” He grabbed Leo’s cock in hand while accentuating his pelvic moves. "Cum for me before you go, babe. Give me that. I want to mark you as mine and give you really shared pleasure."

Leo, obedient, shouted in pure ecstasy, quivering, and Raph finally released him, after his own climax, not being sure if he heard sobs from the other side of the door and in his euphoric state, not giving a damn.

They were barely in the afterglow, when the doctor said in a clear, icy tone, "Leonardo, it’s not like you to be so unprofessional. Open the door immediately or you’ll be disciplined."

Leo, his face buried in the hollow of the policeman’s neck, groaned but moved to get up and again an indignant Raphael stopped him. This blackmail about discipline was too much too bear. "Don’t move. I’m still your owner. Your performance is only in twenty minutes. You’re not late. I’ll take care of that little fucker."

“Peter,” Leo said and placed a hand on his arm, trying to calm him down, but Raph was too pissed to listen. The doc had the nerve to interrupt them and then threatening his partner. Raph won’t allow it and the doc would have a black eye for his trouble, too if he dare to says one more threat to Leo.
Raph grabbed a towel from the table to cover his deflated cock, not wanting to show that he wasn’t wearing a condom, and opened the door, placing his arm so as to prevent Donnie from entering and even seeing inside the room. The doctor was tall, rich and powerful, but Raph was a beast and in the worst case, surely had the law on his side.

“What is your fucking problem, doc? Can’t a guy enjoy a private moment in damn peace? There’s still more than fifteen minutes before his show and I’m fucking positive he doesn’t need a damn bleach bath for that. Because right after, I still own Leo’s ass for two hours and I’m sure as hell not done with him.”

Don’s face was impassive, as he said, “You’re not talking like an accountant. Who are you?”

Raph kept an unimpressed face as well and took out a fake business card from his open wallet on the bed and did it quickly to prevent Don from bypassing him and grabbing Leo.

“Here’s my card, Dr. Freakeinstein. Wanna give me your taxes to do? Must have some interesting shit in your account,” Raph snarled.

The brown eyes blazed, but Leo must have been appearing behind him because his pissed off expression quickly changed and he smiled sweetly.

“Leonardo. I’m sorry. You should be with Karai in the loge to dress-up. You know it, darling,” he said quietly.

Once again, Raph’s tongue ran away and he spat, “Don’t call him that. He isn’t yours.”

Mahogany eyes snapped toward him in a frightening way, as if he was possessed by an evil spirit. Was the fucker bipolar too now? That took the damn cake!

“Leonardo. Now,” the doctor commanded and Leo slipped between the two men, in a purple peignoir.

"Dr. Hudson, I'm sorry. I lost track of time.”

The doctor smiled, "I understand. It won’t happen anymore. I know you sometimes forget with the extremely demanding customers.” He gave Raphael a dirty look and added, “So I bought you a Cartier watch. You nearly never got it, because someone tried to steal it. It is expensive, so be careful. I chose it because the needles are blue, and I know it’s your favorite color and so now it’s mine too because it reminds me of your cherished eyes. It is engraved with your name. Keep it on you always, please.”

The doc attached the precious watch to Leo’s wrist with gentle care in front of a pissed off Raphael. The watch had a white gold bracelet on his wrist and the dial seemed to be made of crystals or diamonds. Raphael didn’t know for sure. But what he could tell was that the watch must have cost the doctor about half of his annual income as a sergeant. His self-confidence crumbled. If Leo belonged to the highest bidder, it couldn’t be him.

Leo suddenly spoke and said serenely, “Oh. Of course, when I come back here after my performance, I'm going to keep it, so I won’t lose track of the time.” Donnie scowled and Raphael's heart swelled with joy. Leo had just informed the doctor that his night with Raphael wasn’t over and that he’d respected his commitment. The doctor had a forced grin and stiffly nodded. Donnie loved Leo enough not to displease him even if it was painful to his possessive nature.

Leonardo came down eagerly, as much to satisfy the doctor, as to pull him away from Raphael, the policeman thought, the towel still tied around his loins. He was still in the afterglow of his love-
making, despite the abrupt interruption, but he forced himself to get dressed and go down. Leaving Leo alone with Dr. Hudson was repugnant to him. And Leo performing was breathtaking.

He didn’t even take a shower, only briefly washing his cock and abdomen and went downstairs. Anyway, he was about to make love to Leonardo again in less than half an hour, he thought with a huge grin. He hadn’t found out anything about Oroku, but he still had four months to do that. Maybe he could convince Leo to make a deposition.

Still daydreaming, he wasn’t at his table yet and the doctor appeared in front of him.

"This face! That advocacy skill! Wasn’t a pleasure to spend time with a handsome guy like him? Once in a lifetime is still something you can afford, like an exotic trip," the man said, his face expressionless. "A drink here from time to time could be fine, but I warn you to not go to close of Leo anymore. Anyway, it wasn’t like you have the cash doing so!"

If there something Raph had always trouble to deal with, was with people telling him what to do, when there were no his parents or his boss. The fact that this prick was talking to him like he was a shabby scum was even more aggravating, but he didn't even have the time to protest.

"I have an offer for you. Leo’s committed to you and wants to fulfill his engagement. You do as well. As an accountant, like you’re supposed to be,” Donnie said, his eyes narrowed. “You probably aren’t rich. Certainly not wealthy enough to rent Leo. Here’s the deal. You can enjoy for two more hours and I will pay for your night with him, but I want to watch.”

Raphael was nauseated by the suggestion and stared incredulously at his rival. He’d never heard such sick shit. “Never!” Raphael snapped, his face dark in rage. "Don’t want yer creepy stalker’s face there and botherin’ us. ”

“Us?” Donnie hissed, furious. “There is no “us” with you two!”

He moved closer to him, as quickly as an insidious snake.

“Leo may like you. For now. But if you cause trouble, I’ll kick you out of the club and you will never see him again,” he threatened. “Anyway, what do you expect from him? If you’re horny, there are cheaper dancers and ones you can afford. If you try to keep him all of your goods will be sold in two weeks to a pawn shop. I can make that happen. Don’t cross me.”

“Who said I’m expecting something from him? Maybe he gives it to me already,” Raph boasted and smirked.

“You mean his body? Well, anybody with money could achieve that,” the doctor retorted.

“Well, anybody except you, apparently,” Raph mocked. He knew he’d hit a nerve when the doctor paled. “You spend maybe 35 000$ on a watch and he’s so repulsed by you that he wouldn’t touch you with a barge pole.”

“65 000 $ for your information. And I’m not aiming for his body, despite his beauty.”

“Whatever the price and how a rich motherfucker you are. I bet you were on Fortune 500 before you had kissed a girl. He would never let you touch him. And, he’ll never love you either,” Raphael said furiously. Oh yeah. He wasn’t in denial. He was jealous and could admit it, but for good reason. Donnie was bad news and he would hurt Leonardo. He was surely a criminal. A narco-trafficker. A nihilist hacker. He probably sold secret wars weapons to North Korea. Or all the above! Raph swore to protect and serve innocent people and Leo, a beautiful and yet so fragile flower was definitely innocent.
“He’s afraid of you,” Raph said firmly and Donnie gave him a dubious smile.

“He’s afraid? What kind of bad joke is that? Leo isn’t afraid of anything or anyone. He is a natural force, a blizzard. No one can’t stand against him. He is Fearless…and maybe heartless…well. You’ll see.”

Raph grimaced, folding his arms and said, “I don’t believe you and I won’t listen to you spouting shit about him. I saw the real Leonardo upstairs. Not the poor slave or puppet you made him be. We had a chat and when you talk, I feel and see how afraid he is. It wasn’t fake. That was the real Leo.”

Dr. Hudson was silent a long moment. Then he said frostily, “You don’t know him at all: his dark secret, his painful soul. You see the body, I see the being. But Leo’s a master of appearances and duplicity, trained to spot your weaknesses, to trap you, to suck you to the core and to spit you dry. You really are a dumb guy.”

Noticing Raph’s still look of disbelief, Don said with a twisted smile, “You want to pursue him? Go ahead and good luck. You’ll witness him doing his trick with people night after night. Men and women. You’ll see others lust after him and you’ll want to rip them to shreds. I can bear it, but you? You’re already a mess. You can barely handle me and I’ve never touched him without permission. What will you do knowing he makes love to his so-called sister each morning? What will you do if someone disappears with him to the cabins or goes upstairs? He didn’t stop, even though I begged him and I can afford everything he wants and his fantasies. Why would he stop for a lowly accountant? You’re just a little silly fly, flying too close to a voracious Venus Fly-Trap. You think I act like a madman? We’ll see if you do better.” Don chuckled and left Raphael, whose heart was pounding, to watch Leo’s show.

A few minutes later, Leo appeared on the stage, but Raph didn’t look at him. He was lost in his thoughts and drinking. If he could, he would slap himself for being such a moron.

Donnie, the neurotic doctor, spoke the voice of reason. What could he expect of Leo, a stranger, known to sell his body to different men and women every night? He hadn’t fought for Lisa and hadn’t wanted to share her either! Why would he do it for a more expensive bitch? And Lisa was a presentable girlfriend. Okay, Raph’s mother had never been very fond of Lisa, but at least she had a real job. What had made him stand up for the hooker? It could have compromised his mission. He had promised that fucking Leo was only for work and nothing more. And here, he was ready to fuck it all up, to be the only owner of Leo’s ass? Shit! The craziness of the doc was contagious! It must be the alcohol or the lack of sex in his life. Sex had always been important to him and a huge part of his life. Being cold turkey for two month’s straight had been too tough on his mind. He must be delusional thinking for one moment that he could keep Leo as a real lover.

Maybe tomorrow he could go to a decent place to meet a good and decent girl, wearing actual clothes. He’d buy her two or three drinks at 10$, he’d ask some questions, listen to her tell him about her dull life with a faked interested look, give her several random compliments and finally, he’d bring her home. He’d have normal sex, not breathtaking and mind-blowing, like with Leo, but at least a psychotic geek wouldn’t spy from behind a door to spoil their orgasms.

And what about the condoms? Was he out of his mind, asking such risky shit? Leo was a whore, damn it. Fucking with strangers 20 times every week. Maybe he didn’t wear a condom when someone paid the extra cash and that was why Leo yielded so easily, hoping for a good tip. And why was he has been so a sap about it? “I want to show you I care.” What an idiot he’d been!

Raphael hung his head in his hands. He’d never again do that, he vowed, but that didn’t change the fact that he still had a damn job to do. He had to find another informant than Leo. The dancer was too dangerous for his mental state. Just by a look, Raph was drooling and acting like a mindless
zombie. The bartender was friendly and talkative enough. Or maybe another stripper with a less distracting appearance. Anyway, with what he was about to do, Leo wouldn’t talk to him anymore. He took out his cell phone, the fake one; the one connected to the phone number of his false business card and pretended to talk on it during Leo’s entire performance, forcing his eyes not to look at him. Then he got up just before the end and went to the reception desk.

"I booked a dancer for the night, but I have an emergency. I can’t stay, but I will pay," Raphael explained in an embarrassed mutter.

The man frowned and asked for his membership number. Then he turned, smiling, visibly relieved and said, "Mr. O’Neil, all your expenses for the evening have already been paid. You can go home. Hope to see you again soon at Ikebana house.”

Raph hesitated for a moment. The Doctor had already paid his tab. Should he thank him or spit on his face? No. He had to leave. If he went back there and Leo looked at him hungrily, he wouldn’t be able to resist him and he wouldn’t go anywhere soon.

He left, extracting a cigarette, as he walked in the cold November rain. The cold water was a relief for him now.

Maybe he should withdraw from the mission. He’d be humiliated, but he’d be sane. Yeah. Tomorrow was Sunday and he intended on having a quiet day. No alcohol, no cigarettes, he swore, throwing away the almost new one between his fingers and mostly, no sexy as hell male stripper.
Sophisms

The day Lisa had left, Raphael had mused over the fact that maybe it was because of sexual issues. Lisa had slowed down giving him sex six months into their relationship. It had only been twice a week after that. And then it had become once a week, before she cut him off absolutely. He could admit that he had maybe not protested about that enough, and maybe she had felt it.

She had caught him many times, indulging in steamy jerk-off sessions in front of the tv or in the shower. The fact he had a strong libido, it was just that, and rather soon, he had found himself not that attracted to Lisa anymore. She was a good-looking girl, with curly blonde hair and respectable boobs, and she had a job.

He had already caught unknown guys staring at her ass as she walked next to him. He had felt annoyed by this, but never mad. Lisa was a hottie and anyway, he was bigger than all these other men. He wouldn’t punch a man for looking at his girlfriend’s ass. There was no real harm in this. But maybe Lisa had felt neglected. As the girl before her had.

He has been desolate of their break-up, but it was more about the prospect to be alone, again, than missing really his ex-girlfriend.

What was wrong with him? He had wanted to rip Adrien’s head off, and the doctor’s too, over this dancer. Was he gay? Was that the reason he had not be so eager about Lisa and the other girls before? He’d had sex with two men before. Those times weren’t extraordinary memories, but maybe it was because most of the time he had been wasted.

Anyway, it was not a gender issue. Leo did the trick that the others couldn’t do and it was a friggin mystery. He knew Leo was deadly and hazardous, with his pale carnation and his dark soul, but still, he longed to see him again.

It was Wednesday. Raph had managed to keep his promise to himself and hadn’t returned to Ikebana since Saturday night. On Sunday he’d been busy all day. He’d gone to the gym, had jogged twice as long as usual and, like every Sunday night, had dinner at his mother's house. Except that, contrary to usual, he’d arrived very early, more than an hour before Casey and April. He’d seen that his mother suspected something. Until Casey's arrival, she’d harassed Raph with questions and he’d arrive so soon. But Casey had said that Raph was "on a mission" and his mother had been relieved. Nobody had said a word about Lisa and Raphael was grateful.

He had drunk more red wine than usual; it always served on Sunday evenings. He hadn’t yet decided what he’d say to Commissioner Hamato and that worried him. Okay, he still had some information. There was prostitution and drug trafficking at the club, but that was easy to guess. He knew that Dr. Hudson was Oroku’s second in command. He’d searched him on the Internet, but as of yet hadn’t found any information. Maybe it was a fake identity. Some crazy fascists had taken the title of doctor in Eastern Europe during WW2 to do such bullshit. Perhaps Donnie Hudson was no different, hiding his criminal activities behind a fake license.

Yes, it was quite good information, not enough to be praised, but Raph didn’t want praise. He just wanted some basic shit like to give ticket for speeding and not go to the fucked-up club with the beautiful dancer for his own sanity.

But how could he voice his refusal to return there? "I'm afraid of falling in love with a stripper?" He’d look foolish and that was an understatement.

“Don’t worry. You’re a handsome man. Generous, loyal and very loving. Someone will see that
soon, just like I do,” his mother had said, before he left and he’d nodded absentmindedly. He’d looked in his mirror a long time that evening. Yeah, he was quite good-looking. Short, light brown hair, piercing green eyes, very tall at 6’5, naturally tanned, muscular and he had all that was needed to satisfy a lover. He had a good job and knew he had a lot of love to give. Yet, that hadn’t been enough for Lisa or the one before her. Something must be wrong with him, just like there was with Leo.

On Monday morning, as was to be expected, the commissioner had refused to withdraw his mission. The department wasn’t going to pay the annual subscription of another agent and Raphael had already established intelligence among the employees and customers of the place. And most importantly, Raph had no good reason for doing so. He’d been told to trust his abilities and so Raph had the choice of either leaving the NYPD or completing the damn mission. Monday and Tuesday were like a real week-end because Ikebana was closed. He refused to think about what Leo could be doing on his days off. Probably sucking his protector’s dick, but it didn’t matter. He was done with the boy. He’d choose another and less dangerous dancer next time.

Wednesday came and he knew he had no choice. He’d been specially assigned to find out more about Doc Hudson. Raphael was revolted by him and since the feeling was undoubtedly reciprocal, he had no choice.

As soon as he entered the club, Raphael felt better accommodated than usual, although the staff was always polite. He decided not to sit at a table and went to the bar. He didn’t even have to ask for his usual cocktail. The bartender just poured his drink and gave it him. Without saying a word, he took the glass and, unable to stop himself, glanced around. The doctor, who sat at his usual table, was the first person, who caught his eyes. Hudson was impeccable as usual, but sported a black eye. Hudson must have said too much shit to the wrong person, Raphael told to himself with satisfaction.

“Mr. Donnie’s looking for you. I think he had a huge fight about you with M. Leo,” the bartender whispered.

So, Leonardo caused the black eye, Raphael thought and stupidly felt proud. Leo wasn’t a puppet and easy to handle. The idea that the dancer had gone so far as to strike his protector, for him, filled him with comfort. Maybe he was special to Leo after all.

But the doctor arrived, smiling, and Raphael didn’t have to force himself to look sullen.

"What do you want, Doc? Drooling over Leo's ass and not daring to do anything about it?"

It was a pure provocation and Raph knew it, but he had to know more about the man.

The doctor answered quietly, "No, Leo doesn’t work on Wednesdays and is in his room. His personal one. He’s probably reading or meditating. As I told you, you don’t know him. Leo’s a serious guy and loves quiet hobbies."

Raph shrugged, again torn by his responsibilities and his attraction to the dancer. He didn’t want to learn about Leo’s stupid hobbies. He didn’t want to know about him at all. During his mission, he’d fucked him. Period. Ok, it was great sex. Beyond great, but no sex was worth losing his job. Shit!

“Leo wants to talk to you. He doesn’t work, so, it will be free,” the doctor continued with a forced grin.

Raph’s face darkened in anger and he snapped, “I can pay for a bitch if I want to. I’m not a shabby sucker, like you seem to believe!”

Donnie’s face darkened too at the mention of "bitch".

"Don’t call him that,” Donnie hissed
Raph, unimpressed, shrugged again and took a swig from his glass. "Why, that's exactly the way you're talking about him?"

The doctor shook his head fiercely and said, “I said that he was a ruthless, cold and calculating man. A master at the art of simulating. A master manipulator. A man, who observes, reflects, and annihilates by striking you at your weakest point. A formidable actor, psychologist and businessman. He’s gifted in many ways! Far more intelligent than you or all the people in this club. But not like you said. Never call him that!” he almost shouted in rage and Raph, mouth open, looked at him. The guy needed help. Medical help, he thought again. No wonder Leo evaded him as if he had the plague.

“Hey, Doc, take a chill pill of yours,” Raph shrugged.

But the doctor almost jumped on him, “What do you know about my pills? “ he asked irately.

The policeman frowned, his imagination working full time. Perhaps Donnie was the head of the Oroku Criminal Laboratory. He created drugs, which created addictions or cures for an epidemic he was going to cause. He absolutely had to know what the evil genius was planning. The doctor had said so himself to his mysterious Japanese friend that he took care of everything. Raph had to trap him. The man looked too smart, rich, powerful and completely crazy. The kind of villain that Batman himself was struggling to stop. But Raph knew the doctor's kryptonite. He couldn’t approach it without damaging himself, but someone had to do it.

“So, your boy toy wants to talk to me. What for?” he asked, folding his arms.

Donnie's set his lips in a thin line at the new nickname and said, "I don’t know. He asked me to tell you so. He’s in his room.” Raphael frowned. It was so weird. Was it a trap? But, despite the danger, he might learn some information. Yeah, he thought to convince himself to go. He was addicted to risky shit and wanted to make the commissioner proud of him. It had nothing at all to do with Leo’s nice ass.

But Donnie’s look behind the designer glasses suggested that it wasn’t a trap. At least not from him. Donnie was pissed off, but yet obedient to his pupil. It must be been a lot to ask from the possessive genius and Raph smiled. "Well, I don’t like making such a nice person wait. Go ahead and lead doc. I’ll follow you to his room. His real room.”

Donnie, livid, said nothing and led, as he climbed the stairs. He stopped behind a small door that led to a long corridor. Raph supposed, as he observed everything, that he was no longer in the original building. "Leo likes calmness,” the doctor explained. “The six neighboring buildings belong to us, but he’s in the farthest so that the music on Wednesdays and other evenings don’t bother him, before he and Karai start at 7 PM, and so that they can eat quietly.

Donnie arrived at a door from which soft music could be heard. Donnie knocked on the door twice and someone sighed before saying, “Come in.” Don opened the door and Leonardo's expression of neutrality changed to one of surprise. He quickly closed the thick manual in front of him and put down his pen.

“Peter…” he said, with an enthusiasm that the policeman found exaggerated, despite the warm fuzzy feeling that it made in his stomach. Then, the handsome dancer looked at the doctor and gave a slight nod. Donnie stood for a moment, unsure, his eyes gleaming with adoration for Leo. Raph thought that no one had ever looked at him that way, but Leo didn’t seem to be particularly touched and the doctor left. The silence stretched thirty seconds after the poor genius’s departure. Raphael hated being so nervous.

"So, what were you reading?” Raphael asked.
“I was studying. I have an argument to present tomorrow.”

Raph’s eyes widened in surprise. Leo went to college or university?

"Yeah? What fields?" the undercover cop questioned, trying to hide his astonishment.

The stripper stretched, visibly sore from his long study and said, “Do you want tea?”. Raphael followed Leonardo, who went to a counter at the back. The policeman glanced around, nodding. He hated tea, but he would have at least one reason to stay there. The room seemed like a suite in a mid-range hotel, in a pseudo-Japanese style. The room was sparse. A fairly large futon served as a bed. The katanas were hung on the wall, above a bookshelf containing about sixty reading books. A coffee table and heating pads were there no doubt to brew tea. But apart from that, electricity and a laptop on Leo’s desk, there were no more appliances. Not even a television or microwave. Raph did see a mini-fridge, though. How could the "protégé" of a rich man like Dr. Hudson live so simply? He didn’t ask and looked at the manual that Leo was studying earlier. Then he jumped as if the book had burned him. "Is it a law book from Columbia University?"

Leo frowned, as he boiled the water. "Yes, why are you so surprised?" he asked as if it were the usual bedside book of a prostitute.

"Are you enrolled in the law school of the friggin’ Columbia University?" Raph asked, dumbfounded.

"Yes, why do you make such a big deal about that?"

"Because it’s Columbia, duh! And Law, you're not supposed to ..." Raph didn’t dare to finish his sentence, aware of Leo’s offended expression.

“Just because I show off my dick doesn’t mean I’m stupid!”

Raph wanted to slap himself and said, “I didn’t mean that. I’m just fucking impressed. You must be really clever to go to this university and to study Law. What year are you?"

Leo didn’t answer his question immediately, busy pouring the hot water. A pleasant floral odor invaded the apartment. "I'm doing the double program. I'm in my first year, I'm completing two semesters of law and then I'm doing my master's degree in philosophy. Then I'm going back to law right up to my JD, and finally, I'm going back for my doctorate in philosophy. It will take at least five years. So, I need to work too.”

Raph was speechless. His mom was so fond of April because she’d done her social work studies at Columbia. Lisa had been horribly jealous of April because of it. If he could have a boyfriend as brilliant as his sister-in-law was, his mother would be so proud and happy for him.

But, suddenly, doubt overcame him. It was too good to be true. Maybe it was only staged. Leo wanted his pity, making him think he was a poor student, needing to dance to pay for his philosophy classes. Yeah right. The Venus Fly-Trap wanted to eat big and juicy flies. Leo had asked Donnie to bring him there at the exact moment of fake studying to impress him and to make him spend cash.

"You don’t seem to believe me, why?" Leo asked.

Raph shrugged and said,” You know why. You’re a product of which you’re the seller yourself. You boast about your product to raise the price, right?

"This is called an ad hominem attack. Your words are influenced by my work and not by what I tell you, but believe what you want. I don’t care if you take it that way.” Leo said with a shrug.
“Prove to me that I’m wrong, then!” Raph said, not understanding what Leo wanted. He wouldn’t have thought it was possible, but the young man, though not dressed as sexily as he usually was, seemed more attractive. He wore rather wide, navy blue sports pants and a rather loose pale T-shirt of a silly children’s show. He looked nothing like a gold digger and almost looked like a typical teenager. Raphael almost felt that it was unnatural to desire him. He looked so innocent.

“This is a case of reversing the burden of proof. When someone makes a statement, he has the responsibility to demonstrate that it’s true. You demand the opposite and it’s lazy and deeply dishonest. If it were so simple, we’d spend our time saying no matter what without ever having to justify ourselves,” Leo said seriously.

Raph was confused and silently accepted the cup. Leo seemed sure of himself and Raph called himself a poor idiot. Leo wasn’t stupid, because he was stunning and gave the best blow-jobs in New York State. Leo seemed very sure of himself and Raph told himself that regardless of whether it was true or not, it didn’t matter. He was a police officer and there for his work.

“No, I don’t have to talk. You do. The madman told me you wanna talk to me. Why?”

After sipping his tea, Leo said icily, “We had a great time and very good times are rare in my life. I was looking forward to joining you after my performance, but you were gone, why?” Raph opened and closed his mouth. Why did Leo make such a big deal of it? Had he really had a good time? Really?

"Did you hit the doctor? Why?" the policeman asked.

Leo closed his eyes, drinking the tea that Raph hadn’t yet tasted, too nervous to drink something hot and caffeinated.

"Yes," he articulated slowly. "I deduced that there were only two possibilities for your hasty departure, since it was impossible you disliked our encounter."

“You’re a cocky son of a bitch, you know that?” Raph replied, flushed. "So, what happened in your big, egotistical head to make you hit the doctor?”

"I assumed that, because he was jealous, he’d told you bad things about me. One doesn’t have to be smart to understand that he, a highly intelligent man, loves me very much and wants me for himself alone. He wanted to scare you and to eliminate his competition.” the stripper said, evenly.

Leo’s words made sense, but Raph was determined not to be seduced. He wasn’t so dumb and had to focus on his mission. "I'm not competing,” Raphael protested. “I can’t afford to give you precious gifts or even get you another night this month, so your doctor doesn’t have to fear me..."

“It doesn’t matter. I like you and it's you I want. Not him. Never him,” Leo said quietly, leaving the cup on the table and slowly approaching Raphael, who was frozen in shock.

The policeman mentally slapped himself at least six times before saying in a squeaky voice, “I don’t believe ya. Ya want somethin’ from me, but I’m not damn rich. I already told ya!”

“'I may not want money. Just maybe a lover with a big cock and firm hands that caress me well,” Leo whispered in a seductive tone.

Raph was stunned and he unfastened the arms that were already wrapping around his neck. He wouldn’t be excited. It was only a scheme. It must be.

“You’re an escort, Leonardo. You have sex all the time, with whomever you want. You’re fucking
cute. You can have anyone. It must be something else ..."

“Ah, Peter again with the same sophisms. You can’t prove I’m not telling the truth. Yet, I hit Mr. Hudson for you and I’m here to give you for free what I could have made you pay for another day. Why don’t you believe me that I can only find you gorgeous or be attracted to you? Unless you left because of the second reason.”

There. He could tell by Leo’s smirk that it was a trap or something bad.

“You’re scared of what you feel for me. Rather than facing it, you prefer to run away from it. You’re ashamed, so you deny it,”

Raph wanted to get angry, but even to his own ears it sounded like an embarrassed babble, when he said, “It’s your turn to make assumptions.”

Leonardo smiled and Raphael’s knees almost buckled. "No. I can always prove what I’m saying, but if you want, prove to me that I’m wrong thinking that. You have the night to do it. We won’t be disturbed. Karai won’t be here for another seven hours. Let’s bet. Make me cum more often than yourself and I’ll agree to be wrong.”

This time, Raph didn’t remove Leo’s arms that wrapped around him or his body that pressed against his. He captured the offered lips in a searing kiss. It only took a few moments for his whole body to be aroused and he placed the young man on the futon, caressing the beautiful body beneath his.

Leo was already naked, “I don’t have lube or condoms here. Nobody comes here,” he said, with a soft, deep, velvety voice who made the policeman shiver in anticipation.

Raphael stopped his descent to his partner’s groin for a moment, “I told you that I want to feel you and I’m going to prepare you very carefully and slowly. I’ll be good and go easy. I promise,” Raphael lovingly kissed his new lover’s navel and said in an embarrassed tone, “I’m not a client. I care and like you too.”

Leo, feeling Raphael’s tongue gently penetrate him, uttered a groan of pleasure as a reply. That was sufficient for Raphael to be led by his hormones. Lost in lust and by his need to give pleasure to his lover, Raphael didn’t see Leo’s sly smile.
The sex had been incredible. Leo gave him as much passion as he offered him, murmuring praises and making enticing sounds. Raph felt like a real lover at home. Time was of no importance and he’d caught his breath for a moment. Leo was a nymphomaniac mother fucker and he needed to gain strength. "Hey. About your argument, you have to prepare it, right?"

Leo had frowned, “You want to leave already?”

The young man seemed really disappointed and Raph's heart swelled with this realization, “No, dummy. I want to hear your speech.”

Leo blushed, "Well, you have to do the opposite part, otherwise what I say won’t make any sense.” Leo got up and took a stack of papers from his desk. "You will say what’s in red and I’ll say what’s in blue. You can take a look while I shower.”

Raph pulled him towards him, kissed the hollow of his neck, “No. You're not going to wash, I’m just taking a break and I’m going to mess you up again right after. I don’t have OCD issues, like your damn Doc.”

Leo giggled, trying to free himself, “So, already jealous and addicted to my flesh?”

Raphael flushed, ashamed. He knew Leo was just making fun of him. Leo meant it in a good way, but his blood flamed up, listening to the teasing tone. He’d sworn to himself to stay here to learn information for his job and not to listen to Leo’s presentation.

“Just want to hear your damn argument,” Raph snapped. “But if you don’t want to, you can fuck yourself.”

Leo raised an eyebrow in displeasure, “Well, and you say that Dr. Hudson has issues. He's always sweet and never raised his voice to me. Maybe I should be with him instead.”

“Go fuck him then and leave me alone. Shit,” Raph hissed, grabbing his jeans. He didn’t know why when just minutes before he was so warm and peaceful in his afterglow and now he was so sensitive, nervous and irritated. He felt naked and raw and furious that he felt this way.

Leo had seduced him and trapped him to stay and Raph was unable to justify it to himself. He didn’t learn anything useful for his job yet and he’d make sweet love to the stripper for maybe three hours. He was incensed, because he knew by telling Leo to fuck the doc and to leave; he was lying to himself and Leo. He knew it and Leo did too. And he hated them both for it.

Leo seemed to find it wiser to change tactics instead of mocking him. He grew sweet and in a way it was worse. “Excuse me. I didn’t want to be rude, but you’re right, I need to study, and I don’t want you to leave and it'll be better if you help me. Please stay. For the night. I want to fall asleep in your muscular arms. I feel safe in them.” Leo pleaded, his blue eyes flashing with need. Raph churned inside at the sight. He couldn’t remain insensitive, not when the voice was so soft and the expression so supplicating. He knew he was being played and manipulated, but he’d gone beyond caring about
that.

Leonardo, in distress, was too amazing.

Raph tried not to lose all his senses and said, “Okay. But I want to talk then.”

Leo smiled brightly and said, "Talk all you want, Peter, I love talking to you.” The intonation of the word “love” made Raph’s toes curl, but he acted as if that wasn’t the case and began to read his text. He was quickly surprised by the subject. It was a defense of a bisexual person, who was threatened with deportation, and Leonardo defended his point of view with ardor and brilliance. He knew his argument very well and even developed it. Raph realized that Leo hadn’t lied about one fact at least. He really was a law student and was very talented.

He understood the doctor’s fury more. Leonardo wasn’t a worthless prostitute. On the contrary, Leo, with his beautiful appearance and dialectic, defended the oppressed, just like Raph did. The policeman did it with his strength and his revolver and Leo did it with his gifted tongue. Raph had no hesitation in congratulating him.

"I want to work in international human rights in the court of LaHaye,” Leo said. “That’s why I learned so many languages. I have to learn Dutch, but that can wait.” Raph didn’t know where LaHaye was, except that it was in Europe, but the thought of the place made him feel gloomy and he didn’t know why.

Leo smirked, “If I don’t have a boyfriend or a girlfriend, I’ll go, but if I have one, I'll stay.” The fake accountant blushed a lot. Leonardo had read his thoughts before himself. He was ashamed of how easy he seemed to fall in love, but he wasn’t in love. He would never be. The stripper was just an arrogant bastard. Only the sex was great. Raph had to change the topic.

"Wow. You have impressive ambitions, but, if I’m not being too nosey in saying, your university must be damn expensive.”

Leo was silent for a moment before confessing, “Dr. Hudson pays for it or I think he does. He teaches in Colombia, so I'm not that positive, but I was accepted because of him."

Raph said nothing. He’d managed to get the information Hudson worked at Columbia. His boss would be happy. But Raph wasn’t happy at all.

“That’s why I live here,” Leo continued. “I don’t want to owe the Doctor too much. He pays for my classes and pays when he reserves me, but I don’t want any more. Wanting more means I should pay,” Leonardo explained in an embarrassed tone.

Raphael didn’t have time to stop his tongue from uttering, “No. I don’t want him to do it.” As soon as he finished speaking, he noticed his stupidity. He couldn’t pay for Leonardo’s studies alone. And anyway, he tried to convince himself, Leonardo was nothing more to him than a great sex partner. He didn’t pay for Lisa’s shit and he couldn’t pay for Leo’ studies. He was only a stranger and worst of all, a notorious player, according to his own sponsor. Leo wanted his pity, he realized, and it was just a gold-digger mind game. He mustn’t be affected and sucked in by it.

The dancer seemed to have read in his thoughts, because he sighed, “That’s why I dance and live here. I want to be independent as soon as possible. I could live in the doctor’s penthouse, but I would have to give up my independence and many other things that are important to me. University is, as you said, already very expensive. Without his support, I couldn’t afford my studies. It’s more than 70 000$ annually,” Leo explained dejectedly.

The fake-accountant’s eyes widened in surprise at the astronomic number. The watch and his annual
income were nearly the same amount! Donnie, who paid so much for an ass he’d never touched and probably never would, was the dumbest out of both of them.

“I try to save and live simply,” Leo said. “But despite the doctor inviting me very often to the restaurant, I’ve only saved $12,000 in six months. I have nothing, except for what’s in this room. Karai bought the futon. The rest we paid for together. I only work twenty-five hours a week, because of my studies. I can’t do more. So, if the doc tires of me I’m in big trouble. Hence, while respecting myself, I respect him too. No bank would want to give me a loan either. So, although you may not like Dr. Hudson, he’s my only option.”

“Find another sugar daddy, then. One less crazy,” Raph suggested, even though he didn’t want Leo doing that. But he kept thinking about how much Leo’s studies cost. Leo had no choice but to target high-paying prey if he wanted to realize his career ambitions. But he couldn’t stand the doctor, even if he was a better choice for the dancer.

“Dr. Hudson isn’t crazy! He’s very intelligent and caring. It would possible for me to love him, be he doesn’t get along with my brother.”

Raph jumped at the mention of Leo’s brother. Then he thought he was a dumbass, because Leonardo had a family like everyone else.

"Why? Your brother doesn’t like the way he treats you? I can relate,” he mocked. “The fuck-up is so insane; he’d enclose you in a glass bubble for the rest of your life.”

“No. That’s not why. Mikey’s only fourteen. He doesn’t know anything about my situation, but he doesn’t like Dr. Hudson at all and the feeling’s mutual. Mikey can’t live with us. In the same house of Dr. Hudson. Mikey isn’t like me,” Leo finished and sighed.
Raphael frowned and wondered what that meant. “Well, I don’t know him, but if he can stop you from staying with the psychopath, I already like him. And your parents?”

"Dead. I don’t want to discuss it now,” Leo said in a clipped tone. Raph nodded and took the dancer's face between his hands, kissing him and asking him for forgiveness for bringing the delicate matter up. He didn’t want to upset his amazing lover.
Of course, Leo’s parents would be dead. If they weren’t, why would they leave their son in such a bad state that he had to sell his young body in order to survive and study? He felt so much pity for the beautiful creature in front of him. Leonardo wanted to defend human rights and he was also someone, who needed protection. How could someone so fucking clever, sensual and stunning be in such a horrible situation?

Raphael suddenly felt extremely protective and said, “I’d like to do something for you, but I’m not rich enough.” Leonardo had talked about himself and Raph thought that in return he could also reveal some real aspects of his life. "My ex cheated on me and left me for someone who could offer her the luxury she dreamed of. I’m not poor, I have an average apartment with two rooms and I can pay my rent, bills, take my girlfriend or boyfriend to the restaurant or the cinema. I can buy him nice presents for his birthday or at Christmas, but not much more. I can’t buy him clothes or a new car or pay for his studies.”

The ‘him’ had replaced ‘her’ but Leo didn’t comment on that.

“You can offer care, love and great sex. And I know Mikey will love you if he ever knows you. So, it’s enough for me.” Leo said and kissed him with a new tenderness. Raph was engrossed in the sweetness of the kiss and when Leo stepped back, his mind was blank. "It's already 2 a.m. I need to sleep for at least five hours. I have to be at the university at nine a.m. tomorrow. We can make love once again, but then I have to sleep. You can stay if you want to.”
Raph nodded and kissed him, and didn’t comment on the “Love” word. His caresses were even more loving and caring than before and Raph didn’t feel, like with a passing lover, but like a real boyfriend. When he finished, Leo curled up against his chest like a chilled kitten, looking for warmth. Raph ran his fingers through the dark hair, murmuring sweet things, his eyes closing when suddenly the door opened. Annoyed, thinking it was the doctor, he straightened up. It wasn’t the geek, but the Japanese. However, that didn’t change Raph’s sour mood.

“Can we be left alone in the afterglow of our lovemaking for once. Shit!” he spat, his green eyes, blazing.

The dancer straightened up, “Peter, it's just Karai. Don’t be rude. It's her room too.”

The fake accountant said nothing but pulled the young man against him. He noticed that the Japanese girl seemed strange and then he heard Leonardo's say crossly, "You know I hate it when you do that, Karai.”

The policeman understood. The female dancer was high on drugs. It was obvious by her grin and her reddish eyes. He knew Leo’s seriousness enough to understand and shared his repulsion. Raph had had a phase between the ages of thirteen and sixteen, when he’d smoked weed, like most teenagers at his school. It relaxed him and he liked being a rebel at the time then, a few months after the beginning of his therapy, he realized that his temper was worse when he smoked. So he’d stopped and since, hated everything about drugs. He didn’t want to share the bed, nor his lover with her, even though it was supposedly her bedroom too.

"Come home with me and sleep there. I live closer to your university. You won’t lose sleep and will have a better sleep.”

Then he regretted saying that. Not the invitation, but the moment. He couldn’t bring Leonardo home without preparation for it. Leo, as clever as he was, would know within ten minutes, by a glance at his mail, his photos or his uniforms, or by a neighbor greeting him, that he was a cop called Raphael Jones. Thankfully, Leo refused.

"No. Let’s sleep,” Leo said, lifting the covers to invite the young woman to sleep with them on the futon. She said nothing, but Raph cringed when he heard his lover ask, "How was Dr. Hudson?” Why was Leo thinking about him after their great and passionate lovemaking?

"He’s gone,” the young woman replied, clutching Leonardo's body and it took Raphael all of his self-restraint so that he didn’t push her away. Leo seemed to care about her. So, he stubbornly clung to his lover’s body.

Raphael wakes up out of habit four hours later. He had to go work at his real office. For once, he felt warm and content. Then, he looked at the two black-haired dancers on the bed with him.

Leo and Karai’s head were close, too close, and their hair seemed so similar with their ebony color that it seemed like it was the same person. He pulled the male’s body closer to his. Leonardo was his. Damn it! Then, he felt guilty thinking that. He could not afford to be as mad as Donnie was. Leonardo was just a good source of information. And a hot stripper with a nice ass. That’s it. Leo could fuck this woman or anybody. He didn’t give a shit!

The dancer stirred and turned his face to Raphael, hiding against his chest. "You’re so warm, comfortable and you feel and smell good. You are the best Teddy Bear ever. I slept so well. I don’t want it to stop,” Leo murmured.

Raphael refused to be coaxed, “I bet you do. You were like the damn ham in a damn sandwich,” he replied grumpily.
“Let’s shower, jealous guy,” Leo teased, standing up.

“For the last fucking time, I’m not jealous!”

Leonardo shrugged, “If you say so. Anyway, it’s better if you aren’t. As I said last night, I’m still a sex worker for four or five more years. I can’t afford to have a jealous lover”.

Naked, Leo headed for the shower and Raph, heart pounding, followed. Leo had said "lover", so for the young dancer, Raph wasn’t a customer, just like for Raph, Leo wasn’t only a lust object. He was special. He’d never felt special for anyone and he didn’t understand how he could be for such a beautiful and gifted creature. Leo was desired by many, who were probably more deserving than him. But, five minutes ago, he had decided than Leo was nothing to him, right?

He was a mess, he admitted to himself, in the bathroom. He must be because of his damn break-up with Lisa.

The shower was spacious with jets everywhere. The kind of shower that cost the price of a car. But for an OCD man, like the doctor was, it had to be self-evident.

Leonardo washed himself with a lavender scented gel. The perfume smelled too girly to the policeman. He didn’t comment, thinking it must have been mostly for the Japanese roommate and looked for a less perfumed gel or a simple bar of soap. "You can take Karai’s soap. I don’t think if we meet Dr. Hudson, he’ll like my smell on you. It’s a shower gel that he made himself, with his own lavender that he grows in his herbal gardens. He doesn’t buy any personal hygiene products. He’s against testing on animals and therefore makes everything himself in his laboratory.”

Raphael was pissed. After a night of passion, he didn’t want to hear about how great Donnie was or that his lover used a product to please his rival.

"You smell like a damn girl," Raph snarled.

Leonardo’s face darkened in anger and he said heatedly, “If it bothers you, you can go. You must go to work after all. Where’s your office?

Raphael shrugged, but the mention of it reminded him that he had to leave to report. He took advantage of the opportunity to try to have information in order to at least be able to justify himself in his own eyes for his passionate night. He mumbled shit about “somewhere downtown” not remembering where it was supposed to be, as he listened to the multiple voices in his head: the voice of the policeman on duty and the voice of the jealous lover.

"So, this doctor’s not a law professor or science is just a hobby? Where did you meet him anyway? For such a moral and ethical person he seems comfortable with prostitution. For me, it’s worse than animal testing, because it’s like being the owner of a flesh market.”

Leo didn’t answer immediately, taking advantage of the hot water. "Animals didn’t ask to be tested. I chose my job. Dr. Hudson’s devoted and every life matters to him. And for your information, he doesn’t own this place. He took interest in it after my hiring. But, a man of his intelligence is very useful. He wanted to continue to take care of me, even indirectly, and it became indispensable to the real boss. Dr. Hudson receives no salary or share, even though he does a lot of work. It’s not clean money and doesn’t need it anyway.”

Leo paused and washed his raven hair. Raphael had slowed his movements to wash, waiting for Leo to speak. One or two more confidences of this kind and he’d have a lot more to report and his mission would be doing well.
“He’s the dean of the public health department at Columbia and runs his own pharmaceutical company and works with several governments and other universities. And, he inherited his parents’ money, a considerable sum. So, you understand that there’s absolutely no need for him to earn a percentage for lap dances. And he’s not interested in doing so. He’s a good man, wanting to help and to heal and to conclude the subject, I met him when I was in High School.”

Raph chuckled sardonically and said, "Let him heal himself before he wants to heal others! How he can be at the head of a department and a pharmaceutical company when the state of his head is such a crazy one?" he sneered. Leo was displeased with his comment but he didn't care. "So, you knew him before you started dancing here? Where and when?" Raph’s internal alarm rang: One because it would make his assumption that this doctor was dangerous for the population. He had the knowledge, the position, and access to the material for doing great damage. And then, he was mad from jealousy that he couldn’t compete. Who’d want a lowly sergeant when he could have a Dean of a prestigious university like Columbia and the owner of a pharmaceutical company, defending animal rights?

Leo rolled his eyes at his petty reply, “Say what you want, but Dr. Hudson can’t be that “sick” to be a dean at 33. He has six doctorates and several other mentions and he managed to stop an epidemic in Burkina Faso and …”

Raph had to shut up Leonardo. It might be interesting for his report, but he didn’t care about that anymore. He had to stop the praise of the other man. He had enough information for one day anyway.

“So, you’ve known him for almost ten years, if you're twenty-five-years-old,” like you claimed. And in ten years, you didn’t give him anything? Something about your story doesn’t sound right. How old are you really? You look like you’re barely 21 and how do you know April?”

The bathroom was lit by a bright light and Raphael was pretty sure that Leo's being 25 was pure bullshit. He didn’t know April from high school, but his stepsister was far from his worries. But even if Leo was only 21, Donnie had known Leo for so many years. Maybe the doctor was right to make fun of him. But, something was off. If he’d known him for so many years, why hadn’t the jealous as hell doctor stopped him from engaging in prostitution?

“The doctor’s patient and respect me. That’s why. He told me that he’s willing to wait another five years. But I doubt that patience is your forte, so if you want, we can have sex one last time. From now to Sunday,”

Raphael frowned and Leo misunderstood his expression.

"If you want to. I don’t force you to be my lover. I feel a strong attraction to you and I thought it was mutual. I need some loving, maybe not love. Don’t be scared, but…”

"That's not it," the policeman slowly said. “Why from now to Sunday?”

"Because I work from Thursday to Saturday night and I’m at the university during the day,” the dancer explained as if it was obvious.

"Yes, but I can come back tomorrow night to see you at the club, right?" Raph asked, hating himself for seeming so eager.

Leo didn’t respond immediately and kissed him passionately. When he stepped back, his eyes shining as sapphires, he simply said, "When I work, you have to pay me. Of course, watching is free, but we can’t sleep together on those nights, but on my days off, I can be yours for free,” he said with a smile. “I’m working here for fast cash to buy a decent home for me and Mikey, as soon as possible. I don’t want you spending so much money on me. But, I can’t afford losing customers, because I
prefer being with you. But on my days off, I can do whatever pleases me.”

The information sank in Raphael's mind. Leo offered to be his part-time lover and he didn’t know how to take that.

On seeing his hesitation, Leo said, “If you came here, it's because you're looking for some kind of sexual stimulation. You know that I’m an excellent lover. You’ll be satisfied with me. We won’t be disturbed here. I can even go to your house if you prefer. I’m not a boring person either. If you’re looking for someone to talk to, I am a good listener. I'm just looking for a good time in every sense of the word. And I'll give you the same thing.”

Part of Raph's brain realized that Leo hadn’t responded regarding his age or where he knew April. He didn’t know if Leo had used a kind of shitty Chewbacca defense on him, but his mind was racing with images of Leo. Sometimes beneath him, swooning, and Leo, caressed by unknown hands, with a rather similar expression. He felt sick and nauseated.

But he was at a point where all his usual bearings were no longer there. Did he have a choice? Leo had the info. Leo seemed to like him and was talkative enough. He’d talked about coming to his place. Home, which he’d avoided since Lisa’s departure, feeling too lonely. Raph would have Leo four nights a week. More than half a week and with him alone. More than that damn asshole in a lab coat had, despite the fact that he spent more than twice Raph’s salary in 6 months. On the other hand, if he refused, Leo could easily take another lover. Raph was nothing exceptional. He didn’t even understand his “luck” to begin with. And his mission couldn’t be achieved either.

Because it was supposed to be his priority. His damn job!

“Okay,” he replied in a shaky voice. He should consider himself happy. He would have the beautiful being for free, while others paid or even like the doctor, paid and had nothing in return. In addition, he’d managed to get relevant information from the young man. If he saw him privately, he’d glean more.

The escort's hands descended along his torso, with sensuality, to encourage him to accept this offer and then stroking his flaccid cock until it grew erect, Leo’s pierced tongue across the hollow of his neck. Yes, he’d have fun, Leo being the most incredible and stunning sexual partner he’d ever had. There Leo was for him. He was only an object of pleasure and useful to his career. Only that. Accepting Leo’s offer to use his body, he’d do his duty twice in a pleasant way and it wouldn’t cost him anything. It also wouldn’t hurt Leo, because it was his own proposition. Raph might even be promoted. It was a win-win situation. So why was he so damn unhappy about it?
The new roommate

His report had raised questions, but the Commissioner after reflection and meetings that lasted most of the day, summoned him again.

"Jones, I think this is a misconception. Dr. Hudson’s well known to the scientific community, but under the name Donatello Huddleston. He took the surname, according to sources, to distinguish himself from his parents. His family’s well known and has been respected in New York for two centuries. A man of this ilk can’t attend that kind of place, let alone be enamored with a little stripper, as pretty as he is. I’m not saying that your source is lying, Jones. Only that someone’s usurping the identity of the honorable Doctor,” Commissioner Hamato explained.

Raph was pissed about the way in which he spoke about Leo, but he tried to hide it. He knew it was bullshit. Donnie or Donatello seemed rich and powerful. They were the same person, but he agreed to appear to consider the Commissioner's doubts.

“Show me a picture then. I'll tell you that I saw the lunatic up close.” Unhappy with his sergeant’s opinion, he handed the file with a picture and Raph smiled.

"It's him. There’s no mistake, Anyway, by offering Cartier diamond watches, it couldn’t be an impostor and you've found chemicals, no?” Raph enthusiastically flipped through the file. “Leo told me that he had six doctorates in the scientific fields. Look. They’re listed there. What? The madman has a doctorate in psychology! Oh, my God! I’d pay to see that motherfucker give love advice to someone in therapy,” Raphael said mockingly.

The Commissioner frowned at the colorful vocabulary and said, “If what you say is true, it’s maybe worrying. Perhaps the glasses with the hidden camera will help us to make our opinion. It’s will be ready in a couple of days.” The chief cleared his throat and continued, “Jones, we noticed that you didn’t use the allocated budget. That’s perfect and you’re clever and cautious. We give you carte blanche, but try to if possible, refrain from your opinion of the doctor. You must make him an ally, a friend. You say he’s in love with a dancer, as odd and senseless as that is. Maybe try to help him in his efforts, since the stripper seems to find you a friend.”

Raphael felt a desire to vomit at the thought of helping Donnie conquer Leo. Never! The commissioner could shove the job up his ass! Raph would never do such a thing.
Raph didn’t know if what he was thinking was expressed on his face, but Hamato leaned in, staring at him intently, and said, “Tell me about the dancer. You said that the person calling himself the Doctor took over the club as soon as this dancer started there. It’s strange for a man with no need for money. If it’s true, he must be very, very fond of him in a rare way. You told me he knew him from school. What high school was that? Are you sure he’s a law student at Columbia? I find that extremely hard to believe. Perhaps the dancer’s a myth maniac. He invents himself a life to increase his value.”

Raph was furious. He knew he had the same doubts about Leonardo, but that wasn’t a reason. “No. I don’t think he's lying. And then, why would the very honorable and intelligent Doc want him so badly if he were just a myth maniac dancer?”

"I'm wondering the same thing, so it's going to be your short-term goal. Find the reason for the strange passion and then try to get to know the dancer better. He'll be less cautious and clever in his answers than the doctor.”

Raphael’s face darkened at the reasoning. Maybe if Leo had heard such shit, he’d have made a caustic remark about the fact that it was an ad hominem attack. He didn’t know and didn’t care. He nodded and was dismissed. The only part he intending doing was knowing his new lover better.
Raph arrived at the club at 7 p.m., went to sit down at a table near Donatello and stared at the curtains. When they opened, Leo’s lovely face would appear.

He was nervous. How was he supposed to act in public with his part-time lover, whom everyone could touch? Raphael knew he was a jealous man, despite his fierce denials about it. He’d never had time to get excited about it. The breakup happened before, but he knew he had it inside of him.

And there, he came from the backstage, breathtaking as always.

And one glance at a half-naked Leo had be enough to wake the beast in him. Although he wanted to cover Leonardo, to hide him from view, everyone was allowed to see him and if they spent money, to touch him. It was shocking and worse, alienating. Leo’s shift had started three minutes ago, and nothing had happened yet but, Raphael decided that he wasn’t going to wait to find out how ugly jealousy could be.

He still had the money he’d withdrawn from the ATM. He had carte blanche from his boss. He could rent Leo and, therefore, prevent other customers from using him, but he hesitated. It was a lot of money. He had had incredible sex less than 24 hours ago. The next day, the day of remembrance, he wouldn’t be at the club. He could wait until Sunday and see Leo get molested for money for two nights, right?

The answer came faster than expected. The doctor arrived and Raphael's attention was diverted for a moment. The doctor seemed different. He was dressed even more elegantly than usual and Raph was surprised that he hadn’t replaced his glasses with a monocle to be fancier.

The cause of the change came more from his assured and relaxed attitude. Yet Donnie must know that he’d spent the previous evening with his protégé. In light of the new information, he observed the doctor more closely. He’d studied the file at work. It went into great depth about what an exceptionally brilliant and what a genius the man was. He did a lot of charity work and was involved in humanitarian work too. The brainy motherfucker bent in the mind was even favorite to be the next Nobel Prize winner; whose income was almost unlimited. And yet, he could have eaten in the stripper's hand, if Leo would have liked it. Something wasn’t clear.

Donnie, with his fame and his money could live on a deserted island with 15 Brazilian models. Why chase Leo, who even if he was indeed handsome, was fucking anyone with money and gave him nothing but respect? Didn’t Donnie have any self-respect? If Raph was in the same position, he wouldn’t have made such a fool of himself. If he was Donnie, he would be sipping dry martinis and would be with bikini-clad girls all day on his own damn yacht, just like James Bond. If he’d only earned the same salary as the damn dentist, Lisa would still be with him. And he might have even had a classier girl than Lisa. More beautiful, able to cook a steak without burning it and his mother would her like. Lost in thought, he noticed too late, that Leo was leaving for the cabins with a woman in her fifties.

When the dancer came out, nearly half an hour later, followed by a delighted client, Raph hadn’t even blinked, as he stared furiously at the purple curtain. Leo didn’t look at him, even though Raph followed him with his eyes across the room. That’s when Raphael saw Donnie’s condescending smile. Donnie was amused by his obvious jealousy, he said to himself, holding his wrists to take control of his temper.

Leonardo went, without glancing at Raph, to what Raph supposed was the cloakroom or loge.

No, he couldn’t stand it, even if he wasn’t in love with Leonardo. At all, he thought, but it was unbearable. The problem was that he couldn’t leave without any new leads. Anyway, he was going to see the same show again nightly. He couldn’t have Leo all night every night either. He had to develop a resistance to that. If the doc could, he certainly could too.
Leo and Karai’s performance would begin in a few minutes. At least no one would touch his lover during it. But it wasn’t counting the Japanese, who he noticed touched her partner more intentionally than not. Both wore funny, unrelated costumes. One was a ladybug and the other was a black cat. Without being explicit, their dance was extremely sensual.

But Raph was far from being mesmerized like he’d been the first time at the club the week before. He was incensed. There were other ways of making money! Leo had taken the easiest solution without thinking. It was out of the question that he touched the dirty, disgusting hooker again!

Fuck the information Leo had. He’d find another way to succeed in his mission. When the handsome dancer came down from the stage, the policeman looked away, sulky, despite trying to look disinterested.

Anyway, Leo seemed to quickly console himself, as three Asian businessmen chose him and Karai for a dance at the table. Pissed off, Raph ordered a second cocktail from his table, thinking that if he got up, he’d probably do something he’d regret, so he stayed where he was. Then, heard an outraged shout. He hadn’t seen what had happened, but he guessed what had probably happened.

One of the men must have grabbed Leo or Karai herself, but the Japanese woman had thrown the pitcher of sake at the man’s face. Leo quickly stood and slipped. He fell badly and clutched his ankle in a way that meant it wasn’t good, as he grimaced from the pain. Raphael wanted to go there, but he didn’t have time, because the freaking doctor was already there. The bouncers kicked out the three men.

For such a thin man, Donnie picked up his protégé in his arms as easily as if he’d been a petal, and carried him bridal style, to observe his ankle closely. It must be the adrenaline. The doctor seemed to be losing it at the idea Leonardo could be hurt.

Raphael was concerned, but he suppressed his worries. Leo wasn’t hurt badly and anyway, that was not his business. The dancer was in the skillful hands of the doctor, who cherished him to the point of ridiculousness. He didn’t have to care, he told himself, though he was startled, when the curtains fluttered open. The Japanese girl came out backstage and walked towards him. “Leo says that he can’t dance for two weeks and wants to know if you gave your real address at the reception.” Raphael’s heart raced. No, actually, as agreed with the NYPD, he’d given the address of an uninhabited apartment. But he wouldn’t tell the woman he didn’t know, that.


“Leo promised the doctor he’d stay at his place for two weeks, but if you give him your real address, he’ll stay with you.”

The policeman’s mind worked at full speed. Was it a trap? The dancer shrugged and said, “I’ll go pack his bags. You can give me your address or not, as you please, and I can slip it inside his bag, but it’d be a pity if Leo hurt himself for nothing.” Raphael frowned. The Japanese woman smirked and said, “Leo doesn’t fall, unless he wants to.”

She must be delusional or doped up on drugs again, but Raph gave way, “Go pack his bags. I’ll give it to you.”

She nodded and went upstairs, while Raph took out a paper towel and a pen from the inside pocket of his stupid accounting jacket. The truth was that he actually lived within 8 minutes drive of the Columbia Law School. If Leo was his future real boyfriend, he’d be fine. The apartment was freshly renewed and well-lit in a very refined style since Lisa had left with all the decorations. But Lisa, being a dental hygienist, could help him pay for the groceries and some bills. Leo, not contributing anything, would cost him a fortune. Then, Raph told himself he was overthinking things. Maybe Leo only wanted good time away from his gruesome job and protector.
For a night of sex, Raph could share eggs and bacon for breakfast. That, of course, if it wasn’t because the Dr. suspected his cover and it was a plan to eliminate him. But in any case, he had to leave quickly to erase the traces of his true identity at home. He left the paper with his address on it on the table.

After meticulously removing traces of his real identity and hiding everything that could compromise him in the basement locker, Raph began to pace. It had been more than three hours since he’d left the club in a state of near panic. The trip from home to the Club took about 30 minutes and then it took him over an hour to remove all the evidence, checking dozens of times out of paranoia in case he missed something. And then, he paced, wondering if Leo would ever turn up and show his pretty face.

“I knew it! I’m a fucking dummy,” Raphael said out loud in his living room. “Anyway, why does it matter to me? I can jerk off. My wrist won’t give me a damn disease or a jealousy attack. He’s only a little bitch, who has information that’ll help my mission. That’s it.”

At nearly two o’clock, while a mad Raph was preparing to go to bed, the doorbell went. He jumped so hard that when he pressed the intercom, the anxiety was still reflected in his voice. "Hello?"

"It's me, come down."

Stupidly, out of nervousness, Raph asked, "Why"

“Because I have crutches, moron.”

Raph went down, knowing that the excitement would probably show on his face, but he was too eager to care.

And there Leo stood with his crutches, his black hair wet with rain, as the taxi left. “How? Why?” Raph asked.

But Leo shook his raven locks, "I'm freezing. Can I come in? If you haven’t noticed, I need help.”

Raph, quickly, put his arm under the young man's. "Take me in your arms,” Leo said. “It’ll go faster, but you have to go down again to get my three suitcases. Despite the fact that it was three stories, Raph was quick to do so. Donatello had worn Leonardo. He could do it too. He had to weigh a good 100 pounds more than the dancer anyway.

When they were upstairs, Raph gently placed Leonardo on the sofa and went looking for Leo’s bags. The motherfucker had apparently planned to live with Raph forever, because he’d brought so much. Putting down the suitcases near the couch, Raph noticed a removable ankle splint on Leonardo.

"How bad is it?” Raph asked.

"Just a sprain. Don’t worry."

"What happened?” Raphael asked, staring at the young man to see if he was going to lie.

"You seemed jealous and I felt bad for you," Leo explained with a shrug like it was obvious.

"You fucked-up your ankle for me? On purpose?" Raph asked and his jaw dropped in surprise.

"Let's say I wanted a vacation with a vigorous partner,” Leo explained with a wink,"Make me cum until I don't feel my sprained ankle anymore, and all will be alright!"

Raph was far too dumbfounded to be stopped by a lascivious look:
"You're fucked up in the head, just like your insane doctor. You hurt your damn ankle on fucking purpose! And I was worried about you, you jerk. Does your crazy master know about this? It's his kind of sick shitty idea!"

"Dr. Hudson’s right. You don’t speak at all like an accountant and I've heard more swear words than numbers in your vocabulary. But for your information, no, of course, he doesn’t know. Otherwise, he’d have nailed me to the wall and watched over and over again.”

"So, he doesn’t know that you’re here?"

"Of course not. He’d be awfully jealous. He’ll be furious when he wakes up tomorrow,” Leo said with a mischievous smile.

"How’d you escape his supervision?"

Leo shrugged, taking off his splint. "Easy. I drugged him with his own sleeping medicine. Of course, wouldn’t endanger his life by playing chemist," he added with a smirk. “I just put in a triple dose of his herbal tea.”

Raph had never heard anything like it and he didn’t know if he should be impressed or scandalized. Leonardo had staged his accident to have a reason not to work. Then, after having frightened his protector to death, he’d cold-bloodedly drugged him, so he could be with Raph and have sex. What a scumbag mother fucker! He was speechless a full 20 seconds.

Then, the sergeant smiled, thinking that it was flattering in a way. Nobody had ever done so much for him. "You're such a schemer and a big dummy,” Raphael said.

“I don’t care,” Leo said huskily. “If I’m your big dummy.”

Raphael had never heard something so sappy before, but he melted anyway at the sweet words and at the following kiss.

“So, can I be your roommate for two weeks or so?” Leo asked. “Don’t worry. I brought all of my things and I have some money.”

“You don’t have to use your savings, Leo.”

“It’s not my savings. I stole it from Dr. Hudson. Not a lot. Just 800$ to help you,” Leo said with a smile.

Raphael was amazed at what his young lover had done. He hated the damned nerd doctor and this rich geek didn’t need $ 800. But stealing was bad and Leonardo seemed no longer able to discern what was good or bad, in real life, outside the texts of international human rights.

Seeing a silent Raph, Leo’s face darkened and he said, “I’ve never talked about my life, Peter, but I've had it difficult. I'm a survivor. If you don’t want me anymore, call a cab for me and I'll go to Dr. Hudson's. He always forgives me no matter what I do. The worst he can do is force me to wash. So, this is your call. I am here to give you affection and sex for free. It'll be for two or maybe three weeks. If you want, after this term, we can continue our part-time arrangement. I've never done that for anyone before. You're special to me, but if you can’t accept me, I’ll go.”

At the words, ‘You’re special to me’, Raph was defeated and undone. He didn’t even try to convince himself that he was doing it for his work. He was dying to give it a try. Anyway, nothing better was waiting for him and he’d regret it all his life if he refused.

Leo insisted, his blue eyes gleaming under the shadow of his longs, black eyelashes:
"I can be a sex-buddy or even...something more," Leo said. "Your choice."

Raph gulped. Leo was too close to home for his comfort. The doctor’s words sprang to his mind: ‘spot weakness, ‘fine psychologist’, ‘great actor,’ ‘trap you, ‘suck you to the core and spit you out dry.’

Raph had just witnessed it. Leo was ready for anything and was relentless. A dangerous and cold being and still quite a stranger. It was insane. Raph must kick him out before Leo took everything and fucked up his life worse than Lisa did. Leonardo was such an opportunist. He could even sell Raph’s kidneys on the black market to buy himself jewels or antique swords, he told to himself, looking at the katanas that Leo had brought with him, without reason.

Despite his common sense telling him he was crazy and he should resist, he knew he was more finished than a character of Mortal Kombat having received an uppercut-claw.

"Yeah," Raphael said, losing his nerve and trying to cover it. "But let’s start at sex-buddy."
They both had the day off the next day and Raph took advantage of it. He carried the dancer into the master bedroom and once Leo was settled under his red duvet, Raphael had a moment of doubt. The man, who he’d only met the week before, was in his damn bed. Leo had caused his hurt, but still. Jumping on him for a hard fuck didn’t seem right, but wasn’t that what Leo wanted?

"I'm not that bad. Be caring and that should be okay," Leo said. "I could use a blow job. It would help me relax a bit and alleviate some of the stress."

Raph was still uncertain and a smirk appeared on Leo’s beautiful lips.

"Or I can do you," Leo suggested, his eyes shining with erotic promises.

Raph paled at the statement and quickly shook his head. "No, no. Don’t wanna fuck up your ankle. A blow job will be fine.”

Leonardo's smile widened and he said, “You don’t want to. Why? That won’t make you less of a man to me.”

Raph realized he hadn’t stopped shaking his head. He tried to appear cool, “That has nothing to do with it.”

“Oh, I bet yes ..." Leo said hoarsely, approaching like a predator. “This would be your first time? I've never had a virgin before. You’re scared and that’s normal, but I can be sweet,” he said huskily, sending shivers down Raphael’s spine.

Raphael finally came out of his shock when Leo's hand touched his ass. He slapped it away.

"I'm not fucking afraid!" Raphael denied furiously, “I just don’t want to! And stop grabbing me, you pervert!”

Leo rolled his eyes but was still smiling.

“I'm sure I already told you that you were kind of cute when you get angry and you're in denial. Anyway, let's sleep. We can have sex all weekend. I’m not in a hurry to pop your cherry.”

Not disturbed at all, the dancer asked him for help removing his pants and, once completely naked, prepared to sleep. The policeman undressed too, though feeling slightly embarrassed, he kept his scarlet boxers on.

"With all those tribal tattoos, you really don't look like an accountant. I'll believe you when I see your qualifications. Good night, little turtle," Leo said sleepily, kissing the turtle tattoo on Raph's shoulder, before lying down to sleep.

Raph had a petty answer on the tip of his tongue, but it died on his lips when he saw the sleeping young man, his pure, innocent face, standing out against the white of the pillow. With his mouth open, his face untouched by lascivious mimicry, Leo looked so young and so innocent that, softened by this vision, Raph rolled Leo onto his side and planted a chaste kiss on the black hair. The dancer shifted against him, his nose lost in the sergeant’s chest hair. A thought came to Raphael. Here in his room and holding Leo in his arms, without intending to have sex, seemed official, in a relationship
Raphael wondered for a long time about what he was going to do. Should he tell his superiors that Leo was at his place? Should he reveal his true identity to Leo? No and no. His instinct told him that if he did, he couldn’t hold Leo any more. Leo would be gone.

Then, he suddenly remembered that tomorrow, the day of remembrance, was the day when every year, his mother, he and Casey met to pay homage to his father, who’d died in Iraq. Their mother was preparing Peter Jones’, her late husband’s, favorite meal. Not going was impossible and so was leaving Leo alone with his sprained ankle.

But bringing Leo to the dinner was also impossible. He’d have to tell his family to call him Peter, that he was an accountant and that Casey was no longer his brother, but his brother-in-law. Then, it was obvious by one glance that April wasn’t his sister. He and Casey both had the same square jaws and tanned skins, inherited from their mother’s Latin blood. She’d arrived from Venezuela in 1974. Although he had lighter brown hair than Casey and looked more like his father with his green eyes and not the black Casey had, his mother had named him Raphael, because it was the name of the outgoing president when she’d left her native country.

April had milky skin, with some freckles, large clear blue eyes and was a mere 5’4, while even his mother was 5’9. Leo wouldn’t believe it. Yet, he already knew her, so he wouldn’t be surprised by her appearance.

Maybe he thought too much. Maybe Leo would refuse to go with him. He was a man of pleasure and sex and didn’t belong at a dinner for family commemoration. Yes, he thought too much. He buried his face in Leo’s black hair, smelling it. It still smelled of lavender, but that would change tomorrow, he vowed, as he cuddled with him.

He was woken the next day by Leo’s lips tenderly pressing against his and Leo placing a hand on his cock.

"Good morning, Peter,” Leo said huskily.

Stunned, Raphael Immediately noticed the brightness of the room. It had to be very late and close to midday. He turned his head, glanced at the digital clock on his bedside table and saw that it was past 11 a.m. He didn’t remember waking up so late for years. Leo’s delicious, enticing and warm body must be the reason. He allowed himself to be kissed, putting more and more ardor in his response.

When Leo took a breath, the stripper stared into his eyes.

"Please make love to me, as if you loved me," Leo said. “Nobody does.” Raphael didn’t need encouragement and was happy to oblige.

He took his caressing and discovering his young partner’s body, not being in a hurry, nor fearing that they’d be caught. Although the situation unsettled him, he was in his territory and Leo had made feats to be with him and he wanted it to be worth it for the dancer. In broad daylight, in his large bed, he could better appreciate the satiny of the skin and the contrast between his ivory abdomen and the raven groin hairs. Leo smelled good everywhere and was soft as a piece of precious silk. He kissed the inside of the thighs, nuzzled his lover’s balls with his nose and slowly stretched the entrance with his finger. “You’re special to me too, Leo,” he tried to explain in a hoarse voice. He’d never been gifted with words and didn’t know how to verbalize a situation he couldn’t even explain.

Leo looked at him through almost closed eyelids and said, “Good.” He was tense under the policeman’s ministrations and Raph didn’t know if the comment was directed at his words or at his actions.

Raph deduced that it must have been his actions when his partner began to wriggle with pleasure.

"There!” Leo shouted and Raph, ignited by the primitive scream, continued to stimulate the spot with
his fingers. "Take me now!"
Raph was quick to obey, but went slowly and steadily, while holding Leo’s right ankle in his hand, so as not to hurt him.

"You're feeling damn so good," Raph moaned, thrusting cautiously.

"I’m not made of glass. Damn it! Harder!" As Raph began to thrust more vigorously and Leo was screaming, his shouts loud enough to wake the neighborhood, the phone rang. A string of vicious curses escaped Raphael’s lips.

"Don’t answer," Leo said, but Raph had a brief moment of lucidity. It must have been his mother or Casey about the evening dinner and if he didn’t answer, the damn answering device would and then Leo would hear his caller call him by his real name.

“Fuck!” Raphael cursed, pulling out of Leo. “I’ll be right back.”

It was indeed Gabriela Gomez Jones, who, surprised by her son’s silence, because it was past noon, asked if he was going to be there at the family dinner. “It’s a bit complicated this year, Mom,” Raph said. “I don’t think I’ll be there on Sunday either.”

Gabriela shrieked in shock, but Raph was moving away, so Leo couldn’t hear her. “Raphael, how can you do this to me and to your poor father?” she cried.

Raph sighed in exasperation. His father wouldn’t care if he ate chili or not or if he watched the movie, “The Patriot”, which he’d done for almost fourteen years, but his mother was stubborn; worse than a mule and if she wanted to make a big deal, she would.

"Mom, I can’t. I have a guest and can’t leave him alone. He has a sprained ankle and…”

“You have a male guest at home?” Gabriela said excitedly.

Embarrassed and not understanding why his mother seemed so eager about it, Raph replied, "Yes. I do, but ..."

"Bring him with you. Damn it!"

Raph stared at the phone in amazement. Had his mom said “damn it”? Then, his eyes met that of the guest in question, lying in his bed, completely naked, and who was slowly stroking his cock with a lascivious look.

"Uh, I don’t think that’s a good idea, Mom.” While his mother was arguing yes and saying it was a fantastic idea, Leo got up.

"Don’t. Stay in bed," Raph said, not wanting Leo to walk unnecessarily on his ankle.

Gabriela took it otherwise, giggled, "Already in bed and I’ve never met him!"

"Damn it, Mom. That’s not what you think. He’s in, uh, the guest bedroom.”

While his mother continued pleading and Raphael was pacing nervously, arguing in return, Leo got up anyway, limping. "What are you talking about?" he asked.

“Nothing,” Raph said, hiding the phone in his hands. "Nothing at all. My mother has the tradition of celebrating my father’s memory today and I said I wouldn’t be going to her place.’’

"My father died in the war too, but my mother isn’t here to prepare meals for us. If she was, I wouldn’t miss this dinner.”
"What did he say?" his mother asked. "The poor boy’s an orphan? Bring him over Raphael; otherwise, I never want to see you again."

Raph heaved a long sigh. Here we go. His mother was vowing not to give him apple pie again if he didn’t bring his ass home. Anyway, if Leo and she were in agreement about the dinner, he was defeated. "Leo, you want to come to my mother’s house? No pressure, but if you don’t come, she’ll come over and wash your underwear!" Raph said, discouraged.

"That would be done quickly. I don’t really wear underwear," Leo said with a mischievous grin and Raph blushed. Hoping that his mother didn’t hear, he gave in and said, "Okay. We’re. April and Casey will be there, right?" He couldn’t help noticing Leo's keen interest in the question.

"Of course. Your brother ..."

"We'll see you then. Bye, Mom."

Embarrassed, Raph hung up and turned to Leo. "So, you're invited to my mother's house, but I doubt you’ll have fun ..." the policeman began, hoping to discourage the dancer. He had no desire to explain who Leo was or to explain to his family what Raphael was supposed to be. It was going to be horribly complicated.

"Nah. I always have fun and you will have fun too."

"What about April? You never told me how you know her?"

“Maybe it's not the same April. The one I know is now a barista at Starbuck's.”

Raph shook his head. Everything was clear now. "No. April works for the children's services, and she also studied social services at Columbia."

Leo smiled, "Oh, too bad it’s not the same person."

Raph frowned. Why would Leo have reacted so much if the April he knew was just a barista? It smelled like bullshit, but hadn’t he also lied? He had to find a way of telling his family about what was going on. Even Casey didn’t know all the details of his mission, but maybe the professional secrecy would save the day.

"Maybe you could show me around the apartment? Leo asked and Raph nodded, lost in thought, trying to build a credible cover for Leo and his mission. Leo seemed to like the apartment, especially the guest room. "Perfect," he commented, looking out the window and Raph wondered why Leo was making a big deal of a room he’d never live in.

"It was probably meant to be a nursery."

Leo nodded and changed the topic. "Sexy tacos, Dirty cash? This is the name of the restaurant across the street? Are the waitresses running topless to serve burritos?" he said mockingly. “Maybe I should bring my resume? You know, to widen the menu choices," he added caustically.

Raph's face lit up. It was the solution. "Go there for our lunch. I'm not in the mood for breakfast. Buy me some tacos and get what you want."

Leo frowned and said, "Why me? I have crutches, dummy."

Shit. That was true, but Raph had no choice. He had to talk to Casey privately, even if it meant that Leo could search everywhere and find something compromising. It was less dangerous.
"Okay. Stay in bed. I'll be gone for twenty minutes. I'll make you some tea before I go. Then we'll eat, talk, fuck, wash and we'll go to my mom's house. Okay?"

"Hai, Caesar," Leo said sarcastically.

Raph was silent, not knowing how to approach the subject. But Leo was a frigging mystery and, for the job, he specified, he had to know more. "Take a picture, it will last longer," the arrogant dancer laughed, believing he was the cause of the other man's contemplation.

Raphael shook his head and said, "Is it true that your father is dead? And what about your little brother? Where is he?"

Leo looked away and said, "Yes, except that I recently learned that the person, who I thought was my father, wasn't. He's only Mikey's. My true biological father abandoned us before my birth. But my mother's boyfriend, that one, at least, was a good man. Mikey didn't really know him. He was six-years-old when he died. Now he's an orphan and, because he's only fourteen, he's in a family home and I don't really have a right to see him." Real tears of rage and despair streamed down Leo's cheeks, as he added, "But I managed to thwart them. I volunteer twice a week at his school and read stories to the children."

Leo turned his head away in disgust, as if he saw horrible images, but Raph, although he knew he mustn't, couldn't help asking, "You said kids, but your brother's 14, right? He can read like his classmates?"

Leo looked down and was silent for a moment. Then he mumbled, "When my father died, my mother lost everything and became a heroin addict, alcoholic and a whore. She wasn't educated and couldn't work and could only use her beauty. I wasn't home, because I was away at a posh boarding school that was paid by my real biological father. I didn't want to go, because I wanted to stay with my mother and Mikey. I saw that she wasn't well, but she wanted me to have a good education. She asked my biological father to pay, so that she could send Mikey...So we could be together. But he didn't care. Mikey wasn't his son! But he was just a child, who deserved a good life too!" Leo howled, trembling in rage and Raph, paralyzed, knew that it was absolutely not a maneuver or a psychological game. Sarah Bernhard herself, as talented as she was, couldn't have pulled it off. It wasn't an act. Leo was sincere. At least, a part of this story must be. He knew that sometimes, suspects meddle true and false information in the same statement, to seem more trustworthy.

"So I don't know what happened. I only came home on weekends. I found my mother dead, her client dead with a knife in the back and my little brother, prostrate and silent covered with blood. Since then, he doesn't speak anymore. He bites, hits, refuses to wash and doesn't always use the toilet, so Dr. Hudson didn't want him," Leo said darkly. "I'm the only one Mikey recognizes. He's good and behaves well when I'm there. I want him with me. But I can't, because I have no fixed address, no fixed salary, no mates and my life isn't honorable," he said miserably, while Raph stayed silent. "He lives with this people, you know, who leaves him in the institution, but take him on weekends, so they can get money from the state! And they give him virtually nothing to eat and they hits him and humbles him and they...It drives me crazy!" Leo cried, throwing his hands up. "I pay someone to buy him some sweets during the week. Nobody understands him. He's gifted and is a very talented artist and a great cook. Damn. He cooked all the fucking meals when I was gone, but his foster family says that he's crazy and dangerous."

Raph realized that Leonardo was really upset. He didn't swear so much, usually.

"Why keep him if they don't want to take good care of him?"

Leo said sneeringly, "I fuck strangers for money. Others can keep strangers at home for money!"

Raph was silent. Was that the dark secret the doctor had told him about? But why didn't a rich and
powerful man like him do anything? Did his OCD issues matter more than Leo?

The dancer seemed to read his thoughts and said, “My brother’s violent, but no one makes him
crazier than Dr. Hudson. I don’t know why. He’s like a fucking cat with an allergic person in front
of him. He peed on the doctor’s shoes last time and I don’t want to talk about this anymore. Please,”
he said miserably.

Raph handed Leo the cup of tea, which he gratefully accepted. “I want to see him. Maybe I can do
something like volunteering too.”

Leo turned around quickly, his eyes wide with real amazement, "After all I’ve told you, you really
want to see him?"

Raph shrugged, "I love children, and anyway, I would never teach to play checkers to my own kids,
and you need someone with your ankle."

A real tenderness illuminated the beautiful features of the young man. "Thanks, but let’s first meet
your family."

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And then, Raph was in front of his childhood house in Brooklyn, Leo by his side. He took a deep
breath, nervous. He’d explained some bullshit to Casey. Leo was a witness he had to protect, but
Leo himself, didn’t know that he was really a policeman. He’d laughed when Raph had told him that
he was supposed to be an accountant.

“With your result in mathematics? You must be kidding me? You can barely subtract,” he sneered.

Casey didn’t understand, but when Raph began to get angry, he ceded and said, “Whatever, bro. I
mean, Peter. I don’t joke with duties, you know!”

His brother had promised to tell April and his mother, so that she would hide all Raph's photos
wearing his uniform. As for Leo himself, he hadn’t prepared anything. As a result of his admissions,
the handsome dancer remained in a dark mood for a long time. They didn’t speak during the meal at
lunch. His mother was usually waiting for them around 5 pm. It always took him a good 50 minutes
with the heavy traffic and it was already past 2 p.m.

"Do you want a hot bath instead of a shower? It would be better for you and your ankle. and that
will help you relax ..." Leo had said yes and, without knowing why or how, he’d ended up in the
thankfully wide bath, and having sex with Leonardo.
Great sex with kisses, caresses and loving words. The kind of sex Raph didn’t remember having in
ages, if at all.

Making love seemed to make Leo smile, putting him at ease, and an hour later, when the water was
cold, he dressed in good spirits, putting on his pants with Raph's help. Surprised, the officer found
that all the contents of one of the suitcases contained what he would have called "church clothes".

Leo smiled, “I wear that to university. You’ve already seen what I wear as a dancer.”

“And what do you wear when you’re not dancing and not at university?” Raph asked, putting on a
dark grey T-shirt. " In your real life as a real you?"

“Something similar to you, Mister Taxman,” the dancer noted with a suspicious nod. Raph then
remembered that Leo had doubts about his job, and he bit his lips. He must work harder on his cover.
This damn Leonardo was too clever, and now that they were living together... Then Leo changed the
subject, “Do you want me to remove the jewel in my tongue? I don’t want to make a bad impression on your family.”

Raph shook his head, "No. I don’t care and my family’s opinion doesn’t matter. I can harbor who I want. You’re not my damn bride-to-be.”

Leo had raised an eyebrow.

And there, getting a bad feeling, in front of his mom’s house, Raph didn’t know what to do.

“Relax, big guy. I won’t make you ashamed of me.”

"I'm not worried," Raph lied. “Let’s go,” he added, getting out of the car to help the other male get out and leading him to the front door.

He didn’t have time to knock, because his mother opened the door, flinging her arms around his neck and said, “Peter, my son. I’m so glad you could come." She stepped back, glanced at Leo so fondly, undressing him from head to foot, that Raph was puzzled.

"Well, Peter. You brought us a nice ... friend." His mother's voice was heavy with innuendo and Raph blushed.

"He’s only the brother of a colleague, who was injured,” Raph explained. This story makes nonsense, but it was the only things he had thought about.

"Of course," his mother said, clearly making fun of his bullshit. “Let him come in.”

Feeling nervous, Raph helped Leo take off his coat and to sit down. “Don’t mind her,” Raph said. “She watches too many fucking romantic Latino soap-operas.”

Leo shrugged, but didn’t comment, waiting for Raph to make the introductions.

“Leo,” Raph said. “This is my mother, Gabriela. Mom, this is Leo.”

“Enchanted to meet you, “Leo said and kissed the nearly fifty-year-old’s hand. “Did anyone ever tell you that you look like Sophia Loren?”

Raph's mother flushed with pleasure and said, “It’s an old name. I’m astonished you know of her, but yes, my late father-May God bless his soul-told me the same thing when I was a young girl. "

“Please. You still look like a young woman.” Annoyed, Raph watched, as the dancer was so charming. It was true that for a 49-year-old woman, Gabriela Gomez-Jones was beautiful. Makeup helped her look more youthful, but Leo was going too far in his praising.

April and Casey were already there and his sister-in-law welcomed him warmly, as if he’d returned from fucking Vietnam and Raph thought she was over the top. Casey, on the other hand, held out his hand, like a real brother-in-law. It must be said that April seemed to look at Leo, as greedily and as excitedly, as his mother and Raph began to feel self-conscious. Why did they have to make such a big deal about it? Leo was hot, but that wasn’t a reason to forget about decorum.

Raph’s mother was just coming in, a wide smile on her lips, holding flutes of champagne and Raph frowned. His mother wasn’t rich. She didn’t habitually buy Champagne, like the damn Donatello. "Let's make a toast," she said, raising her glass of champagne. April and Leo raised theirs too.
Raph drank half of his glass with one sip. He didn’t understand his mother's fuss, but she would call him Peter, everything was peachy, and then Leo, who hadn’t spoken since the introductions, said softly, “A toast to what? Your late husband?”

“No. To the day that Peter finally came out of the closet,” Gabriela said proudly.

Raph spat out the champagne, shocked, “What the fuck is that supposed to mean?” he snapped.

“Come on, my son. We’ve always known you were gay. See, you tried unsuccessfully to have girlfriends and it broke my mother's heart.” Mrs. Gomez-jones said with a smile, toasting April. “And you choose very well!” she added, smiling at Leo appreciatively. “What a pity you can’t have children together.”

Raph was speechless, taking it in all. Then, he erupted, his green eyes blazing, “He’s just my damn fucking roommate! Just for two fucking weeks! And I’m not gay. You’re fucking delusional. I always had sexy chicks for girlfriends!”

“Oh, please, brother,” April said sarcastically. “Have you ever wondered why it never worked? There was no… No little spark that made a woman feel really desired…."

“Fuck you and the spark! Shove it up your ass!” Raph roared, incensed.

Casey didn’t respond to the insult to his girlfriend. He knew that Raph, temperamental, as he was, was trying to suppress his emotions the best he could. And April and his mother had provoked him. Raph had good reason to be pissed. His brother wasn’t even gay! Maybe it was just revenge for the roles Raph made them play. It didn’t matter, because he didn’t want to intervene.

But Mrs. Gomez-Jones and April seemed to be very pleased with them and Raph tried to change the subject.

“Let’s fucking eat! Or I’m leaving,” Raph said furiously, trying to flee towards the dining room, but Leo put a hand on his shoulder.

"Please. I don’t want to be a contentious subject. I already feel like I’m in the way here. I don’t want to ruin your commemoration,” Leo said softly, with his angelic smile.

Raph melted, unable to stay mad. It was not Leo's fault. He was so cute that his mom has just made-up some stories in her romantic mind, “Yeah. As I said, Mom watches too much fucking TV. I’m not that angry. It's just fucking annoying as a joke.”

“Let’s eat,” Casey suggested, with a roll of the eyes. His brother seemed the more annoyed one.

The first few minutes of the meal went well. April spoke about the university, a safe subject, and Leo responded politely, talking about his classes, his teachers, and his ambitions. But Raph was still nervous, sensing his mother was holding back something. April noticed the expensive watch on Leo's wrist and complimented him on it.

"I admit it, I love flashy jewels, but this watch is just a replica, and a dealer sold me $25 in Chinatown," Leo explained, as Raph took a long sip of red wine to hide his embarrassment. The watch alone was worth more than all the furniture of his mother.

Then Gabriela, pouring wine to into her glass and validating his fear, spoke, “I really need to know something. I’ve been told that tongue piercings give incredible oral sex? Is that true?” She looked at Raph, casting a heavy, implied look, and Raph nearly choked on his wine. What the fuck was this question? Why his mom was acting like a horny cougar from Sex and the City?

Leo smiled, but he wasn’t at all impressed by the daring question.
"Oh, I'm sorry Gabriela. Can I call you Gabriela? You look too young to be called Mrs. O'Neil ...” Raph's mother, charmed, smiled, nodding: "I can’t show you, unfortunately, because your son would be too jealous. He’s kind of a very jealous and possessive man, you know? But given his moans, I do believe that it is incredible,” Leo said quietly, before forking chili into his mouth and acting as if he hadn’t said anything wrong.

Raphael was too shocked to reply, but after hearing April sneer, he grew angry, “Okay. Fine. I fucked him!” he admitted, irately. He knew he couldn’t deny it without looking like a dumbass. “Does anyone here have a problem with it?” He didn’t wait for an answer and added, “Good. So, shut the fuck up about my sex life and eat your damn chili!”

A heavy silence followed this declaration and Raph refused to look at his brother, his cheeks red, as he kept his eyes on his food. He was pissed off with Leo. Did he have to say that? And did he need to speak to his mother in such a flirtatious tone?

"I'm sorry, Peter. I didn’t want to embarrass you,” Leo said in a low and sweet voice, taking his hand in his and fucking kissing it in front of his family. “I think I'm maybe too happy and I wanted to express my happiness too much. I’m not used to this kind of familial reunion. Maybe I don’t know how to behave with real people…”

The blue eyes were misted over and touched, Raphael smiled tenderly. “Don’t be sorry. It’s okay, Leo. It's not you.”

No one talked about it during the meal. His mother made another toast to his father and even to Leo’s father. They asked Leo to talk about him, but Leo seemed to have reservations about it. Then, Leo said, “My father died in Iraq on May 21, 2009. My mother wasn’t married to him, so they didn’t treat her like a war widow. I’m an illegitimate child anyway. My biological father’s still alive, but who cares? Certainly not him.”

He couldn’t continue and Mrs. Gomez-Jones was already in tears.

“Oh, my poor child!” Gabriela said. “Have another glass of wine!” she added, as if that would help him in some way.

Raphael smiled at him empathetically and took his hand. “It’s all right, Leo. You don’t have to talk about it.”

Leo smiled gratefully at being served again, although his glass was still half full. "I'm so sorry,” Gabriela continued.

“Don’t be,” Leo said. “I have your son now. He makes me very happy.”

Raph saw his mother melt under the praise.”I know, Ra… Peter’s so loving and caring and loyal. A very good man and I’m sure he’s a wonderful lover, even if he doesn’t have any piercings.”

Raph blushed, not because of his mother’s compliment, but because of what the dancer had said. Did he really think so?

In any case, when his mother put the DVD on, he didn’t mind when Leo chose to lay over him. They were both covered by a blanket. At one point, Leo turned his head, voluntarily brushing his lips against his, clearly wanting a kiss. Raph gave it, yielding to the desire and let himself be engrossed by the comfort of those lips on his own and not giving a damn about the “aahhhhhhs” escaping from his mom and April, who were ecstatic.

Leo rewarded him by stroking his cock that was under the blankets and though his jeans. Something must have appeared in Raph's face, because Casey grimaced, “Get a room! Shit!”
Raph’s face darkened, but his mother chimed in and said crossly, “Casey! Don’t talk to your brother…-in-law like that.”

Raph thought it was good advice. He was fed up about feeling like he was under a microscope. In addition, his mother, who was slightly drunk, was about to blow his cover.

“I ate chili,” Raph said. “I watched two-thirds of the damn movie. Let me go home now!”

Casey stood up, while his mother and April were giggling about Raph in a hurry to leave to be alone with his ‘roommate’ ”Before you leave, can you come with me, Peter? Something doesn’t work with my car and you’re good at mechanics,” Casey asked, in a dull voice.

It was true. Raph was competent with cars and fixing them, but he suspected that his ability to repair a brake or change a wheel had nothing to do with Case's current concerns. Indeed, once outside, Casey motioned for him to follow him to his car. Raph said irately, before Casey could say anything, “What's your beef, bro? Do you have to be so passive-aggressive with Leo?”

“How can you tell me that? You, what’s your fucking problem and sucking face with a witness? Don’t bullshit me and tell me it’s confidential! Spill the beans already before I lose it!”

Raph thought about it all. The secret and the situation drove him crazy. And then it was Casey, no? His brother! He could trust him! He told him everything, but didn’t go into detail. Casey at was amazed at the end and said, “Okay. So you're sleeping with a male whore to get info, so it's not serious and is only for work? You don’t love him or even really want him?”

"Yeah," the other policeman said mechanically.

Reassured, Casey punched his shoulder, “Da fuck, bro? I didn’t even know you had this in you! Man, I was almost convinced that you were homo for that little twink! I mean, he's kind of hot, I mean for a guy, but not enough to convert a real man like you!”

"Yeah,” Raph repeated.

“Well, don’t play with his feelings too much. He seems very fond of you, but, who cares? He’s just a fancy bitch.” Casey shrugged.

Raph smiled hard at the comment, but his thoughts turned to the doctor and his hurt expression when Raph had treated Leo like a bitch. He’d made fun of Donatello, who was so in love. No, Leo wasn’t the bitch of the story, karma was.

Chapter End Notes

Go see the illustration of Raph, in chapter 1. Leo's is heading chapter 2 and Donnie will be chapter's 3
As soon as he went back inside, his heart racing, and feeling disgusted, nervous and ashamed, Raphael said curtly, “Come on, Leonardo. I'll take you home.”

His mother and April had exchanged concerned looks, probably not understanding his sudden change of mood. Leo remained marmoreal.

He followed the fake accountant into his car. Raph attacked as soon as they were alone and snapped, as he started the engine, “What the fuck was that?”

“What you mean?”

“Don’t play with me. You fucking know what you did!” Raph replied, taking a sharp turn. “You’re too much of a clever bitch to ignore it!”

Leo frowned, looking serious, but didn’t comment about being treated so harshly and being called a bitch. “No. I don’t know. Maybe revealing that you liked my blow jobs? But, given your mother’s question, I didn’t think your family was prudish,” Leo said calmly. Too calmly for Raph’s liking.

Raph hit the steering wheel furiously and hissed, "I'm not talking about that. Why did you act like you loved me? Why did you behave like my damn boyfriend in front of my family? I'll have to spend hours convincing my mother that you don’t!"

"Why, you don’t want me as a boyfriend?” Leo asked, surprised. Raph pressed the brakes so hard that Leo nearly hit his head against the dashboard.

"Are you crazy? You’re a whore. A male whore! And I don’t even know you!” Raph snapped and wrinkled his nose in disgust.

Leo kept a neutral countenance, but Raphael had time to see a wounded glow in the sapphire eyes. He hadn’t intended being so brutal, but his conversion with Casey had left him raw, sensitive and feeling like he’d been skinned alive. He was so mad and wanted to hit something. Poor Leo just happened to be there and he was to blame anyway.

"I thought that was what you wanted,” Leo said evenly.

"What can you know about what I want or not? You don’t know me!” Raph roared.

“You want me,” Leo stated, with a soft voice, but something in his tone was daring the policeman to claim the opposite.

Raphael snorted derisively, “I agree that you’re a great fuck, but it doesn’t justify turning my life upside down. And you know what? I’m a reasonable guy. I’m sorry you went through so much trouble for me. I don’t even know why, but if you give me an address I’ll drop you off there. I’m done!”
Leo was silent, as he digested what Raph had said. Then he said, “Leave me at Dr. Hudson’s. He must be crazy with worry. He can be particular, but he is a good man. He doesn’t deserve all that I put him through. He lives fifteen minutes from here, in UpperWest Side, and will be delighted to see me. He doesn’t see me as a whore, but as a challenge, an enigma or as a collection piece. I don’t really know, probably all the above,” he shrugged with a neutral face.

Raphael said nothing for a moment. Then he asked the young man if he wanted to first pick up his things at his place. The reality was that Raph regretted his impulsiveness. He hadn’t acted so reckless in ages. And now, as they drove towards the doctor’s house, he was overcome with remorse.

Leonardo’s lips on his, in his mother’s living room, had felt as fresh and appealing as an oasis. And apart from the comment about on the blowjob, Leo had been polite and kind. His mom hadn’t had to ask the damn question. Leonardo had made a very good impression on his mother and April. Too much for his liking was closer to the truth.

Leo had nothing to do with the fact that Casey was a homophobic moron. If Leo came home, maybe he could find a reason to 'change' his mind and the dancer would stay. And they’d kiss again.

"Useless,” Leo said coldly. "He’ll burn everything anyway. He can’t stand clothes or accessories that have been in an unknown environment. He’ll buy me twice the amount of clothes I left at your place. Don’t worry about me.”

Leo’s tone was icy and a stuck Raphael asked for the address. Leo gave it to him in an emotionless tone and the rest of the trip was in silence. Raphael regretted being so impulsive. When they arrived, in front of probably the luxurious building he has never seen that close, Leo said, “I was really looking forward to seeing Mikey with you. I hoped that someone would finally not see him as a lost cause. He revolts Dr. Hudson.”

Hearing about Leo’s little brother saddened Raph and stirred him. Leo seemed sincere and he felt like a motherfucking scumbag.

At the same moment, lost in his thoughts, regret, and hesitation, Raph was parking his car. He noticed the valet in a stylized uniform, in front of the elegant door. The valet was obviously recognized Leo and was grinning as if a bonus of $100,000 had been offered to bring him back alive to Donnie’s arms.

Maybe it was indeed true. He knew it. Donatello was a madman and Leo apparently meant more to him than his money.

The sudden idea that Leo was so badly wanted and that if Raph let it go, he could be in the doctor's bed in less than ten minutes, shocked him. Leo could maybe be his. The dancer had talked about being his real boyfriend. An official one. If Leonardo stopped dancing and just studied, despite being a boy, he was a valuable partner. Leo had said that he was special to him and Raph was tempted to believe him. In any case, Leo was special to him.

At the same time, the valet opened the door to the dancer and fussed over him, “Mr. Leo, welcome home. The doctor was so concerned and crazy about you.”

By the respect showed by the valet, Raph suddenly realized that Leonardo could have a dream life, much better than anything he could hope for. Power, wealth, everything was within reach for him. Yet, he’d risking everything to be with HIM, Raphael, the false accountant. And he, because of a macho comment, wanted to abandon him. He tugged on the inside handle, holding Leo out, "I changed my mind. He stays with me."
“No,” the valet said, in frenzy. “This is his house. Mr. Leo will be much better off with the doctor, who’d make snow fall in July for him. Only him could treat Mr. Leo as he deserves.”

Raphael refused to listen to so brown-nosing. He could like Leo, and Leo could have a nice ass to taps, this valet was exaggerating, probably mirroring Dr.Hudson’s way with Leo. “Your doc’s a psycho. I’m guarding Leo. He will be better with normal people.”

Leonardo remained unmoved during the exchange, as if his fate didn’t really interest him. Raphael thought that he acted like a slave, who didn’t care what his master’s name was. He didn’t know why, but it made him crazy. He closed the door, locked it and drove off so fast, his tires screeched. And why the fuck he has to keep Leo? This guy was only troubles!

“I fucking hate you!” Raph spat, giving Leo a deadly stare with his blazing green eyes. But, if Raph had to be honest, he was angrier at himself than at Leo.

In spite of his rage, Raph had time to see the valet in his rear-view mirror. The valet was getting excited; cellphone in his hands, but Raph didn't care. Donatello couldn't go down so many floors until he disappeared on the street. He hoped the valet hadn't made a note of his registration plate number of his car. Raph glanced at the source of the drama, his passenger, who was unperturbed.

"I'll make it up to you at home,” Leo said softly, and Raphael’s heart swelled. Leo’s home wasn’t Donatello’s billionaire building, but Raphael’s small 2-bed room apartment in Spanish Harlem. Leo wasn’t a fancy bitch, like Casey had said; otherwise, he’d have quickly gotten out of the car at the doctor’s place. Everything was there for his advantage. Even though Donnie was an influential man, he seemed to be nothing but wax in the dancer’s hands. And saying that he could make snow in July was hardly exaggerated, considering how Donatello was wealthy. Leo would indeed be in great hands at the doctor’s place, but he’d be unhappy. For an unknown reason and also because of his little brother, of whom he seemed so fiercely protective.

Raphael continued driving in silence, trying to take stock of his feelings. When he arrived at his place, he went around to take his passenger in his arms. Leo put his head on his shoulder, "Peter, you’re so important to me.”

A delighted shiver at the words ran down Raph’s spine, but he protested, “You’re drunk.” Even though he knew Leo wasn’t. “Shut the fuck up. Don’t wanna listen to your bullshit.”

“It’s not bullshit,” Leo said quietly. “But if you don’t want to hear me out, I’ll stay silent.”

The quiet acceptance stirred the policeman. Leo seemed sad and resigned and he didn’t know what to think anymore. He carried Leo up three stories and the dancer, as promised, remained silent. For a moment, Raphael hesitated. Should he put Leo in his bedroom? Leo made the choice easier and said, "Let me sleep with you. Like I said, I want to make it up to you.”

Embarrassed, the sergeant put him on the bed, helping him remove his pants without waiting for his signal and said, “You aren’t obliged to do anything. It's not that bad.”

Leo smiled and said,"Have you ever tried bondage? "

Raph stood for a moment and wondered what that had to do with it.

“No,” Raph said. “My girlfriends weren’t eager to try new things. Not like that or with me.”

“Too bad for them. I brought my stuff. I can show you and I promise you’ll have the time of your life,” Leo said, his eyes shining.

Raph was skeptical. Being tied up by a near stranger was a trying situation. But on the other hand, he
knew that the dancer knew what he was talking about. Indeed, Raph was likely to experience a lot of pleasure in his expert hands.

"Okay," Raph yielded, trying not to appear too nervous.

Still smiling, Leo kissed him tenderly to thank him for his confidence or to reassure him. Then withdrawing the rope from his suitcases and using complicated knots, he tied Raph’s hands to the bedstead. Raphael tried to stay quiet, but he was unable to when Leo began to tie up his ankles.

“What the fuck, Leo? Is it necessary depriving me of all movement?”

"That’s what bondage is all about, hot stuff."

Then, to calm him, Leo kissed the inside of his thigh, "Trust me. Just say "no" and I will stop. I'm not an abuser."

Leo's smile was a little bit sour and Raph swallowed heavily. Leo, surely, had suffered from less honest hands. He wasn’t going to resist when the dancer seemed so sweet and sincere. He had a last moment of almost panic when Leo blindfolded his eyes, but the black haired boy silenced him with a kiss. "Trust me,” Leo repeated and added, “my love, " The pet name screamed truth, despite the fact that it was whispered and Raphael was speechless. Leo could do anything he wanted with his body now. His heart and mind were blown away by the simple endearment.

Leo kissed him, licked him and revered every part of his body for a long time. Such teasing should be banned. He didn’t know if it was because of the blindfold, which amplified the sensations, but each kiss seemed to him like a bite or a burn. It was a sweet torture, but alienating. Sweat beaded on his forehead, but he was not going to beg for more. He already felt pretty exposed and weak.

He had to admit that never in his life had he ever felt so important, wanted and loved and that freaked him out. Leo started a blowjob, licking from the base to the head of his cock, while stroking his balls. Being defenseless in this worship was extraordinary and seeing nothing stimulated his imagination. Then, Leo’s tongue descended lower and penetrated him. Raphael almost jumped out of his skin at the sudden touch and tried to move, but still bound, was unable.

“What the fuck? Don’t go there, Leo!”

Leo shushed him, raising his head to stick a finger into him. “Calm down. I will only use my fingers and tongue. Just feel the pleasure,” Leo said huskily. “It’s my apology to you.”

"Don’t want your damn apology. Shove it up your damn ass,” Raph rasped, before yelping.

"There," Leo whispered. "Don’t be ashamed of feeling pleasure. It’s natural." The policeman bit his lip, furious with himself, but he wasn’t willing to stop the addictive sensation.

“I…I…” Raph stammered. The rope cords prevented him from moving and Leo’s tongue on his cock and his fingers inside of him removed the last of his fighting spirit.

"Almost there? Go ahead. I want to see you cum."

He knew that in a few hours he’d maybe blame himself for having cummed so quickly with a man’s fingers up his ass, but right now he didn’t give a damn. The dancer greedily swallowing him, it was the most powerful orgasm of his life. He was noisy and his neighbors could maybe hear him, but he didn’t give a shit. When he was done, Leo approached him, taking off his blindfold and kissing him, making the supposed accountant taste his own bitter and salty taste.
The sergeant’s eyes were wet and he didn't know which emotions had prevailed more: the rage at losing control over the situation and at himself or the extremely strong pleasure. Raph decided it was too bright when the blindfold had been removed. He tried to keep his face impassive, refusing to show the dancer that he had "won".

When Leo broke the kiss, Raph spat, “You jerk. How dare you…”

"I think I love you,” Leo said quietly and Raphael fell silent, too shocked to continue pretending that he was indignant at having an orgasm pulled out against his will.

“What the fu…” Raph began, stunned.

“Sorry. I didn’t mean that,” Leo said, but his tone said otherwise and that he’d meant it. “Let’s sleep.”

Leo suddenly seemed panicked and fragile and Raphael felt more disarmed in front of him than in front of a child crying for a lost ball. And kids and animals were his weaknesses.

Despite himself, little by little Leo had managed to break down his walls, leaving him more at his mercy than the previous day. It was a mystery how Leo had interfered in his life, his apartment, his family without Raph opposing it. The law student managed to get Raph to do things without even lifting a finger. And Raph no longer knew how to kick him out.

"Don’t be sorry. It’s okay, Leo,” he said, cuddling against him. He wasn’t going to say the same words of course. Leo was just an acquaintance, useful to his job, as he’d told Casey, pretending that Leo was just part of his mission. Pretending being the operative word in the sentence. He had to admit that he was very close to developing feelings. Much more, in any case, than receiving any new information.
thank you for your comments to all, it is very encouraging. I hope you enjoy the meeting with Mikey.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.
The next day was strange. The day unfolded as if they already had an established relationship. They made love in the morning, Raph prepared the breakfast, they ate in bed, had sex in the shower. He took pleasure, like a moronic caveman, in washing Leo with HIS masculine scent of cedar wood and zesty orange to make the lavender scent disappear. Smelling his scent on Leo drove him wild and he took his new roommate right and there, bending him over in the shower and fucking him senseless, but despite being as horny as hell, he was still careful with his ankle.
Later in the day, Raph realized that Leo's company was nice too. The young man commented on the newspaper during the breakfast with insight and humor. He complimented Raph on his omelet, telling some funny anecdotes about his attempts at cooking. He also noticed that Leo was a clean and autonomous person. In spite of his ankle, the young man was anxious to pick up his things. The dancer questioned him about Lisa, but non-aggressively and listened patiently and discreetly to Raphael's story. He gave him reason for his reaction and when the false accountant seemed dark, he began to lighten his mood with dirty talk. Raph began to think that having Leo as a real boyfriend would be nice. Then he blamed himself for thinking that.
He couldn’t have a romance with a stripper. He wouldn’t. Leo had “trouble” written all over him, despite his beauty and nice personality. He couldn’t afford fucking up his career for someone as hot as him.

But his kiss was so sweet and loving.

Feeling bad for having these thoughts and not knowing what to do with the handsome young man, Raph asked him what he wanted to do.

"I have to study," Leo said, so Raph did his cleaning. Leo studied in the living room, being as comfortable, as if he owned the place. While he vacuumed, Raph chastised himself. He couldn’t let Leo invade his life, not without anything in return. He had a damn job to do and, technically, he had to go back to the club that evening, although he doubted that the doctor would be there, because his protégé wouldn’t be.

Raph decided to question Leo. He had to learn something he could report, otherwise, he couldn’t justify to himself why he let Leo take up so much space in his life. He tried to attack obliquely, so that Leo couldn’t dodge his question.

"The doctor will see you at the University. What are you going to do?"

Leo put down his marker and said quietly, not at all concerned, "He can’t do anything in public, especially not at university. We cannot be seen together and my building’s far from where he works. Anyway, I doubt he'll be in the mood to work. He must be mad."
"Aren’t you afraid? I don’t understand, but you look different in front of him."

"It's our arrangement. I have to show respect, especially in public."

Raph frowned and said, “What does that mean?”

“Exactly what I said,” Leo said abruptly. "Nevertheless, I respect him, but I can’t be with him, because of my brother, you know."

Raph stayed silent, hoping Leo would say more.

“Anyway, I can’t blame him,” Leo said and sighed. “To spite him, Mikey can make murals on his apartment walls with his shit. Or even stab him in his sleep. Mikey hates him that much.”

Raph opened his eyes wide in disbelief and, exasperated and unwilling to talk about it, Leo waved his hands, “I told you so. Mikey’s almost uncontrollable with him. Even if the doctor adores me, it’s more than he can bear. They can't be in the same room.”

Raph cautiously changed the subject. Talking about his little brother seemed to greatly upset Leo. "Yes, I understand, but why does he support you sleeping with so many people if he loves you and can support you financially? I don’t understand. I’d find it intolerable."

Leo smiled sadly and said, "I sleep with so many people, so that I can be independent and also,
because I hope to disgust him. My piercings and tattoo are for the same reason, but he doesn’t love me for my body.” Raph blinked in confusion and Leo said, “Dr. Hudson’s not like you and isn’t a carnal man. He doesn’t like sex.”

Leo’s response, despite his apparent naturalness, sounded like a text, a part of Raph's brain warned him. Many suspects spoke in interrogation in this tone, but he dismissed the thought. He wanted to know Leo better.

“Then what’s his purpose in wanting a sexy as hell boy?” he asked, dumbfounded.

The dancer smiled mockingly and said, "You admit that you think I’m sexy?"

"Duh!" Raph said and rolled his eyes. Leo was already cocky enough.

“No. The doctor finds me extremely attractive, but he loves me for my poetry and my soul.”

The policeman arched an eyebrow in incredulity, “What do you mean? He thinks you’re poetic when you dance? That you put your soul in your moves?”

Leonardo burst out laughing, "No, you idiot. You do some projection, there. He loves the poetry that I write and that’s how he met me. My English literature teacher contacted him, knowing that he was researching about the brain and the so-called "genius." I was a Rimbaud, according to my teacher.”

“Who?”

“You didn’t learn anything at school, except for mathematics, did you?” Leo sneered.

Raphael said nothing about the fact that he was a dunce at math and that he’d only excelled at sport and Spanish.

"Rimbaud was a very young French poet but that's not important. I'm good at linguistics and the doctor can discuss and argue in many languages. He doesn’t find anyone challenging his mind and nobody impresses him or teaches him anything. I do and he loves this trait of mine. It’s only intellectual. You love my blow-jobs and he loves listening to me declaiming. He said he could read my soul this way, and my soul fascinates him. It's even.”

Raph thought it was bullshit. Nobody could fall in love for poetry, whatever good and deep it was, but the doctor was so weird that maybe he could prefer poetry and dialectic instead of Leo’s fine ass.

“Let's say that when I lived with the same family as Mikey and Karai, he got me out of a critical situation, so I owed him, but one night I got fed up and joined Karai.”

There again, the same tone of a long-time made-up confession.

“Fed up with what? The dull sex? His OCD issues? His nerdiness?” Raph urged to know.

“I already told you we’ve never had sex, just a kind of foreplay. I don’t want to judge, but it’s the kind of foreplay I don’t love too much,” Leo explained, quickly, not wanting to give details.”In a nutshell, I joined Karai at the exotic club. I thought the doctor wouldn’t come looking for me there, but he did and since then and in spite of everything, he’s been coming to the bar to control me.”

Raph would have preferred to ask questions about the dancer himself, like asking what kind of foreplay, what the critical situation was or what exactly Karai was to him, but he decided to try and remain professional. “The bar seems illegal. Does your doctor trade shenanigans with the owner?”
“Him? You're kidding? He’s harmless,” Leo said emphatically.

The denial was firm and Raph thought that Leo was maybe not as clever as he'd thought. And that Donatello, who’d fired a dancer, crushed his glasses and smashed a mirror, seemed much more ferocious than the dancer seemed to believe. To be so jealous and possessive, the doctor couldn’t only love Leo’s poetry, even if he was talented. Raphael was pretty certain that Donatello wanted Leo physically! Damn. A monk would want to fuck Leonardo. He, himself, wasn’t even gay and he wanted to bend Leo over. He remembered very well when the doctor had wanted to kiss him in the restroom.

Maybe Leo was just naïve and was idealizing the doctor, because the man had helped him in the time of need or the dancer was bullshitting him.

He didn’t know why, but that idea sickened him. The man was abusing Leo’s naivety. Raph didn’t want the dancer to appreciate the man, who was manipulating him, so much. Was Leonardo really at such risk for the doctor to intervene in his life?

"What was the critical situation that made you call the doctor for help?"

The blue eyes grew cold and Leo said, "I was raped almost daily by my brother's current guardians. Now, do you understand why I want to get him out of there?"

The hint about Mikey was lost to Raph, too, shocked by the revelation, “No need to call a stranger for help. The police are there to protect you,” he exclaimed, rushing over his lover, holding his hands, his green eyes blazing. Leo had only to told him the fucker's place and with his team of the precinct, he would make them pay for their crimes.

Leonardo laughed mirthlessly, “Please! The police, really? I have absolutely no confidence in them. They’re all corrupt and hide behind their badges! I hate cops.”

the last words were hissed with hatred and Raphael was angry at the statement, "Fuck you! There would be chaos without them!” he roared crossly.

Leo shrugged, “I don’t want to hurt you with your idealized conceptions, Peter. Can we change the subject? I can’t train, as usual, but I want to meditate. I don’t want to bother you. Can I go to the guest room for an hour?”

Raphael thought that an hour was an exaggerated time for meditation, but furious at Leo's remark about him and his colleagues, he waved his hand, “Go ahead. I usually go to the gym around the corner on a Saturday. I actually go daily. Meditate as you wish. I’m out of there.”

Leo smirked,” Of course. You have to maintain such an impressive musculature for an accountant.”

Raphael spat still angry, "What’s your beef with accountants? Do you have a smartass opinion about them too? Anyway, shove your mediation candle in your ass. I’m fed up! I'm going to the gym. Do what you want. I don’t give a damn! You can get bent! Must be easy for you!”

Furious, he took his gym bag near the door and left before the dancer could say anything to change his mind again with his talented tongue of his.

Raph was at the point where he didn’t care about the risks of Leo discovering his cover. That would be a reason to end the situation. Why didn’t he leave Leo with the doctor? Why did he let the dancer anger him? After all, Leo and the commissioner may have been right and Donatello was a misconception. Perhaps Raph was wasting his time trying to get information from Leonardo, who probably had none. Yes. He was wasting his time. He had to go back to the bar tonight. He was
going to leave the dancer with his protector. Perhaps a grateful Donatello would befriend him, like his boss had hoped.

That's what Raph thought when he lifted his dumbbells. It had been more than two hours since he’d arrived at the gym and his mind kept going around in circles. He finally came to a decision. He’d fuck Leo maybe one last time and then drive him back to the doctor’s. It wouldn’t hurt Leo’s feelings, because Leo had made fun of him by pretending to love him. And he didn’t absolutely love him. He’d only pretended to have information and he had to get rid of Leo, because he wasn’t useful. Raph went home and as he went upstairs, he changed his mind again. He wasn’t going to have sex with the stripper again. When Leo touched his cock, Raph lost his damn mind each fucking time. He turned the key in the lock and was surprised by the silence in his apartment. He even had a moment of regret. Having someone welcoming him when he came home was lovely. He closed the door a little loudly, and hearing no one, he shouted, "Leo?" Nobody answered him. He put down his gym bag, refusing to worry. Leo’s crutches were still there. Perhaps the young man was just asleep?

Surprised, he found the dancer neither in the guest room nor in his own room. Had Leo sensed his exasperation and called the doctor? He refused to feel disappointed. He entered the bathroom, it being the last room he hadn’t checked. As soon as he did, he had the shock of his life. Leonardo’s beautiful head protruded from the bath, his wet black hair cascading over the ceramic bath, his head bent backward. Raph saw right away that something was wrong. The usually pale dancer was translucent and he hadn’t opened his eyes or turned his head again. Raph’s heart raced, as he approached the bath, and he saw that Leo was lying in the scarlet water. His knees almost buckled and Raphael was anguish when he saw the katana on the floor.

Panicked, he leaned over the tub and realized that Leo, being so pale and with all the blood that was supposedly his spilled in the water, wasn’t far off from death if he wasn’t already dead.

Hysterical, Raph didn’t know what to do. He never lost his head at work, but this was different. His lover, who was apparently more important to him than he’d thought, had committed suicide in his bathtub after a kind of argument, while he was away. After removing the icy body from the tub, Raph placed it on the carpet and checked Leo’s pulse, feeling panicked. He was still breathing. A wound was on his wrist, where the doctor had fastened the watch, and Raph frantically tied a towel around it, as a tourniquet to try and stem the blood loss. Then, he slapped the dancer, praying he’d wake up. Leo opened his glazed eyes and Raph, still panicked, slapped him a second time.

“Fuck you!” Raph screamed. “How can you do this to me? Are you fucking insane?”

“You don’t love me,” Leo murmured. “You lied to me and don’t care about me. Don’t pretend I’m important to you.”

That was the last straw. Pride didn’t exist in his vocabulary anymore. Only fear did.

"Why would I have kept you with me if I didn’t feel anything?” Raph could help it, he slapped Leo again, wanting to slap himself to be suck in such a situation. "I don’t want to love you, but I can’t… Poor idiot. You drive me crazy. I’m calling the ambulance and then your crazy doctor. Yeah. That’s a good idea. He’s a nutter, but he’ll take care of you. I prefer you being with him and safe!”

Raph picked up his phone, and trembling, began to dial 9-11.

“Don’t do it. If he knows what I did, you'll never see me again. I couldn’t stand it," Leo protested, his voice shaking.

Raph could have replied that dead, Leo wouldn’t have seen him more, but he didn’t have the necessary peace of mind to make that kind of reasoning.
“I can’t go to the hospital. He has all my IDs and…”

Raph only listened with one ear, still far too anxious.

"Please. This isn’t the first time that I’ve dealt with this. It’s like my time will never come," the dancer mourned darkly. "Give me bandages. That’ll be enough."

Raph was so amazed that before he came out of his bewilderment, the dancer was already up. "You need help. I can’t leave you," Raphael finally managed, as Leo fumbled in the pharmacy with sure hands.

“No. I need love, normal sex and peace. A new family life. I need to know that my little brother’s safe.”

Mikey was at the back of Raph’s mind and he said, as he took the roll of bandages from Leo, to place bandages on him, “Why, Leo? Why?”

Leo sighed and looked away. "You saved me. You can stop feeling guilty and pretend that you’re concerned.”

Green eyes snapped up to Leo and Raph hissed, "Fuck you. You know I am. If you wanted a confession from me, you won! I fucking love you! You damn jerk!"

The policeman said nothing more, but Leo put his head on his shoulder with a contented sigh. "Peter, please forget our argument, this incident and all the rest. I want to eat, I want to watch a movie cuddled on the sofa with you, make love and spend the night by your side. That's all."

His voice was like velvet. Soft, tender and warm and Raph was stirred. Anyway, he has already confessed it and then, fighting his feelings were pointless. He kissed the dark hair and said, "Okay, Leo, but tell me if you feel weak. I'm so worried. Don’t do that ever again,” Raphael pleaded, still shaking of anxieties.

The rest of the evening was tender. Leo was affectionate, sweet and obliging. During the sex, Raph, carried away, let out words of love to which his lover responded naturally. It wasn’t until the next day, around noon, that Raph noticed that he’d completely forgotten his mission and that he hadn’t been to the club. He hit his forehead. He must be really in love, whether he liked it or not, to be so stupid.

Leonardo looked at him worriedly over his mug and said, “What’s wrong, my love? You seem anxious. Can I do something to help?”

Raph shook his head. How could he explain to Leo that he had to go to the club, when he already had Leo, the star dancer, who refused him nothing, in his bed? “I have to go out tonight, Leo.”

Leo looked at him sharply, blue eyes as shining as steel, and said, “What time do you have to go? I have to be at Mikey's institution at eight p.m. That’s when they leave him. You promised you’d come with me and you know how important it is to me!”

Raph didn’t go so far as to say that he hadn’t promised. He’d actually suggested it and he knew that Mikey was Leo’s main priority. Raph’s eyes fell on Leo’s bandaged wrist and he knew he couldn’t let his lover down. Maybe he could go to the club afterwards?

"Of course, I’m going with you, Leo. i told you, I will. I won't let you down."

The dancer gave him such a beatific smile that it would have made Raph's resolutions crack, if they
hadn’t already done so. "My love, you make me so happy. I’ll give you back a hundredfold." Raph let the pet name go again without protest, but without using one of his own in reply. He remembered with great shame, uttering sweet nothing when they’d had sex.

It didn’t cost his conscience much by pleasing Leo by accompanying him. He could know him better and see him in another light. And then, he also wanted to see Mikey though his policeman's eyes. If Leo was telling the truth and his little brother was being raped and abused, he had to act. Too bad for his cover. Raph loved children and if Leo hadn’t exaggerated and someone was hurting his little brother, someone would bleed. The idea of blood made him look fondly at Leo, who was almost purring on his lap.

“You'll see that if you stay calm and discreet, everything will be fine,” Leo reassured him, between two kisses.

The brotherly love, so strong, touched the false accountant and he said, "I’m looking forward to meeting him, bae.” Leo smiled at the pet name, victory blazing from his blue eyes.

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It was 8:00 p.m. and Raph, feeling a little anxious, paused in front of the cold establishment, which said that it was a "High School for a particular child", but the writing underneath it said that it was a wing of the pedopsychiatric services.

Leo’s face radiated happiness and he carried a book. "Don’t be nervous, Peter. He’ll sense it and will maybe attack. Don’t look at him in the eyes, don’t touch him, don’t talk to him and everything will be okay. Keep eight or nine feet between you. Don’t touch me either. He can’t bear it. That’s my karma: being surrounded by possessive men.”

“I’m not damn possessive,” Raph mumbled.

“Oh please! I saw how pleased you were with yourself in the shower. If you could piss on me to mark your territory and to spite Dr. Hudson, you would do it!” Leo smirked.

Raph didn’t reply. He so hated when the cocky bastard was right. He promised Leo that he’d follow his advice. Anyway, Raph was a black belt in jiu-jitsu. He wasn’t a sucker like Donatello and could defend himself if the boy grew aggressive. And then he told himself that Mikey would feel Leo’s love for him and how sweet he was to him.

As they walked, Leo said, “It’s a medium-term here between the asylum and a specialized school. The fifteen students, at least those who have a family, can return home from Friday evening to Sunday evening for staying in touch with reality, Mikey doesn’t return to a loving family, so it hurts him more than good. The brave teachers try to teach them a little bit of English and math, but in general, they try to keep them calm and make them the most autonomous. From an academic point of view, Mikey’s level at is at a child of about sixth grade. On the other hand, he’s the most talented artist I know. I hope that if he at least reaches a middle school level, he can live by selling his art.” Raph nodded. Leo spoke so fondly of Mikey, it warmed his heart.

A few minutes later, they were greeted by a nervous man. "Mr. Hamilton, you're here. Your brother’s causing us so much trouble.”

Leo frowned and Raph realized that even though he’d fucked Leo at least a dozen times, he didn’t know his surname. His heart pounding, Raph followed Leo, but the man tried to hold him back. "I don’t know who you are, but if you want to keep your eyes, stay here. He’s very agitated.”

Raph stepped past the man. He wasn’t going to leave Leo alone with a madman, even if it was his little brother.
He followed Leo down the corridor, almost running, as Leo walked with long nervous strides. Finally, they arrived in a kind of relaxation room, similar to that of the hospitals. Raph had gone to psychiatry at age 15. The televisions screwed into the wall reminded him of bad memories. The smell too, a mixture of sweat, piss, vomit and cleansers. There was a ping-pong table, but no one was playing. Most of the patients were sitting curled up in armchairs. Everyone was staring fearfully at a blond child, swaying back and forth on the floor and twitching his head. Raph's heart sank. Obviously, the worst patient would be his lover’s younger brother. A disgusting smell emanated from him, but Leo knelt beside him, stroking the blond and messy hair.

"Hey, Mikey. It’s me. I have orange lollipops and a new story." Leo pulled a dozen lollipops out of his gray coat. He’d asked Raph to stop at a shop, so that he could get his brother's favorite candy.

The kid looked up, his huge blue eyes fixed on his big brother. Mikey didn’t seem to be 14 years old, 12 at the most, and Raph wondered why everyone seemed to be on the alert for a 5-foot-tall brat.

Then, Mikey looked at him with a disturbing intensity and, as agreed, Raph shifted his gaze and didn’t move. Leo, following Mikey’s gaze, said gently, “He’s a friend. A very good friend. He wanted to stop and buy you sweets. Be nice to him.”

The kid didn’t speak and took the lollipop without looking away from Raph, his eyes never leaving him, like a hawk. Raph began to feel uncomfortable under the inspection. Then the boy seemed to make a decision. He removed the candy from his mouth, which he’d sucked for a few minutes, and handed it to the policeman. Raph looked at the candy, which seemed like a peace offering, but Leo had warned him not to come near. Leo appeared astonished at the gesture.

"It seems like Mikey wants to share with you,” Leo said with a touch of worry. “You can come close if you want to.”

Raphael had no intention of staying behind Leo anyway. He walked more confidently than he felt and crouched down next to the two brothers. Mikey was holding the lollipop and Raph realized that no matter how disgusting Mikey was with his hygiene, he had to take the candy. Leo was worth it. He took the lollipop and put it in his mouth, and Mikey smiled. Leo was more and more amazed. Raphael saw that he was, but he pretended that everything was normal.

"Can your classmates listen to my story, Mikey?" Leo asked.

The boy nodded and stood up, taking his brother's hand to walk quietly to where the chairs were. The other "scholars" aged between 12 and 16 years old applauded when Leo sat down in a big armchair. Leo started his story and Raphael was transported. The sexy dancer was an exceptional storyteller and his face shone with pleasure, as he told his story to the poor locked up teenagers. Leo looked even more beautiful and Raph hated himself for treating the gifted student with a tragic past, who took the time to volunteer in such a difficult environment out of brotherly love, like a bitch and a whore.

Leonardo was a pure diamond and fuck Casey, but he was going to give it a try. A real try, without changing his damn mind. He would see what to do about his mission. Maybe starting with confessing everything to Leo. The young man had said that he hated cops, but if he knew the truth, maybe he’d change his opinion.

Lost in his thoughts and in his contemplation of the beautiful face, so animated by telling his story, Raph jumped when he felt a hand on his thigh. Leo’s little brother was on the floor, his face raised to him and Raph’s heart sank. Mikey's face was youthful and cute under the dirt, but he also noticed the split lip and the look haunted by terrible visions. Never had the suffering seemed so untenable to him just by looking at a face. Mikey reached out and the policeman deduced that Mikey wanted to sit on
his lap. Despite his pungent smell, Raph didn’t have the heart to refuse, not because of Leo, but because of the pitiful kid himself. He saw that Leo, amazed, had seen the gesture and had paused with his reading. When Mikey was sitting on his lap and the kid put his dirty blond curls on his shoulder, the policeman noticed Leo’s expression. And he noticed that all the smiles and previous sweet mines were faked before in comparison. The dancer's eyes shone with genuine love this time. Raph remained on his cloud, Mikey still sitting on him, as Leo began to read again. When Leo had finished, he approached with unfeigned adoration.

"Peter, I don’t know what to say to you. Thank you, for starting.” Leo’s eyes misted over and Raphael was surprised when Leo sobbed with what appeared to be happiness. He approached to take the other man in his arms, but Leo gently pushed him away.

"Later. Mikey’s calm, so I’ll try and wash him. You can stay here.”

"You don’t need help?"

Leo shook his head, but the little one tugged at the policeman's sleeve."Oh. It seems like he wants you to come. Let’s go then,” Leo said, dazed.

Raph followed the brothers to a tiny room, but when he got there, the boy undressed himself, keeping on only underpants, and went into the bathroom alone.

“Mikey’s able to wash himself,” Leo said. “If he’s calm, he’s self-sufficient, like other boys his age.” Leo then fell silent, letting Raph inspect the room and the beautiful watercolors hanging on the wall. “Those are Mikey’s works,” Leo explained. “Like I told you, he’s very talented.”

What caught Raphael's attention the most was a realistic portrait of the dancer himself with his katanas. "Beautiful work, you are right about him, Leo, he is very skilled,” he said in awe. “Do you think Mikey will want to sell this to me? In exchange, I’ll give him enough money to buy himself a lifetime of lollipops.”

Leo approached, putting a hand on his shoulder. "When I'm not here, it's his only contact with a non-hostile outside environment…” Leo was shaking and the fake accountant took him in his arms. "Not here,” Leo whispered. Raph didn’t listen, kissing the young man. Leo needed his strength to leave his brother in the living hell. Mikey returned, clean and smelling of citrus and Leo said, “I’ll come back on Tuesday.”

“And so, will I,” Raphael said, rewarded by Leo, who looked at him softly.

The kid nodded, as Leo made a thousand recommendations. Then they finally left.

"Peter, I must confess that I am happily impressed,” Leo began,"Getting Mikey trust is something...”

They were interrupted by a tall, bald, sullen-looking man, who said, “Mr. Hamilton, please go to my office. I have to talk to you.” Raphael saw anguish ravage his beloved’s features. He leaned over to intervene and a scared Leo whispered, “Please don’t. Wait outside. I beg you!”

Raph, worried, didn’t dare to go against his lover, in spite of his reluctance to leave his new mate with a man, who seemed to frighten him. So, he went outside, happy to breathe fresh air. It was dark, being almost 10 p.m., but he immediately noticed the luxurious Mercedes parked underneath the lamppost. He hoped for a moment that it was the director of the establishment’s car, but his hopes were soon dashed. Donnie got out of the car; stood next to it took out what looked like a cigarette from his pocket, and began to smoke, while gazing at Raphael.

Raph wondered what he should do. Then he told himself that he didn’t have to fear his rival. Leo
loved him. But inaction and patience weren’t his forte. It had been nearly ten minutes, since the doctor had commenced staring at him and Raph’s hands shook. He hadn’t felt such a desire to fight, since his teenage years.

Raph spat, his voice dripping with venom, “He won’t follow you. You disgust him and he loves me. He told me so.”

Donatello snorted, not even answering, smoking his long cigarette and Raph was angry that he was so nonchalant. He knew that he hadn’t acted differently from a dog wanting to keep his bone all to himself, but he didn’t care.

But before Raph could run to the doctor and punch him, Leo suddenly exited the building, his eyes red and hysterical. He stopped in his tracks, seeing the doctor and turning to look at Raph, his eyes wide in panic.

“Good evening, Leonardo. Get in the car, please,” the doctor said politely, but in an authoritative tone.

“You don’t have the right to order him shit,” Raph bellowed, indignant at the doctor’s boldness. “He does as he wants and he’s done with your craziness!”

“You owe me something, Leonardo, and I’m here to collect the debt,” Donatello said dryly.

“You want your $800?” Raph shouted. “I’ll give it to you, you cheap-ass, but fucking leave him alone.”

Donatello arched an eyebrow and said, “You think I’m here for something so miserable? I don’t even know what you’re talking about. I wouldn’t bother bending for a $5000 banknote, assuming there would still be some in circulation. I wouldn’t take the time to drive so far for such a trivial thing,” he sneered, “Leonardo knows what I’m talking about. I have advanced my work for you, my precious. I want to show it to you. You know I don’t like giving you order, but I don’t like to say twice, either. For the last time, please, get in the car.”

“You can suck a fat dick and bend over, fucking Gollum!! Leo’s going nowhere!” Raphael yelled, “Whatever you want to show him, he doesn't give a damn!”

Instinctively, Raph moved his arm, as much to protect the dancer, as to prevent his obedience to the order. He was astonished to see Leo clinging to his arm, like a man drowning, his eyes so bright with hope that the look seemed more unsettling than Mikey’s.

"Marry me and adopt Mikey,” Leo begged, his eyes wide as Bambi, begging a hunter.

Raph stared at him in shock. What the fuck? Had he heard correctly? Lisa had been with him for years and they’d never discussed marriage or even children. He suddenly remembered the insistent look in the guest room. Had it been Leo’s plot from the start? Raph couldn’t think clearly, as the young man clung to his arm, begging him. Raph might be fond of Leonardo and might be touched by the little brother's distress but a marriage and an adoption were important, permanent things and this moron of Casey wouldn’t talk to him anymore if he married a male stripper. And his so catholic mother would have a heart attack too. Marriage was between a man and a woman. Why did Leo ask him such a crazy thing? If Leo had asked him, eventually, to take his brother with them, he could have accepted. But it was way too fast and there were far too many official seals. He couldn’t take responsibility for Leo, a stripper, whom he’d only known for ten days and for his little mentally challenged brother. It was madness.

Raph removed Leo’s fingers and said seriously, but with sincerity and kindness too, “Are you
kidding, Leo? I can’t marry a man, whom I hardly know and adopt his little brother. I can care about you, but I can’t do something so foolish. Sorry.”

Leo coldly turned away, his cryogenic eyes now fixed on the Mercedes. He walked towards the car and Raph, stunned, held him back.

“Leo! Don’t go with him!” Raph said. “You can’t stand him! You can’t blame me and leave me, because I want to wait and know you better before I commit my life to you. I didn’t say ‘not ever’ just ‘can we fucking wait?’”

Leo didn’t even bother to turn around completely, as he said icily, over his shoulder, “You're useless now.” He was still limping, because of his sprained ankle.

The shift of the mood, the crazy and too sharp 180 degrees made Raph feel dizzy and speechless.

Donatello opened the door and Leo rushed inside the car. "At the risk of repeating myself, you are indeed a dumb guy,” Donatello said to a still speechless Raphael. "Leo’s too smart to ruin his life with you.”

Then, the doctor closed the door and sat down behind the wheel of his car, looking satisfied, and Raph felt the rage shake him finally. "I'm a good winner and when his ankle’s fully healed, you can watch him dance, if he wants to, but you will never touch him again,” the supposed harmless man hissed menacingly. “If you do, I’ll send your hands to your mother. Finger by finger and after removing the nails one by one.”

No one had ever physically threatened Raphael and he felt like an enraged bull in a scarlet room, but he wasn’t surprised by the violent promises. He’d always known that the doctor didn’t only have jealousy issues. The man was well on the path of madness and obsession. Donatello was PURE evil and he felt validated to have hated this man from the start.

"I love Leo enough to leave him live his fantasies, but they must remain short-lived ones. Your time is over, Mr. O’ Neil,” Donatello said mockingly.

Donnie finished with provoking him, threw his cigarette away, closed the window and after a derisory gesture with his hand, started his engine, leaving Raph more irate than he’d ever been. And even madder than he’d been when he’d heard about his father’s death.

He screamed his rage and pain in the empty parking lot.

Chapter End Notes

The idea of marriage seems sappy, but Leo never does anything for nothing. Don't forget that. Its not out of romanticism
Raph was beyond mad. He refused to return home, where the dancer’s sweet smell still permeated the place. He got in his car and sped to Casey’s place, replaying Leo’s icy cold tone and his words ‘You’re useless now’ over and over again. As if Raph had just been a pawn, a mere tool, in a great scheme that he was unaware of, right from the beginning.

He entered Casey’s place, didn’t explain anything and asked for whiskey. Casey handed him a drink, but Raph grabbed the bottle instead and his elder brother frowned.

“What is it, Raph? I haven’t seen you so upset in over a decade.”

“It’s the damn mission, Case. I can’t do it anymore!” Raph roared, shaking in rage.

Casey Jones was relieved. It was normal. Fucking a man for work would be beyond his strength.

"You pushed the professionalism too far, Raph! You didn’t have to act so against your nature and fuck a guy in the ass. Nobody will reproach you if you only watch from afar! I’ll talk to the boss tomorrow."

Raph nodded, absent-minded and grimaced, the alcohol going down his throat. Casey had been in their precinct, the 28th, for almost 10 years. He might be heard.

“Bro, maybe you needed a little time to yourself after your breakup. Maybe I can ask to replace you on this, and suggest you take some days off.”

Raphael sipped his drink again and shook his head at the suggestion.

There was no way that Casey could replace him. Firstly, his reputation would be dishonored at work if his big brother replaced him and secondly, it was also now personal. He didn’t care about Leo anymore, he told himself, but he wanted to rip Donatello to shreds.

“No,” Raphael said emphatically. “I’m going to finish the mission. I’m only going to change my angle of approach. The dancer was useless.” Unconsciously or not, he used the same words that Leo had said. “The doctor was manipulating him, so he couldn’t tell me anything, but the evil, dickless motherfucker’s so crazy that I’ll surely find an enemy of his, who’ll give me the information I need.”

“Too bad you fucked him for nothing.”

Raphael shrugged, still drinking.

After a moment of silence, Casey uncapped a beer bottle and said in curiosity, “So, how was it?”

Raph wiped his mouth and said, “Huh? What do you mean?”

"Well, you know, with a man..."

Raph blushed and a shudder ran through him, as he pictured Leo stretched out in front of him, a delighted expression on his handsome face, as he sank into the warmth of his body. His praises whispered in a wanton voice.

It was only fake for an unknown reason. And he wouldn’t think about that ever again. It had never happened.

“Don’t talk to me about that ever again,” Raphael hissed and Casey nodded.
“Do you want to stay over or do you want me to call you a cab?”

“I’ll stay. I don’t want to go to my empty place.”

April didn’t question Raph’s presence the next morning. Casey had told his brother to take a day off and had gone to explain his absence. Raph tried to argue about it, but having a damn hangover, he agreed that it was a good idea. April and Casey's apartment, 8 blocks north of Raph, was across the street from the New York State Office of Children and Family Services, where April worked. And then, while drinking his coffee and sitting with April, he realized something.

April worked at the New York State Office of Children and Family Services.

She wasn’t a fucking barista at Starbucks and Leo, the damn bastard, knew it. No wonder he’d been eager when he’d heard his surname. Maybe April had Mikey’s file. Leo adored his little brother and already being ruthless, wanted nothing more than keeping him, so he’d do anything he could to achieve it, even sucking Vladimir Putin’s dick without a second thought. That was the only reason for the fake tenderness.

Leonardo had never loved him. He only wanted a way of getting his brother out of his foster family. He had to consider himself lucky, being at least used out of brotherly love! He didn’t quite understand Leo’s insistence about marriage. It was probably something designed to confuse and deceive him even more.

Anyway, he was done with the player.

Shortly after his sister-in-law's departure, he knew that whether he liked it or not, he had to go home. The apartment smelled. Not of Leo exactly, but of sex. Sex he hadn’t had that long before. Too bad. He could live without it!

He took a black garbage bag, placing all of Leo’s belongings, clothes and sex toys into it. He wandered the apartment, removing any trace of Leo. His heart raced when he saw Leo’s study books on the coffee table in the living room and documents. He picked up the documents and frowned. Leo was writing an analysis of a judgment before his attempted suicide and Raphael gritted his teeth. He’d been stupid. Leo had deliberately sprained his ankle. Staging a suicide would be child’s play for such a machiavellistic being. Raph was a really dumb guy, just like the doctor had remarked and believed. But it was only a means of getting pity from Raph and forcing his hand to keep him with him. Raph had been naïve, but it was over.

While Raph had done his chores, Leo had spent nearly two hours on his assignment. Maybe he’d still been busy with it when Raph was at the gym and maybe it was as an assignment due for that day. Donnie might be rich, but it had been late when Leo had gone with him and Leo couldn’t get his book and probably needed to start over.

Perhaps Leo was in trouble with the University, which was only ten minutes from his home. Raphael reproached himself for thinking about it. Leo could go get bent! He didn’t give a shit about him. The filthy fucker had what he deserved.

He remembered Leonardo's distressed and upset expression, as he emerged from the director's office. Something had been said and a panicked Leo had tried to seize a chance to get out of something. Raph didn’t know what. He’d refused and Leo had then instinctively turned to his usual protector, who was unfortunately there and very sure of himself. Leo had turned to Raph first, but hearing his refusal had flung himself towards Donatello in great desperation.

Donatello had been so pleased with himself and had talked about a debt. It stank of blackmail and machination. The doctor was an incredibly rich son of a bitch. Perhaps the administrator of Mikey’s facility had been bribed, so that Leo would be manipulated and would run in blind panic to the evil doctor.

Something wasn’t clear.
No. He didn’t care about the filthy Leonardo anymore.

Well, fuck it!

Furious with himself, Raph put the books in a bag and headed to Columbia law school.

When he arrived, Raph regretted his impulsiveness. He was going to make a fool of himself. When he looked at his cell phone, he figured the Student Services at William and June Warren Hill was the best place to drop off Leo’s books. He went to see the person in the office and told some bullshit about finding books belonging to Leonardo Hamilton. The attendant recognized the name and this surprised the policeman. Sh must have thousands of law students.

"Do you want to go and give to him yourself? He’s working in the library at the moment like he always does at lunchtime."

Raph raised an eyebrow in astonishment, “You seem to know him very well.”

“Everyone does,” she replied, with a fond smile. "He’s such a nice boy.”

Raphael rolled his eyes. Leonardo must have been as charming with her, as he’d been with his own mother.

“Well, I don’t, so I’m asking you to give it to him.”

Raph hated how tempted he was to go to the library and to see Leo in his serious student clothes, his beautiful features in an expression of concentration. He was tired of Leo's gimmicks. He was a ruthless predator and Raph thought that Leonardo had chosen the right profession. He’d make a formidable lawyer.

Raph refused to think about it for the rest of the day. He went to the gym and was happy that the club was closed for the next two nights. Maybe smashing a bottle on the doctor's head would hurt his career. He had to relax.

The commissioner’s secretary called him. He didn’t know what Casey had said, but Raph was on medical leave until the following Monday.

Raphael was furious with his brother’s interference, but he was also relieved. He wasn’t ready.

On Tuesday and after shopping at the liquor store, he tried not to think about Leo and Mikey and got drunk alone at his place.

On Wednesday night, he went to the L. lounge, bought 3 cocktails for a girl and took her home. The sex was boring and it had been difficult to maintain an erection. Raphael found her skin soft and less pleasant to caress than Leo’s muscular body. Her teeth caught on his dick three times during a blowjob of fewer than two minutes and it took all of his self-control not to kick her out. But at least she wasn’t playing mind games and didn’t make a fuss about leaving after she’d been used, the next day. He’d paid $ 40 and so got what it was worth.

But on Thursday night, he decided he’d wallowed enough in self-pity and decided to go to the club. He didn’t even bother with his fake accountant glasses. Anyway, the camera-integrated one was still not ready. Leo had seen him without them when he was reading and driving, but for someone being so smart and quick-witted, had surprisingly not commented about Raph's part-time myopia.

More proof that Leo didn’t really give a damn about him.

Leo would probably not be at the club, because of his ankle and that was perfect. Raph didn’t want
to be distracted by lust, anger, jealousy, pain, or any negative feeling he’d feel if he saw the bastard again.
He knew he was supposed to be on medical leave, but he was on his own and wasn’t on a mission. And, if he had to be honest with himself, he had been slacking lately. He was going to control himself that evening and move the mission forward. He’d thought enough with his dick for the moment!

The attendant greeted him as usual and Raph went to the bar. The bartender was after all a good source of information and was harmless because he didn’t arouse any desire for him. Raph decided to mark the change by ordering a different cocktail. He studied the menu and then chose the "Blood Lust". It consisted of Scotch, strawberries, rosemary, vermouth, and orange bitter. The bartender handed him the glass and said, “You look like shit, but I have good news for you, my friend.”

Raph took a long sip and looking uninterested said, “Yeah?”

“Yes. The handsome Leo’s dancing again tonight. He’s been away for a week and is back. I know you appreciate him.”

It was, in fact, the worst news ever. Just hearing the name makes his insides churn. Raph composed himself and said, “I’m a little jaded. I thought of maybe asking for a “privileged ”moment” with another dancer tonight.”

The bartender nodded, "Yeah. He's very expensive and he's not going upstairs anymore anyway. The doctor has forbidden him from doing so.” The bartender leaned over and said in a low tone, “I think he’s maybe in love with him.”

Raph snorted, rolled his eyes and said, “No shit? Really? Getting laid would definitely help him.”

No. He wouldn’t learn anything from a man only realizing now that the doctor was madly in love with the dancer after witnessing his attitude nightly for months. Then, he wondered what point there was for Leo to dance if he couldn't fuck clients. Leo wouldn't earn money. Maybe he didn't need it anymore and was getting off by teasing some dumb guy.

“No idea, but taming Mr. Leo’s something. He’s young, but don’t let his cute face fool you,” the bartender explained, in a low voice.

Raph thought that was late advice, but taking a sip, he continued to listen.

“M. Leo has character and tenacity as hell. He’s a hard nut to break. A man of steel. Mr. Donnie must break his teeth on him. Even the owner seems scared of the boy.”

Raph’s ears perked up, interested. Not about Donatello, who could be broken by Leonardo’s stubborn nature, but by the mention of the owner. Leo had never talked about him. And what was the purpose of his presence in the fucking place? Knowing about Oroku?

“Really? How?”

“I don’t know, but nobody has seen him since Mr. Leo’s début. It’s a strange coincidence. Mr. Donnie spoke to him, but, that all. Anyway, he manages to do all the Oroku’s business now.”

Raph knew it! The doctor did indeed hold all the strings. He ventured a direct question. "And what’s his business?"

The bartender stepped back, as a customer sat down next to Raph. The policeman quickly turned,
thinking it was the doctor, but it was Leo himself. "Blue Bramble for my friend," Leo said.

Raph’s face flamed in anger and he spat, “I’m not your friend.”

Leo’s face was stoic and he said, “It doesn’t matter to me. I don’t want you as a friend.” The implication spoken in a husky tone didn’t escape Raphael’s attention.

"I don’t want anything to do with you," Raph hissed, trying his best to keep a cold expression.

Leo gave a small smile and said, “I don’t blame you. Enjoy your drink, but if you change your mind, be in the back alley at eleven p.m. I will wait for you.”

Raph snorted contemptuously and said, “Yeah. Count on me. As if there were no other fine asses to fuck.”

Leo whispered, “As soon as I received the books, I waited for you in front of Sony for five hours. I came back the next day and I waited for you again. I didn’t see you go out and no one there knew you. I gave your name and your description. Nobody could tell me anything. I owe you an explanation. After all I done, you return my book and my notes. You really care ... ”

Raph shuddered. Leo had really waited outside his fake work building and he knew that he needed to explain. No. He wouldn’t. He mechanically tasted the new drink.

“Yeah?” Raph said. “What was the description you gave? A dumb, bulky accountant?”

“No. The douchebag accountant,” Leo replied dryly. “Anyway, why did I trouble myself so much? Enjoy your drink and all the asses you want. I’m done with you!”

Raph wanted to snap that it was him, who was done with Leo, but trying to be the mature guy, Raph shrugged and said, “Go suck your doc’s dick. He’s useful and heals your sprained ankle.”

Just then, as if evil forces had summoned him, Donatello appeared, still impeccably dress.

Raphael, unimpressed, looked at him. The doctor’s face darkened, outraged at seeing his protégé by Raph’s side. A stab of protectiveness overcame Raphael. Leo could be beaten if he spoke to him. Then Raphael shook himself and thought that the doctor wouldn’t hurt him, because he wanted Leo in good shape for doing some crazy bat-shit foreplay.

“Think about what I told you,” Leo whispered, moving away.

Raph turned away, apathetic. He wasn’t going to be a victim of Leo’s games again. The dancer went to the doctor, who usually kept a low profile, but he didn’t this time and grabbed Leo’s head, shoving his tongue into Leo’s mouth and kissing him passionately.

Raphael, despite wanting to remain calm, thought that he was going mad with jealousy. Something had changed in Leonardo’s relationship with the doctor. Something that Raph couldn’t accept. Furious, he turned to the bartender.

"Who do you advise me to use?” Raph asked. “I want a pretty good fuck. I need it”

"They’re all quality here, but maybe Miss. Karai will satisfy you. She’s wild, but she’s worth it. The customers have told me that.”

Raph thought it was a good idea. She was well known to Leo and so, by the band, Donatello, she was no doubt, a good investment.
But bad luck continued to pursue him. The Japanese girl wasn’t listed as one of the menu choices, despite being present. The bartender explained, “Sometimes she can’t dance or do anything when she is on her dark mood. Maybe Mr. Leo would try to reason with her, but maybe not for you. He seems to like you and will maybe be jealous.”

Raph burst out laughing and said, "Him? Jealous? He’d first have to love something other than his own ass!"

“’I’m intuitive about these things."

"Yeah, right," Raphael said and laughed, as he finished the blueberry's drink Leo had ordered. Then he put the glass down and said, already slightly drunk, “The only jealous guy here is that damn doc and you know why, because he’s the only one here silly enough to be in love. I'm not! Leonardo, that jerk, neither. I will fuck who I want to fuck. We owe each other nothing!"he growled.

Upset, he made a gesture to have some refill, and the bartender handles him a new one, from a pale green color.

"There a 'Pillow talk', to put you in the mood, whatever you plan to do," the man said, winking to him.

Raphael imagined that a drink called 'Pillow Talk' would be something syrupy and strong, like most drinks with innuendo in their names. Instead, the bartender brought a tall glass with a creamy cushion of froth rising up to the rim. Its sweetness wasn’t cloying, but instead as muted and relaxed as a conversation in the afterglow. Like the one he had with Leo, once. Damn it, he had to stop thinking about this dick. Leo was fine shaking his ass for his doctor and Raph was done dealing with the madness and the creepy jealousy of Donatello.

Two drinks and almost two hours later, Raph had to admit that Donatello wasn’t the only guy, who was jealous in the place. Leonardo was dancing, despite his partner’s absence and the desire ran through his veins. That and the urge to fight. How the doctor could tolerate his lover being ogled was beyond him.

Trying to compel all his features to appear unimpressed, he listens to the song, unknow of him.

I ain't lookin' for a ring 'cause I got what I want
I ain't lookin' for a ring 'cause I got what I need
4 in the morning, I buy you a drink
6 in the morning, I take you back to my crib
I'll teach you things, baby, teach you things
Show you every move and make you reach for things
I'll teach you things, baby, teach you things
In the morning

So, Leo’s chosen song was about a girl, who didn't need a ring and Raphael thought that was ironic. The son of a bitch had wanted to force him into marriage and had then claimed the opposite. Leo would teach him shit! Leo could fuck himself! He was done, and the dancer won’t coax him by buying some fancy cocktail.

Furious, he looked at the stage.

Leo’s body was as graceful as a cat's as he danced, keeping in time with the music and the rhythm. Stretching his limbs, dancing effortlessly and wiggling his hips, a picture of eroticism, and Raphael thought he was even more beautiful than Greek Statue of some god. Leo's eyes gleamed, his cheeks
rosy, as he moved. Raphael thought that his dancing was, indeed, like poetry: beautiful, sensual, erotic and it awoke feelings in him that he hadn’t wished to feel, but Leo had that ability and he both hated and loved it.

He commanded to his eyes to look away of this forbidden fruit.

Raph took the opportunity to examine the clients and the doctor, so that he wouldn’t feed his longing for the dancer. The doctor’s eyes didn’t leave the dancer, devouring him with his burning eyes. He didn’t look sad and nervous, like he’d been two weeks ago, when he’d been distraught about the dancer’s lack of enthusiasm for him.

Donatello looked at the dancer like he owned him.

And a damn possessive owner, with that.

And a cold rage burned the sergeant to the core.

He turned his attention back to the stripper, to avoid being too tempted to crush Donnie's glasses in his geeky face.

Raph had to admit that Leo was more tantalizing than normal, but Raph didn't immediately know why. The dancer gazed at Donatello too much and as if his longing for him needed gasoline. The nerd was enough fond of him without all these lustful looks.

Then Leo did some thrusting motions, as if to an invisible partner and Raph's mouth grew dry, remembering when Leo had talked about 'popping his cherry'. Flushed, Raph looked away and noticed that a mesmerized Donnie was on the verge of a nosebleed.

Raphael then realized something. When Karai wasn't around, Leo was dominant in the dance. With his fierce and inflexible personality, Leo couldn't be so submissive and, as an alpha, he was extremely intoxicating.

As a customer yelled appreciative comment on the dancer's ass, Donatello bit his lip, his fingers tightening like hawk claws,

Raph guessed that Donnie's stiff posture, and his gaze which looked at nowhere other than Leo and his body that moved with the grace of a cobra, couldn’t stand others ogling his Leo. The doctor obviously wanted to take Leo in his Mercedes and drive far, far away to a deserted island or to a fancy condo with maximum security. For once, Raph could relate. He couldn’t see Leo reveal the satin skin of his thighs and make his expressions exalted, even fake, for others. He looked at Leo’s round and firm buttocks that were enhanced by ridiculous, but sexy latex panties, and his amazing, oiled, muscled thighs and lust and desire overcame him.

He had licked and kissed between those thighs and he craved doing so again. And between those thighs, there was the ultimate price. Thinking about Leo's warm, satiny skin, Raphael felt warmth pool in his groin and a bulge form in his pants; his erection straining against the material, painfully.

He checked his watch and saw that it would be 11 p.m., very soon. Maybe it was a trap and the doctor was waiting to chop off his hands and dick, but Raph didn’t care.

He’d go... Leo had just winked at him on stage and he knew he will regret if he did not take the opportunity.
Raph pulled a cigarette from his pack, as if to show his intention of smoking outside. He went around and went to his car. He took his revolver in case there was any trouble. One could never be too careful. When he turned the corner to go to the back alley, a door opened and Leo came out. There was a moment of hesitation between them and the dancer rushed at him, crushing him against the brick wall, desperately pressing his lips on the policeman’s. Raphael eagerly returned the kiss. Then he realized what he was doing. What a fool to suck face with the player even before he spoke!

He disengaged himself, “You told me that you owed me an explanation, so go ahead.”

Leo sighed, but more for the interruption of the kiss than because of the explanation.

"You remember that the director wanted to talk to me about Mikey’s family who was going to put him in an asylum? They are his guardians and can,” Leo said, distraught and Raph nodded slightly. He’d suspected something about that, but he said nothing. That wasn’t enough for an explanation.

Leo continued, “My opinion doesn’t count. I'm his big brother, but I don’t have a voice. There were only two ways to prevent that or at least to postpone it.”

“Finding a new guardian, for example?” Raphael asked, crossing his arms,” A dumbass love dork like me.”

“Yes,” Leo admitted. "I thought of you because Mikey seems to love you.”

“Bullshit! That was your plan from fucking day one. Why did you make a fuss about my name and ask if I knew an April? You knew she worked for the State Children's Services and I suppose she’s responsible for his record.”

“Yes,” Leo admitted, again, having the nerve to not seem ashamed by his lies and scheme. “I wanted to make you love me, so I could manipulate you to help me convince your sister to turn a blind eye about Mikey's file and leave him to us. And then, my plan was to disappear with my money and Mikey.”

Raph was shocked. Leo’s plan was even more horrible than he’d thought.

“So, what was the wedding story then? If you want to run and hide in California or wherever with your little brother? And your studies? ”
“My ambitions are nothing compared to Mikey’s well-being and about the wedding, I really fell in love with you and got swept away by how romantic it all sounded," Leo explained, but Raph was far of convinced. Leo was not this kind of guy."Your passion, your fighting spirit and your sweetness with my little brother. ..Not everyone would have done this and if Mikey loves you and blesses my choice, then ...”

Raph refused to let Leo say any more, because he didn’t want to believe his words or have hope on them.

"So, why did you run to your master if what you said is true?” Raph asked.

“I told you. There were two ways. The other was to have a medical diagnosis. You know, with a doctor's signature on an official letterhead. Now, it’s postponed for six months and he won’t go to the family anymore. He’ll stay at the institution all week. He’s safer and I feel better.”

Raph then understood: the doctor must have pushed for Mikey’s foster family to get rid of him. Then, Donatello had only to wait at institution’s exit for Leo to fell into his arms, like a beautiful, ripe peach.

Raph understood, but he refused to forgive the dancer so quickly. He still had some pride.

"So, what did you do to convince him to sign? Bend your knees disguised as anime cosplay? Declaimed a poem about his little dick?"

"I slept with him,” Leo said quietly and the confession had the effect of a dagger to Raph’s sternum, but he refused to show his rage, pain, and jealousy.

"I thought that asshole hated sex. Didn’t you say that? There was finally a dick under his lab coat?” Raphael said and sniggered.

Leonardo seemed displeased with his reaction and Raph smirked. The damn bastard was too often cocky. He won't let himself be coaxed, even less now that he know Leo has dared fuck with this crazy motherfucker. It was probably the reason the doctor has seem different. He has tasted Leo’s flesh and now, the fool thought he was owning it. But Leo could be a whore, he has no master and was only following his own laws.

"Donnie’s over his fears about that. I have nothing more to say,” Leo said dryly.

"Oh, because it’s now no longer Dr. Hudson? Now it's Donnie and tomorrow it'll be honeybun! I saw how he played hockey with his tongue right down your throat! It was revolting!” Raph snapped, unable to keep his cool façade any longer.

“You’re jealous,” Leo said quietly.

“Well, thank you, Captain Obvious! What an omniscient psychologist you are!” Raph sneered.

“I mean, you're jealous and that's stupid because I love you. You have no reason to be,” Leo said softly, his voice sweet; like he was confident he’d obtained what he wanted every time.

“No reason? Are you kidding me? What about the fact that you display your near naked ass to a bunch of horny guys? What about the fact that you admitted you had sex with another man? And the damn crazy nerd, no less! I don’t want your love at that price, admitting that I believe you,” Raph spat, his heart pounding."My boyfriend is mine, I don't share!"

Leonardo stepped towards him, but Raph pulled away. If the dancer touched him, he was done.
Leo’s hands were too fucking good to change his mind.

The dancer seemed greatly upset and remorseful. His voice was shaking and his features expressed desperation.

“What can I do to change your mind? Ask me for proof and I’ll give it to you, Peter. I could do anything for you. You’re the one I’ve been looking for all these years,” Leo pleaded.

Raph’s tongue spoke before he could stop it. "Let everything go, except the university and your brother.” Leo was silent and Raphael continued, “No more Donatello and no more dancing. Then I’ll accept a relationship with you.”

“You’re asking me something huge. Stopping dancing and seeing Donnie.”

Raph bit his lip, so he wouldn’t yell at the mention of “Donnie” again, instead of the formal Dr. Hudson.

"Are you that dumb? No man would want to see his boyfriend seduce other men by dancing naked and it’s out of the question that my lover continues attending to an ex, especially not him, who’s so madly in love with you.”

Leo tried to negotiate and said, “Be reasonable. I can’t drop both. You must choose which one is the most important to you.”

Raph was amazed by the stubbornness and boldness. Why was Leo so keen on being a stripper? It wasn’t only a question of money. It was something else, but Raphael didn’t care. Seeing Leo dancing was intolerable to him. And he didn’t want to think about the doctor's predatory eyes on Leo, like he owned him.

Raph shook his head in irritation and said, “No fucking way! I'm not as fucking rich as your damn nutcase doctor, but I sure as hell don’t need you to dance or to suck the asshole’s dick to pay for your food. We’ll see about your studies and your bro.”

Leo was silent for a moment. Then he sighed and said, “I’m a fool to love you that much. Please. Take me with you now, before Donnie sees us. He would find a way to keep me with me, and I’m tired.”

It took a dazed Raphael about fifteen seconds to recover from his shock. Leonardo had chosen him over a billionaire genius.

“You don’t have things to take?” Raph asked, still uncertain it was true or not.

Leo shook his head nervously and said, "No. Have you kept my clothes at your place?" Raph nodded. He’d put everything in a trash bag, but he’d hadn’t thrown it out and had stored it in a closet. “I have enough with that. Four shirts, four T-shirts, three pairs of jeans, two clean pants and my coat. My books are at the University, I don’t need anything. If I need socks, I’ll borrow yours. That is if you don’t mind.”

Raph was speechless again. Leo had listed all of his possessions in one sentence and was content with them, while the doctor would have paved him a path of pure gold.

Overwhelmed by a surge of happiness at the realization, Raphael approached, moving aside a strand of black hair to kiss his new boyfriend's cheek. "Are you sure about this? I'm not rich..."

"I don't care," Leo whispered. "Just kiss me already."
Euphoric, Raph hurried to crush his lips on Leo's. Never had a kiss so exalted the policeman, finding it more meaningful than others he'd had before.

"You may be my end," Leo said, as he broke the kiss and stroked Raph's cheek that was rough with a two-day beard. "You make me act senselessly."

At the same moment, when Leo slipped his hand into his own and Raph didn't think he could be happier, Donatello emerged from the shadows, his eyes as bright as carbuncles. "Leonardo, please think about your decision."

Leo barely managed to hold Raph, who wanted to eviscerate him, back. “I’m sorry, Donnie,” Leo said quietly, the uneasy anxiety in his voice.

The doctor lowered his head, his long arms on each side of his body, his hands clenched. His voice was rather soft, no doubt because he was trying to keep it low. “Do it, Leo, and it's over. You won’t be able to count on my protection anymore.”

Leo whispered, “You can’t do anything to me. Not for that. You're now in the same boat as the others. And I told you, I'm tired.”

The doctor nervously pulled out one of his long cigarettes and said, “Okay. Do what you want, Leo. I’ve only always wanted your happiness. I loved you so much, but I get that. You are tired. Go your way and be happy in this life.” But only by his voice, Raph could say it was pure bullshit. The doctor doesn't have any intention to leave the table.

The dancer stepped forward and kissed the doctor before Raphael could stop him. More gently than passionately, but on the lips, all the same, and the policeman’s face darkened in rage. He furiously pulled Leo backward.

"If you want to be my boyfriend, stop that and never do it again,” Raphael snapped. “Your lips are only mine to touch, just like the rest of your body”.

Donnie licked his lips as if he was savoring the taste of the exchanged kiss, “You can go get your things. Leo, you have money in your room and some personal items, but please don’t sell your watch to support yourself."It was probably only meant to drag Leo away from him and then having the possibility to threatened him again but it doesn't matter. Raph’s face darkened again in outrage and he spat, “I can fuck support him on my own. He won't sell shit!”

Leo shivered, not so foolish, took Raphael’s hand again and said, “No, Donnie. I don’t need anything. Thanks for your concern.”

Donatello, pale as someone who’d just lost all his fortune at the Casino, looked pleadingly at Leo one last time. It was so painful, to see this eyes full of love and longing for Leo, that Raph looked away, finding it unbearable, even though he hated the doctor.

Seeing the still stoic dancer, the doctor's mood changed and he said in a tone that was mixed with hate and pain, "It's the last straw. Leo, it's over now. You had just ruined your bright future !"

He then turned his wrath on Raph and snarled, "And you, good luck with your praying mantis. He can tear off your head and devour you, without remorse, in a blink of an eye, as soon as you become useless. I told you so. Leo's a predator. Not a sweet boy. And he is so ungrateful! I'm done."

"Goodbye, Don. You got what you wanted from me, the rest is your dream, not mine," Leo said icily. "Leave me alone, now, please."

"You know it wasn't what I wanted, but I don't care anymore. You're too deadly and hazardous. I
withdraw," Donatello replied, so upset, but using the same tone then Leo’s." I put so much on you
and was ready to do so more...But instead of this golden dream, you preferred to have sex with
this...moronic caveman."

Leo tugged on his arm and Raph followed him, despite his furious urge to fight, but as he turned the
corner, the doctor spoke one last time with a clear voice that was on the verge of being menacing, “I
talked to your boss at Sony.” He stared at Raphael for a moment and, without saying another word,
entered the club through the back door. Raph said nothing but turned pale. How could he confess to
Leo that he wasn’t at all who he’d claimed to be?

And what was he going to say to Casey?
A faint scent of lavender and smoke

Chapter Notes

I have now chapter 1 to 3 illustrated. If you thinks another moment/chapter is worthy to illustrate, tell me. I'll ask.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

He dismissed the ideas from his mind, taking advantage of the desirable thigh under his hand, as he left Chinatown to get back to Spanish Harlem. He didn’t know how he was going to explain things to Leo, his family and his boss, but that torment could wait until the next day. He’d devote tonight to passion.

To be honest, he wasn’t sure if he loved Leo in the sense of loving. He didn’t know him well enough. Raphael wasn’t a kid any longer. He’d turned 28 the previous July and was therefore able to distinguish between desire, romance and the complicity of a daily relationship.

He knew damn very well he wanted the law student and found his company both pleasant and charming. He knew that he wanted Leo for himself alone, felt a need to have him and to protect him, but perhaps that was only because of all Leo had gone through. Raphael had, however, wanted Leo, like a 6-year-old wanted the latest toy, for the simple reason that everyone wanted it. The toy, indeed, was attractive and cool and gave the illusion that owning it guaranteed happiness. Raphael had just gotten into deep trouble to obtain it.

He suddenly felt apprehensive and Leo sensing it, took his hand in his, gave it a reassuring squeeze and placed it on his swollen groin. "I want you, Peter. I want you to erase all the invisible marks of others and to replace them with yours. I want this evening to be like my first night, I want you to take me, claim me, mark me and brand me."

Blood rushed to Raphael’s head and flamed his cheeks. Leo always knew what to say in any situation to steer his boat wherever he wanted. "You sexy little shit!" he grumbled "You bet I will. You’ve driven me crazy right from the moment I met you. It’s payback time”

“Hmm. Looking forward to it. Actually, I can’t wait. You drive as slowly as a tortoise. Do you mind if I get you in the mood?”

Before Raphael could ask what he meant by that, Leo unbuckled the seat belt and leaned towards his lap.

“I’ve missed you so much, Peter. Your taste is addictive,” Leo whispered seductively.

Raph tightened his hold on the steering wheel, the lustful words leaving him dizzy with need and desire. Leo’s hand pulled out his swollen cock and Raphael felt incredibly aroused. Leo had woken the beast in him. None of Raphael’s girlfriends had been kinky enough to suck him off while he was driving. But Leo, the tease, stopped before he climaxed. "I want you in shape and I feel too horny to wait for you."

On their arrival at his place, Raphael lifted the dancer into his strong arms and began to climb up the
stairs, but Leo protested and said, “My ankle’s better and I can climb up the stairs by myself.”

“Shut up. You’re supposed to be romantic, remember? I like it and like carrying you.”

Leonardo smiled tenderly, “You’re such a big sap.”

Raphael grinned and said, “Well see if you still feel that way when my big rod is plugged into your tight hole.”

The policeman threw Leo onto the bed once they got upstairs and Leo smirked.

“Why not the other way around?” Leo asked.

Raphael took a moment to reply. It wasn’t the first time the dancer had suggested it.

“Why? Do you prefer the opposite?” Raphael asked, hoping Leo didn’t.

Leo thought a minute, “I don’t prefer anything. I don’t mind with you, but if I wanted a switch, I’d like my partner feeling comfortable to do so.”

“And what do you want tonight?” Raphael asked a bit anxiously.

Leo said with a knowing smile, “You’re not ready. You will be eventually, so I can wait.”

Raphael exhaled a deep sigh of relief, realizing that he’d held in his breath and mumbled a barely intelligible thanks.

“I’m yours now, Peter. I can compromise, just as you will for me.”

That’s the trap, Raphael thought and immediately dismissed the thought, because Leo was right. It was only fair.

“Sexy, relax,” Leo said calmly and gently. “We don’t have to go there if you don’t want to. There’s plenty of time for us to get to know one another and to learn to trust one another.”

Raphael was amazed at how thoughtful Leo was. How was the beautiful and sensual creature, whom he barely knew, in his bed? And how come he wanted to get to know him and wanted him as his mate?

“Don’t think so hard, Peter. You’ll hurt yourself. Just love me, like you mean it.”

Raphael’s doubts vanished. He made love to his boyfriend. He no longer felt so doubtful about the veracity of the tenderness in his lover’s gestures and he no longer believed that the words were only meant to soften him. Leo had told him about his plan. He’d dropped the dancing and the doctor, which were proof that he was determined to change and to live more seriously. As soon, as he finished, Leo leaned against him, muttering, "Let's sleep. I have classes tomorrow and you have to work.”

"I'm on vacation this week,” Raphael lied, telling himself that the afterglow wasn’t a good time to confess.

"I know you can’t cook, so I’ll get up and make you breakfast and then I’ll drive you to your university." Leo protested that he could get cereals or yogurt and fruit and walk to the University or take the subway, but Raph insisted and after a last kiss, Leo felt asleep.

Despite the warm body beside him, Raph didn’t sleep, his mind playing catastrophic scenario all night long.
The next day, the fake accountant left his boyfriend at the University. There, passionately kissing in the car, wishing him a good day, he felt the courage to face his new reality. He didn’t have to go to work and he had to take advantage of the time to think. Leo only had a half day on Friday. He’d promised the young man that he’d fetch him at noon. They were going to eat hamburgers together and chat. Leo had suggested they go shopping afterward, so he’d feel better settled. He’d explained that his money was in an anonymous safe, but that he wouldn’t touch it now. He still had the $800 stolen from the doctor and he’d joked that it was enough to buy a toothbrush. Then, maybe he could find a part-time job as a server. His studies had been paid for the entire school year and he was hopeful for a scholarship the following year. But he was firm about paying for his personal needs, as well as for half of the groceries.

Raph considered that nothing was worth more than a shared bed anyway.

What worried him more was what he was going to say.

He’d finally decided, out of cowardice and by prudence, to postpone the inevitable discussion with his family. No need to introduce Leonardo as a boyfriend at the Sunday meal if he realized, a week later that it was finally impossible. So, he called his mother to warn her that he’d spend the weekend in Northampton at the family’s second home. A lie, certainly, but overlooking the beautiful landscape.

His mother tried to ask him some questions about the "lovely boy", but Raph managed to dodge all of her attempts. He didn’t call Casey, asking his mother to take care of it and that alone was already an alarm bell. Raphael had always got on very well with his brother, whom he was very close to, but Gabriela Gomez-Jones didn’t ask any questions.

So he spent a quiet weekend with his boyfriend and Raph, apart from feeling uneasy for a bit in public, because he was being cuddled by a man, noticed that having a boyfriend was just like having a girlfriend. It was nice holding someone’s hand if he wanted to. Just a loving look from Leo made him feel warm and fuzzy inside, and Leo wasn’t as demanding as Lisa had been, considering his past as an expensive escort. He was content with anything Raphael suggested.

Raph suggested pizza at home on Friday evening and it seemed to suit the young man perfectly. Lisa wouldn’t have wanted to, because she wanted to go out, but Leo was considerate.

Leo was affectionate and didn’t deny him hugs, kisses, and loving words. He took them and offered the same, but with ease, was natural and it was always when Raphael wanted to.

Leo was smart, could hold a conversation and he was sometimes sassy. It annoyed Raph sometimes but it was always with a hint of amusement. Leo was fun too, sharing some of his tastes in martial art. Leonardo was pretty good at ninjitsu. He briefly thought that Leo was better than him after a demonstration. Then he dismissed the idea. Raph was only blinded by love.

The Saturday was similar and Raph was thankful for his medical leave, because how could he go to the club and explain it to his lover? No matter how much he thought about it, he didn’t see how he could tell Leo the truth. It was as if the opportunity never presented itself. One piercing blue look and Raph deflated and couldn’t do it.

But a rational part of his brain admitted that the longer he waited, the worse it would be. The worried part of his being feared that Leonardo, despite apparently loving him, might not care enough for him and their relationship yet. Maybe if Leo learned the truth in a few weeks’ time, he’d be too happy and too in love with Raphael to have the courage to leave him. And maybe then enough time would have passed and Donatello would have found someone else to obsess over.
The doctor's last threat hadn't left his mind. Donnie obviously knew that he didn't work at Sony as an accountant. He'd been suspicious about that from the beginning. But did he know he was an undercover cop?

What would Leo say if he knew?

But right now he didn't know if he was thinking too much. He'd just considered himself in a relationship again and he was happy, even though they'd only been together for two days. He felt more balanced than he'd done in ages, but he feared it would end abruptly if Leo learned that he was a cop on a mission. So he was trying very hard not to put all of his heart and soul into something that might not work out. Something that might blow up in his face at any moment.

A few days passed, and Raphael felt that he was indeed falling into a happy routine and he couldn't understand how he'd lived so long without Leo's kisses. It was a frigging mystery how Leo had become so addictive in such a short time. The young man made him feel so warm inside with just a look or by a word. It was crazy and it didn't actually seem like Leo was trying to seduce him. He was just nice and caring, witty and smart and have much in common with him. And Leo was so horny in bed. Raphael had never had such incredible sex before! No, Leo had certainly no competition to fear about sex with regards to Raphael's past lovers. Raph couldn't recall having such a willing and imaginative partner. What he loved the most was when Leo played the power-bottom. The student was controlling how he must fuck him with sharp command, demanding to be called 'My leader' and Raph was thrilled to the core, to obey and pleasure him as he demanded.

Of course, he wouldn't tell Leo. The bastard was already smug enough and he did not want to sound unmanly, admitting to getting turned-on by being bossed around by a younger and frailer man. But Raph knew, by Leo's sly grin, that the student knew perfectly well that Raph had a kink about following orders. Leo could be bottom all the time, for he was not a bottom at all, and Raph would not have wished him any different, listening to the praises escaping Leo.

There were other foreplay and roleplay, which he had never dared to hope to live out before. He was sometimes bewildered in the face of Leo's creative and kinky suggestions to spice-up their sex life, feeling like he was in some kind of porn movie with dialogue, like 9½ Weeks. Raph was not complaining, in fact, he considered this to be living a sex life that people could only dream of.

But when Leo was just in front of his bed, moving, like a cat, strip-teasing in a more enticing way than all the Demi Moore's of the world, beckoning Raph's desire and then, giving his lips, it was real as Leo's silky and warm inside.

Leo felt so damn good each time, and maybe even more. Leo’s lustful smiles ignited his blood in a good way, going right in his groin, but swelling his heart too. It was Love. Raph had this and with such wonderful lover, and he cherished his treasure. If he believed in God, he would think that his mother’s prayers had worked, but maybe it was his karma, rewarding Raph after he had tried so hard for the last ten years to make amends and to give himself to the good.

Leo was so much more than a body, too. The evening that Leo showed him a session job for which he had a A+ mention, Raphael's heart swelled with pride. He’d never had such a note. His lover was exceptional, so intelligent and gifted. He wanted to take him to a fantastic restaurant to celebrate, but Leo refused.

"Order in Chinese and make me cum," Leo said. “That's enough.” Raphael was happy to oblige. Leo didn’t want him to spend money at all like Lisa had. Anyway for Leo, maybe he would.

Leo was a perfect match for him, ticked all the boxes and it no longer bothered him that Leo was male, except when he thought about his job and his brother.
He’d unnecessarily dreaded the moment of returning to work. The mission was either canceled or entrusted to someone else. He wasn’t sure, but he did notice how some colleagues looked at him. With a heavy look, but he didn’t care. There was now no huge obstacle between his lover and himself. Raphael didn’t have to lie about going out at night. There were already too many lies between.

Leo always volunteered on Sundays and Tuesdays, but thanks to the doctor and Mikey no longer living with his foster family, Leo could visit him on his own on Thursdays. Leo, after all, no longer worked and Raphael didn’t mind accompanying him on the visits to his little brother. The boy, even if he can't speak, treated him with familiarity and confidence and Raph began to find him endearing.

This relationship was the most close of perfection that he could imagine and he was so afraid to lose it, being extra careful to continue to act like an accountant until Leo will be ready to learn the truth.

Then it was Thanksgiving.

All week long, he’d dreaded it, knowing it was approaching. He couldn’t avoid his family forever and not return their calls. Leo must have sensed it, because that Thursday morning, marking what could be called their first week of being together, he stretched like a cat and said, “I know what you’re thinking, Peter. It’s Thanksgiving and you have the dinner with your family. No need to worry about it. I’m going to see Mikey like I told the institution. I don’t want to leave my brother alone on a holiday. Then I must study. Life is sadly not just about sex. I'll see your family at Christmas if you want me to, so, you’ll have an extra month to prepare them."

Raph kissed his mate, who was so understanding and sensitive.” I must go through some shit. Nothing you have to worry about, babe.”

Raph had left alone, around 3 p.m., after a passionate romp between the sheets. He was gone, while Leo, getting out of the shower, was settling down to study. Raph had never told him outside of the bedroom, but after a week had passed, he decided that he could do it. “I love you, babe. I’ll be back around 10 pm. High five Mikey for me.” he said, before he left.

The blue eyes had become tender, “I love you too.”

Upon his arrival, his mother noticed that he looked happy. Then Casey had mumbled that Raph had indeed smiled like an idiot all week at work, while he’d told the bosses that Raphael was cracking under the pressure of his work and was struggling to cope after a painful breakup. Casey had felt like a fool, seeing his brother behave the way he had.

“Fuck you, Case!” Raphael hissed, pissed off. “I asked you for shit. I was fucking fine!”

"Fine, my ass, after the story about the little whore....” Casey snapped.

Raph was shocked, interrupting his brother before he finished, and said in a low voice, "Who are you calling a whore? Lisa?"

“Of course not! She was unworthy of you, but I meant the boy...”

Raph didn’t give him time to explain further. His fist slammed into his brother’s jaw and he yelled, “Don’t call him that!”

Casey remained incredulous for a moment, holding his aching jaw. Then April rushed between them, while their mother burst into noisy sobs.

"It's a family celebration,” Gabriela said, “How can you do this to me? I’m glad your father is dead,
so he doesn’t have to see this.”

The mention of their father always threw a bucket of cold water over their arguments. Casey recovered first, his temper though easy to ignite, was easier to calm than his brother’s. "Don’t talk about it anymore," he suggested with a shrug.

Raph was shaking with rage from head to foot, almost frothing at the mouth, his green eyes flashing, seemingly unwilling to drop the subject.

His mother placed a soothing hand on him and said, “Raphael, your brother’s only worried about you. He has a bad way of expressing it, but I think you’re fine. Have a glass of wine.”

Raph, still angry, accepted the glass, trying to calm himself so that he wouldn’t crush it in his hands.

Although everyone had started talking about something else, meaning his mother and April, Casey just answering in monosyllables, Raph remained gloomy. Although there was no direct link between Casey’s insult and Leo, Raphael was suddenly wondering a lot.

Leonardo had very easily accepted not accompanying him and had even suggested it. Raphael had taken for granted that his lover had been empathetic, coupled with his desire to see his little brother and his real need to study.

But did he know the student enough to blindly trust him? Maybe Leo had returned to his bad habits as soon as he’d left? Of course, in a few short hours Leo couldn’t go to the club, screw several customers and return home, but he could see Karai. The student had never said her name during their time together and yet she’d seemed so close to him. The Asian dancer seemed to appreciate him a lot.

Raph remembered her back, arched in pleasure, while her dance partner brought her to climax. But, he must admit, as he stared into his glass at the Burgundy contents, which reminded him of the doctor, he mostly feared Donatello, such a rich, powerful, clever man, who seemed to know his lover lot better than he did.

Maybe the doctor’s thin lips had licked Leo’s abdomen, burying his tongue in Leo’s belly button, like he’d done earlier. And Donatello’s mouth was lost in the fine, black hairs, at this very moment.

"Raphael.”

Coming out of his thoughts, he noticed that in his escalating jealousy, he’d crushed the glass his hands, the wine spilling onto the white tablecloth. He remembered the cuts on the doctor’s palms.

Leo was pouring blood onto him, without even lifting a finger.

He realized that everyone was looking at him with concern, even Casey.

Raph shook his head and said in a false casual tone, “Sorry. I didn’t pay attention.”

He must have been disbelieved, because he saw April elbow his brother.

“Raph, bro,” Casey said worriedly. “I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to upset you.”

Raph made a nonchalant gesture with his hand, while pulling his cell phone out of his pocket. Leo might have sent him a text.

There was no message and the disappointment of not seeing a small envelope icon was intolerable. It was only 7 p.m., he hadn’t finished half of his plate, but he knew it was useless. He wasn’t going to eat anything now.

"I think I'll go. I’m tired.”
Gabriela Gomez-Jones immediately said in a sad voice with tears in her eyes, “You can’t leave, Raphael. I don’t see you anymore. Please stay.”

It was exaggerated, but seeing the tears in his mother’s eyes, Raph, who’d already stood, sat down again. If he left now, his mother would never let him live it down.

"Okay, Mom. I’ll stay a little longer.”

But he couldn’t help feeling a little uneasy the entire time, as he tried not to think of the possible scenarios that could be happening. The law student was happy with him, right? They got on well and the sex was amazing, but assuming he wasn’t, would it be so bad if Leo left him? No matter how hard he tried to convince himself of the opposite, the truth was that Leo had become a big part in his life. His caresses, his charismatic personality, everything had become quickly addictive and necessary to his happiness. He felt that even if the relationship with Leo ceased after such a short time, it would be more difficult for him to recover from it than it had been from the breakup with Lisa. Pouring another glass of wine, he thought that it was perhaps because for the first time in his life he was in real love.

Gabriela, after having watched him for nearly an hour and seeing that her son was sullen and gloomy, suggested that he did indeed seem tired and he should rest. Maybe he had the flu. Despite his mother’s pain, Raphael agreed. Anyway, moping in front of his family wasn’t much better. It was 8 p.m. Not soon enough for Leo to take offense at his apparent lack of confidence, but enough so that if the young student had something to reproach himself with, Raph would surprise him. After hugging his brother more out of obligation than out of love, he jumped into his car and finally gave in to the temptation to text his boyfriend.

"Hey, what r u doing?"

To his relief, Leo replied rather quickly.

“Pretty busy here with my studies. You?”

He hesitated to tell the truth. He could tell the student he was on his way home, but then Leo would have time to prepare. He preferred to surprise him, but without lying. "I miss you."

Leo only sent a heart icon and the words “See you soon. I’ll be waiting for you.”

Raph smiled. He had the intention. Arriving without Leo knowing, he could always pretend to be too much in love with the ex-dancer and that he was missing him.

A traffic jam slowed him down, but, he opened his apartment door at 9 p.m., his heart racing in excitement. Despite his instinct that had been warning him for two hours that something was happening, he hoped to be wrong. He was quickly disappointed. The apartment was empty. Furious, he looked at Leo’s notebooks on the table. The student seemed to have worked, but he couldn’t be sure. Maybe he was stressing for nothing and Leo had just gone to see Miley. That must be it, he thought, trying to convince himself, and pouring a glass of liquor. He sat on the sofa and forced himself to remain calm and not to text his lover.

Twenty-five minutes later—it seemed far longer—he heard footsteps behind the door. Leo opened it and surprise appeared in his eyes, but he quickly composed himself. "Peter, you’re already home?" he asked with a smile.

Raphael refused to be circumvented, “Where the fuck were you, Mr. Model student?” he asked crossly.
Leo’s smile widened, but the policeman, accustomed to reading the non-verbal language, though it was insincere. “What do you mean, Peter? After I’d finished studying, I went to see Mikey and then I jogged back, because I didn’t want to miss you for a minute. Let me shower and I’ll join you.”

Suddenly alarm bells rang out in Raphael’s head. The unfaithful lover always showered after their secret trysts. He knew it. He’d already been an unfaithful boyfriend. Clenching his teeth, he stood up, but Leo stealthily evaded him and slipped into the bathroom. For Raphael, the evasion was an admission. Leo must have done something deserving of reproach.

Raphael knocked furiously on the door and said, “Open the fucking door, you damn bastard.”

Leo opened it, looking surprised at his pissed off expression. "Why are you suddenly so aggressive? Did something upsetting happen at your mother’s house?”

Raph ignored the question and sniffed the young man. He knew he was acting primitively, but he didn’t give a shit. He had to know if the son of a bitch and so-called lover was cheating on him.

Leo’s hair smelled faintly of flowers and smoke and Raphael yelled, “Why do you smell like fucking lavender?” He gripped Leo’s bicep, digging his fingers into it and added, “You did it again? You bent over for the damn obsessed, crazy nerd?”

Leo pulled away from the vice grip, “You’re delusional, Peter,” he said coldly. "You’re the one acting crazy and obsessed right now. I did nothing at all. I went to see Mikey and I washed him and drank floral tea there. And for your information, I never bent over for Donnie. He did. He didn’t treat me like a submissive girl like you always do.”

“Fuck you! I never considered you a submissive girl,” Raphael shouted. “And don’t try to change the subject. You have the motherfucking geek’s smell on you.”

“No, I don’t. Your jealousy is making you think so. Stop acting like a mad caveman!”

“I don’t care how I’m acting! You’re mine,” Raphael growled. "And I ain't the fuck jealous of this dickless clown!”

“You accused me to have sex with him, and then call him dickless. Make up your mind, geez!” the law student pointed out, with a sweet smirk. "I know I’m yours. I’m not the one denying it. You do,” Leo replied quietly, doing a complete 180 degrees. “And you know it. You were there when I chose you over Dr. Hudson. He was mad at me and doesn’t care about me anymore.” The calm acceptance after a storm, unsettled the policeman. Maybe Leo was telling the truth. And Raph had to admit he didn’t want to discover that he was lying. He wouldn’t willingly let Leo go and the cocky bastard knew it.

He looked him straight in the eyes and said, "Is that the truth?” Leo nodded and said it was and Raph decided to drop it, wrapping his arms around his lover and burying his nose in his black hair. “Please don’t lie to me.”

"Never. I love you, Peter. If you don’t like my scent, come in the shower with me,” Leo suggested seductively and winked.

Raphael smiled faintly and refused. He suddenly needed time alone to think. “No, I'm tired. I’m going to bed. Join me afterward.”

Lying in bed, Raphael mentally replayed the confrontation with his boyfriend. Leonardo had seemed sincere, but had he only seen what Leo had wanted him to see? But he had nothing special to offer to Leo. Why would Leo play him when he could have the biggest fish, like Donatello?
He thought back to the doctor's hint and Raph's treatment of Leo as a girl. The student seemed to be resentful and Raph thought that if Leo wanted to top and he didn't let him, he'd look elsewhere. When Leo joined him in bed, his hair still wet, he moved towards Raph and he stopped him. “Leo, I don’t want you thinking that I think you’re a girl or a sub. You can do me if you want. I’ll bottom.”

“You’re just saying that, because of Donnie…”

“Shut up! Don’t say that damn name again!” Raph roared. “This has nothing to do with it. I want it because I want it. That’s all.”

Leo moved close and looked him in the eyes. He was pleased with what he saw, because he kissed him with even more passion than he usually did. “I’ll be sweet,” Leo said huskily and a shiver of expectation ran down Raphael’s spine. Bottoming wasn’t something he’d fantasized about, but he wanted to do that for Leo and show him he loved him.

Leo spent so much time worshiping his body that his nerves failed to crack more than once. He stiffened when Leo’s tongue and fingers penetrated him like the previous time. “Easy, sweetheart,” Leo murmured lovingly. His anxiety must have shown on his face, because Leo suggested a change, as he stroked the inside of Raphael’s thighs. “Peter, one word and I’ll stop. I don’t want to push you into anything that makes you uncomfortable.”

“Go ahead,” Raphael whined, though he tried to make his voice firm and confident.

Leo lubed him up, lined his dick up at Raphael’s entrance and pushed in. He whispered compliments and encouragements, but Raph was too shocked to listen. He could say, however, that Leo was pushing in slowly and carefully. Leo looked at him with such love and consideration the whole time and Raphael had never felt so exposed and fragile. It was unnerving.

Raphael bit his lips at the point of burst them not to yell. The pleasure was pain and his feelings were too visible.

With Leo's hypnotic eyes boring into his own with an expression of focus and care, Raphael had never felt so special and cherished. All of Leo's attention was devoted to bringing him pleasure and despite it being as painful as hell, and it was weird being so closely watched, he knew he should be happy. But a hint of lilac seemed to shine in Leo's eyes, making him remember the damn lavender smell and he felt a new stab of jealousy. Maybe when he was eating his turkey, Leo had looked at the doctor the same way. Leo, buried in him, sensed the tension and said, "Easy, Peter. Just feel our love and relax." Raphael bit his lip, trying not to yell. It was a strange feeling. A mixture of pain and pleasure. And he knew that, unable to hide his raw emotions, that they were visible. "I just want to make you mine and make you feel good. » his partner whispered gently.

Then Leo hit something inside of him and all fear vanished, as Leo began to thrust and stab at it, causing pleasure to course through Raphael’s body and his toes to curl.

A while later, Raphael climaxed in a strangled cry, soon joined by his partner.

Leo nuzzled his cheek and said, “Thank you. If you don’t want to do it anymore, we don’t have to. I saw your discomfort and understand it, but you still did it out of love. I love you enough not to ask for it again.”

Raph was cuddled and fusssed over, but he didn’t answer. He was ashamed of himself and was more convinced of Leo’s infidelity and lies, yet he’d insisted on bottoming instead of kicking him out.

Next time, he swore. If he doubted Leo again, it would be over.
Chapter End Notes

Sorry for the little action in this chapter, but I swear the plot will come back in force in the next chapter.
The last straw

Chapter Summary

An ugly truth is unfolded

The next day, Raph could tell that something had changed for Leo, between having cheated or letting him bottoming; whatever the reason, he was being… extra nice.

The student had started the day, by waking him with his hot mouth on Raphael’s cock. When he had been sure that Raph indeed had a morning woodie, Leo had asked if Raph was willing to let him ride him. It was not an offer Raph could refuse, and Leo knew it, and so, Raph was already mid-way into him before he was able to groan a yes as an answer.

Leo had gyrated his hips with an incredible eagerness and Raph had protested.

“Shit, babe, slow down! And stop moaning like that, I don’t wanna cum yet!”

Leo had snorted at this.

“You will take what I give to you and shut up. I’m in charge,” he said in his commander voice, which was turning him on. Raph kind of hoped it was not too apparent, but it was probable that Leo, who spoke so many languages, could read body language and mind, too.

After ripping a climax from him, Leo had laid down, tired out, cuddling him and Raph had felt it was like an apology. Leo often expressed his feeling through sex. Maybe he had never learned another way. It was sad to think about. But, he had promised himself, rolling over to take the other man in his arms, kissing his black and moist hair, that Leo’s dark days were over. He would take care of him.

And then, one month passed without any hitches. Just sweet kisses and fucking. Leo’s kisses did not have the same fruity taste as before, but he still craved them, biting his bottom lip when he was not eager enough for Raph’s liking. Leo’s kisses were still sweet, but with a hint of rawness that they did not have before. They tasted real; like if now that Leo’s love was no longer covered with fake-sugar, but genuine love. Maybe that was the key to this enigma. Leo tasted of real love.

Leo never asked him to bottom again and a very grateful Raph was tender and patient with his actions until Leo cracked and begged him to stop his teasing. Nobody had ever aroused his desire as Leo had. With just one look, Raphael frantically stripped them for the next round in bed. Their daily life was fun too and he’d never felt so much complicity with another person before, even his brother.

Raph was still not tired of Leo’s body, despite all the times he believed he had already visited every hole and crevice. There was always something new and he loved to touch each part and watch what Leo’s reaction would be. He wanted to learn his lover’s body, to give him even more pleasure. Leo deserved only the best, to accept staying with such an ordinary guy like him.

All was so precious and stunning on his lover, and he couldn’t help but tell him how beautiful he found him, not being the type of guy to hold back anything. Usually, Leo accepted his praise with ease, but there were times when the compliments about his eyes made him uneasy.
“I have never seen this hue of blue in any eyes than yours, bae. You must have some Scandinavian blood. The closest to yours I ever saw was on an Ikea flyer!” he had joked, meaning it as a compliment.

It was not really an amazing praise, he had thought right after, sensing Leo tensing and staying silent. Shameful, he had tried to find another comparison, more poetic, talking sky, lakes, flowers, and other girl's stuff, but Leo had interrupted him rather harshly.

“There are just blue. No need to make a big deal of it!”

Raph had felt very bad for a few minutes. To a guy having seduced Donatello with his poetry, and who Raph knew for his skill in speech, Leo must really find Raph pathetic and unworthy. Leo had better compliments about his eyes before. Abashed, Raph had tried to raise up to cook breakfast, but Leo had stopped him.

“I’m not hungry, let me suck you off. It will do it.”

Still, embarrassed and not sure how to feel, he could not turn back this. Leo was a mystery to him, but a mystery with skillful hands and tongue, and Raph could not ask for more. It would be pushing his luck. He could not demand answers when each day, he was playing an act himself.

Dressed in his fake accountant suite, Raphael left Leo at the university every morning, with a kiss and stopped at a Starbucks to go into the bathroom to dress in his Sergeant uniform that was concealed in the trunk of his car, but Leo's love was worth all this trouble. His work day was busy; his job making sense now that someone he really loved was waiting for him at home. When he finished his day, he went to meet Leo in the library, where he was waiting for him.

Leo never wanted to speak about his past, despite all of Raph’s attempts.

“You know enough about me. My past doesn’t matter. Let’s say I was born the day we met.”

It was supposed to be flattering, but it made Raph wonder a lot. He needed to know more about his lover’s painful past so that he could help him heal and also so that he could ease his own worries. Leonardo seemed to be rather mysterious and unpredictable. Way too often for Raph’s liking. And he hated the idea of the damn Donatello knowing about his boyfriend’s supposed suffering soul better than he did.

Christmas was fast approaching. Raph had avoided, like the plague, returning to his mother's house since Thanksgiving. He’d answered her calls but had hung quickly. But the situation couldn’t last forever and he told himself that he had no reason to be ashamed of his lover. Leo was a charming and smart man with a bright future.

Anyway, his mother had always had the wrong idea that he was gay and wouldn’t be shocked. And Casey would have learned his lesson, now understanding that he wouldn’t accept the slightest criticism about his mate.

But the problem was that Leo was still unaware that his name was actually Raphael Jones. He had to tell Leo the truth. Anyway, he couldn’t stand being called Peter anymore. He needed to hear Leo’s sweet voice call him “Raphael.” Now that he’d been in a relationship for more than a month, he was less afraid that Leo would leave him on an impulse. The young man seemed as happy as he was in their relationship.

Now that the young man's session was over, the situation was becoming untenable. He was tired of
changing his suit quickly as if he were a fucking Superman. He’d tell Leo the truth on the morning of the 25th. To better convey the truth, he’d long thought about what to get his lover as a present. He had a weeklong vacation. Leo was also on vacation, so he’d thought of spending a few days in Miami on the beach. The reservation was in his name and so he thought to leave the hotel reservation papers was a good way to start the subject.

Now it was the 24th and, as agreed, they were getting ready to see Mikey this day and "Peter's" family, the next day. Leo had volunteered to help serve a Christmas dinner and Raph, touched by his boyfriend’s altruism, had been happy to be able to accompany him. Leo had bought his little brother a new art kit and Raph had asked to contribute to the cost of it.

It was almost 4 p.m., and they were about to leave for Mikey’s institution. They showered, which was another opportunity for incredible sex. Leo, now used conditioner, because he had longer hair, so Raph left the shower before him. He went out at the right moment to hear the doorbell ring. He frowned. No one apart from his immediate family, whom he was going to see the next day usually visited him. A knock sounded on the door before he had time to speak into the intercom. The person must have taken advantage of someone else's entry.

He opened the door and was amazed to see Lisa. "What the fuck?" he barely managed to ask, before the pretty blonde launched herself at him.

“I miss you so much, my love. I made a terrible mistake.”

Raphael, too shocked, remained stiff in her arms for a good five seconds. Then, recovering, indignation overwhelmed him and he pushed her away. Leo wore just a towel and was behind him. “Who is she?” Leo asked jealously and Raphael’s insides twisted. Leo was finally jealous too. It meant that he was precious to him and Raphael was ecstatic.

“Who is he?” Lisa demanded, outraged that Leo was obviously intimate with her ex because he was practically naked. “Oh, my God! Are you cheating on me with a man? ”

"Cheating?" Leo repeated and the panic took precedence over Raph. He had to get Lisa out now, especially before she called him by his real name. Leo couldn’t learn the truth from her.

"Fuck you,” Raphael snapped. “You had your chance. I'm with him and I love him, so go fuck your dentist and leave me the fuck alone.”

Lisa whined, but Raph dreading too much that she’d reveal things dragged her out without listening to her. “Raph, I made a mistake,” Lisa said. “You're the one I love.” Raphael didn’t answer, dragging her down each floor. Once on the ground floor, he opened a door, pushed her out, and ignoring her pleas, said, “Never come back here. If you do, I'll call the cops and tell them that you’re harassing me.”

“Raph, please!”

But the door was already closed.

Back in his apartment, Raph saw that Leo, still wearing a towel, was waiting with his arms crossed. He again asked coldly who the woman was. “That was Lisa, my ex...nothing worthy you worry about, bae.”

Leo narrowed his eyes, doubt showing on his face. “Why did she come here if she’s your ex? And why does she say that you cheated on her with me?”

Raph quickly shook his head, thinking that a jealous Leo was cute, but he didn’t want him to feel
that way for long. He knew how jealousy could ravage and consume a person.

“She’s crazy, Leo. I told her that I love you and that I’m with you, now. The rest doesn’t matter.”

Leo’s beautiful lips still pouted and Raph tenderly kissed them. "Don’t be silly, Leo. What would I do with her when I have you?" Leo stood silently and the policeman pulled him out of his muteness by smacking his buttocks. “Come on. We’ll be late for the meal.”

The student smiled softly and said,” Are you really eager to go?"

"You know how much I like Mikey. I think it’s great that you’re volunteering, babe, and it’s only natural that I want to help you."

Leo's eyes shone with love and tenderness and he said, “Yes. Let’s hurry up.”

Raph went back into the bathroom, starting to shave, and he suddenly realized something. "Did you use the laser? You have no hair on your chest and your beard is hardly there. Just a few hairs."

Leo coldly answered yes and Raph thought that his boyfriend was really stupid to still be resentful about Lisa.

At Mikey’s school, most of the patients were present, waiting impatiently. The employees were also present. Leo gently lets himself be hugged by Mikey's classmates. It was new. It seemed like the kid had been very possessive of Leo before Raph came onto the scene. It was a break for Leo, who’d joked that he was surrounded by possessive males. Raph no longer claimed that he wasn't possessive and Leo had only to remind him of what had happened at Thanksgiving to make him ashamed.

Leo told a Christmas story after the meal. Then gifts were distributed, both from the establishment and from the families of the young children, who sent a present to compensate for abandoning their offspring at Christmas.

Leo and Raph waited to be alone with Mikey to give him the art kit, so as not to arouse the envy of others. The kit had been expensive. Leo hadn’t told him the price, only saying that there were 350 pencils in a beautiful suitcase. Raph knowing nothing about it had handed him a $ 50 banknote, believing that he’d paid for about half of the gift.

Leo had also brought about twenty lollipops for his brother and thanked Raph very fondly for his involvement in giving his little brother a much better Christmas than he’d had in the past. “Next year will be even better,” Raphael said. He thought about that promise again, as Leo’s head rested on his shoulder, while they watched Mikey unwrapping his presents, excitement shining in his eyes, and acting like a real kid.

Raphael was thinking about the future. He knew that they couldn’t do it immediately. His relationship with Leo was only just over a month old, but someday they could be his guardians. There was an age gap of 14 years and a few months between him and Mikey. Leo had told him that his brother’s birthday was on Halloween. Mikey could almost be his child. Raph kissed the dark hair that brushed against him. “And when’s your birthday, babe?” Raph asked.

“The end of November,” Leo said mechanically. "It had just passed."

"And you didn't tell me?" Raph, asked, so disappointed to have missed his lover's birthday. Leo sometimes was far too discreet. "So, you've just turned 22? Well, too bad, we missed it but your Christmas one would make up for it. It doesn’t unwrap, but I hope you'll like it.” he said, nuzzling Leo’s raven hair.

Leo smiled, “I have a gift every day. Your love worth so much more than goods.”
The fake accountant burst out laughing and kissed his lover, calling him a big sap. Mikey was too excited and focused on his present to notice. The boy went to his desk and began to draw. Leo sighed and said, “When he’s like that, he goes into his own world and forgets everything else. At first, he drew blood and gore. That was one of the reasons for his confinement. Now he sometimes draws pretty things.”

“Like you?” Raphael whispered between two kisses, referring to Leo’s portrait, as he flipped Leo underneath him and placed him on the bed. Leo laughed, protesting that Mikey didn’t speak, but he saw and heard everything, and he tried to pull away.

“Don’t be silly, Leo. Just a few kisses. You were so beautiful and touching when you read your story. Why can’t you work here? You could probably teach English because you’re so good.”

Leo looked down.

"I've thought about it, but I can’t,” he said mournfully. "Being a teacher was my ambition, younger."

“Why you can't?” Raph asked, stroking his lover's body to encourage more confession from him, "I'm sure you'll be amazing! You are so a dedicated person, babe."

“I must have a certificate of morality. I don’t want to talk about it.”

And there was the answer 'I don’t want to talk about it', which threw a bucket of cold water onto Raphael’s raging hormones.

Leo sensed the shift of mood, as Raphael sat up. "I have a present for you, too, Peter. It's nothing, but I bought a nice notebook and I’ve written a poem every day since I started living with you. I put a lot of feelings in it.”

Raph’s insides churned. Leo’s poems, which had almost led the doctor to madness, were a mystery to him. He’d never seen one. No one had ever written anything to him, other than a grocery list. Moved, he barely managed a tender thanks and Leo smiled.

“That it was or buying a dance pole for our room.”

Raphael chuckled, “I prefer the poems, but the dance pole could be fun. I love the way you move, but for my eyes only. I'm looking forward now to go back home and read your soul like this damn doc pretended to be able to do. ”

Leo mocked his jealousy, they laughed, kissed each other and caressed each other so much that Leo, his cheeks red, as he took off Raph’s shirt, saw that they’d forgotten where they were. Mikey wasn’t paying attention to them, but Leo to stop things from going further, asked him what he was drawing. The kid, too focused, didn’t answer and a worried Leo, followed by Raph, got up to see what he was doing.

Raphael then had a shock. Mikey had drawn him, but not as he was. He’d drawn him as a police officer.

Leo also seemed surprised and Raph thanked the heavens that the little one didn’t talk anymore. "It's strange,” Leo said. “Mikey adores you and hates policemen."

Raph, who was starting to hyperventilate in panic, calmed down. Mikey must have drawn without real reason. He’d planned on confessing everything the next day, but he had to know why the brothers detested the cops. “Why do you hate the cops, Leo?” he asked in a strangled tone. Raphael that whatever the reason was, they could work it out. "You need to tell me, babe. I know you don't
like to talk about it, but I want to know you more, to help you with this emotional wound you have.”
Leo darkly replied, “They treated Mikey badly during the interrogation. I can’t say more.”

Then Leo’s face lit up and he said, “Oh. Everything makes sense now. Look. He drew a lollipop in his hand! He sees you as a benefactor of the police station.”

Raph, shocked, listened, as Leo recounted, as memories long forgotten, surfaced in his mind. "While I was being questioned and Mikey was in shock, the only friendly person was a policeman, who gave Mikey a lollipop to console him. Since then, it’s one of the few things that calm him down. The policeman stayed with him, while he sucked his lollipop until my interrogation ended.”

Stammering, the fake Peter asked if it had happened near here. "No. We lived in Brooklyn at the time. Pretty close to your mother's house actually."

No mistake possible: it was indeed him. The police officer giving an orange lollipop at a little kid covered in gore.

Raphael stood, his face ashen, “I forgot that I have to call my mother. I’ll be back now.”

Raph, upset, left the institution. He had to make a call, but to Charley, his former colleague at the 94th precinct. He’d always gotten along with him and being older and more senior than himself, he had to remember the dreadful tragedy. He didn’t beat around the bush and said, “It’s me, Raph Jones. Do you remember the horrific murder case of the kid drenched in blood?”

"How could I forget? One of the worst murder cases of my career!"

"The boy had been accused of murder?"

Charley was surprised and said, "Why do you want to hear about it? It was three years ago."

Raph told himself that he had no choice, but to say a semblance of truth. "I volunteer at a children’s psychiatric institution and I think I’ve recognized him.”

He cut off Charley, who thought he was obliged to give him glowing comments on his devotion. "Poor kid. He surely must have seen his big brother slicing into his mother’s boyfriend with swords. It must have been so disturbing.”

With a lump in his throat, Raphael said, “Oh. So his brother was accused of it? Not him?”

“No. That little bastard was too hard to get. Even the lie detector wasn’t strong enough for him. He was pretty clever, but it was his age that got him off the hook.”

“What do you mean?”

“He was only fourteen and was sent to a correctional house for delinquent children. I’m surprised that I haven’t heard about the fucker again. He must be seventeen now. A dangerous snake, who should be crushed, if you want my opinion!”

It couldn’t be Leo. Leo couldn’t be barely a 17 years old. That’d make Raph a pedophile, even if 17 was a legal age to consent to sexual intercourse. He had sex with him before Leo's birthday, if the teenager had said the truth about having his birthday in late November. No wonder that Leo had shut up about it! No. it was a mistake. Leo couldn't be a teen. He had given a lollipop to another traumatized kid. Not Mikey. Then he thought back to the mention of the sword that had killed the man and the katana that was now in his house. And that Leo, who was a sneaky son of a bitch, was
capable of distorting a lie detector. Then, other points lined with each other, like Leo's unease about the fact that he didn't have bear, yet. Because obviously, Leo was still a kid.

With nausea, Raph recalled when he and some of his colleagues had broken into the house of a pimp. The guy was making runaway girls, of only about thirteen, dance and prostitute themselves Raph still remembered his own disgust and anger. But had he been any better, sticking his dick so eagerly and so, so, so many times, into a teen boy’s body? If his coworkers had known that, they would look at him in horror and contempt. But even if they didn’t, Raph could not look at himself in a mirror anymore after that. it could not be true!

"Can you send me his file or at least his mugshot? I think he’s also a volunteer,” he asked, shaking.

“I was leaving, Raph. You'll owe me a beer.”

Anxious, Raph waited for the message, the longest 10 minutes of his life. Then his heart pounded when his phone vibrated and he saw that he had a message. He opened the message and his whole world collapsed. He stared at the features of his beloved and saw his name and date of birth. There was no possible mistake. Leo was born on November 29, but he’d been only fourteen, three years earlier.

Raphael’s heart shattered into a million pieces. He, an NYPD sergeant, had paid for and received free sexual acts from a minor, who’d been charged with murder, like eighty times. He was deep in shit and he realized, his eyes filling with tears, that he must break up with him and be single again, despite loving this damn Leo so much.

Just then, Leo appeared with his coat, smiling at him in concern, “Is there something wrong, Peter? Must we leave?”

How can he have believed this guy was twenty-two? He could see now how his face was pure and smooth. Leonardo had maybe not even finished growing up, having only turned seventeen three weeks ago.

“Yes,” he replied, struggling to not go on a rampage mode. It was hard. He felt like he was choking and was still dizzy from the emotional shock.”Leo, tell me the truth. Are you seventeen?” he asked, his voice clipped.

Then he saw what he hoped not see. Leo's confusion and panic. Leo was scared, and that was very bad news. But Leo took on him and replied cautiously “Yes, but…”

There, that was it, Leo had confessed it. The karma had just kicked him in the nuts. Raph could not even recall a movie with such a plot twist. There was no need for words. His happiness was over.

“There’s no fucking but!” Raphael shouted. “Are you insane? I'm fucking 28 and you were sixteen when we had sex for the first time!” How he could manage not to cry or hit something out of madness was an accomplishment. He was losing it.

“Those are just numbers! Age of consent is seventeen, I'm now seventeen, and I studied the law, so if you just…..” Leo tried to explain.

“I’m a fucking cop!” Raphael yelled, beside himself. “I’m the damn policeman, who gave candy to your brother! I was fucking undercover on a mission. My name’s not even fucking Peter!”

Leo for once, was shocked, “Do you mean you lied to me?”

That was the fucking last straw. This was taking the damn cake.
“Fuck you, Leo!” Raphael snarled. “I guess your doctor knew that and that’s why he didn’t touch you before jealousy crushed and consumed him, even if you had not seventeen yet. I don’t even want to know how a sixteen-year-old was hired by the club as a stripper. And I don’t know how this evil doctor of twice your age managed to enroll you at the university. And I don’t fucking care! Go see the pedophile! I’m done!” he yelled, absolutely mad.

Without looking back, Raphael got into his car and drove off, his tires screeching.
A special delivery

Raph refrained from thinking because if he didn’t, he’d be completely crazy and a wreck. He couldn’t go home. Not immediately. The horny teenager would leave, taking his things and disappear from his life for good. Raphael, who’d idiotically been no longer afraid of Leo searching his apartment had given him his own set of keys to the apartment to celebrate their first month anniversary, so that he felt at home. Leo was going to take his suitcases, call a taxi and head to the doctor’s place. Raphael had judged Donatello well. The man was too madly in love to forget Leo in 5 weeks. Anyway, with his angelic figure and devilish tongue, Leo would quickly find a protector.

Another dumb guy, blinded by his sweet smile and his cute face.

Raph didn’t go to Casey’s house, because he didn’t want to see his face and hear “I told you so”, so he went to his mother’s house.
He entered the house without knocking. His mother was probably preparing the Christmas meal for the next day. He went into the kitchen and found her alone flour up to the elbows.

“Raph?” she said in amazement.

“Don’t ask and pour me some red wine.”

Raphael went to the lounge, followed by his mother, and flung his coat onto the sofa. “I’m going to sleep here, Mom. You don’t have to worry about the drunken driving shit.”

Gabriela silently watched him empty the bottle of wine.

“Do you need help?” Raphael asked abruptly, his last glass finished. He meant with the cooking.

“I think I should ask you that, son.”

Raphael couldn’t contain his anger and snapped, “I’m fucking fine,” although he knew the tone of his reply proved he wasn’t.

"Raph, tell me the truth. Are you still using drugs?” Gabriela asked anxiously, her big black eyes shining with tears.

The policeman was incredulous: Where did his mother get that absurd idea? In addition, the "still" was exaggerated. He’d smoked weed for a few months, which was almost 15 years ago, when he was almost…No. He refused to think about him.

"No, Mom,” he said, almost regretting that it wasn’t such a simple problem. Addictions were more common than the problem he currently had. The smoking would have helped him relax and to feel light headed. Then he shook his head, dismissing the idea. He had enough problems and didn’t need to add drug use to the mix.

"Talk to me," Gabriela insisted. "I don’t understand. Your emotions are like a rollercoaster since your breakup with that girlfriend of yours. And then you had brought a very handsome man to dinner.”

"Stop! Don’t talk about him!” Raphael shouted furiously. Leo wasn’t a "man”. He was a boy, just a teen, and the idea sickened him.

To control his desire to break everything and not wanting to frighten his mother in a fit of anger, he opened the bar cabinet and poured a full glass of bourbon and began to pace, gripping the glass in his
Gabriela, feeling helpless, said that he’d find his soulmate someday and Raphael gritted his teeth, trying not to scream. He’d already found his soulmate. The problem was that his soulmate was a minor.

Of course, Leo has now a legit age to have sex and will get older, but the gap was still too wide between them. And the problem wasn’t just his too young age, but the fact that the student was accumulating more lies than he had years. He couldn’t trust Leonardo. It wasn’t worth it for Raph to put his life on hold one year for Leo to get at least 18 and being officially major.

He thought about what the young man was doing and downed his drink. Leo could fuck himself, but in the blink of an eye, he’d probably find someone to do it.

Gabriela, seeing him so irate, was silent, her head down, as she returned to the kitchen. Raphael hated acting like an asshole to his poor mother. He noticed her beautiful clothes on the chair and called to her, “Are you going to the church, Mom? Do you want me to go with you?”

His mother returned to the lounge, an excited expression on her face, her hands clasped, as moved as if she’d seen Our Lady of Fatima. Raphael hadn’t set foot in a church since he was eight, but then she began to worry and said in a distressed voice, “Are you planning on killing yourself, Raphie?”

Raphael was astonished she’d think that. He was upset, yes, but not to the point that he wanted to commit suicide. “No, Mom! You really watch too much fucking TV! I’m just mad, because…” He paused. Gabriela was nearly as sneaky as the damn Leo was. She said false things to learn the truth. But she was waiting and she wouldn’t drop the subject until he’d spilled the beans. He caved. She’d understand him. “I’m mad, because of the guy. I liked him, but I can’t be with him anymore. That’s it.”

“Why? Did he cheat on you?”

If only. Raph would have been pissed off, but he might have been able to forgive him, weak as he was. The minor thing couldn’t just be swept under the carpet. It was not right.

“No, Mom. Don’t be mad, but he lied and hid his real age from me. He’s seventeen,” Raphael said in a sad and ashamed tone. He didn't give detail about the fact that Leo only turned seventeen three weeks ago and then, was a child when he has pounded him in his mattress.

Gabriela looked puzzled and said, “So? What’s the big deal? I was seventeen when I married your father and eighteen when Casey was born.”

Raphael sighed exasperatedly, bringing his hands to his head, “Mom, It’s not the same thing!”

Then he was silent. There was the real reason for Leo’s desire to marry. He was surely trying to make the age gap less shocking, and then, maybe the fact that they had sex before the age of legal consent, could not be considered a crime. Clever son of a bitch like Leo know how to by-pass laws.

“Why isn’t it the same thing?”

“I barely know him! I can’t commit my life to someone I don’t know!” he protested, incredulous his mother was asking such a question.

“Learn to know him. You’ve time for that. Your father waited fifteen months between our first encounter and our marriage.”
“Are you crazy, Mom? What don’t you understand? He’s a minor! And I touched him!” Raphael said in embarrassment, not wanting to go into more detail.

“So? Don’t touch him like that, if you find this immoral. You can keep your dick in your pants, Raph, and control yourself until his next birthday. Your father waited for me.”

What was he supposed to say to that? “You weren’t as alluring as Leo is or as horny?” His mother would be displeased and that was an understatement. Anyway, with Leo near, he knew he couldn’t keep his hands to himself. And Leo wasn’t a Catholic virgin like his mother had been. Leo couldn’t stand chastity either. How the doc had managed to remain virtuous was beyond him. It was probably because Leo hadn’t been eager and that he knew about his real age, not wanting to have trouble with the laws.

He tried to be diplomatic, “You were the one for Dad, because you’re a great lady and were worth waiting for.”

“Maybe Leo is too, Raph. You just have to give him a chance,” she tried again.

“Would you fucking drop it?” Raphael yelled, losing it. “We’re over. I told him to leave and that I never want to see or talk to him again. I don’t want to hear about him either. I’m not even gay! It was only a crazy phase in my life, ok? I was upset about separating from Lisa. I clung to anyone. I wasn’t fine, but I’m better now!”

Gabriela Gomez-Jones looked at him doubtfully and Raphael realized that he had to leave now before he’d tell her something he regretted and then he’d have an epic argument with Casey.

“I must leave, Mom.”

“What about the church?” Gabriela whined.

“I don’t have the peace in my soul right now to listen to preaching,” Raphael said, trying to control his rage.

His mother insisted, but he grabbed his coat and checked the time on his cell phone to see if Leo had had enough time to vacate his place. Three hours had passed, but that wasn’t what attracted his attention. He had a bewildering number of messages that were all from the motherfucker.

He opened one of them out of curiosity.

“Peter or whatever your name is, I beg you. I love you so much…”

He closed his eyes, opened them, then read the rest and deleted them all. He had to act as if Leo had never existed. And he had to eradicate any feelings for him.

“You can’t leave after drinking so much,” Gabriela protested.

But Raph had already left. The messages he’d read were already three hours old. It was going to take him almost an hour to get home. Leo would have had time to leave. Alcohol consumed had the advantage of making him concentrate on the road, rather than on his aching heart.

When he arrived home, he noticed from the street that all the lights were off and he didn’t know if that further broke his heart or relieved him. Leo, the joy in his life, was gone. Upset, he entered the dark and empty apartment. He turned on the light and noticed that Leo’s book was still on the coffee table and was open. It pinched his heart. He’d tried to be reasonable. He was going to be ravaged for a month or two and then he’d recover. Breaks-up were still painful, but he must be used to it now,
right? But it was nothing compared to all the trouble that he might have had to face, had he continued seeing the teenager. He opted for a shower, his head already pounding from the wine and bourbon.

The lukewarm shower did him good; except that he had a nervous breakdown thinking that he’d had sex with a minor in the same shower a few hours earlier, just before Lisa had arrived. He thought about the blonde again. She seemed to regret what she’d done. Maybe he should give her a chance. Lisa was really 27.

Lisa wasn’t forbidden like Leo was. And it was fucking ironic because now he realized that he’d never really loved her.

Leaving the shower, he opened the bathroom cabinet and looked for sleeping pills. There weren’t any, unfortunately, so he’d have insomnia and have his heart and cock aching for Leo’s warmth. He entered his room and, without switching on the light, he slipped into his bed. He immediately shouted in surprise and turned on the bedside lamp. Someone was in bed and he saw Leo’s blue eyes staring at him. The dancer was naked and obviously waiting for him. Raphael immediately got out of bed, like he’d been burned, and yelled, as he put on his jeans, “What the fuck are you still doing here, Leo? I told you to leave.”

“You said it was my home now too,” Leo said softly, sadness and vulnerability written on his face. Like the fucking child, he was.

“What the fuck? I told you to fucking go elsewhere!” Raphael raged. “I don’t want your fucking seventeen-year-old ass here.”

“I love you,” Leo said as if that fucking validated everything and made it okay.

“No! You love playing mind games,” Raph growled.”I’m fucking done! Get dressed and scram!”

“No,” Leo said stubbornly.

Raph’s eyes opened in surprise at his obstinateness, as he put on a grey T-shirt.

“You have some fucking nerve for a damn teenager! I’ll give you that, but like I said, I’m done playing with you. Get dressed and I’ll call you a cab.”

“No.”

Raph tried not to scream. Separating from Leo was already worse than painful. If he resisted, he’d go insane. He had to remain firm and focused. His intoxicated brain managed to tell him some simple order.

\textit{Don’t look at him.}
\textit{Don’t listen to him and more importantly, don’t touch him!}

\textit{Get him out.}

Raphael gritted his teeth and said, “Put on some damn clothes and go away. I told you that I’m a cop and I can’t be with a minor.”

“What’s your real name?” Leo asked, his eyes as big and pleading as an anime little girl, ”I always knew you couldn’t be an accountant, but Peter did suit you.”
“My real name’s meaningless to you because you don’t have to pronounce it. We can’t see one another anymore unless you end up cutting up another man with a katana!” Raphael said sneeringly.

Leo frowned, “That’s not what happened, it’s a long story.”

“I don’t fucking care anymore!” Raphael roared. “I asked you many times before, but you refused to talk to me. Now that I know this part of the truth, is too late! Take your fucking things and fuck off. Don’t make me hurt you!”

Leo narrowed his eyes, the childish expression wiped off his face, “I’d like to see you try. I’m better than you.”

Raphael felt like he was suffering from indignation at the idea. Then he saw Leo, who was only dressed in his, Raphael’s boxers, get out of bed and stand in a fighting position, with a challenging gleam in his glare. Raphael rolled his eyes, “Fucking unbelievable,” he hissed.

Just to put an end to the situation and to show the arrogant son of a bitch that he was wrong, Raph also put himself in a combat position. He didn’t want to hurt Leo, despite all the pain he felt. He only wanted him to teach him a lesson so that he’d finally leave and so that he could finally cry unashamedly on his own and begin the mourning process.

But, ten minutes later, that wasn’t the case. He was on the verge of losing. Raphael blamed all the alcohol he’d stupidly consumed. Leo moved like the damn Neo in the fucking Matrix movies. Then, finally, he leaned over and used his 270 pounds to pin Leo to the ground.

It was another bad idea. The young man’s warm naked body against his, his breath tickling his neck and his tempting lips that were within reach were too much. His nose was in the hollow of Leo’s neck and he smelled his scent. Raphael had never been a master of self-control and he was sure that Adam hadn’t such a dilemma. He furiously kissed the guy beneath him, almost trying to suck his soul, like a drowning man. How could he live without these kisses?

"I never thought about sparring being a kind of foreplay that might please you,” Leo whispered."You win, now take your reward already. I need to feel your huge cock breaching me.”

It was just that lascivious allusion that broke Raph’s spell. Leo was too sure of him, maybe if he’d played the fragile card...But the dancer was acting as Cleopatra distracting Ceasar’mind of Egypt, using his beauty and his charming nature to have his way. Raph looked down at Leo, naked on the carpet. The fucker wouldn’t come out unless he used force. Taken by a sudden idea, he quickly rolled the young man into the carpet, wrapping him up, despite Leo’s protests. For once, watching too much movie was useful to him.

“What are you doing? Drop me immediately!” the student ordered.

“Don’t play the leader with me. I don’t have to listen to your shit orders!” Raph grunted.

“Let me go!” Leo said yelled, struggling futilely.

“You look like a child having a temper tantrum in the store because he was denied candy!” Raphael said going down the floors. “Shout, bite or kick me. I don’t care, as long as I get you away from me.”

“You love me,” Leo said desperately.

“Correction, Leo. I loved you. Now it’s over. I don’t want any kid, who’s a murderer, for a boyfriend.”
“Maybe I’m a kid to you, but I’m not a murderer and that’s a fact.”

“I don’t wanna hear your damn bullshit. I’m fed up with it.”

Raph called a cab and put a frantic Leo in there with him.

“I gave you a choice, Leo. It’s the police station or the mad doc’s house.”

Leo was silent for a minute. Then he said in a low voice, “Donnie.”

Raph, heartbroken, tried to hide it, by keeping his face and eyes neutral. He gave the address to the taxi driver, Leo still in his arms, rolled up in his red living room carpet. It was the last time he was holding in his arm this boy he loved so much.

“Tell me your real name,” Leo whispered, pleading.

“It’s Raphael. No need for you to know more,” Raphael said sullenly.

“Raph…” Leo said sweetly, sending a chill down Raph’s spine. “You should know that if you give me to Donnie, I won’t be able to escape this time. I drugged him to go to you the last time, but he’ll watch me now like a hawk and I won’t be able. He’s too clever to be tricked again.”

“Well, I’m not dumb, either!” Raphael snarled, so mad and upset. He couldn’t help himself; he hated any praise about this damn scientist.

“Raph, I never said that. You underestimate yourself. You’ve tricked and surprised me. Nobody has managed to achieve that before,” Leo replied softly, his big eyes pleading, shining with an intensity that Raph had never seen in it before. “I always knew you were exceptional, Raphael.”

The policeman bit his lip. If he heard another seductively said "Raphael" he was going to lose it.

"Shut up! You could beg, I don't give a damn. It's mean nothing from a guy with so much experience down on his knee.” It was a cheap insult, but he just wanted that Leo let it go. If Leo was too stubborn, Raph could say "fuck it", and bring him back to his bedroom for a passionate make-up sex session, like he was itching to do. But, it would be immoral, and selfish. Leo needed discipline and order. He needed to know that laws were not only used at la Haye, to punish big-shot international criminals but at New-York as well. At least, in Raph’s apartment.

Finally, he saw the building overlooking the park. Raph wound down the window to address the valet. Pointing to Leo, who was still wrapped up like a mummy, he said, “Tell your motherfucking crazy boss that I have a Christmas present for him. A special delivery.”

The valet immediately took out his phone and spoke into it. Raphael’s heart pounded, while he waited, and ignored the voice inside his head telling him that he was making a massive mistake.

Donnie arrived four minutes later, looking as if he’d returned from lunch with the president. He was so elegant, his hair straight in an impeccable ponytail and wearing a coat of felt that was probably from the best tailor in the city. He carried a folded up bathrobe that was of blue or dark purple ratiné and looked as calm as the Duke of Ellington. The valet opened the taxi door for him and Donnie smiled, "Leo, my dear. I now believe in God. He hears my prayers! Come to me and get out of this ridiculous carpet.”

But Leo was frozen, being unable or willing to move. Raphael remembered the doctor’s OCD issues, helped Leo out of the carpet and unfolded the bathrobe.
Leo’s eyes looked like a deer caught in the headlights and Raphael, ravaged by remorse and pain regretted it, while making him get dressed. He loved Leo with every fiber of his being, and he was doing all of this despite his own wishes. A weak part of himself needed to explain it to the boy.

“Leo, I can’t be with you,” Raphael whispered, "He’ll take care of you. Rich people are higher than the law and I prefer you being with him than selling your body. He loves you and will treat you well.”

But Leo still looked wild and miserable and seemed to be petrified, not believing what the policeman just said. Raph wondered if he was afraid that he’d get a beating for what he’d done the last time.

Despite his contempt and hatred for the doctor, Raph asked, “You won’t harm him, right?”

“Never,” Donnie said. “I always treated him like a prince and he was more eager when he begged me to buy an art kit for his brother three days ago. I know what he’s playing. Thanks for bringing him to me.”

Raphael wasn’t even offended that Donnie spoke of Leo like he was a lost poodle. He was beyond furious. Leo had seen Donnie, to get some money and yet had sweetly accepted his $50 and thanked him for his contribution. Wasn’t he enough for the dancer? Well, he could screw himself!

“Raphael! That’s not what happened,” Leo said, clinging to him desperately, but Raph shoved him away, far too upset. "He is twisting the truth!" Leo yelled, in despair. "Don't listen to him! I love you!"

Jealously struck the doctor too and ignoring his damn OCD, he pulled the young man to him and kissed him almost forcefully. “I’m never letting you go, my beloved. You belong with me. Only me can give you what you deserve.”

Raphael didn’t contest. The taxi was already gone.
Damn it!
Raph was still pissed off, his ass sitting on the beach, Lisa by his side. They’d been there for four days and his anger hadn’t faded.

He’d phoned Lisa, finding it difficult to remember a number he’d dialed and texted for more than two years. He’d had told her that he was ready to give her one last chance and would bring her to Miami as a reconciliation gift. He’d told her to pack for a week and he’d fetch her. Raph hated wasting money and he wouldn’t. The trip had been paid for, so he’d go. He didn’t expect to arrive in Miami until the afternoon of the 26th but never mind. He couldn’t go back to his apartment just yet. The sheets were still warm from his ex-lover’s body.

On the way to the airport and on board the plane, he tried to remember bits of his emotion management therapy so he wouldn’t scream his rage and break everything. Rage against Leo, against Donnie and against himself.

He hadn’t relaxed, maintaining a sullen expression, the best he could do in these circumstances. He didn’t listen to Lisa, who was blabbering about how boring and what a bad fuck her dentist ex had been. His mind was too occupied to be in replay mode.

Raphael saw Leo lying naked on a bed with purple sheets. He was pumping his leaking cock and had an inviting smile upon his face, as he whispered some naughty word to his partner, the damn billionaire asshole, who leant over him, hunger and desire in his mahogany eyes. A dark predator over a tender lamb.

It was what Leo had done to get the money for the art kit that upset him. Raph had discovered after visiting the seller’s website that it had cost nearly $2,000. Leo must have thought his 50 bucks was a joke. And then he’d been even more hypocritical and thanked him while going behind his back and fucking Donnie to get more money. It didn’t matter that it had been for his locked-up little brother. He’d still gone behind Raph’s back.

He’d been silly thinking that he was enough to satisfy the greedy carnivorous plant’s hunger for money.

He fucked Lisa mercilessly in their hotel room. The idea of revenge made him do that and blinded him for a while, but towards the end and to save face, Raphael had to fake an orgasm for the first time in his life.

The hard curves of his ex-lover’s muscles weren’t there and a cock was lacking. Lisa’s body was boring and she seemed as inactive as a dead starfish. The pleasure didn’t seem as rewarding as Leo’s. His ex-lover had been a force of nature in bed, taking everything Raph had to give and inspiring him to outdo himself to get more moans and convulsions from his partner. Leo’s shining blue-steel eyes shone with fire and ecstasy during sex, which lit a fire in Raph’s blood and his voice. Wow. Leo could get him off just using his erotic phone-call voice. Just the mental image of Leo sucking him off, his gorgeous eyes half closed, like a greedy cat after a bowl of cream, a drop of Raph’s cum on his delicious lips, gave him a boner in his swimming trunks. The boner that Lisa couldn’t give in flesh
and reality, Leo only could in mere fantasies.

He mentally cursed the raven-haired boy for casting a spell on him. If he couldn’t find a sexy chick like Lisa attractive anymore, it was the beginning of the end for him. It was certainly not Donatello, who, at this exact moment must have a flaccid member between his legs, having such a wild partner. Leo, in the blink of an eye, would have guided Lazarus out of his tomb before Jesus Christ himself, just with a wink.

Raphael had tried to convince himself for four days that it was just a phase and that in a very short time; the gay parenthesis of his life would end. Did he have to keep Lisa during this time? Even Lisa's conversation sounded insipid now. Leo even sounded sassy and interesting when he was just commenting on the weather. Leo had values, opinions, and goals. The only opinion Lisa had is about how the polka-dotted bikini of the girl next them was old-fashioned.

He had to stop thinking about that damn Leonardo. Right fucking now!

"Darling? Are you listening to me?" Lisa asked impatiently.

Raphael mumbled yes. Then he fell back into his inner world, tense with rage, as he thought of the doctor's tongue on the student's body. Then, since he didn’t seem capable of thinking about anything else, he thought that Donatello was probably too handicapped by his OCD to take full advantage of what the dancer's body had to offer him. He thought back to what Leo had told him about the foreplay that Leonardo, the most inventive, open-minded and willing partner in bed he’d ever had, didn’t like.

Maybe the doctor was forcing the teen to do things against his will? How could he, Raphael, an NYPD sergeant have left a minor in the clutches of a twisted being like Donnie? It was minor hijacking! It was immoral! Leo might be raped right now!

Then he gritted his teeth. Leo wasn’t the type of guy, who’d endure anything. The young man was able to defend himself and Raph was certainly not going to worry about him after the way Leo had treated him.

The fact is that for a man, who’d stood up to him, Raphael Leonardo seemed to have mixed feelings for the doctor: admiration and affection, as well as disgust, fear, and disdain.

Maybe he’d made a mistake in pushing Leo into the wolf's mouth. Maybe his mother was right. Raph could have waited. Living with Leo, courting him, without touching him, waiting to know him better. He’d fucked him countless times, but he had to admit that Leo was still a frigging mystery to him. He knew his ex-boyfriend as a devoted big brother, a brilliant student, a gifted karateka and dancer, a bad cook and a very talented lover. He knew that Leo had a dramatic past. He’d tried to ask him questions about it, but that damn Leonardo had clamped up, despite his many attempts. Raph wasn’t at fault! An extremely stubborn Leo was!

Still, Leo was so successful in seizing his mind, his body and his heart that, even if he didn’t have to worry about the law student's fate, he was still burning to leave Lisa alone on the sand and go back to New York and read the damn poetry that Leo had given him for a Christmas present. He might say to himself that it was just part of the lies to manipulate him. It turned out that the tenuous logical part that remained in his brain had to admit that Leo had no reason to play him at the comedy of love. He knew that Raph cared for his little brother and he’d confessed his first plan. He knew that Raph wasn’t wealthy. The suspicion of a gold digger, anyway, was out of the question. Leo had accepted, without regrets, to leave the billionaire doctor to live with him. But on the other hand, Leo had run, probably to offer his ass to Donatello, to make him pay for the art kit for his brother.
For a damn box of artistic supplies, Leo had fallen back to his old bad habit of prostitution.

First of all, Leo could have chosen a less expensive one. On the company’s website, he’d seen some complete that were about 200-250$. Leo could have asked the officer to provide more cash. Raph wouldn’t have minded paying $ 150 more for Mikey’s gift if that would have meant that the ex-dancer wouldn’t have seen the need to drop to his knees for the fucking asshole in the lab coat.

Leonardo wasn’t worthy for Raphael to still be thinking about him, but the truth was that, on the damn vacation, while lying on the Florida warm sands, he hadn’t had a moment’s rest, too tormented with regret and longing for the damn motherfucker.

Two nights of his hotel reservation remained, but he couldn’t bear to pretend to be tired or to think of another excuse, so he didn’t have to touch Lisa again. Nothing had happened since their last romp, him fearing that his lack of interest in her would grow to the point of being embarrassing.

He couldn’t focus enough to have an erection, pursued by the memory of a blue look, desperate and supplicating, on the sidewalk, in front of a luxurious building. Leo was trembling in his arms, pleas escaping his mouth.

Damn it!

He couldn’t quietly sip a Corona by the beach, without wondering if Leo was abused or raped and if he was waiting for him, hoping for his help. And he couldn’t stop wondering if Leo still had faith in their love and still loved him.

Raph hated his vivid imagination; as he pictured Leo tied up and frightened. A victim of a too weird kink from his master. The master that Raph, knowing his age and vulnerability, gave him.

He shook his head and thought that he was telling himself stories. Leo wasn’t so fragile. Leo was a formidable opponent and the doctor seemed very gentle and concerned about him and unable to refuse the dancer anything. But Raph also had to admit that Donatello seemed more certain and more determined than he’d previously been. Maybe….

Maybe it was indeed him and not his mother, who watched too many fucking Latino soap-operas, he thought, incensed at all the indecisions and bad feelings.

Raphael hated all of his indecisions.

Raph hated his damn cock that wasn’t responding to his commands and which refused to bang another being other than the damn bastard.

Raph hated Leo, who’d had such a powerful grip on him from the beginning without really trying.

And Raph hated himself for being so weak and so damn in love. A forbidden love that he had to forget.

But, the truth was, to put an end to his misery; he had to go back to New York now.

Damn it!

With a loud sigh, he put down his beer and turned to Lisa, interrupting her. "It was a mistake. I don’t love you anymore. You can stay here for two days and go home by plane if you want. I’ve already paid for your ticket, but I can’t pretend that I care about you for another minute."

The blonde's face writhed with anger and disgust and she snapped, "Is it because of the young guy?"
Do you dare leave me for a man?"

Why did Lisa need to use the qualifier young, which reminded Raphael of his apprehensions?

“I’m in a mess right now…” he said slowly and then hissed angrily, “But it isn’t your damn business. Not anymore, so go screw yourself!”

Without giving her another look, he strode towards the hotel. Nothing was probably waiting for him in New York, except perhaps a notebook with fancy words full of syllables, but devoid of meaning. He was almost sure of it, but he wouldn’t be at peace until he was 100 percent sure. The situation was slowly but certainly driving him crazy.

Wounded, he’d cowardly fled, abandoning his lover. It wasn’t like him. He was stronger than that. Maybe Leo had reasons. Too many mysteries remained about the ex-dancer. Something wasn’t right and Raphael had been too lazy in not investigating more about his boyfriend. It didn’t change the fact that Leo was a damn teenager and that Raphael couldn’t even kiss him anymore on the lips, but that wasn’t a reason to let another man, even less the fucking nut-case, commit the crime that he, Raphael refused to do due to his morals and ethics. If Raphael decided to leave Leo, because of his age, that was his decision. A wise decision. But he’d left the student in a perilous situation. Leo had given him only love and pleasure the past few weeks and he didn’t deserve to be delivered in a cavalier manner to a man, who was obviously a lunatic. An NYPD sergeant can’t and shouldn’t behave that way and turn a blind eye to pedophilia. Even if Leo can legally have sex, the age gap between Leo and the doctor was too important for Raphael’s opinion. Donatello was 33 years old. It was twice older than his cute supposed pupil!

Leo would have deserved at least 20 minutes to explain himself. If Raphael had forced him to tell the truth about his past in his bedroom, maybe none of this would have happened. Maybe if the boy had had good reasons, he could have adopted Leo himself, taking care of him, like a big brother would do. He could do that and keep his dick in his pants like his mother had told him to do. Raphael was an adult and had had extensive training about self-control. Okay. He hadn’t been good at it lately, but it wasn’t too late to regain control of his life and to shush his never-ending horniness about Leonardo.

Thus, the student would have been protected and could have led a simple life. One that was healthy and moralistic and with a big brother watching him out of brotherly love, like Leo did for Mikey. And then, maybe he would’ve adopted the blond kid too. Two young brothers who’d have brought meaning to his life. Many people live without having a spicy sex life or he could have banged a girl a few times at her place after meeting at a bar.

Yeah. It could have been a great plan for the future if Leo had been able to defend himself.

But Raphael, a fool, who’d been scared that Leo would manage to get his hand on his cock and would plunge him into stupor, had taken his lover rolled in a carpet and handed it, despite Leo’s anxieties, to the mad doctor, as if Leo was nothing more than a big spring roll.

Maybe Leo locked up and tied up in some weird Japanese rope, was cursing him right now and calling him a scumbag motherfucker too. Or maybe he was calling for help?

Leo, a justice lover, didn’t even have a trial. Anyway, what was really his crime? Being a horny seventeen-year-old? Raphael couldn’t pretend that he hadn’t enjoyed the sex. Okay. It wouldn’t happen again, so Leo wasn’t to blame anymore.

Maybe the story of the 2000$ art box paid by the doctor was just a scheme of the clever genius’s to break them up? Maybe Donatello had known about it and had pretended that he’d paid for it and it was a lie. Maybe Leo had used his savings to buy it. There was something fishy about that.
But, there was also the suspicion of murder. The sergeant trusted his colleague, but Raph didn’t believe it was true. Anyway, Leo hadn’t been officially charged. A 14-year-old can’t be that devious to fuck up a lie detector. He’d seen too much love in Leo’s shining eyes in front of the children of the psychiatric center and also when he’d fed the squirrels in the park. A being loving animals and some poor troubled kids, who wanted to defend human rights on an international level, couldn’t be a cold-blooded murderer, slicing a man with katanas in front of his 11-year-old little bro.

Yes. Leo was guilty of lying and of being too eager to bend over to achieve his goals and he remained a minor and forbidden to him, but the young man had already suffered enough without being the deluxe sextoy of a crazy and twisted geek.

If necessary, he’d put his badge under Donatello's nose to free Leo or he’d confess to Commissioner Hamato. Leo was perhaps an innocent boy, who was in danger and the police force had to help him. The young student had already told him that he’d been repeatedly raped by his former foster family, who’d also mistreated Mikey. Raph had been negligent in not learning more about it. The horrible people deserved prison. For Leo to feel that he needed to suck a dick in order to survive, he must have had a very troubled childhood. Maybe it was because he’d seen his mother become a junky whore when Leo’s father had abandoned them. He could go to his former precinct to get information about the case of the death of Leo and Mikey’s mother. Why hadn’t he done it before? It was very easy for a cop like him. Oh yeah. Because he’d been far too busy fucking Leo senseless, rather than trying to know him and helping him. He’d been selfish, a coward and lazy.

For the hundredth time, Raph called himself stupid, while placing his suitcase into a taxi. He paid a surcharge fee so that he could leave two days ahead of schedule. He nervously looked at his phone. Leo, who was probably watched by Donatello or by his servant, couldn’t call or text him. But in exactly 6 hours, Raphael would be in Manhattan to get some answers.

Then, he’d free Leo and watch over him if it turned out that the young man was only a victim. He’d do it. Not for himself, but for the well-being of the handsome young man with black hair and gorgeous blue eyes, whom he’d no longer consider a lover, but a little brother, he swore to himself.

A scattered image came to his mind, picturing a naked Leo underneath him.

Raphael blushed slightly. Things would surely be better by now, right? He could behave. He raised his head to look at the infinite sky for a few minutes. Well, it might have been minutes, or hours, he wasn’t sure actually... All he knew was that a warm feeling was squeezing his heart. The blue light of the sky reminded him of his eyes. He had to do something about it. He couldn’t afford to lust about him anymore.
Raphael rushed home, even though he knew it was ridiculous thinking that Leo had managed to escape and that he’d be there naked in bed, waiting for him. Of course, if that had been the case, he’d have told Leo to get dressed, but he’d have been relieved that the boy was okay.

But when he arrived home, he found that his apartment was in the same state that he’d left it. The sheets and Leo’s clothes were still on the floor. When he’d been packing, he’d opened a drawer and had tossed his boyfriend’s clothes onto the floor.

He bent down to pick up the clothes, as tears filled his eyes. He held a navy T-shirt to his nose and took a deep whiff, smelling Leo’s herbal scent. For a moment, he was tempted to wank off to it, but he quickly dismissed the idea, reminding himself that it was wrong and twisted, because the clothing belonged to a teenager. The shirt even had a silly image of a captain from one of Leo’s favorite shows imprinted on it. Raph had teased the smart, all-star student about it, saying that it was rubbish and was for those who were brainless.

It was kid stuff.

But he missed hearing Leo repeating the same senseless catch phrase from the dummy captain. “Gentlemen, I have a bold and daring plan,” while Leo was cuddled up against him, eating popcorn, as he stroked his raven hair.

He’d been ecstatic and now, after a month of joy, it was over. Even worse, the wonderful month and the activities during it had been immoral.

He’d loved the damn Leo so much and now he must forget him as a lover. Leo was only a troubled child, who needed protection.

Raph decided to look for the poetry notebook. He didn’t have to search for it long, finding it hidden under his pillow. It was beautiful notebook with a genuine leather cover and a white orchid was hand painted on a dark blue background in an Asian style. Squinting, he noticed a clear, brushed signature. The “Leo” was easily decipherable. Raphael caressed the signature with his thumb, feeling pensive. Leo had painted the notebook himself, putting effort and discretion into it, because other than when he’d been at university, he and Raph had always been together. He wondered when Leo had found the time to do it. He briefly hesitated, before he opened the notebook, fearing that he’d harm himself by reading the love words. He was already struggling to accept that it was over, without adding more heartache.

He’d often read bits of Leo’s essays and draft arguments. Leo’s handwriting was beautiful, but his poems were in an even more elegant script. Raphael knew nothing about poetry, but as he flipped through the pages, he was surprised to see different styles. One was an ideogram and was probably Japanese. Others consisted of only three lines, while others filled the pages. Some words were also placed, so that they formed drawings. Nearly all of them were in English and a few were in foreign languages.

He tried to force his eyes not to read, allowing himself to catch only a word here and there, but his curiosity prevailed.

Raphael wasn’t really an artist or a connoisseur. He could say that most modern paintings were overrated. He found the author's films boring. He was more into football, beer and chicken wings.
He was sensitive, but it was hidden deep down under his muscles and bravado and he rarely showed it, but he did now, as he read the poem, unable to contain his emotions. He’d never read anything more beautiful. All right. Raph had never read poetry in his life, but Leo’s words sounded so right, touching him to the soul, that he almost understood why Donatello had fallen so hard for Leo’s pen. But he doubted that Leo had written such sweet words to the doctor.

Delighted, he read everything that was in English. He couldn’t deny that Leo had really written personalized poems for him, because each one expressed an anecdote of their daily life as a couple. Every word of the poet expressed his affection for him and his happiness to have him for a lover. That thrilled Raph to the core. Nobody, apart from his mother, had adored him that much.

He couldn’t deny that Leo had to be sincere about his love for him, because he’d gone to so much effort to make the gift personalized, beautiful and special. That didn’t really improve his situation, Raphael told himself, trying to refute his enthusiasm about the dancer having loved and maybe still loving him.

It was a silly idea, because Leo couldn’t be his anymore. He was damn too old for Leo.

But it didn’t mean that he could be Donatello’s sex slave either.

Raph looked at the time and saw that it was 10 p.m. Where was Leo? No doubt in the billionaire’s tower, the insane geek watching over him like a hawk.

He clenched his fists with rage, his eyes burning with tears of anger. Leo’s poetry had revealed to him a new aspect of the ex-dancer’s personality: sensitive, dreamy and deeply in love.

And Raph had left the delicate suffering soul at the wacko’s mercy, without giving him a chance to explain.

Leo was as fragile as a beautiful white orchid, lost in a world of darkness, like the one painted on the notebook.

Spurred on by his fury, he took his keys and left. Leo might be in danger. Maybe the doctor's foreplay was disinfecting him with a blowtorch after bleaching him and… Raph didn’t even want to think about it. The idea of someone else touching Leo’s intimate parts was unbearable.

Leo maybe wasn’t his, but he also belonged to no one else.

He headed to the doctor’s place, images of a violently treated Leo plaguing his mind. How could he allow such a thing to happen? How could he have thought that it was right leaving Leo in Donatello’s clutches? Because of jealousy about the allusion to the art kit? He didn’t even believe it anymore. Leo loved him too much to betray him. The thirty or so poems had declared that Leo harbored a deep love for him. It had been one of Donnie’s schemes to break them up.

He hadn’t thought of a plan. He was going to flaunt his badge, claim that Leo was a minor and get him back. Nobody would stop him.

Then he’d bring Leo home, make him have a bath and he’d brew him a cup of tea. He’d listen to Leo tell his story and he’d protect him. He could sleep in the guest room for the moment, but if Mikey moved in with them, they’d have to seek a new place to live. An inner voice told him that it would be impossible living with a sensual Leo and not being able to touch him. Moreover, Leo wasn’t the chaste type either. If he met a student his own age, what would he do? It wasn’t illegal for two seventeen-year-olds to fuck each other. If Leo brought a new girlfriend or boyfriend home, Raph would have to accept it, even though it would break his heart and would drive him crazy listening to
Leo’s panting and moaning in the next room.

He was thinking about this when he saw the street where Donatello lived. He parked as close to the building as possible and got out, hurrying to the entrance. The valet was there and was shivering, at the door.

Raph already had his hand inside his jacket to show his badge, when the valet smiled at him. The unexpected friendly expression made Raph pause in his actions.

“What you came for is waiting for you at reception,” the valet said in a well-mannered and cultured tone.

Raphael was flabbergasted. Leo had obviously planned for his return. Was he already ready to follow him? Or was it the doctor's trap? Donnie couldn’t have the audacity to want to eliminate him and let so many people know about the secret, right?

Never mind. Raph wasn’t a coward and had only returned to New York to get answers. He wouldn’t find them on the sidewalk, so since it was expected, he went inside to a luxurious hall with an impressive cathedral ceiling that was decorated in the Art Deco style. Standing next to a huge desk was a sixty-old man, who was almost as distinguished as the doctor.

How was Raphael supposed to announce himself? Having not thought about anything and since the situation hadn’t turned out the way he’d imagined, he bravely said, “The valet says that there’s something here for me.”

The man briefly arched an eyebrow and then realization hit him.

“You’re Mr. Leo’s acquaintance?” he questioned with a pronounced British accent.

Raph nodded, uncertain. The man turned to look for something and the policeman anxiously asked if Leo was coming down because he was half expecting the old man to have a revolver.

“No. Mr. Leo’s not here, but he told me to give you this.”

The man handed Raph a brown envelope. The policeman wondered if it was another collection of poetry, but the envelope was too thin. Maybe it was a simple letter? But how Leo had known that Raph would come to get him after such an epic argument? He mused if Leo was too cocky or it was him, who was too weak. He opted for both answers, while he promptly opened the envelope. Maybe Leo had managed to escape and was giving him an indication to find him?

But as soon as he opened it, he was stunned. A simple white rectangular piece of paper fell out. A check bearing Donatello’s signature on it, addressed to no one and a staggering sum of $ 75,000 was written on it. He anxiously peered into the envelope, looking for an explanation. He looked back into the envelope anxiously, searching for a word of explanation. He took the check, turned it over and saw the doctor’s fine writing and the reason for the check: "inconvenience caused.”

“You must write your name yourself on it,” the man explained, mistaking Raph’s silence.

Realization hit him what the check was for and Raphael darkened in indignation, his heart pounding, revolted that Donnie could stoop so low, gall filling his mouth. He didn’t even think about buying a new car, his being seven-years-old or a motorbike, which he’d dreamed of owning since he’d been a teenager. He could buy both with this sum, but he didn’t give a damn about any of it. He crumpled up the check and tore it into pieces. It was no longer just about the entrapping of a minor, it was now also human trafficking. Donatello acted as if Leo were a white calf and Raph his former owner.
“You can tell your boss that he can shove his money up his fucking ass,” Raphael yelled. “I don’t want it. I’m here for Leo and I won’t leave without him!”

Imperturbable, the man replied that he’d like to see Mr. Leo brought against his will with an air of profound skepticism. The policeman remembering how Leo had been stubborn not to go out of his bedroom, understood the employee’s hint. Leo has a reputation among the Doctor's staff, obviously.

“He’ll go out with me because he loves me. Your boss is insane and sequesterates and isolates him. Leo’s a minor, and your boss has sexual intercourse with him against his will and mistreats him, so I came to release Leo from his hell,” Raphael explained, flashing his badge. “Try to stop me and you’ll be in big trouble.”

The man was unimpressed by Raph’s tirade, “Mr. Leo and Mr. Hudson are away for work, but if you’re worried about Mr. Leo, I can confirm that nothing has been done to him against his will, let alone that he’s being abused or sequestered. If you know this young man, you must know that he’s not made of steel that can be bent. If there’s a victim, it’s the doctor and not the other way around!”

The man had said the last sentence disdainfully and Raph realized that he disliked Leo, but he had no idea why.

“You can’t deny that Leo’s a minor and that your boss has sex with him, which is illegal. If you resist, I’ll take you too.”

The man coldly informed him that he had to have evidence and a warrant in order to do that, Raphael mentally cursed the TV programmes that people watched, which told them about their rights. Then Raph frowned, as something hit him, and he said, “What do you mean by going to work?”

“Exactly that. They went out like they do every Saturday night.”

Was he talking about the club? But why would Leo have returned there? Donatello was sick with jealousy over him working there and he didn’t need Leo’s lap dancing tips to survive. Shit! Donnie was willing to spend 75 000 bucks to pay off Raph.

It couldn’t be true.

"I don’t believe it. Your boss is here and is getting a blowjob from a teenager!” Raph growled. “You don’t seem to appreciate Leo, so here’s the deal. Let me inside, I’ll get him, I won’t tell my colleagues that you knew about Leo being underage and I won’t annoy your boss, despite him being a twisted pervert!”

The man looked at Raphael with condescension, “It might be true that Mr. Donnie has feelings for the boy, but I don’t think he has the kind of relationship you implied.”

“Leo told me that himself!” Raph snapped, hitting the desk with his fist. “And I saw the motherfucker kissing him as if he wanted to suck out his soul! More than once, so stop bullshitting me or I’ll smash your face!”

The employer smirked contemptuously, “He’s got you, hasn’t he? Just like he has Mr. Donnie? You think you impress me with your muscles? Your Leo’s a devil in disguise and much more terrifying than you, even if both of your tempers seem to be equally hot. Did he tell you he was in love with you? And you believe it? Mr. Leonardo says a lot of things. How do you think he manages to manipulate a man of Donatello's intelligence and potential? A dummy like you doesn’t stand a chance against a schemer and a ruthless man of steel, like that little so sweet blue-eyed boy.”

The old man burst out laughing at the sarcastically uttered “sweet.” Leonardo was indeed a sweet
boy, affectionate, tender and wild and passionate in the bedroom. Its was only lies and calumnies. Raph knows it and hearing this kind of denigration, he growled.

“Fuck you! You don’t know him like I do. Let me get him and your damn boss could live a dreamy life in a disinfected bubble alone with you to wipe his ass.”

“I’d be thrilled to get rid of the boy for my master’s sake. This evil boy and his family had already done too much harm to the Doctor's. but I can’t help you get him. Mr. Leonardo only does as he wants, you should know that by now. If he finds it advantageous to follow you, he will, but if he deems you useless, he’ll deny you more easily than St. Peter did for Jesus.” The man’s smile grew sinister, “Do you know Mata Hari, sir? She had many things in common with your lover. I hope he’ll end up like her.” He paused a moment and then said icily, “Now get out or I’ll call your colleagues and you’ll have to answer their questions about why you’re Leonardo’s acquaintance. You say you’re here to free Leonardo from a molester, but I believe you’re only here to satisfy your own needs and to have fun with his tainted, pale flesh.”

Raphael gritted his teeth, but chose not to react and stormed out. He had nothing more to learn from the old man, who was obviously loyal to death to the doctor. And, indeed, he had to admit the old man had been right about one thing. Raphael couldn’t afford a scandal, when, he was also guilty of crimes.

He refrained from thinking about what the old had man said. Leo wasn’t like that at all. He knew the young man, his soft voice, his tender gestures, his touching look and his sweet kisses. The old man had said that Leo was a cold and calculating man, but he couldn’t be if he showed so much emotion while making love and if he wrote such sensitive and stirring poetry. The employer was from another generation, which was post-war, homophobic and rigid. He must have been in the services of Donatello’s family since the Tower of London had been erected and he must be very partial to him. Raphael mustn’t let his retarded speech affect him. Besides, how he could say that Mikey had harmed the doc? The blond kid had a mental illness, being traumatized by a gruesome murder. It wasn’t damn Mikey's fault!

Commissioner Hamato had forbidden him from returning to the club. He’d been officially removed from the mission and if he went to the club, it could blow a potential colleague’s cover. He’d also be recognized if a member of the precinct happened to be there, but he had no choice. Leo was surely there. He returned to the place he’d hoped to never see again. What would he do after so many passionate nights if he saw Leo sucking other men and seducing them for green notes? The thought of it made him want to throw up and he trembled, as he approached the entrance door.

He was stopped before he could even reveal his identity. The man at the reception showed Raph’s photo that had been taken from the fake driver’s license of ‘Peter O’Neil.’ Written on it were the words “Don’t allow this man in if you see him.” That had no doubt been Donatello’s doing and it was indeed a big bump in the road.

Raphael recovered quickly and said, “That’s not me. He just happens to look like me! I heard about this place and this is my first time here.” He was playing a huge game. He was showing his real ID and brazenly lying. The guy at reception was new and Raphael hadn’t shaved for 4 days and in Florida, had tanned. He hadn’t been here in over a month and he hoped he’d been forgotten in such a popular place. The bartender might remember him, but he hoped that he didn’t.

The man, convinced, opened a new file for him. Then he said in a low voice, “Did you come for sexual entertainment or for the event?” Raphael tried to keep his face neutral and not to get excited at that, because even though he didn’t know what the event was, his instincts told him that it somehow had to do with Donnie and Leo.
“The event,” Raphael said neutrally.

“It’s $2000, but if you bet right, you could gain tenfold back.”

Raphael frowned and wondered if he’d made a mistake. Leo, who was so exotic and clever, wouldn’t waste time gambling when he could seduce more easily people and the rich doctor surely wouldn’t either. Raph couldn’t go back now. He knew he was caught and handed his credit card to the man.

A bouncer arrived at his side, silently signaling him to follow him. Until then, Raph had never noticed that a basement existed. It was well concealed under a curtain with a door leading to a suitcase that led to a dark basement. He briefly thought that it was a trap, as more obvious noises were heard. Cheers and a Stentor's voice, sounding like that of a boxing match announcer.

There was another counter in the basement with another reception clerk. A poster on the wall explained what the evening’s event was It was championship matches and Leo’s name jumped out to him first. That had to be him and couldn’t be someone else. A man in front of him was looking at a piece of paper deciding for a fighter, because Raph assumed that it was a fight.

"I put my money on Hun, as usual,” the man said.

Raph touched his shoulder and whispered, “Hey. I’m new. What’s the championship goal?”

The man raised an eyebrow, “Oroku wants to make sure that his lieutenants are the best, so every year he makes them fight aspirants. There are disturbing events with his men lately, so he’s making six lieutenants fight sex aspirants. There are fewer lieutenants this year and the candidates are there, so the match will be fierce and tight. You should bet on Hun, who’s been the Shredder’s lieutenant for over eighteen years. He was just seventeen when he joined and quickly rose up the ladder. Don’t worry. He’s thirty-five, but still in the prime of his life. »

Panicked Raph took the piece of paper and thought that it was too much if Leo compromised himself in a criminal organization. Raph couldn’t get him out of there. But what was the deal? Leo wanted to work at the International Court in La Haye! He didn’t want to be a weapons dealer or a drug dealer! And then Mikey? No. He had to talk to Leo now and try to convince him to stop the madness. Why did the doctor, who supposedly loved Leonardo, let him do these crazy things?

Maybe the old man had reason and he didn’t know Leonardo at all.

"You have to bet, Sir, otherwise you can’t go inside.”

His head buzzing with questions, Raph bet on one of only two names he knew. The other was Karai’s.

After betting his rent on Leonardo’s victory, he went inside and was almost forcefully seated. He couldn’t see if Donatello was there. Karai was the first opponent against a stranger from Oroku and Leo was third, following a contestant whom Raph didn’t know. Leo had to face Hun and Raph tweaked the sheet in his hands, anguished.

Why was Leo doing that?

There must be a reason.

The first fight began, and, panicked, Raph found that it was armed fighting. In addition to being illegal shit, it was damned dangerous and the officer wondered if he preferred Leo fucking someone else or being hurt. The answer was easy when blood spurted out. Karai’s opponent, a slim, but
energetic mulatto, hadn’t been fast enough to avoid the tanto shot of the young Japanese girl, who was wild and fierce, hitting him directly in the left eye.

“Fuck,” Raph muttered, having never seen so much violence before.

The man, who’d advised him, and who was sitting next to him, whispered, “The candidates are surprising sometimes, but I knew she was good. She hated being a sex worker and must have been so frustrated. This is a good opportunity for her. If she wins, she could kill men, lick pussy and get paid for it. The boss doesn’t care what rocks her boat. She hates men, apart from her dance partner! Anyway, she wears too much make-up for my liking. Don’t you think so? Look. She’ll cut poor Xever to pieces, take his blood and use it for lipstick!”

Raph, whose face was ashen, said nothing, feeling like he was going to vomit. He pretended he was watching the match and the following one, but he was too worried to concentrate.

Leo then appeared, katana strapped to his back and only wearing black sports pants. Raph held his breath and clung to his chair, so that he wouldn’t rush to Leo’s side. Leo’s hair was in a bun, to stop his hair from falling in his face and covering his eyes during the fight. Leo had the assurance of a gladiator and Raphael found it difficult to comprehend that he was the same man who’d written such beautiful rhymes comparing Raph’s eyes to the pools of Central Park on stormy days.

The dancer smiled slightly at someone in the crowd and, unable to resist being jealous, Raph, following the look, saw the back of Donnie's head in the front row. Raph, in the sixth, sank back further into the shadows. He was more discreet, but not invisible. Leo didn’t seem unhappy at all, like he’d thought, even fucking fine.

He exuded happiness and Raphael wondered what he should feel at the slight. Hun then entered the ring and Raphael knew it: fear. It was ironic because every aspirant needed a nickname and Leo, modest as always, had chosen 'Fearless'. Leo could actually be Fearless, while Raph was scared for both of them.

The student audaciously unsheathed his katanas and set himself in position, mirrored by Hun, who had Raphael’s impressive musculature and was as tall as Donatello and a ponytail. He also seems to have Leo’s bravery and the edgy twitch of a disturbing being, like poor Mikey. A deadly cocktail.

Hun had danger written all over him and red flags appeared in Raph’s mind. The man was also experienced and more ruthless than Leo himself.

While he wondered how he could stop the madness, the fight began and Raph bit his finger, so that he wouldn’t scream, feeling like he saw David about to fight Goliath.

Raph had learned when they’d lived together, that Leo was a surprising and formidable opponent, but he’d never imagined that his ex-boyfriend could be so lethal. Their sparring match had only been for fun. And then, despite his pride, he’d had to admit that Leo had pulled back, so that he wouldn’t hurt Raph and dent his pride.

Each movement of the young man occurred with the express purpose of destroying his adversary, cold determination upon his face. Raph shuddered, imagining the fight that had preceded the crime scene in which Leo’s mother had lost his life and for the first time, he found himself wondering if Leo really was a murderer. But it had only been self-defense, right? And to protect his mother. Raph too would do anything to protect his own mother.

He glanced at the first row and didn’t understand how Donnie remained so calm. Maybe the fights were his idea and maybe he jerked off to them. Maybe it was the foreplay Leo had spoken about.
Donatello was so twisted, it could be the explanation.

Anxious, he returned his thoughts to the game and saw that Hun was trying to bend Leo backward, while their katanas were pushing against each other. Despite the distance, Raph saw Leo’s tense muscles straining and trembling under the effort. Leo was going to lose. He screamed at the defining moment, the name escaping his lips before he could stop it. The blue-steel eyes glanced sideways at the sound of his name, and without seeming to react, he struck his forehead against the giant’s.

Hun lost his posture just enough for Leo to regain his and with a fancy kick to his opponent’s temple; the older man fell to the ground in a heap. The audience immediately stood, the crowd clearly having deemed Hun the favorite to win. The guy next to Raphael cursed him and said, “It’s your damn fault!” A hand rested on Raphael’s shoulder and a bouncer ordered him to leave.

Raphael tried to resist, wanting to see what would happen to Leo, but he couldn’t because he was dragged to the counter at the entrance. He learned that being one of only two people to have bet on Leo, he’d just won $25,000. Raph didn’t think about it, jaded about the big money for the day. "What's going on with the winners?" Raph asked.

“None of your business, Sir.” The employee replied, polite but to the point.

Mad, Raph stormed out and decided to wait for Leo all night long if necessary. He didn’t care about Donatello’s presence. The mother fucker didn’t love Leo if he allowed dangerous and insane things to happen to him. If Donnie wanted to open his shitty mouth, Raph would punch him!

Restless, he paced on the sidewalk, hoping that Leo hadn’t left by the back entrance. Then a voice from the darkness startled him. “Why did you come? I thought you didn’t want him anymore.”

Donnie was standing in the shadows and only the glow of his cigarette revealed his presence, it being reflected in his glasses. His voice was low and quiet.

“I made a fucking mistake! I don’t want him, like you think. I want him to be free and happy. You use him as a dog now, making him fight big guys just for some kinky blood fetish of yours! I know you’d jerk off to a beaten Leo,” Raphael yelled. “You want to exact revenge because he doesn’t love you.”

Donnie stared at him incredulously, “I don’t have any blood fetish and took no pleasure in seeing Leo harmed. It’s actually the opposite, but I don’t think you’re here to hear about my sex life.”

“Maybe yes, if Leo’s involved!” Raphael snapped, his eyes blazing. “I know you forced him to do things he didn’t enjoy!”

The doctor took a deep puff and sighed. “For your information, the sex is quite normal now…”

Raph despite what he had just said, didn’t want to hear more about that. The picture was too atrocious to his mind.

“Pervert! He’s only seventeen. You knew it and I didn’t!” he yelled.

Donatello stayed silent for a minute. Then he spoke in a sad and quiet voice, “It’s not what you think, but you’re right about one thing. Maybe Leo doesn’t love me and maybe he loved you. I use past time on purpose, here. Maybe I also made a mistake. I should have left him with you. Leo seemed to have forgotten his ideas and obsessions, with you. I admit that I helped quite a bit to make grow these ideas in his head, to keep him by my side. But the risks were controlled with my help, at the time. But, you’ve come onto the scene and screwed up the plan that’s been in the works for years. Now, he acts ruthlessly."
The genius closed his eyes a moment, as he was so tired. “Leo should only be a weapon, but I lost control of my tool. Me, who’s so cold, logical and determined, the master of the plan to begin with. It was only about revenge...But, I’ve fallen in love with Leo, even more than with her...He is so skilled and farsighted. A pure jewel, when she was only zircon, maybe. He deserves what is waiting for him, and even more after all this unfair suffering.”

Raph doesn’t understand who was “her” but he didn’t give a damn about Donatello love affair. The only thing preventing him to punch the doctor was to learn something useful about his ex-boyfriend.

Don begins to be riled up, by his own monologue:

“Leo is like a chemical component, which is more volatile and unstable than nitroglycerine. I’ve wanted to withdraw from this game for a long time and I wanted to get Leo out too. I wanted to drop the plan and live happily with him elsewhere, but Leo, the obstinate mule, doesn’t want to. Since you gave him back to me, he is worse,” he sighed. "He wants revenge and burning everything to the ground! I help him to keep him...not because I really still want it. Don’t stay here, because you’ll risk being collateral damage and caught in the blast of Leo’s fury. He could achieve his goals, without you, but I’m not sure to want to see him succeed anymore. He had become more precious than vengeance and ambitions, to me. But, it's now too late. Its all or nothing, now. For your own sake, turn you back.”

Raph didn’t understand anything, apart from the fact that Leo was in deep shit and Don was trying to get rid of him again. The doctor had confessed that Leo had loved him and was worse since their break-up. For Raph that was the only clear point he saw.

At the same moment, the dancer appeared, his head down and said, “Donnie, it didn’t happen like we expected…” Raphael, his nerves and his anger getting the better of him, rushed on him and slapped him twice, startling Leo.

“You little bastard!” Raphael shouted. “I was sick with anxiety for you. Why aren’t you at home studying Dutch?”

Blue eyes looked back at him, with an equal fury. The old butler was right. Leo and he were two hot-heads.

“Mind your own business,” Leo retorted, composing himself and replying with a left hook at Raphael. “You weren’t so concerned when you delivered me to Donnie like I was pizza.”

Raph touched his busted lip. The asshole had made him bleed, but it wasn't his goal to start an alley fight. He grabbed Leo’s wrists and gripped them tightly and said, “Come back with me, Leo. I’ll treat you well,” he begged."We won’t be lovers, but I’ll take good care of you.”

Leo’s eyes blazed and he broke the hold, grabbing Raphael’s hand and digging his nails into his flesh. “I don’t need your care,” he said in a low voice dripping with venom, "Focus on yourself like I focus on myself. I told no one that you’re a policeman because you were just a dummy endangering yourself with serious issues you didn’t even understand. I don’t know how you managed to get in, but that was the last time. Don’t return here ever again or to Donnie’s place. Get a boyfriend or girlfriend and forget about me. It’ll be better for you because if I see you again, I’ll crush you without any hesitation.” Leo turned his back disdainfully “Donnie, the car! We’re off!” he shouted in an authoritative tone,

Maybe the old man had been right, Raphael thought again, and Donnie was really the slave. But Leo was about to leave and he didn’t want that to happen. He must convince him to stay with him, instead.
“Leo,” Raphael stammered. He didn’t want Leo to be so furious. He liked a gentle Leo, whose hair he’d stroked, while he’d sat on his lap. Leo held a grudge about the previous time and Raph knew he had to be patient. “Leo, please. I don’t know what you want to do, but you’re not thinking about what you’re saying. It’s not you. Come back with me. I'll make you a tea and we will talk.”

The student grinned and said, “It’s not me? Because you think you know me? You don’t know me just because I allowed you to fuck me! ”

Raph forgot all his resolutions to remain calm and conciliatory and snapped, "Fuck you! I tried to know you and you…."

Leo gestured condescendingly, "That doesn’t matter, I don’t want to be treated like a child with you acting like my bulky babysitter. I hid things from you and you did as well, and you didn't know my real name either, so we’re even now. Farewell, Raphael. Be a good and clever boy and don’t cross my path again. I mean it.”

Without looking back, Leo climbed into Don's Mercedes and left a beyond mad Raph. Being dismissed like an ex-employee was too much extreme feeling to bear. He was going to explode like he never did. The sergeant feels played, cheated as if Leo had just used his heart as a toy or a target game. Leo didn't tell him his real name, too and he had the nerve last time to call Raph a liar!

Absolutely mad to be torn between wanting revenge and still wanting to protect Leo against his will, he threw the trash in the alley, hitting the walls and screaming obscenities. Never he had suffered such a heartache. Leo a dumped him in the most fuck-up way, leaving him so in pain, he can't think clearly. Raph’s mind was going back and forth, rotating between its was only a front from the student, to fool Donatello and that Leo was the biggest scumbag ever.

And it wasn’t only that: He wanted to do his job as a cop. Leo was involved in dark schemes. Its was Raph’s duty to stop him and protect Leonardo against himself. Or the city. He felt like he was Batman having a sick-shit affair with the Joker. It was driving him crazy as hell!

Enraged, he kicked another trash bin, while thinking about Leo’s words. The jerk didn’t want to be treated like a child but he deserved an epic spanking! He didn’t give a damn about all Leo had said. Raph was just as stubborn as Leo was, but he wasn’t dumb. He’d make Leo take back his words. All of them.

He throws a glass bottle on the brick wall of the club, watching it burst into miles shards, with satisfaction, as if it were the arrogance of the teenager.

“You think you can bully me with your self-important ass of 17 years-old, Leo? Just watch me!” he yelled, aloud.

Leo wouldn’t even know what had hit him. Leo would no longer treat him with this haughtiness as if he had never loved him. He would regret to had hurt him that way.

Yes, Raph knew how to bend Leo’s steel and to get to him.
The cheap shot

For a disturbed being, Mikey played checkers extremely well, Raphael told himself for the second time. The damn Leo was late, so he and Mikey had been playing for over an hour. Mikey was also an excellent listener, being mute. Unable to stop himself, Raphael had confided his feelings to the boy. “Your brother’s doing a lot of nonsense. I love him, even though he’s too young for me. I’m trying to stop him from doing stupid things, but he’s the most stubborn person I know…”

Mikey nodded, as if he was saying, “Yeah, Raph, dude, you’re absolutely right. My bro’s sexy as hell, but also so stupid.”

'But you know, Mikey,” Raphael continued. “He’s a damn schemer, but I could also be one, because I have a plan and even a plan B. Your brother doesn’t think that far ahead.”

At this statement, Mikey looked at him unimpressed, grabbed a piece of paper and a pen and drew a flow chart.

The title was: Leo's mind.

Under the title was the first row of choices, with plans from A to E and a tangle of lines following each other, ending in a diagram so complex that Raph didn’t understand it. Raph told himself that Mikey was surely exaggerating.

"And where am I in your brother’s fucking plan?" Raphael asked.

Mikey didn’t even bother to think and drew a heart out of the flow chart. Then, taken by artistic impetus, he began to draw rays from the heart that conflicted with the straight lines of Leonardo’s plans. Then he put down his pencil to have his turn.

“I don’t think I have as much impact on your brother as I’d like, Mikey, because he’s too stubborn, mistrustful and mysterious and he can’t even be fucking punctual!” Raphael barked, slamming his hand down hard on the table, having just lost to Mikey for a second time and being upset, because Mikey seemed to believe that Leo loved him and he didn’t dare to hope for that. “Leo’s too busy doing shitty business with his damn doc! What a shame that you can’t talk. There must be a reason why you hate the doc’s guts so much. I mean other than the fact he’s a colossal dick!”

Mikey picked up the pencil again, but before he could draw, a male voice shouted indignantly.

“You!”

Raph quickly turned around, hearing his ex-lover’s voice. He could tell that Leo was pissed and he couldn’t hide a smile of satisfaction. Leo hadn’t see this coming. Even the great Leonardo, the ultimate tactician since Julius Caesar, could make mistakes. Leo had believed that Raph was compliant.

If so, he wasn’t the fine psychologist that Donnie pretended he was.

Leo’s hair was in a loose bun, just like it had been in the illegal battle arena, but his clothes were more expensive than usual. He wore a pale blue cashmere sweater with a v neck and designer blue jeans that were almost black. As he approached, his beautiful pale cheeks flushed with anger, Raphael noted other details: a belt engraved with the Prada brand, a necklace, two rings and a bracelet in addition to the watch, as well as an earring. Leo, covered with his sumptuous jewels, put him in anger equal to that of the young man. Each gift from Donatello must have been the price of a
caress and Raphael gritted his teeth with rage. Leo was too precious, too feminine and too perfumed for his liking. He preferred Leo wearing T-shirts, sweating during training, katanas in hand. Leo was definitely Donatello’s now.

“So, after dolling up, you’ve finally come?” Raphael said.

“What are you doing here?” Leo snarled. “I told you to stay away, Raphael.”

“Oh, and because the great Leonardo told me, I must obey?” Raphael mocked. “Well, I don’t listen to my boss most of the time, so why would I obey a kid?”

Blues eyes flashed and Leo turned towards his brother, “Mikey, he isn’t my friend anymore. You don’t have to be kind to him.”

Indignation overcame Raphael, “Did you just talk to your bro, like he was a Doberman trained to attack intruders?” he asked crossly.

“That has nothing to do with it. I want him to understand that you’re only using him as a means to avenge yourself.”

Raph was silent for a minute. Leo, who was so smart, didn’t understand his real motives. But he didn’t have the time to undeceive the student, because Mikey approached his brother to sniff him. Mikey had no reason to approach him. Leonardo smelled of lavender. The blond boy did the maths in his head and his face twisted in disgust. Furious, he pulled back and angrily spat on his big brother."

Leo’s expression was one of pure shock. Then, the hurt was etched on his handsome features and he looked so heartsore that Raphael stepped forward to take him in his arms to comfort him, but Leo, upset, evaded him and shot him a hateful warning look. “All I’ve ever done and am doing was for you, Mikey, and to avenge our mother,” Leo said, upset and mad at once.”You know that and you know the plan. The doctor’s our best ally and the only one, whom we can trust. But if you’d rather trust this stranger, than me, I’m leaving.”

Leo quickly turned towards the exit, but he glanced over once at Raph, his eyes misty from his tears of fury. “I’m warning you, Raphael. When I come here next time to visit Mikey, I don’t want you here.”

The “next time” gave Raphael hope. Leo wasn’t that mad at his little brother. If he had been, Raphael’s scheme would have been annihilated. Plan A hadn’t worked, so he had to focus on plan B now.

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April had been surprised and slightly reluctant, saying that Raphael knew nothing about kids, let alone perturbed kids, but Raphael had been very eloquent, pretending that he needed to find meaning in his life and that since he was apparently gay, he might never have children.

April could facilitate the proceedings, having known Raphael for more than 5 years and he had a clean record because he was a policeman. Raphael had a two-bedroomed apartment and a salary that could provide for a child. In addition, Mikey would continue to go to his school, so he didn’t have to watch him 24/7. Except Raphael would now pick him up at the end of his workday and drop him at home and the boy would spend weekends at home. But Raphael had to attend 30-hour Model Approach to Partnerships and Parenting training. He was determined to do so.

So, if Leo wanted to see his brother, he had to come to Raphael’s house. If he saw that his little brother was well treated, Leo might want to live with them. In fact, Raphael had already been looking for a
bunk bed, because it was out of the question for Leo to share his bed. He could stay calm with Leo in the same room as him, but certainly not in the same bed.

This was, of course, Raphael’s greatest motivation, although removing Mikey from his misery was also important to him. The kid was endearing.

April had promised him that his foster file would be ready in 2 weeks’ time after his formation. It was already good, because it usually took several months. It was Sunday. He’d have time to shop the rest of the week for the bunk beds, for an easel and for everything that would make the brothers comfortable. He’d take a day off to repaint the room, which was white at the moment. Mikey would be at home and Leo too if he accepted.

Money wasn’t a real issue. April had explained that he’d receive a pension for Mikey. Not a large sum. 560 $ monthly, which wasn’t even enough to cover all of the expenses, but Raph didn’t care. He’d done it out of love and not for money. To force Leo out of his den, where he planned to blow up his life.

“I’m going to come back in two weeks’ time, Mikey,” Raph said. “Not a word to your brother. I don’t want him to come up with a damn F plan!”

The boy nodded.

The only negative thing about Raph’s plan was not seeing Leo mad with anger when he heard that Mikey had a new tutor. Leo, riled up, was kind of hot. Mikey would already be at home when Leo heard about it.

Raph went to his 3-hour training every night. He went shopping on Saturday. There were still Boxing Day sales and he managed to get what he wanted without spending too much and kept some mismatched furniture. He took the single bed into the basement and painted the room. Leo liked blue and Mikey liked orange, so it was difficult to mix the colors. He opted to paint the room cream, which was a warmer color than white. The bunk beds were blue, so he bought orange linen. The result was good. Not worthy of being in a magazine featuring stylish homes, but it was welcoming and Raphael was certain that the teenagers would approve.

At the end of the two weeks, after his training, a medical visit and a social worker had visited his apartment, he had the certification.

And so, 12 days after his last meeting with Leo, Raph went to get Mikey with his new official papers. It was time. The two weeks had seemed extremely long and he’d been fearful that Leo would do some drastic shit to fuck-up his life. He couldn’t trust Donatello to supervise him. It was like asking the Mad Hatter to baby-sit the March Hare.

Raph was a little afraid of the young teenager’s reaction. After all, he didn’t know Mikey, except that he loved art and was a great checkers player. Leo had mentioned that he knew how to cook but also that he could stab someone in his sleep, which wasn’t encouraging. But the boy caused no trouble on Friday night when Raph went to get him. Mikey packed his suitcases, bringing some clothes, some stuffed toys, his expensive art kit and Leo’s drawing.

The director was surprised but relieved to see Mikey leave. Amazingly, he didn’t seem to recognize Raphael. Maybe his sergeant uniform did that and was too intimidating for the man to ask questions.

"Can I give your coordinates to your pupil’s brother? Mr. Hamilton loves and cares deeply for his
little brother, as weird as that is.”

Raph frowned at the insult to Mikey and coldly answered, “You’ll tell Mr. Hamilton that he’s very welcome to visit his brother. In fact, I’m looking forward to seeing him.”

It was strange to go back home with someone. Mikey wasn’t just a visitor. Raph couldn’t change his mind and kick him out. Mikey was home and Raph was in charge of him for a while.

Mikey seemed to like his bedroom. He didn’t question the bunk beds and put his stuff on the bottom bed. He pinned pictures and drawings onto the cork board and settled down. He seemed very happy having his own TV, although it was only a 32-inch screen. It was Raph’s first TV, a first generation HD, which he’d bought almost ten years earlier. Raph had also found his old PlayStation 3 and 18 games at his mother’s place. He wasn’t sure if it was a good idea to provide violent games for Mikey, but Raph was determined to treat him like a normal teenager.

Mikey seemed to be delighted, probably never having known so much comfort since his father’s death.

“It’s your TV,” Raph said. “But you don’t have to stay in your room. You can go to the living room or wherever you want to be. It’s late, but if you want, we can go to the park, bowling or to the cinema tomorrow.”

Mikey nodded, but without a real expression, caught in the inside of his troubled mind and Raph wondered if he’d made a huge mistake.

Raph had no idea what interested a 14-year-old boy, especially one who was mute. Maybe Leo could give him tips, once the motherfucker came. Moreover, Raphael was told that Mikey’s teacher expected him to be more diligent with his homework and lessons. Raph’s own mother had fought with him all of his youth for him to do his homework and it seemed like payback to him. The teacher had said that only Leo could convince Mikey to listen. Go figure. There was only Leo, who could be both a mother hen and an evil schemer and who could care for his little brother, while seducing half of the city to carry out his dark, vengeful plans.

So, Raph hoped very strongly that his plan would work and that Leo would come.

Saturday was a beautiful day. Raph was awakened by the smell of pancakes. Although it was only 7 a.m., Mikey was busy in the kitchen. The sergeant was pleasantly astonished and the pancakes were excellent. Mikey then did the dishes, while listening to pop music.

The youngster then sat down and watched cartoons until noon, while Raphael ironed his uniforms and did the chores. He really felt like he was with his younger brother, or at least, his son. But he didn’t want Mikey spending all of his time watching television. He asked the boy if he knew how to skate. When he nodded, Raph pulled out his hockey skates and offered to take him to the Woolman ice rink in Central Park, where Mikey could rent skates.

They skated from 1 p.m. until 4 p.m. Mikey skated well and he nodded when Raphael asked him if his older brother had shown him how to. Then, Raphael had suggested that they go shopping for him. The boy was quite uncomfortable, contenting himself with a Stars Wars toothbrush and two pajamas and Raphael had to insist that he get something else for himself. They ate pizza and then went to the movies. Mikey was again silent and uncomfortable and Raphael was never sure if Mikey was pleased with whatever they did, but by the end of the day, Raphael was almost used to it.

On the way home, Raphael wondered if Leo would be at his apartment. He knew Leo was going to visit Mikey on Sunday, but he’d hoped that the director would give him an earlier warning. It didn’t
seem so, or Leo was sulking because he’d been screwed over by him, the dumb in love guy.

Mikey went to bed at 10 p.m. without making a fuss. Raph wondered if it was too late. What time did a 14-year-old teenager go to sleep on Saturday? Okay. When he, Raph had been 14, he’d smoked in a basement or in a park with friends until 2 a.m., while his poor mother was crazy with worry about him, but he didn’t want Mikey to follow in his footsteps. Leo would never forgive him.

Sunday was similar. They went bowling, ate tacos and went for a walk near the harbor, which was just next door. Mikey didn’t speak, but he was calm. He’d accepted, without making a scene, to wash himself in the morning and Raph almost thought he wasn’t that unhappy without Leo. Having someone was cool, even if it wasn’t a handsome boyfriend.

On the other hand, they returned home earlier than the previous day, because Raph didn’t want to miss Leo’s certain arrival.

The young student was going to be furious at being manipulated through his little brother, but Raph hoped that Leo would think of himself in a few weeks and that he’d sleep in the top bunk. While Raph was anxiously biting his nails at 9 p.m., the doorbell rang.

Raph nervously pressed the intercom, “Yeah? Who’s there?”

“Stop acting! You know damn well it’s me. I must admit I’m actually impressed, but I’ve come because of Mikey and not because of you,” Leo said icily. “Open the door now.”

“Drop your Fearless leader act and maybe I will,” Raph taunted.

Raph had to be as cocky as Leo, and delighted, he heard Leo’s exasperated groan. “Fine,” Leo said coldly. “Please open the door?”

Raph excitedly pressed the button and paced anxiously, while Mikey was neutral.

Leo knocked at the door and Raph, putting on a poker face, opened it, but Raph couldn’t hide his amazement when he saw Leo’s cases. Leo followed his gaze and said, “There are six others at the entrance. You can go get them.”

Raph was still stunned and said, “Da fuck?”

“Language!” Leo snapped.

Leo, who’d already rushed to Mikey and who was tenderly stroking the blond curls, glanced at Raph, “This was your plan, right? Making me stay with you. I’d never have believed you’d stoop so low, as to use my brother as a weapon against me. But, your plan’s worked. I’m here. Maybe you’ll regret it.”

Raph didn’t want to argue with Leo in front of Mikey. He went downstairs, getting the rest of the suitcases. When he returned to his apartment, Leo frostily told him that it was Mikey’s bedtime. Raph frowned. He disliked being scolded and he wouldn’t have a lecture about bedtime from a 17-year-old kid.

"I’m able to care for a kid, Leo, and even two, which appears to be the case.”

As he spoke, Raph opened Mikey’s bedroom door and Leo was flabbergasted, noting the care taken in the decorating. Then, almost looking horrified, Leo asked, “Why a bunk bed?”

Raph smiled. He’d still managed to surprise Leo. The dancer believed that Raph wanted sexual
favors and would, therefore, be easy to handle and to manipulate. He hadn’t realized the seriousness of the police officer's willingness to close his heart and the door of his bedroom to the law student.

"I hope that doesn’t bother you. Mikey came first. He chose the bottom bed," Raph said, showing the fluffy toys and smiling mockingly.

Leo was pale, digesting that he’d been fooled.

"You see, Leo. When I bought toys for Mikey, I found a stuffed captain Ryan. He’s waiting for you on your pillow. I know you don’t like an empty bed."

Leo looked like he was going to throw up. "Fucking unbelievable!" he muttered.

Raph grinned, “Language, Leonardo!”
Raph slept badly. The idea of Leo being so close, but yet inaccessible due to his own will were tormenting him. And so did the fear that Leo would manage to deceive his vigilance. The student was quite capable of drugging Raphael and leaving with Mikey at night. Raphael hoped that his affection for Mikey would prevent Leo from doing anything crazy. Leo could be mad at him, he could not deny Raph cared for his little brother.

Raphael found Mikey already up at six the next day, but he was alone.

“Where’s your brother, Mikey?” Raphael asked worriedly.

Mikey pointed to the bathroom and Raph, reassured, realized that he did indeed hear the shower running. Raphael briefly thought about Leo’s suicide attempt. Although it had only been a means of handling him, anxiety still gripped him when he thought about it.

He really wanted to pee. After a few minutes of waiting, he knocked on the door, but Leo chose to ignore it, whether it was deliberate or not.

Raphael placed his hand on the door handle, saw it wasn’t locked and opened the door. He only hesitated for a moment and wouldn’t look to the right or the left, but would go straight to the toilet, piss and then leave.

He felt as his bathroom was as hazardous than a secret tomb in an Indiana Jones movie.

Despite the steam covering the glass of the shower and his brain instructing him not to look, his optic nerve didn’t really have anything to fuck with the command of his main system and he saw a pair of round and firm buttocks, which had haunted his nights for nearly two months straight.

But that wasn’t the most disturbing thing. Because of Leo's back position, Raph knew very well what the student was doing in the shower. Leo was jerking off.

Nights without sex were to be a rarity in the beautiful ex-stripper’s life. Placing Leo in the same room as Mikey probably didn’t help the student to release his sexual tension. But maybe Leo had purposely done this. He’d told Raphael the day before that he’d maybe regret Leo’s enforced presence.

Maybe Leo just wanted to break his balls.

Raphael noticed that he’d been caught staring when Leo, his eyes clouded in lust, glanced over his shoulder. Leo smiled encouragingly, while turning a bit and letting Raphael see that one of his hand was on his erect cock and pumping it, while the other was caressing his ass, stretching the buttock to let him show what he had to offer to Raph. Then, he started fingering himself with eagerness to the cop's shock.

Raph's mouth came dry. He remembered very well that the last time they’d had sex was in the shower. Leo had been slightly bent over, Raph’s hands grabbing his loin, while he felt Leo’s silky insides, trusting in him and nipping his collarbone. Leo had had the same lustful look, pumping his cock and moaning at Raphael’s touch. They’d climaxed at the same time and after disengaging himself from his lover’s body, Raphael had wiped his essence onto Leo’s ass and thighs, marking him. The cum had glistened on Leo’s skin. Raphael had been quite pleased with the sight, but Leo had protested and said that Raphael was disgusting. Raphael had laughed and told Leo to stop acting like an outraged princess, because they were in the shower anyway. Then, to shut him up, he had
dropped to his knees and licked it off, tasting his own cum and hardening again, when he was rimming him. Leo had stopped complaining and had muttered praises, while he’d shook with need and pleasure.

Raphael so wanted to make Leo moan and quiver like that again.

Entering the shower, kissing him slowly and fucking him hard, so hard that Leo couldn’t walk away again would be easy. Leo was there, so enticing, and prep, and willing to bend over and to allow Raphael to have his way with him.

"Don’t you dare go there and touch him. Fucking piss and leave", Raphael’s brain ordered him for the third time. Raphael took a long stride and went to the toilet, determined to obey his brain. Despite the noise he made, he thought he heard Leo's moans. He managed to put his hard dick in his red boxers and went out of the bathroom, as breathless as if he’d run thirty yards. Living with Leonardo and treating him like a little brother, was going to be even more difficult than he’d thought. But he won't be longing for him forever, won't he?

He later understood that Leo had only wanted to piss him off. His rather annoyed expression confirmed it when Leo saw Raphael reading the newspaper with his coffee and Mikey eating his cereal next to him. Leo’s scheme to seduce Raphael hadn’t worked.

Raphael’s will was stronger than that. It would take him more than a kinky teenager to make from him an abuser.

That Leo badly wanted to induce him into temptation proved that the young man was plotting something and wanted to coax him. Raphael feared his ideas. Not for himself, but for Leo’s own good. “I hope there’s still hot water,” Raphael grumbled.

Leo shrugged, “Maybe a cold shower would better suit you,” he replied mockingly

Mikey looked at them and shoveled Cheerios into his mouth, so quickly, as if Raphael had starved him before, to his great shame.

“I can take Mikey to school by the public transport,” Leo suggested. “Before going to university and then, you can go to your job. We don't want to give you more troubles. You are already so kind to us.”

Raph frowned. The thought of leaving the two brothers free and on their own, worried him, as if they were the Dalton brothers. The worst thing was that Leo had proposed it, is his sweet radioman voice, so it sounded indeed like big trouble to him.

“No,” Raphael said. “It’s my duty as the big brother of you rascals to take you to school and I’ll do it.”

Upon hearing that Leo was cross, “Big brother? What the heck? You’re not our brother,” he exclaimed indignantly

Raph, impassive, explained that since he was too young to be Mikey’s father, he preferred the title of brother and that since Leo was the brother of his little brother and lived with them, even if it was unofficial, he was Raphael’s little brother too.

"But it's not because you're not official that I'll treat you less well, Leo,” Raphael said. “I'll love you equally." Leo paled and Raph jubilant, continued, “Now, here are some of my rules. Curfew’s at nine p.m. and you’ll answer when I call you, because I need to know where you are. For your own security. I don’t want my little bro alone in the city and in the dark. And if you’re a good boy and
behave, I'll give you an allowance.”

Traumatizing Leo, like the raven-haired teen had done to him in the shower, was delightful payback. The three of them knew the rules were only for Leo, but Raphael knew Leo. The jerk would make him pay tenfold, being the ungrateful bastard that he was.

Leo’s cheeks darkened in rage and he snapped, “I doubt you were at home at nine p.m. when you were a teenager! That’s bullshit! You’re not my father!”

“It’s a pity I’m not because I’d have raised you better, so that you didn’t talk back,” Raph roared, hitting the table with his fist like he has seen many fathers doing in a lot of teenager movie

He saw the hurt in the blue eyes and felt bad. He did not mean to recall Leo his painful past. But he preferred a resentful Leo than a Leo, who was hell-bent on seducing. Leo needed attentive care and rigorous discipline much more than Mikey did. This tough love was the only love that he could now give it to him.

“Why would you do that? You love driving me crazy, don’t you?” Leo snapped. “Do you feel avenged now?”

“It’s not about that. You’re taking it the wrong way. I just want to protect you,” Raph tried to explain.

Leo sneered. “Against what? I’m not a kid anymore like you think! There no a day when we were together that I didn't think myself as more mature than you!”

No wonder, Raph though, pissed. Leo was such a self-important piece of shit. He restrained himself to make a witty answer and tried to sound paternal.

“Against your self-destructive mind, Leo. You may not drink, meditate for two hours a day and play sports, this overthinking would be your end! I’m serious. I don’t know your real background story, but I intend on knowing it and I can already tell no one has taken real care of you. I would. And I’d try and fix the damage done to you and to get you out of the shit. I feel like a fucking missionary trying to save a pagan’s soul. Damn it!” Raphael bellowed, throwing his hands up in the air, unable to stay calm. Leo was good to crawl under his skin like nobody else, the arrogant dick!

Leo was dumbfounded a moment before asking in a low voice, “And you don’t want sex from your so-called protection and your cares?”

“No! Of course not! I already told you! I won’t ever touch you that way again!” Raphael said with conviction. "I would have never touched you if I knew that you were so young! It was a mistake."

“But you know I have a fake ID, right? Donnie has the real one, but he won’t bother us about it. You won’t have any trouble because I have already the legal age and I’ll get older,” Leo said suggestively.

“I know the truth and that’s enough for me,” Raphael said sharply, ignoring the ‘get older’ part because he didn’t know how to answer that and a lot of things could happen in the next years Leo will graduate and...No! He won't cling to this idea!.

“Excuse me. I’m going to shower. We’ll leave in twenty minutes, so make sure you’re ready,” he said, trying to be casual.

Raphael avoided thinking about Leo in the shower thirty minutes earlier. He tried to steer his fantasies towards something else. He couldn’t masturbate about a minor he called his brother. He
turned on the cold and was unable to. When he went out dressed in his uniform, but still shivering, he caught Leo staring at him admiringly. The student had never seen him in his police uniform. He quickly turned his back. He didn’t want to see Leo look at him that way. It was already difficult enough.

He took the brothers to their schools and then went to work. He’d first dropped Mikey off and with only Leo, the trip had been awkward. Leo was mute and only said “you too” when Raphael wished him a good day at school.

He was satisfied with himself when he arrived at work. Leo hadn’t been ecstatic, but he’d been rather calm about the situation. Not tamed at all, but quiet.

Raphael had only been at work for three hours, when he heard news from a colleague that froze him. Oroku Saki was dead, having died from an erotic self- asphyxia. A thong with a knot was wrapped around his neck for that purpose, but it was possible for Oroku to have done it himself. Raphael got a bad feeling when he discovered that Oroku’s death had happened less than twenty-four hours earlier.

Maybe it had happened just before Leo had arrived at his place.

The last time he’d checked, Leo had been working for the criminal and now suddenly the man was dead in an erotic, kinky manner. Donnie had talked about Leo’s desire for vengeance and Leo, himself, had also done so. And who could seduce and kill so efficiently a crime lord?

And he still didn’t know if Leo was a true cold-blooded murderer.

And the possible serial killer was at his home and protected by him, an NYPD sergeant.

If Leo had killed the guy and even if Oroku was indeed a dangerous yakuza boss, they were both in deep shit.

Desperate for answers, he called Leo during his lunch break.

Leo answered his call, but in a rather irritated tone. Raphael, needing answers, cut to the chase and said, “Your boss is dead. Strangled. Is it your work? You’ve endangered our family!”

“What are you talking about? You seem to be my only boss because you order me around and try to control me,” Leo was quick to snap.

“Stop talking to me like I’m a dumbass, jerk. You know whom I’m talking about. The Oroku guy. The owner of the place, where you showed off your ass for cash,” Raphael spat, now angry about Leo’s fake misunderstanding. He should have waited to have the fucker in front of him, watching if he was lying. But he knew that would be useless. Leo had the best poker face ever. Leo should have made poker his favorite illegal activity instead of stripping. He’d have made a fortune and Raphael would have been less jealous. But what was he thinking about? He had to listen to what the bastard had to say.

“I don’t do that anymore. Donnie forced me to give it all up, but your preaching was the biggest reason,” Leo explained in a serious voice. “I’m turning a new leaf, thanks to you.”

“What you mean?”

“What you said about Dutch lessons, you know. I don’t belong in the criminal underworld. It’s less dangerous for my future career if I didn’t and I’d rather play Go Fish with you and Mikey, even if I die of boredom,” Leo said in a bittersweet voice.
Raphael beamed. Leo had listened to him, the voice of reason and morality. Leo would now be just fine.

“Yes. I’m really thrilled to hear that, Leo. You’re too intelligent for that and you can’t ruin your future by having a criminal record. You must go to La Haye and do good things with your talent. I was thinking that we could maybe go to the pizzeria, like a real family tonight. I’ll buy you the best sundae ever!”

Leo was silent for a minute and Raph realized he had sounded very paternal, indeed, with this childish reward. Leo will retort something sassy in the next ten seconds flat. But, then the student sighed, “Okay.”

Raphael had spent the day on the ninth cloud. Okay. He no longer had a handsome lover, but he was doing something good. Mikey wouldn’t be abused anymore and Leo was on the road to rehab. The only dark moment came when he saw Casey, who bugged him and complained that he no longer saw him and that April had told him that he was the guardian of a mentally disturbed child. Casey seemed distraught and worried about it.

"I wanted to do some good, Casey. What’s so amazing about it?"

Casey shook his head and said, “Your big softy heart will be the end of you, Raph. I’m sure this Leo is behind it. You’re his puppet! Ever since you met him, you’ve behaved like a madman! He can give wonderful blowjobs, but that doesn’t worth to spoil your life,” Casey said and wrinkled his nose in disgust.

Raph was prompt to deny it and said. “He isn’t sucking my dick, so keep your repulsive thoughts to yourself!” he snapped. "And Leo has nothing to do with it. I don’t see him anymore.”

It was a daring lie. If Casey came over, he’d see the bunk bed or even Leo himself, but Casey wasn’t the type of brother to meddle in his sibling’s love life.

Casey shrugged and said, “I don’t know, Raph. You’re not the same guy since you met him.”

“Whatever. Think like you want to. I don’t give a shit!” Raphael then left.

After his shift, he first fetched Mikey and then Leo. His anxiety caused him to sweat, as he waited outside Leo’s library. Maybe the raven-haired boy wouldn’t be there and would be sucking off the doctor for some reason or a more powerful guy than Raphael himself. But, Leo was there and appeared; a genuine, but a rather sad smile on his face.

They went to the pizzeria and Raphael didn’t remember having been so eager to order pizza. Mikey had eaten like there was no tomorrow, but Leo hardly touched his food.

The teen looked worried and said, “Raphael, I want to ask you two questions. Answer truthfully.”

Raphael was far too happy to protest that Leo wasn’t sincere himself most of the time.

“Okay. Ask away, Leo.”

“Would you let me go to La Haye, even if it meant you’d never see me anymore?”

Raphael took a deep breath, “Yes. I would because you’d be happy and you’d have a good life. It was you want and it’s an honorable goal,” he said, trying to put as much conviction as he could.

Leo sighed sadly, showing he wasn’t pleased with Raphael’s reply. “If I’d told you that I’d killed
Oroku, what would you have done?” he asked.

Raphael was silent for a moment. It was a damned good question.” I don’t know,” he honestly replied. “Did you do it?” he added in an anguished tone.

Leo was quiet for a minute. Then he spoke softly, “No, but you need someone in your life. A good someone. Don’t wait for me, Raphael. I’m not worth it, even if I truly love you.”

Raphael’s insides churned at the answer, but showing it would end badly. He kept an indifferent expression:

“Do you want a vanilla or chocolate sundae, Leo?”

“Vanilla,” Leo said softly, looking slightly upset.

Mikey was devouring his sundae, like his life depended on it, while Leo obviously felt nauseated. “Raphael,” Leo added. “Please forget about us. I’ll take care of Mikey. We are both too much trouble.”

The sergeant didn’t have time to protest, because he saw the news on the pizzeria tv screen. The reporter saying that Oroku’s death had been an accident and that he’d left his fortune to his illegitimate daughter, Oroku Karai. He recognized Leo’s partner immediately. The girl wasn’t only his dance partner, but maybe his crime partner too. He remembers with a quiver Karai’s fierce fighting style. He knew that the Asian woman wasn’t an Oroku. Some illegal bullshit must have been done, to make a fake will or whatever, Raphael saw Leo’s sly smile and snarled, “Why are you grinning? It’s your handiwork and that damn doc’s, isn’t it?”

“Don’t bring poor Donnie into this,” Leo said in a low voice. “I’m just happy for Karai, because she’ll be okay now. I’m thankful for that. And also surprised by the turn of event. She helped me a lot in the past.”

Raphael didn’t think Leo was that happy, but he was relieved. Okay, Leo’s denials looked like bullshit and his surprised expression, faked, but maybe the death was Karai’s work and not Leo’s. She seemed more feral than his boyfriend. No. His ex-boyfriend, he corrected himself. Leo has nothing to do with these people anymore.

Leo tasted his vanilla ice cream, "I forgot to tell you, Raph, that I have homework and I need your help." Leo’s voice had turned syrupy and that worried Raphael.

“Okay. But why are you so flirty about it?” he wondered, the doubt oblivious on his features.

“I’m not. I just need to go to your work. I must research the rule of the law and corruption and I thought you could help. Introduce me at your work as a journalism student. I’m sure I’d get a grade and I could then get a scholarship next September.” he explained, eager.” So you don’t have to stress about paying for my studies.”

Raphael was perplexed and said, “When did you get that idea?” But, a scholarship was pure gold. He hated not being able to give what Leo needed, unlike Donnie, who could.

Leo smiled and said, “It just came to me now. You’re such a good person and inspire me, Raph. I want to know you better and see where you work and how you are helping poor citizens,”

Raphael was dubious, but believing in Leo was easier. “Okay. What do you need?”
Raphael didn’t know what to think about Leo’s false-journalism project. The student had explained with so much emphasis, examples and complicated words that Raph had nodded. After all, Leo couldn’t hurt anyone or cause any bullshit at his police station. He’d be there to watch Leo. And he felt a certain spark of pleasure at bringing Leo to work. Lisa had never really been interested in his job, except for his paycheck.

Why did he compare Lisa and Leo? Leo wasn’t his boyfriend, as Lisa had been his girlfriend. Leo was only a spoiled and annoying little brat. Nothing more than Mikey, just his goddammm brother!

The next few days passed without too much trouble. Leo liked to tease him sometimes. Scratch that: always. The night before, he’d eaten his asparagus more slowly than necessary, but Raphael was firm about his position.

He’d been rewarded more than once by the student’s confused look about his lack of reaction.

Leo Hamilton hadn’t suffered failures before and he was upset that his seduction attempts weren’t working.

Raphael, of course, did masturbate morning and night, thinking about a male body, but refusing to identify the lover of his fantasies, despite his black hair. Leo didn’t know that, did he? So, there is no harm.

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There’d been a power failure the day before when he’d been washing the plates after their meal of beef and asparagus.

Mikey had started screaming. In alarm, Raphael had rushed to find a source of light, while Leo was trying to calm his brother and moving guided by his cell phone’s flashlight.

Raphael returned with Leo's meditation candles and came back to them. Leo was stroking his brother's blond curls. “What’s going on?” Raphael had asked.

“They pushed Mikey into the cellar that night,” Leo said. “It was pitch black and he was already scared of the dark place, but those idiots didn’t know that we kept our weapons there.”

Raphael had been surprised by the plural form when he heard the reference to their mother’s murder.

“They? I thought there was only your mother's boyfriend,” Raphael said.

Leo had dryly replied that he wasn’t giving the real version to the police and Raph had seen red. First, Leo integrated him among the police officers to be wary of, and then because he admitted to having concealed information from the police. But he was starting to know the ex-dancer.

“Well, Leo, if you’re suspicious of the police, I shouldn’t bring you to my workplace.”

Raphael had regretted with every fiber of his being not being able to see Leo’s tamed expression because it was dark. Leo had changed the subject and Raphael had decided that he didn’t care. Leo would never tell him the truth, but the police report from his ex-precinct would do that for him.

So far, Raphael had been too weak to ask for Leo’s file. He’d convinced himself about many things
to excuse the weakness. He’d told himself that Leo hadn’t officially been found guilty and that his colleague had admitted that they’d learned nothing conclusive from the long hours of interrogation. He’d learn nothing, apart from the lies that Leo said were true. But he knew the real reason. He didn’t want to see the darkness of Leo’s past and read about it and feel obliged to abandon the young man out of duty. Leo could be an epic jerk, but he still loved him. And he hated himself for that. It was silly, like a teenage girl crushing on a rock star. He couldn’t have Leo and he wouldn’t. He must stop thinking about him that way. Leo would be better off with a clever and younger lover. Raphael was nothing extraordinary, apart from being a huge, dumb softy under his bulk.

After two hours of trying to calm Mikey down, the child fell asleep between them and they put him to bed. Raphael had heard Leo sniff in the dark and wondered if he was crying. He’d stretched out his hand and felt Leo’s cheeks wet with tears and then Leo had leaned over and had finally hugged him.

“Thank you for being here, Raph,” Leo said. “Without you…”

Raphael had stroked Leo’s hair and had almost been tempted. A fragile Leo was more dangerous for his resolves than a seductive Leo. Despite the opposing order of his brain, his hands had descended, caressing the body so desired, and firmly grabbing the ass that made him drool each time that Leo, the damn cock tease, bent over on purpose.

Leo had whimpered at the daring gesture and had brushed his lips against Raph’s chin, trying to reach his lips in the dark and standing on tiptoe. Leo, with the darkness, wasn’t a kid anymore but was a warm body that was so soft and inviting. A shadow that Raphael wanted to kiss. Raphael’s heart was pounding, while he was about to kiss the invisible, but so enticing mouth.

"Leo…"

And then, the power had returned, breaking the spell.

Raphael had pushed Leo far from him, apologizing profusely, and Leo had protested with a frown. “You did nothing wrong, Raph. Stop apologizing already.”

“I won’t do it again. I promise!” Raphael said, ashamed of his lack of control.

“Yes. You will,” Leo shouted. “Because you want me like I want you. I’m sick and tired of your chastity kink. You’re a love machine. Why are you doing this to us?”

“There is no us, Leo!” Raphael had roared, not caring that he might wake Mikey. “The only us is our family. Us as three brothers.”

Furious, Leo yelled, “I don’t want you as an annoying older brother! I only want to be with you the way it was before. As a lover! I want to feel you in me and…”

Raphael had shushed him and snapped, “Shut up! Our little bro’s sleeping and anyway, I don’t believe your bullshit. People like you don’t have desires or feelings. You only scheme!”

Leo had paled, and Raph's heart missed a beat. His answer had hurt Leo deeply, in a way that Raphael did not mean. But Leo regains his composure quickly, being icy.

“You want to be chaste? Fine! I won’t be! Now, get out of my room,” Leo said crossly.

Leo had sulked all morning and had only talked to Raphael to ask him if he’d be there, as planned, to fetch him at noon. Raphael had nodded and there he was at his lunch break waiting for his self-proclaimed brother, who was strangely late.
Raphael tried not to think too much about Leo’s threats to find someone else and get what Raphael wasn’t willing to give. It was pure blackmail, but he knew there was truth behind it. Leo would find another lover one day. One with his own age and Raphael would be obligated to allow it and he’d witness Leo kissing and being touched by someone else. The idea made him want to puke.

But he couldn’t ask Leo to wait for him until he was 21. Raphael would be 32 then and the age gap was still too huge.

Leo was late and Raphael was stressed out by. What if Leo was misbehaving? In Raphael’s imagination, that meant him slicing up someone or sucking another guy off.

He was biting his nails and cursing under his breath about the motherfucker when there was a tap on the car window. Startled, he looked up.

Leo was smiling at him, but he looked different and a bewildered Raphael unlocked the door.

Leo’s hair had been cut short, making him look more serious, mysterious, classy and older. Dressed in his university clothes, he no longer looked like the gold-digger stripper he’d once been. Leo looked like the Columbia five-star law student that he was and the perfect boyfriend that he could be.

“Sorry, I’m late. I was at the hairdresser. Do you still have the fake glasses? I need them.”

His jaw dropped and gaping at him, Raphael handed them to Leo. The useless glasses had been in his car for weeks. Leo was still smiling when he put them on.

“So? How do I look, Raph?”

Raphael didn’t immediately answer, still staring. The truth was that he was pleased about Leo’s short hair. Very pleased.

“You look like the damn Clark Kent, Leo,” Raphael managed to say, trying to pretend he was unimpressed, but it was true. Leo with his blue eyes, his short raven hair that was carefully styled and his neat clothes that emphasized his toned body was a carbon copy of Superman’s alter ego, except for the too squared jaw and the dimple on the chin. Leo was far more handsome.

“Good. That was the idea.”

“What you mean? You’re not on a ninja mission to dress-up like this. You’re only a law student and not a damn spy from a Charlie’s Angel movie!” Raph replied, angry at himself for drooling over the fake Clark Kent.

Leo didn’t answer and showed his tongue. “I don’t wear the tongue piercing either. And I’ll get rid of my tattoo the first chance I get.”

Raphael was stunned. The tattoo was the only thing he disliked on Leo. He didn’t mind the ink. He had a few himself, his whole damn arm and shoulder were covered, and he has some around one calf too, but he hated Leo’s Venus Fly Trap. It made him remember his ex-lover’s whore past. He never told Leo, afraid of hurting his feelings.

“Why?”

Leo shrugged, studied himself in the mirror and said, “I don’t need to please Donatello anymore.”

Raph blinked, not sure he was understanding. Leo had told him before that the tattoo was a missed
attempt to disgust the man. Leo sometimes didn’t make any sense. Probably because it was a bunch of lies. But he was happy about the statement. Leo didn’t need the evil doc anymore and he was getting rid of the creepy tattoo soon. But a prim and proper Leo seemed unsettling to him and worse; Leo was more alluring as if that was possible. He didn’t look like the illegal stripteaser he had criminal sex with it, anymore, but like the law student that Raph wanted him to be. Leo was now more than ever the desired boyfriend.

“So now you’re disguised, can we fucking go? I’m late, because of your coquettish ass!” Raphael said, mad and so regretful to know the truth about Leo. He hoped that he was able to turn a blind eye about Leo’s age and past, but he couldn’t. His conscience couldn’t let it be.

Leo smirked, “Don’t lie. You like my coquettish ass a lot. I saw your expression and I bet you’ll jerk off thinking about me tonight.”

Raphael flushed because it was true. Leo was not fooled a bit, but still, he would deny it. “You egotistical shit! Don’t flatter yourself,” he spat, angrily, “I won’t be doing that! I don’t harbor fucking fantasies about a fag teenager living under my roof as my damn brother. And I had someone. A decent and honest adult woman.”

Leo’s expression changed from outraged to hurt and then a cool expression settled on his face. “Well, I hope getting laid will help this atrocious mood of yours. Maybe being around woman will help with your potty mouth, too.”

Raphael started the car and said nothing. He’d lied, but he didn’t feel remorse about that. Now, maybe Leo would stop teasing him endlessly.

The trip was silent again, but Raphael, nervous, was grateful for that. He didn’t even know what to say now.

He’d called Leo a fag and it was unfair and a cheap shot. If Leo was a fag, Raph was too. Distraught, because he so badly wanted to do good for Mikey and Leo and he was rewarded only by teasing, innuendos, and winks. Leo didn’t look like he understood Raphael’s struggle and just poked fun at him or sulked, without appreciating Raphael’s efforts to keep him on a straight path, the impossible jerk! It was true that Leo was only a teenager, a child, and kids were always ungrateful. Raph himself had been an ungrateful bastard to his own mother most of the time. Leo didn’t mean all of the shit.

“We’re here, Leo. Tell me again, who are you supposed to be and what do you do?”

Leo rolled his eyes and sighed as if Raphael was the biggest dumbass ever.

“Listen carefully, because I don’t have enough patience to explain again! I’m a journalism student from Columbia and I want to write a series of articles about the fight against corruption in the police force. So, I have to interview a very important person about this. I can’t interview you because you’re just a pawn,” he concluded icily.

Raphael’s face darkened. Leo didn’t need to be insulting about it. He wasn’t that stupid. He’d been chosen for the damn undercover mission, during which he’d met the little arrogant shit. Raphael told himself Leo was only paying him back for the fag insult, so he didn’t react to it.

“It’s the police, Leo. They’ll probably want to see your student ID. And I still don’t understand the connection between this and your law studies.”

“I don’t need your understanding. I’m only your cousin, who’s a journalist. That’s it. If you can fake
being my brother, you can fake I’m your cousin,” Leo retorqued.

Raphael suddenly had reservations, having rarely seen Leonardo so edgy and, it wasn't sure how to feel about it. He barely knew Leo, but he did know that Leo was a liar, a ruthless bastard and that he maybe didn’t give a damn about him, Raphael. And worse, nearly being charged with murder and maybe two if he did murder Oroku. Despite knowing that, Raphael was going to lie for him and introduce him to his damn job. What if Leo’s past was discovered? Raphael would be fired. And what if Casey saw Leo and recognized him? Raphael had told him he didn’t even see Leo anymore. Casey would be mad and he already loathed Leo.

“Don’t worry, Raph. A friend of mine created a fake ID. And it’s not such a fake one. You know me as a real student from there. You won’t have any trouble. I can be very convincing when I want to be,” the student tried to reassure him.

Raphael didn’t doubt it. Leo could convince anyone about anything because here he was ready to help Leo about something hazardous and he wasn’t really sure if it was for school.

What did Leo want? He had learned that Leo didn’t act a way without a specific goal. What could it be? His file was at the other precinct. He was too clever to looking for troubles at a police station, didn't he? All this overthinking and stress was giving him a headache.

“If I get the scholarship, I’d stay with you and would behave. And you’d attend my graduation and would be proud of me. And from now on, I’d also act like a brother to you, as you wish.”

Raph stared at the blue-steel eyes behind the fake glasses, searching for a hint of lie or deception. He only saw hope and sincerity. If Leo acted like a brother, it’d be easier. Maybe he’d also forget about their past as lovers and Raph would be able to move on. Raphael had many flaws and had been a great sinner, but he wasn’t a selfish bastard. He didn't want to be an obstacle to Leo's future and happiness.

“Yeah! That would be good. But I’m already proud of you. You work hard at school and you’ve abandoned the wrong and easier path. And, you’re the most wonderful big brother in the world to Mikey. I'm very glad to call both of you my bros.”

Faint uncertainly shone in Leo’s eyes. He was struggling to hide his emotions and that was rare. Leo mostly only being emotional for the show.

“Before we go, who do you think I should interview?” Leo asked in a hoarse voice.

“Commissioner Hamato, but he’s so busy, and could be harsh, so….”

“Commissioner Hamato, huh? Sound promising. Don’t worry about it. Everyone has flaws. Maybe pride is his flaw. High ranking people are narcissistic most of the time. He’d be delighted to get some attention.”

Raph doubted again. Not about what Leo was saying, but something about Leo’s gigantic Cheshire cat-like grin made him shiver.
Raphael was happy. It had been much better than he’d hoped. Everyone had believed Cousin Leo’s story and although he’d initially been reluctant to meet the young journalism student, Commissioner Hamato had later agreed to meet him alone in his office.

It must be said that Leo pushed hard and was obstinate. Leo had, to Raphael’s surprise, enthusiastically shaken hands with Commissioner Hamato and had with the eagerness of a geek at San Diego Comic Con, had talked about the commissioner’s deeds.

Raphael had frowned. Leo hadn’t known who to interview thirty minutes earlier and now he knew Commissioner Hamato’s career like the back of his hand.

He then understood that Leo had had a plan from the beginning and that he’d once again been manipulated, as easily as if he were the child of them both.

A beaming Leo had exited the building two hours later and his boss had said that his “cousin” was impressive. The praise had worried Raphael, despite it being a good thing. Whatever was going on, Leo had succeeded and he should be relieved about it.

They’d quarreled, as soon as they’d arrived at the apartment, but Leo had extinguished the recriminations by gently squeezing his hand, thanking him for his trust and looking him straight in the eyes, looking more innocent than a cherub. Raphael had given in, but had despised himself for being so weak.

But that wasn’t the worst.

It was February 13 and Leo was on his way back from his “interview”, which took place three times a week in the evenings. Each meeting lasted almost three hours and Raphael had to admit that he was jealous, as irrational as that was, because Commissioner Hamato was at least 50-years-old.

But that night, Leo, who always returned with the air of a kitten that had drunk some cream, returned looking very dark.

“You must ask to work elsewhere, Raph,” Leo said. “The man doesn’t deserve someone like you.”

Raphael was dumbfounded at the statement, “What do you mean? he is a boos like another.”

“You’re honest, loyal and generous. The best person I know and if there were more policemen like you, there’d be fewer people like me.”
Leo seemed distressed and Raphael was speechless. Leo gave praise only to obtain something, but it seemed like that wasn’t the case this time. Leo looked genuinely mad, so he really did mean what he said. Raphael disliked the hidden meaning behind “people like me”. That sounded criminal to his ears and he didn’t want to think about it.

Leo paced in the living room. Mikey was engrossed in a cartoon and didn’t pay attention to his brother, but Raphael was extremely anxious. Leo wasn’t an agitated person, Raph knew it, and when Leo threw a glass, the sergeant understood that it was a matter to be very concerned about.

“What’s the matter, Leo?” he asked worriedly.

Leo placed a hand to his forehead and looked like he was close to throwing up.

“Please quit your job, Raph. When you have, I’ll take care of you, like you’ve taken care of us,” Leo said, motioning toward an uninterested Mikey.

Panic replaced concern. How in the world could the poor orphan take care of him? Did he mean after his license? Or…

“What do you mean? Do you plan on returning to the damn doc?”

Raphael hated himself for being more jealous than suspicious, but he couldn’t help himself. Hearing the reference to the doc, Mikey spat on the floor and Leo turned his wrath on Raphael.

“Stop being so silly and jealous. I only care about you, you big dummy! You’ll be the death of me! I love you too much for my own good!”

Raphael put his mind into censorship mode every time Leo talked about love. Leo had promised he’d act like a brother, but that wasn’t the case. Yes. He had indeed stopped to tease him too obviously, but Leo talked about the “L” word too much for his liking.

But Raph knew, having learned the hard way, that Leo’s sweet nothings weren’t sweet nothings at all.

“I don’t know, Leo, but what I am sure about is that you’ve lied to me again and the interview had nothing to do with your law studies.”

Leo as always, dodged the matter and muttered, “Whatever”, as he nervously ran a hand through his short black hair. Then he said, in an uncertain tone “It’s Valentine’s Day tomorrow.”

Raphael frowned. He loathed when Leo changed the subject and even more when he talked about the damn romantic holiday when he’d be alone and wouldn’t have any lover to kiss and to buy roses for.

“So what, Leo? You want me to dine and wine you? For the last fucking time, we’re not a damn couple!”

It was still an issue. Even if he wasn’t teasing, Leo sometimes acted like a real boyfriend and it was upsetting. Raphael told himself most of the time that he’d been paranoid and that the boundaries between brother and lover were thinner than he’d thought, so he couldn’t even lecture Leo for doing something bad because he wasn’t sure if it was only in his imagination. Leo was more affectionate with Mikey, so maybe it was indeed normal, although he didn’t remember having been so touched and hugged by Casey when they were kids.

The thought made him remember the only time when Leo had pretended to be a brother. It had
turned rather badly.

Casey had called, concerned about his younger brother. It must be said that Raphael hadn’t given any sign of life to his family in weeks. So the next day, when Leo had been introduced to Commissioner Hamato, Casey had phoned and Raphael, who’d been cooking dinner, had been too slow to answer the call. Leo had done it.

Casey had asked, who was talking and Leo had replied, “Leo, Raph’s younger brother.”

Saying that Casey was mad was an understatement.

Raphael had then taken the call and had listened to Casey’s fury.

“Da fuck? I’m your damn only bro. Not that cock sucker!”

Raphael was incensed at the insult in less time than it took to say Mississippi.

“Don’t call him that, Case! He’s only a troubled child needing help!”

Leo had been displeased by the statement too.

“I’m not a troubled child needing help,” he’d muttered and Raph had given him a warning glare.

“A child, Raphael? What do you damn mean?” Casey had demanded and Raphael’s mind had gone blank. Being the dummy he was, he’d said too damn much! He’d hung up, knowing very well that the subject wasn’t over, but maybe he’d think of something to say the next time.

And of course, Leo came nose to nose with Casey the next time he visited the station. Casey had recognized him, despite his glasses and short hair, but by some miracle, he’d only snorted and hadn’t asked questions. He only told crossly at his younger brother that Raphael was indeed the troubled child, who needed help, not this Leo.

But Raphael had been rewarded by Leo’s soft manner with him. The raven-haired student didn’t tease him, but asked about his day and told eagerly told him about his. They made family plans to ice skate and to go to the movies. Leo had suggested snowboarding in the north of the state and they’d had an excellent day there. Raphael had been impressed by Mikey’s snowboarding skills and Leo had proudly said, “We’ve all been naturally gifted for many generations in our family.”

Raphael had frowned at this and had asked what he meant, but Leo had looked like he regretted his impulsive statement. As far as he knew, Leo had only known his mother, who’d been a poor heroin addict and a prostitute and who’d been stabbed by a kind of boyfriend, but as always when it was about Leo, he cowardly didn’t question him. The sergeant reminder also the cryptic statement from the doc’s butler, about Leo’s family having harmed Donatello. Maybe that wasn’t Mikey who was implied by it. Who was Leo’s father to begin with? Why could he ask a question to the student? Himself was sharing his life and his home! Raph wasn’t that dumb to believe all the bullshit served by Leo. Sometimes, the cute boy contradicted himself, perhaps lost in his lies. At times, Raph almost felt like Leonardo wasn’t even worried about being caught in the act of lying or deception, anymore, maybe too sure of Raphael's blind love. Why couldn't he grow a pair and demanding the truth from the black-raven teen?

The reason was that he loved a happy Leo and he didn’t want any more lies. He should shut up and should be happy too. The situation wasn’t that bad, right?

Leo studied Dutch for one hour each day, using an application on his laptop and Raphael’s heart softened when he saw him studying. Leo studied a lot, but the dedication reassured Raphael. Dutch
was a very difficult language, and when Raphael tried to get the student to practice, Leo gently laughed at him.

“How can you make progress so fast?” Raphael asked one day.

“Because it’s the tenth language that I’m learning.”

Raphael was amazed. “It seems to me that there weren’t so many listed on your file at the nightclub.”

Leo had shrugged and said, “Only the ones useful for the club’s clientele. That’s all.”

The sergeant had wanted to know which of the little prodigals were talking too. “Russian and Serbian,” Leo had replied with a brief hesitation.

Raph was as impressed as if Leo had admitted to speaking that weird old crap that the evil Egyptian gods were talking in Stargate.

"It sounds really hard. Do you take tongue steroids to talk in so many languages?"

Leo had laughed at his joke because he’d been in a cheerful most of the time for the past few weeks.

Leo smiled and joked when he touched Raphael. It was only friendly, but Raphael still felt like Leo was acting like he’d been when they’d been lover, apart from the sexual part. Maybe he was unconsciously wishing for things.

Because he still loved him.

Leo was only trying to be grateful.

But he sometimes saw the same hunger as his in Leo’s eyes. A hunger he tried so damn hard not to notice, struggling already so damn much to tame his.

So, Leo asking about Valentine’s Day didn’t help him to move on at all.

“I know,” Leo said crossly. “We’re brothers, right?”

There was silence, only broken by Mikey’s laughter at his cartoon. Mikey had been laughing again the past few weeks and maybe that had something to do with Leo’s behavior and good mood.

“What about Valentine’s Day, Leo?” Raphael asked awkwardly,

“Do you have plans with that invisible girlfriend of yours tomorrow night?” Leo said with a mocking grin.

“Why are you snickering? Maybe I do.”

Leo shrugged, faking indifference, “I wanted to know if you did, because I have a date and I don’t want Mikey being alone.”

Raphael paled. He’d always known deep inside of him, that this day would come. He’d just kind of hoped that it wouldn’t be so soon, when he still jerked off about Leo daily, longing to kiss him and to stroke his black hair.

Leo silently observed him and Raphael realized that he was behaving like an egotistical dumbass. He’d been the one to ask Leo to move on and he couldn’t stand between Leo and his happiness with a new mate.
“You can go, Leo. I’ll stay with Mikey,” Raphael said, trying to sound casual.

Leo nodded and then said softly, but with a sad and lovely smile, “Thanks. If you want to please me more, ask to work in another precinct. You deserve happiness too, Raph. Nobody deserves it more than you.”

And there we go again. When Raphael had stepped back, as hard it was, Leo had moved forward, as if Raphael didn’t already have a hard enough time.

“Yes. I deserve happiness or at least peace of mind, Leo, so don’t fuck with my head again! And I’m fine at my job. Don’t try to look concerned about me. It’s pointless.”

Something was deeply troubling the student, because he kept his head bowed when Raphael had replied. Leo wasn’t the type of guy to be so easily bullied. He was up to something.

Leo then looked up and asked in an urgent tone, his eyes filling with tears, if they could talk privately.

Raphael was rather shocked. Not about the crocodile tears. Leo didn’t usually hide things from Mikey, so if he wanted to, it must be very important. Maybe Leo would explain why he wanted Raphael to work somewhere else.

Raphael hadn’t been in his room with Leo since the teen’s arrival, but the urgency in Leo’s voice made him shiver. Maybe Leo was in deep shit. Maybe his true identity had been revealed and maybe Raphael was in deep shit now too and Leo wanted to tell him that. You never knew with Leo and it must be huge for the teenager to be so upset.

Trying to ignore his wild imagination that was conjuring up all kinds of scenarios, Raphael said, “We’re alone now, Leo. What’s going on? Has my boss discovered that you’re not my cousin or a journalism student?”

Leo was astounded and frowned. “Of course not. He’s too much of an idiot.”

Raphael was speechless at the lack of respect towards his superior, but he knew better than to lecture Leo about it.

“Well, so what’s the matter?”

Leo struggled a moment, choosing his words, “I need to know, Raph. Do you still love me? Because if you do and if your moral code bugs you that much, there are plenty of solutions for us. We can love each other, in the open, without sex and wait until my 18th birthday, even if the age of consent is seventeen. You’re worth waiting for. Or we don’t give a damn and you make love to me now, like we’ve been dying to do for weeks. It’s not a crime. You’re a policeman and you know that,” he exclaimed, in an urging tone, pleading.

Leo had moved closer, his face tilted up, no doubt wanting a kiss. Raphael stared for fifteen seconds at the offered lips, his brain working overtime like it was still a new issue and that he didn’t spend already sleepless nights to think about it.

That was true. He knew it. Having sex with Leo was now legal. He wouldn’t have any legal problems, the teen will shut up about having sex with him a few weeks before his seventeen birthday, but the age gap was still shocking to him. Okay, Leo was a university student and didn’t look at all seventeen. People could easily believe that Leo had twenty-one, as he had believed himself. Raph didn’t look his almost thirty, so they could be a not too surprising couple. But Leo needed someone with excellent morals to keep him on the right path. Someone not taking Leo’s a
pleasure object but as a worthy and gifted being. He must get rid of Leo’s idea. Leo should keep his pleading for Netherland, far from his New-York's bad memories, when he will be a formidable lawyer with a bright future. Raph could only be an obstacle for the career of the student.

“I won’t, Leo. I’m too old for you,” Raphael said, trying to sound sure of himself, despite the pain he felt, uttering his negative answer.

Leo was distraught at the answer and then irate, he snapped, “You’re not that old! You don’t have a single white hair! You’re in shape! Why is it so important that I’m not twenty-one, as you believed? I don’t smoke, drink or gamble and anyway, the difference is only four years! I’m not a high school student! I lived more experience than a sixty-old man! I'm mature! I won't be a shame for you! Get down off of your high horse for once!” Leo spat and stomped on the ground with his feet.

Raphael took a deep breath. He didn’t want his mind thinking that it was indeed possible. Leo was reasoning like a spoiled brat. He was supposed to act like the adult he was.

He had to explain his refusal to be Leo’s lover again.

“Leo, you said you’d treat me like a big brother. You gave me your word and I promised that I’d never touch you intimately. I love you, yes, but in a brotherly way now.”

Leo looked sorrowful and he shook his head and said, “Don’t lie, Raph. I saw your face earlier when I mentioned my date. You’re jealous. And what about Donnie? I know you’re still afraid that I’ll go to him.”

Raphael grew angry each time Leo said that name. Yes. That was true. He was still jealous of the asshole, but he’d never admit it.

“Shut up! I’m not damn jealous. I’m just scared that you’d misbehave with his bad influence. He is a nutcase, giving you awful ideas,” he denied fiercely.

“You’re denying it, just like you did when we first met. Remember? You wanted me so badly at the time…” Leo said, a dreamy expression on his face.

Raphael disliked Leo’s love-struck smile. Leo must be faking it for some reason. Yeah, this prick must be up to something and just wanted to coax him with his honeyed words and kissy faces. That had to be it, it was easier to stomach.

“Wipe that stupid smile off your face, Leo. It’s over. I’ll take care of you and Mikey and that’s it. Be a grateful jerk for once and quit your enamored boyfriend act already!”

Leo said firmly, “It’s not an act! Why don’t you believe me! I love you! You do everything for that! Don’t deny it!”

Raph was fast to reply, “And why don’t you believe me when I said that I’m done with you? I haven’t been anything but brotherly the last few weeks. And I won’t for the last fucking time! I’m serious as hell, Leo! I need a lover with an age gap of fewer than eight years, so that I don’t feel like I’m an abuser each time we have sex!”

Leo looked amazed at his choice of words and said, “An abuser?” Then he laughed, but it was in a sinister tone that reminded Raphael of the one the psycho little bodyguard Japanese girl in the Kill Bill movie had used. The bitch had died at the end, blood smeared on her innocent face. Raphael shivered at the thought.

The ex-dancer said scornfully, “You don’t know what you’re talking about, but I get the point. You
don’t want me. Don’t worry. When it’s over, I won’t be an ungrateful jerk.”

The hell with his patience, Raphael thought, grabbing Leo’s wrist to stop him from leaving. Leo’s comment was too distressing to ignore.

“What are you talking about, Leo? What evil plan are you conjuring up? Are you planning on fucking up our lives again? Is that the case? If it is, I’ll stop you! Answer me, damn it!”

Leo maintained his cold gaze and didn’t flinch, despite Raphael shaking him like a fruit tree.

“You’re kind of cute sometimes Raph when you try to be a big brother, but you’re annoying most of the time. I’m a born leader. Not you. You want to be my big brother? Fine! But I’ll rule the family. Age has nothing to do with being the leader. Only the character matters. Millennial monarchies collapsed because the elders didn’t have the balls to lead. I will.”

Leo angrily broke free of his grasp and left. Raphael cursed, damn Mikey’s presence. Leo was the worst scumbag motherfucker ever. A stubborn asshole! An arrogant prick!

Leo shut himself in his room and Raphael allowed him. How could he, Raph, love this big-headed bastard so much? Leo gave him nothing but trouble. Mikey was no problem compared to him, He was mute, and only painted, cooked and watched cartoons, all day. How could Donatello have lost Leo, because of the calm kid? That was a mystery.

“Your brother’s such a jerk, Mikey!” Raphael exclaimed, indignant. “And so obstinate. I don’t know why I went through so much trouble for him. And he pretends he’s in charge and that he’ll take care of me one day. He can’t even make a toast! I swear, Mikey, if he doesn’t drop his high and mighty act soon, I’ll...I don’t know what, but it’ll be epic. You understand me, don’t you, Mikey? You agree your bro is a dick!”

Before Mikey could reply, the doorbell went. Raphael froze. Who’d and come and see him at almost nine p.m. on a Tuesday night? He pressed the intercom button and Casey's panicked voice rang out.

“Let me up, bro! Oh, my fucking God! I can’t believe it!” Casey said.

Casey seemed so alarmed that Raphael fearing it might have something to do with their mother, unlocked the door. Anyway, Casey knew about Mikey and Leo and the latter was sulking in his room, like a spoiled seven-year-old.

Casey strode into the living room, carrying a folder, and shoved it under Raphael’s nose before he could ask what was going on.

“I investigated the bastard, Raph. Mom told me that he was only a youngster! April told me the rest. The motherfucker has a record and a file!” Casey screamed.”He has the biggest record since Billy the Kid! And you knew it! You fucked him, a motherfucker fag thug! Then you brought him to work and pretended he was our cousin! I’m your damn real brother! I don’t want to be a criminal’s cousin! But did you bother to ask me? Of course not! Anyway, you haven’t spoken to me since this fag got you in his clutches.”

Seeing that Mikey was tense, Raphael made a soothing gesture and said, “He wasn’t convicted. And no charges were brought against him. It was self-defense or a misunderstanding! He’s clean!”

Stunned at Raphael’s determined denial, Casey regarded him as if he were mentally challenged and said, “This bitch has you. He just has to shake his little ass and you’re his puppet! You’re so blinded by him; you believe all of his lies. You disgust me, Raphael!”
Casey was extremely upset, but Raphael didn’t give a damn and shoved his brother up against the wall. Leo must have heard everything from his bedroom and he didn’t need Leo to come and fight with Casey. Leo had many flaws, it was true, but he wasn’t a coward. He must end it before Casey said something about Mikey or whatever and Leo go all rampage mode.

“For the last fucking time, Casey, I’m not fucking him. I did, but that was before I knew about his past and his age. I stopped. He’s here in a kind of rehab because he’s a great guy and deserves better.”

Casey laughed bitterly and said, “A great guy? Are you kidding me? Just because he has a nice ass to bang?” Casey shook the files in Raphael’s face and hissed, “Do you see the great guy’s files? One from the police department and the other from Child Services. Theft, perjury, falsification, prostitution, affiliation with criminal gangs, drug possession and that’s not even the worst! There’s murder too! There’s nothing he hasn’t done! He even tried to kidnap his own brother! And do you know that he’s not even a legal American citizen? His mother was an illegal immigrant, who was a drug addict, a whore and who blackmailed honest people! And he made our mom cry about his fake father, who was killed in the war and who died a hero! The amazing thing is his impressive record! He’s an asshole!”

Raphael was livid. Leo’s file should have been closed three years earlier. Leo could have committed so many crimes and offenses at 14! If so, knowing his past, the clever, aristocratic and rich doctor wouldn’t have treasured him so much. It had to be a mistake or Casey had made it up to break them up. He hated Leo so much. Anyway, the drug possession charge was ridiculous. Leo was clean and only drank Shirley Temple or other non-alcoholic drinks. And, he still remembers how Leo had scowled his roommate Karai, when she was high. A drug dealer would have made no comment about his friend being geeked. So that fact proved that it was bullshit and lies, and Leo was cleaner that his files show.

"You'll find another bitch to suck you off, but please, get out of this shit, man before it's too late! You can't fuck up your life, your family and your career for a dick-sucker whore!"

Raphael sensed Mikey near him, tense and ready to bolt. When he, Raphael, had insulted Leo, Mikey had been understanding and hadn’t made a fuss, but it was a different story with the rather aggressive stranger, who injured his brother, and it was maybe too much for a boy with psychosis. The reminder about his deceased mother wouldn’t have helped either.

Raphael didn’t want to validate Casey’s worries by Mikey stabbing him. Casey had to leave right now or he might be punched. Raphael was fed up of hearing the lies and insults about Leo too.

“I don’t believe you, Casey,” Raphael said coldly. “This is your last warning. Be respectful to Leo. He’s suffered a lot and I’m sure he’s innocent of all the charges. And he’s turned over a new leaf. He’s like a young brother to me, like Mikey is too. Be polite to them or leave.”

Casey darkened, not even looking at the blond kid next to his younger brother.

“You prefer taking the side of the fake bro of yours, Raphael?” Casey yelled. “Do it, but if you’re his bro, you’re not mine anymore.”

Raphael stayed silent, wondering if his brother was serious. It was only blackmailing, he decided and pitiful compared to what a determined Leo could say or do. It was just an irrational fit of anger, as Raph himself often did. Nothing to do with Leo’s cold, controlled, and thoughtful fury.

When Casey saw Raphael didn’t react, he stepped back, threw the file and said, “You know why your Leo’s still innocent? I told you. The CIA took over his case and closed the file. The CIA isn’t
interested in a fourteen-year-old, except if he’s very bad news. You’ve been warned.” He paused and then spat before leaving and slamming the door, “You can worship your little bitch alone, but don’t dare bring the fucker to Mom’s house!”

Raphael silently stared at the door. Then he looked down at the files. Mikey wanted to take them, but Raphael swatted his hands away. “Don’t read this bullshit, Mikey. I won’t either. We’ll burn it.”

The sky blue eyes gazed at him and Raphael wanted to see hope in them. He took out a lighter from the kitchen drawer and after placing the files in the kitchen sink, he set them alight, taking Mikey in his arms to bring him some comfort.

Raphael didn’t see Leo looking sorrowfully at him from behind. Then Leo turned and headed back to his bedroom.
His alarm clock had been ringing for more than 10 minutes when Raphael managed to wake up enough to turn it off. He held his head in his hands, feeling nauseated. He’d taken three sleeping pills the day before, knowing that his excessive anxiety would prevent him from sleeping if he didn’t.

He hadn’t seen Leo for the rest of the evening and hadn’t tried to confront him either. But he’d have to face Leo’s steel gaze this morning.

Raphael briefly thought that he was less nervous when criminals pointed their weapons at him. He ignored the voice in his head telling him that maybe he was nervous because Leo was a much more dangerous criminal. If only half of what Casey had said was true, Leo was a massive criminal. And he was dangerous because he was definitely smarter than the bandits Raphael usually dealt with and Raphael was helpless in front of him because he was deeply and madly in love with him.

Damn it, he thought. Cupid’s such a bitch.

This made him remember the date. It was the damn stupid lovers’ day and he wanted to gag. He might witness Leo with a "new special someone" that evening and he didn’t want to. Maybe he could go out with Mikey before the girl or guy arrived or maybe Leo was going out. He hoped so because he didn’t want to deal with Leo too much that day.

He left his room after donning boxers and a T-shirt, knowing that it was useless trying to prepare for when he saw Leo. He stopped, as soon he entered the kitchen. There was a beautiful bouquet of scarlet roses on the table. Were they for Leo from someone? Or had he left them there waiting to give them to his new lover? Where was the son of a bitch anyway? The house was quiet, apart from Mikey watching his cartoons, his mouth full of whatever he was eating.

Raphael then saw the note. He nervous picked it up, recognizing Leo’s elegant handwriting.

“My dear brothers,

Valentine’s Day is for loved ones too and not just for lovers, so here are gifts for both of you. Chocolates for Mikey, because he’s so sweet and roses for Raphael, because he’s like a rose in February. Rare and precious.
Raphael frowned, refusing to be moved by it. Leo was only flattering him to coax him and maybe to avoid talking about the previous evening.

But a part of himself that he loathed was relieved that the spectacular flowers weren’t for a new lover.

But that wasn’t all, as he discovered when he read further.

“I decided to leave sooner to do some jogging and then to go straight to classes. Don’t wait for me, but if it’s okay with you, my teammate will come over to help me with an assignment.”

Raph wasn’t sure how to take it. The hasty departure was suspicious to him. Leo jogged five times a week for one hour a day. But so early? He glanced at the time and saw that it wasn’t that early. He’d woken up one hour later than usual. Damn sleeping pills!

“Shit, Mikey,” Raphael said. “Get ready. We must go to your school in ten minutes. I’ll shower quickly.”

Then what he’d feared for weeks happened.

Mikey shook his head adamantly, with the same stubborn gleam in his eyes as his big brother, but the difference, knowing Leo better, he stood a chance against him, and that as far as he knew, Leo wasn’t psycho.

The sergeant repeated himself, using emphasis, authority, and supplications. He couldn’t leave Mikey alone. Who knew what the kid could do? He could burn the building to the ground! The lucky bastard that was Leo being absent, if Mikey stayed, Raphael had to too. But Leo would kill him if Mikey missed school. He couldn’t even use the chocolates as blackmail. The little glutton had eaten them all.

Damn it!

Raphael called Leo, whose classes hadn’t yet begun. He hung up after listening to Leo’s voicemail message. It was full. He refused to be jealous about it, having more important matters to deal with at the moment. He nervously paced and sighed.

“Oh, Mikey,” Raphael said. “You win. We’ll take a day off. I’m going to say that you threw up because you ate all of the chocolates, okay? Will you nod when your brother asks if that’s true?”

Raphael realized how ridiculous he was being when he dialed his work number. He’d learned that Leo, an illegal citizen, had a record worthy of Al Capone and he was biting his nails at the thought that Leo would discover he hadn’t had the guts to force Mikey to go to school. He was such a weak and dumb coward!

Mikey nodded and stood up and Raphael felt hopeful. Maybe the kid did understand what troubles his stubbornness would cause for Raphael. But Mikey tugged on his hand, dragging him to the bedroom he shared with Leo. Raphael frowned. What did Mikey want to do? Help for dressing? It was strange because he was usually able to dress by himself.

Mikey went straight to Leo’s drawers, opened them and began searching. The policeman tried to stop the young boy. “Mikey, those are your brother’s belongings. We’re not going to look at his stuff, while he’s not here. That’s wrong.”

The truth was that Raphael had thought about searching Leo’s room many times. Not because he was jealous. Of course not! But if he knew Leo’s plans, it might stop Leo from getting into deeper
shit! But his honesty had prevented him from doing so until then.

Mikey looked at him condescendingly and Raphael then understood. Mikey was his ally. The youngster also didn’t like Leo’s plans. His hatred of the doctor proved it. Raphael suddenly felt that Mikey was sort of like Lassie the dog, trying to explain something without being able to talk.

“Okay, buddy. You want to show me something. What?”

Mikey then took out an old cubic black box and pulling out from it something as strange as it was splendid. It was a kind of big egg, like the chocolate Easter ones, but it was made of gold, green and white enamel and was decorated with diamonds and rock crystal and divided into compartments with hand-painted miniatures.

It was magnificent, but Raphael after being stunned for a moment, shrugged.

“So what? It’s a weird and expensive gift from Donatello, the nutcase,” Raphael said.

Mikey shook his head and carefully picked up the jeweled egg. Mikey’s unusual deferential attitude proved that it wasn’t a gift from Donnie. If so, Mikey would have smashed it.

Blind fear then overcame Raphael and he said, “Did your bro steal it?”

Mikey shook his head again, holding the egg close as if it belonged to him. Then he pointed to a miniature on it and kissed it respectfully.

Raphael looked it. It was a young, maybe sixteen-year-old girl, with dark short hair, blue eyes and with a pure profile like Leo have. She wore the same damn kind of clothes than the first class bitches on the Titanic had worn and Mikey looked at her picture in admiration. So the kid had a crush on a painted miniature of a girl, who’d been dead for more than a century? He wasn’t sure if that was cute or disturbing.

Raphael spoke softly, not wanting to upset the youngster.

“Yeah. She’s a cutie, Mikey. What about Leo?”

Mikey threw his arms up in exasperation, just like Leo did when Leo called him a big dummy.

The sergeant frowned, not understanding at all, where things were going.

Mikey stood up and frantically searched for something in his art kit. The boy didn’t give a damn about him, so Raphael decided to look in Leo’s drawers too. Maybe he’d find what Mikey was trying to show him.

Raphael opened a box, flushed and quickly closed it. Then he peeked again. There were many porn movies in it and for a moment, Raphael feared that Leo was a porn actor too. Knowing Leo, that was indeed possible, but that wasn’t the case and since Mikey wasn’t paying him any attention, Raphael took a closer look and noticed that they were all hetero movies. No one was gay and he wondered if Leo was even bisexual, because his preference seemed to lean towards women.

Maybe Leo had faked attraction to him from the beginning. That thought upset him more than the jeweled egg with the miniatures. He found a dozen fake ID’s from different states and even countries in another box and feeling sickened, he stood up. Casey had been right. Leo was indeed a criminal and unworthy of his care.

Mikey turned towards him and showed him a canvas on which he’d just painted a tree. The egg was
at the top of the tree and his portrait of Leo was at the bottom of it.

But Raphael was too upset about his discoveries. Why had Mikey opened the damn drawers? Raphael had had the courage the day before to burn all of the shit without looking at it. Why did Mikey have to rub that in his face?

Raphael threw up his hands in surrender and said, “Do what you’re good at, Mikey. Watch cartoons and go eat candy. Leave me alone. I’m going to miss a day of work, because of you two! I don’t know why I bothered taking you both out of the shit! You only reward me with trouble and sorrow!”

Mikey’s eyes instantly filled with tears and Raphael felt remorse. It wasn’t Mikey’s damn fault that his brother was a lost cause. Mikey, despite being truly cherished by Leo, was also a victim.

Seeing his remorse and maybe his heartache, Mikey took the portrait of cop Raphael and put it next to the one of Leo and formed a heart with his hands, showing Raphael that Leo did indeed love him a lot.

“Don’t try to fool me too, Mikey, your bro doesn’t love anything or anyone, apart from you.”

Raphael’s cell rang and he saw that Leo was calling.

“What do you want again? Damn it!” Raphael snapped before Leo could say hello.

“You called me, doofus!”

Before Raphael could argue, Mikey kicked him. It wasn’t that hard, but it was sufficient to stun him and he yelped.

“What’s happening?” Leo asked worriedly. “Are you hurt?”

Yes. Raphael was deeply hurt. He didn’t even think about a lie to cover why Mikey was there.

“It’s the little shit that you call your bro! I can tell he’s your damn real bro because he’s nothing but trouble. He didn’t want to go to school and given that your egotistical ass wasn’t here, I was forced to take a day off!”

“I’m sorry, Raphael. I’ll come home right away. I wanted to be alone to think and…”

“Think about what? What ID did you use today or did you fancy some dead chick, like your bro does?”

Raphael supposed that this would astonish Leo, but before Leo could reply, he said, “Your bro wanted to show me some of your hidden shit.”

He almost heard Leo’s heart pounding at the news.

“He showed you the egg?” Leo squeaked and Raphael was astounded that that was Leo’s first concern. Maybe he’d been right. Leo had stolen the fancy weird egg to sell it on the black market to rich wackos. Maybe it was for Donatello? And the son of a bitch had hidden the stolen stash at his apartment Damn it!

“Yeah. He introduced me ta his sweetheart, Leo. Now what? Will ya stop actin’ like this is the damn "Eleven Oceans" movie or the fuckin’ " Catch me if ya can”? This isn’t a Hollywood movie! It’s real life. Yer so close ta fuckin’ it up ta the point where I can’t help ya no more! Yer ‘bout ta be too deep for me ta catch ya.”
His childhood accent had returned like it always did when he became too emotional about something.

“Raph…”

“No! Shut the fuck up for once! I’ve listened to your venomous tongue too much. It’s my turn to speak and you’ll listen carefully. I’m fed up with your shit, Leo. This is your last chance. If you want to live here and be a part of this family, you must work for it too. These are the conditions: I only want an A as a result of your classes. You have one year to learn Dutch perfectly. I’ll want proof that the interview with my boss was really for school. Then I want you to find a good girlfriend.

“But…”

“I didn’t say that I was finished. You find a good girl at your university under 21. But I want you to destroy all the proof of your misdeeds in my house before you do that. Understood? The Fake ID’s and the damn jeweled egg too!’”

“Never. It’s mine!” Leo roared and a stunned Raphael heard a slight accent in Leo’s voice too, kind of eastern-European “I’ll do what you want, but the egg’s mine. I didn’t steal it. It belongs to us. I’d rather lose an arm!”

Raphael regarded Mikey thoughtfully. The usage of “us” made him think. Leo, who was always cool and calculating, was about to lose it. Maybe it was true. The blond boy seemed fond of it.

“It’s from your family, Leo?”

“Yes. Family.” Leo sighed sadly and added, “Mine and Mikey’s, so please allow me to keep it. I swear that it was my mother’s.” The slight accent was there again and Leo seemed mournful and sincere. Damn it!

Raphael’s mind worked at full speed. Maybe the mother had stolen it, but Leo and Mikey didn’t know that. He had no idea about the value of the things. April loved antiques, but it wasn’t like he could ask her after his epic fight with Casey. Maybe the fancy crap was fake too.

He sighed. How could Leo manage to undo him like that every time? The bastard wasn’t even in the same room as him.

“Okay, Leo, but you must respect all of the conditions. I’ll kick your sorry butt out of here if you don’t. You’re a bad example for the kid. And I’ll buy you a first class ticket to La Haye the day after your graduation.”

He heard sniffing. Damn it.

“Do you want me to come home now, Raphael?” Leo asked. “I’ll take care of Mikey.”

Raphael refused and explained that it was indeed too late for that, having already called his work. He hung up and then sat down, feeling desolate.

Mikey bugged him all the morning, wanting to show him something, but he shushed him and did the best thing to keep the boy quiet, searching in his DVD collection, picking out his Stars Wars Collector DVD box

“I think,” Raphael said. “We should watch episodes four, five and six and then this shitty first episode. Your brother will be home before the end of this one. You and I will watch episodes two and three tonight as Valentine’s date. You can eat popcorn all day. I’m your damn tutor and I’ll
allow it. You’ll leave me the fuck alone with your mouth full and your brain occupied.”

Raphael sat down next to Mikey and faked being as engrossed in the Skywalker adventure, as the teenager was. But he was tense, unable to think about anything else, but all he knew about Leo. The fact was he didn’t know anything for sure about his ex-lover. Leo could even have faked being a bad cook. Being that awkward with a toaster couldn’t be true.

At the beginning of the sixth episode, when Leia came to Han Solo’s rescue, he found himself on the brink of tears without even understanding why. He stood up, went to the kitchen, opened the fridge and took out a corona. A drink would calm his nerves and do him some good. He hadn’t drunk alcohol in a while. The 12 coronas had been there for weeks.

He was drinking the fourth when Leo entered the apartment with a good looking Indian girl with black braided hair and expressive dark brown eyes.

“Hi, Raph,” Leo said. “Let me introduce you to my friend, Tamisha. She’s my teammate for my International Criminal Investigation courses. We’ll work here for one hour before we head to the restaurant. She’s the date I told you about.”

Mikey didn’t pay attention to the visitor or his brother, but Raphael gripped his bottle tightly and slightly bowed his head to Leo’s girlfriend. What could he say anyway? He’d told Leo to find a new lover.

“Tamisha,” Leo said. “These are my brothers. Raphael’s the bulky one. He’s a dedicated NYPD sergeant. Mikey’s my little brother. He’s mute and very shy.”

Raphael thought the young woman, who was maybe 19 or 20, had a beautiful smile.

“Nice to meet you,” Tamisha said very politely and Leo removed her coat. Her body was very curvy to match her lovely face and despite himself, Raphael wanted to howl, as he imagined Leo pounding into her fit ass.

Leo seemed nervous and asked her if she wanted something. Being the good girl she was, Tamisha only asked for a glass of tap water. Leo opened the fridge to get her a bottle of water and grabbed a beer for himself, but when he passed by Raphael, the sergeant snatched it from his hands.

“Alcohol isn’t for kids, Leo,” Raphael said sternly. “Pour yourself some milk.”

The girl laughed and said, “Leo, you weren’t lying when you told me about your protective older brother.”

Leo scowled, grabbed her arm and said in a seductive tone,” Let’s good to my room, Mischa. We won’t be disturbed there.” Jealousy flared up in Raphael and he tightened his grip on the beer bottle.

Raphael was drinking his seventh beer when Leo exited his room. He didn’t turn around to see Leo’s face that was probably beaming from the afterglow. Leo had always looked slightly flushed after making love and his eyes had been bluer than grey and had shone like stars. Blue was even reflected in his black hair due to the sweat. And he smelled so damn good. Raphael still remembered that peculiar enticing scent.

He was still so hopelessly in love with Leo and it was pathetic. He’d turned his back on his own family for the boy and it was insane.

Raphael grunted and managed to say goodbye to the couple. Not giving a damn about Leo asking Mikey to prepare a relaxing drink for him, because “Raph seemed tired.”
Raphael didn’t object when Mikey handed him a mug and he drank it.

It wasn’t herbal tea and he could detect a hint of alcohol under the sweetness of the hot chocolate. It was surprisingly delicious.

“Damn good, Mikey!” Raphael said. “I didn’t know I had such a good bartender under my roof.”

Mikey seemed indifferent to the praise and poured him another one.

After drinking half of his second mug, Raphael felt dizzy, but he didn’t question it, because he’d been binge-drinking all afternoon.

“I must admit somethin’, Mikey. I’m dead drunk, because of yer bastard bro. I know I asked him ta find a good girlfriend, but now that he seems ta have found one, I’m fuckin’ jealous. Ya know how much I love him, but he’s a kid. I can’t have such a young mate. It’s not right and is immoral. But I loved him even if he’s the worst jerk ever. Ya know I’m right, don’t ya, Mikey? I’m sure yer damn bro killed the man cold-bloodedly and not ya. He’s able ta do such a thing. Okay. I am too. I’ve shot two or three criminals, but it’s not the same ya know? Yer bro is such an evil guy. He’s a serial killer sure. Ted Bundy also seemed like a regular guy and fooled everyone, because he was a law student and was so damn clever. Maybe Leo was the culprit in the Black Dahlia case. Have ya heard ‘bout it? I must ask him what his alibi was in January 1947. She was a cutie too and was black haired with blue eyes, as your damn bro. What a shame to have her pretty face butchered like this. Ya see, ya gave me yer kink ‘bout dead chicks.” He finished his sentenced and yawned. He suddenly felt very tired.

Mikey took him by the hand and helped Raphael to walk to his room.

Raphael continued spouting nonsense, as Mikey gently put him to bed.

“Mikey,” Raphael said. “Tell me. You might be the only one, who knows your brother. Please. What should I do with him? I’m afraid something bad has happened to him and I’m afraid of him falling in love with someone. I love him so damn much. Maybe I should wait until he’s 18. It’s only ten months away. I can jerk off until then.” Raphael stopped and saw an exasperated Mikey clutch a pillow to his face. “Sorry. I forgot who I was talking to,” Raphael said, his cheeks flushed; embarrassed that he was telling Mikey that he’d masturbate about his brother.

He didn’t even see Mikey’s expression or see him switch off the light because he was snoring.

Raphael knew that he was dreaming, but it didn’t matter. Leo's lips were on his face and his lover whispered sweet things to him, as he stroked his body. He didn’t understand what Leo was saying because it sounded foreign. But Raphael kept telling him “I love you” in his dreams, freeing himself from the burden he had to bear when he was awake.

He was dreaming about taking Leo in his arms and he couldn’t, when he woke up.

“Da fuck?” Raphael said in amazement.

He was bound and naked in his dimly lit room with a few candles.

Leo emerged from the shadows wearing Raphael’s uniform and pointing his Glock at him. Raphael was caught. This was it like Casey had predicted. His big dummy and soft heart was the end of him. Leo would shoot him in the head for whatever reason and instead of being afraid, Raphael grew angry. Because he realized that Mikey must have also drugged him, the little rattlesnake.
“So this is your thanks, Leo?” Raphael said irately. “I give you all I have and you end up killing me? You’re such a coward to drug me and to restrain me to ensure you don’t miss.”

Leo kept his face neutral and said, “Shut up, little bitch, or I’ll shoot your slut mother.”

Raphael was flabbergasted at the threat. He said nothing and Leo came closer.

“Are you a virgin?” Leo continued. “You might be only 14, but with a whore for a mother, you probably aren’t a stranger to sucking cock, so suck it!”

Leo straddled him, his cock three inches from Raphael’s mouth, the Glock pointed at his forehead.

“Suck it,” Leo yelled. “Or I’ll shoot and then fuck your little bro’s sweet mouth. He’s not as cute bitch as you are, but he must be tight.”

Raphael didn’t even dare to breathe. He wasn’t sure he understood, but he knew that Leo was acting the scene that may be followed his mother’s murder. Two options were possible to explain Leo’s behavior. Either Leo had lost his damn mind or he wanted to teach him a lesson. Leo was enough of an arrogant prick for that.

But maybe not.

A slap in his face shocked him and he struggled in his ropes, cursing Leo.

“Even when your mom was dying,” Leo said icily. “She was more eager, so open it or I’ll make another opening.”

“Fuck you, you damn psycho!” Raphael shouted. “I don’t wanna play your fucking mind games. You’ve given me enough of a hard time like this.”

“You want to talk back? No wonder your dad ditched you,”

Raphael opened his mouth, but Leo shoved something in it and Raphael realized he was gagged.

“Now your ass is mine, little bitch,” Leo said. “You’ll be a good slave bitch, like your pretty mama.”

Raphael glanced at Leo with real fear now. Would Leo rape him? In a blind panic, he struggled again, but harder this time. Bottoming seemed a worse fate than being shot point blank.

Then he saw Leo’s resolve crumble.

“I can’t, Raphael! I can’t even fake it. I wanted to show what an abuser was like to show you that you weren’t one, but I can’t because I love you.”

The 180 was dizzying and Raph felt sickened. So that was the reason. Leo scared the crap out of him to teach him a lesson. What a…

The feverish kisses interrupted his thoughts. Leo caressed him, like in his dreams, and Raphael began to think that he hadn’t really when dreaming so much, when Leo whispered, “Don’t deny it. You told me that you loved me just ten minutes ago. I showed you what an abuser was like, but let me show you what you are to me, as a comparison.

Seeing Leo undressing, Raphael wanted to protest, but the gag stopped him. Leo then caressed and kissed him sweetly, tenderly and passionately. But Raphael felt more hopeless than Keanu Reeves in the Dracula movies with the woman vampire. It was scary.
“I feel cherished and like the like the most important thing in the world. Not like Donnie does. You love me for the real me. Not for my mother or my ancestors or for what the future could bring me.”

Raphael didn’t understand shit about what Leo was saying, but he knew one thing. Leo had to stop now before he believed him.

“I want to make you feel good like you made me feel. I want to show what pure and real love is because that’s how you make me feel.”

Raphael struggled again, making muffled cries and fiercely shaking his head when he saw the lube bottle in Leo’s hand.

“Don’t be frightened. I’d never hurt you. It shocked me that you could believe it for one moment,” Leo said softly, lubing Raphael’s entrance and his own cock.

Raphael told himself that Leo would have a huge shock when his legs would be free. He’d kick the jerk so far that he’d need a boat to return home.

He could tell that Leo was indeed slow and considerate, giving him time to adjust to his finger and then his leaking cock.

When Leo was buried in Raphael to the hilt, he made a guttural sound and then spoke with foreign words.

“ТАК ПЛОТНО.”

Raphael was familiar enough with James Bond movies to recognize the language. It was Russian. Leo had told him he spoke Russian, but to have chosen Russian over the other languages to talk dirty in bed couldn’t be common for a polyglot, except for weird cold war roleplay. And Casey had told him that Leo’s mother wasn’t an American, so Leo must be Russian, even if he wasn’t a muscular blond, like Ivan Drago, which he pictured Russian men to look like.

His imagination worked at full speed, as he conjured awful scenarios, like Leo being a communist here to spy on American or carrying out a terrorist attack.

Leo’s thrusts sped up and his hand was like a blur on his erect cock. Raphael came, despite himself and it sounded like Leo was praising him in the demonic language and that revolted him, even if it had felt so damn good and Leo had looked absolutely stunning in his full male glory, as he also climaxed.

After recovering his breath, Leo effortlessly switched to English and said, “I love you so much. Let me explain now that I have your attention. I planned a lot of things. That was the first reason when I believed you were an accountant. Money’s always good to take, but I wanted Mikey free through you. You were attractive, funny, sweet and a wonderful lover, so it wasn’t difficult to pretend I loved you.” He took a breather and Raph felt almost self-conscious under the gaze full of pure adoration.” I began to feel it for real when Mikey seemed to love you. But when you kicked me out because of my age, I was determined to forget about you, because you would be a nuisance to my destiny anyway. But then I saw a new purpose for you and then, I returned. Mikey was a good incentive too, but he was only an excuse. The real reason was that I wanted to, because I love you enough to move mountains, so I want to keep you. To hell with the circumstances, I ready to abandon all is not you or Mikey. But I need to know that you want it too, and that you still love me. I still need Donnie’s collaboration. Just for one last thing, and it’s will be over, but I don’t need both of you giving me a hard time. What’s your answer, my love, if I ask you if you want to be with me?”
Leo gently removed the gag and an incensed Raphael spat in his face. He’d only heard himself called a useful tool during Leo’s speech and the damn doc’s name and other shit that he didn’t give a damn about. He felt raw as if Leo had stolen something from him. The son of a bitch had admitted messing with his feelings and he was fed up with this kind of mind game shit.

“You must be proud of yourself, Leo. Rape was maybe the only crime you didn’t do,” he growled, his green eyes blazing with fury.

Leo turned livid and wiping the spit off his face. Then his expression changed and looking miserable, he said softly, “Is that your definitive answer? After all I said?”

“Don’t give a damn about what your shit talking mouth…”

Leo shut him with a sweet kiss and then replaced the gag, despite his protest. He stared at him, struggling in the rope, a full minute, completely silent. Then, he spoke, with his softest voice.

“до свидания, моя любовь.”

“Do svidaniya” was the only word Raph knew for sure in English. It meant goodbye. Was Leo going to kill him for good this time?

But Leo was getting dressed in a proper white shirt and black pants that he’d worn with the girl earlier. When Leo’s back was turned, Raphael noticed something. He hadn’t seen Leo naked since the shower episode and he saw that Leo had used laser and the carnivorous plant was almost erased. But he saw a new tattoo on the other shoulder blade, to replace it. A black eagle, bicephalous, and Raphael wasn’t sure if that tattoo was less dreadful than the carnivorous plant. He reminds him the double face of his ex-lover.

With stiff movement, Leo spoke, “I trust you to take care of Mikey, despite our disagreement. There’s a letter for him in the living room. Anyway, you’ll be a better big brother to him than me.”

The statement was cryptic, but Raphael had other things to think about. Leo was leaving him tied up and naked with his cum all over his belly. But the most concerning was how Leo was suddenly gloomy as fuck.

“Don’t worry. Mikey will free you tomorrow morning and everything will be fine. I promise.”

The voice was as soft and caring as a marine leaving his pregnant wife and Raphael was crying behind the gag. Leo was about to leave him for good. At that moment, even the earlier scene was nothing compared to the pain and sorrow with his realization. He’d just lost the love and the light of his life. Leo was trouble and a liar, but he’d rather be lied to and cheated on than to lose him. But he couldn’t take his words back with the gag.

Leo looked at him one last time with a burning loving gaze. Then he quietly closed the door, not wanting to disturb Mikey and a helpless Raphael screamed in despair.
Eggs hunting

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Raphael tried not to panic. He’d been taught how to remain calm no matter the circumstances at the Police Academy. Checking the on his digital clock, he’d been surprised that it was only 9 p.m. The drug Mikey had given him had been effective. It had only been 6:30 when Leo had left.

But that also meant that Mikey wasn’t going to wake up for a good 10 hours and Leo would be far away by then.

He knew that Leo, or at least he thought he knew, could only go Donatello’s, but how could be certain with that son of a bitch?

But he was positive that Leo was going to make a massive mistake. He felt it to his core.

He had to wake up Mikey. Leo was still there, because he could hear him pacing and sobbing. Calling him was impossible, because of the gag. He hoped with every fiber of his being that Leo would come back to untie him, but, 15 minutes later, he heard the door quietly closing.

Raphael struggled again, but Leo must have been a boy scout when he was younger because the knots were too tight to undo, so he was trapped. He looked around him in despair, trying to find something to throw on the wall to make a sound that would wake Mikey up. He saw nothing and after struggling for a while, he realized that it was pointless. Having nothing better to do and being exhausted, he began to think.

Leo had ditched him AND Mikey and that was shocking because to begin with, Mikey was apparently the reason for Leo’s existence. But maybe that was only a scheme, a trick to manipulate him, like the fake suicide attempt, so maybe there was no reason to worry so much. Without anger to blind him or Leo’s attractive physique to distract him, he could reflect on all Leo had said to him in their last encounter.

Leo had reacted to his mother’s death and what seemed like his rape. Raphael was disgusted, as he remembered Leo’s speech when he was pretending to be threatening with his gun. He could understand why Leo was so devious after having been hurt that way and at such a young age it was as if Mikey had been raped and the idea revolted him. Leo had probably been a good boy before that had happened. His routine had proved it. Leo was an early bird, who ate healthily and who practiced karate, jogged, snowboarded and ice-skated. He mediated for one to two hours daily and he studied extremely hard. He didn’t even have a real lunch; because he wasn’t allowed to eat in the library. He didn’t drink or smoke and was the neatest guy Raphael knew. Raphael couldn’t understand how such a sane person could be evil.

Not forgetting his wonderful and stirring poesy that Raphael read when he felt too lonely.

Something was off about Leo and it didn’t take rocket science to know it. Raphael had been weak and cowardly to have postponed his visit to his previous precinct. It was his duty and not Casey’s to read Leo’s record.

Leo had talked about his destiny and Raphael didn’t understand. Did it mean that Leo couldn’t leave for La Haye if he had a mate? Maybe.

His mind was going in circles and he turned his head, tired. It was now almost midnight and there
were still more than six hours to go before Mikey would wake up and free him.

If he did. Mikey was woken by Leo most of the time. And if Mikey didn’t see anyone, maybe he’d rather binge eat and watch cartoons than go and check on Raphael. And if the damn lit candle hadn’t burned Mikey alive.

The semen had dried on Raphael’s belly. He’d tried, but not very successfully, to forget about Leo making love to him. But now that he’d recovered from the shock, he could admit it. Leo had been loving and caring and probably hadn’t meant to rape him at all. In a weird and forceful way, Leo had wanted to show him that Raphael wasn’t an abuser and he didn’t understand why Raphael had acted like he didn’t want him. Leo had suffered severe trauma and had had many painful experiences. He just didn’t know what to do about showing his affection, because he’d never dealt with honest and considerate people, like Raphael before.

Or maybe Raphael was making excuses for the jerk again.

Raphael didn’t feel his arms anymore, the gag hurt him and he was pretty tired. All he could do was pray, like his Catholic mother had forced him to do when he was a child.

Trying to remember words wasn’t easy. Curses were more natural to him and all he could think of for a prayer was “Please don’t let Leo do something stupid and fuck up his life.”

Gabriela Gomez-Jones would probably say that it wasn’t correct to address the Lord that way, but it had been sincere at least.

His eyes heavy with lack of sleep and the consumed alcohol, he tried to sleep. Then the moment he’d been waiting for happened. Mikey appeared out of nowhere.

Still not believing his luck to be found relatively soon, Raphael made muffled sounds to catch Mikey’s attention, but the teenager seemed to understand the gravity of the situation right away.

“Where’s Leo?” Mikey asked and hearing the voice of the supposed mute boy, Raphael was speechless.

Anger then overwhelmed Raphael and he hissed furiously, “You can speak? You’re an even worse fucking liar than your motherfucker brother!”

“No time. Damn it! Where’s Leo?” Mikey asked in a panicked tone, shoving a sheet of paper on which tear stains were still visible, under Raphael’s nose. Raphael, still stunned, didn’t lecture him on his language.

“Fucking free me first if you want my help!”

Mikey didn’t argue and Raphael froze to the bone when he noticed Mikey’s nervous gesture, as he untied him.

“For your information, Leo told me never to talk to anyone, this day. Anyway, I kind of got used to it, so I wasn’t tricking you like you think. But seeing Leo’s letter shook me.”

When Raphael was free, he grabbed the piece of paper. It was indeed a letter in Leo’s elegant handwriting.

“Dear Mikey,

“Sorry to leave you like this. I’m too weak to see you crying, so it has to be this way. Raphael will be
a good brother to you. Be kind to him, don’t cause him trouble and be sure he doesn’t overdo training or begin drinking. Anyway, I’m going to stick to the plan. Well kind of. No glorious destiny for me, but money for you and Raph. Not enough for the spotlight to shine on you, but enough that you can live with your art like I wished for you. I love you, L.”

Raphael looked at Mikey. It seemed serious and the blond boy knew it.

“Spill the beans already, Mikey. Damn it!” Raphael snapped.

“Leo didn’t tell me about the late development!” Mikey said in an upset tone.

“And me? What do you think? He told me damn nothing at all, apart from damn lies!”

“Okay. Where does your boss live?”

Raphael didn’t even have the faculty to be dazed anymore and he said, “I don’t know his home address. Like Leo said, I was just a pawn to damn everyone!”

Mikey cursed so vulgarly that a flushed Raphael wondered if he’d taught the colorful vocabulary to the youngster.

“But what about my boss, Mikey? Leo doesn’t seem to have left for doing a paper for his school.”

Mikey facepalmed and mumbled, “And I felt so slow, compared to Leo. You’re so naïve. Anyway, Leo doesn’t go to your boss for school! He goes egg hunting. Leo found out that your boss has the last one and he needs it.”

“What for? Does he collect them? I know he has a kink about blades, but,” Raphael said, his words trailing off, as he tried to clear his thoughts. “So my boss has a fancy egg. Why are you interested in it and how does Leo know about it? I never saw the shiny shit in my boss’s office before.”

“It’s not shiny shit! It’s a Fabergé egg and you could work your entire life and can’t buy one with your income! The one I showed you is the third and your boss has the fourth one and I hate that,” Mikey mumbled to himself. “I hate the story. Leo said that it’s because I’m not the firstborn son, but that has nothing to do with it. Leo could be happier with you than he’d be in Russia or Serbia. And lately, Leo wasn’t acting like himself. He seemed sloppier than usual. He could end up being killed if he does this.”

Raphael’s guts churned, as dread overwhelmed him. He’d known it! Leo was so deep in the shit that he could be killed!

“What are we going to do, Mikey? I don’t know where he lives and I can’t call work at midnight and ask out of the blue. Maybe my bro knows, but he won’t tell me…”

“Useless. We have to go to the necrophile’s place.” Seeing the astonishment in Raphael’s eyes, Mikey sighed, “The mad doc. He knows all of Leo’s dark secrets and plans. I hate the guy so much, but Leo could be in a bad situation. It’s an emergency and he’ll help, whatever he felt about me, because he thinks he loves Leo so much. Don’t ever ask why I hate him. I don’t want to remember what I saw. I saw things that prevented me from talking more than my mother’s murder and Leo’s rape. You know where the wacko lives, right?”

Raphael nodded, pale. So the twisted foreplay had been real. Leo and Mikey had suffered so much. No wonder that Leo had turned out badly. And he didn’t want to know what Donnie had done to traumatize Mikey.
“But you’re sure he knows where my boss lives, Mikey? And what do we do once we get there? I knock at the door; ask to speak to Commissioner Hamato and say, ‘Could you pretty please give your egg to my pretend cousin and ex-sex buddy?’ It won’t work.” Mikey was talking without thinking. They needed a plan, but he couldn’t plan one if he even didn’t know what all of this was about. And he wasn’t sure about Donnie’s collaboration. “Okay. We’ll go to the doc’s place, Mikey, but I need to know why Leo wants those eggs so badly. And how he thinks he can convince my boss to give it to him. I mean, you said they’re pretty expensive and Leo’s seductive tricks won’t work on him.”

“Yes. He must be had put a microchip in him to follow Leo’s every move. He is so obsessed. Get dressed. I’ll be back.”

Raphael began to dress, throwing on jeans and regretting that he didn’t have time to shower. Then, Mikey comes back and showed him newspapers that were yellowed with age.

“There:”

![Image of newspaper]

“There:”

“Okay. I’m not a moron, like you think,” Raphael said. “I know a Tsar was shot during the Russian revolution.”

Unimpressed, Mikey having now his coat, folded his arms:

“Did you know that he managed to hide a treasure worth sixty billion?”

Raphael opened his eyes wide. That was a fucking astronomical number.

“And do you know that some studies say that Russian people want the tsars coming back? A charismatic man could maybe take this opportunity”

“No wonder: Putin’s such a massive dick,” Raphael said, annoyed that they were discussing something else when Leo was maybe in danger. “Could you get to the fucking point now? Your damn bro!”

“Remember the cutie dead chick? That’s Tatiana," he sais pointing the girl standing in the middle of
the newspaper's picture "She was the Tsar’s second eldest and she survived, because she was clever, stubborn and beautiful. She walked, pregnant in Russia, during the civil war to where the treasure was hidden. She couldn’t bring all of the gold and jewels with her, but she took four Fabergé eggs. And with a Serbian scientist’s help, she left a code to find the treasure. Each egg has twenty-five percent of it, but Leo couldn’t read it without Donnie’s help.

Raph was stunned and when he’d regained his composure he said, trying to reason as he grabbed his coat and keys, “But it’s not yours. If my boss has it and he knows everything, he won’t give it to Leo.”

Mikey narrowed his eyes and said matter-of-factly, “Of course he won’t give it. Leo will take it after killing him. He’d be doing so, like he did in Oroku’s house, because it appears that your boss, an extremely corrupt cop, ordered our mother’s death with Oroku’s help.” Before an astounded Raphael could react, Mikey said, “And the treasure is ours, because we’re the more direct descendants. The cutie was my great-great-grandmother. You had sex with a Romanov heir, who is affiliated to Serbian royalty too. Congrats. Now we can go rescue my stupid brother.”

Chapter End Notes

A short chapter here: I don’t want to put a too heavy revelation in only one. The second part would be Donnie's confession.
Deadly lipstick

Raphael was far too anxious to ask more questions. Anyway, he knew it was true. Nobody could invent such a massive lie. And it would explain Leo’s high attitude, aristocratic posture, his need to lead and his remark about his gifted family and dynasties crumbling, because of weak rulers. He only had his meltdown when he was on the road, hitting his car’s wheel and cursing.

“Why does the asshole play this game? Such powerful people are dangerous. He has everything he needs to lead a happy life and a safer one!”

Mikey, who was biting his fingers and staring at the road, turned to Raphael and said, “You don’t want Leo to be a billionaire? Even if he doesn’t find the treasure, there is still seven billion in different banks around the world, waiting an heir to collect.”

Raphael shook his head and took a sharp turn.

“Don’t you want Leo to be a Tsar or King, Raph? It’s his right to be recognized and he must be elected. Anybody in their right mind would choose a charismatic guy like Leo over that Putin.

“No,” Raphael fiercely denied. “Putin’s goons would kill him as soon as he arrived in Russia. He doesn’t need that crap. We don’t need that to be happy. He can be a simple lawyer. He is talented to tell about shit. It’s a less complicated job, less dangerous and it pays enough. All three of us would have lived peacefully with my salary. Leo would have been happy, safe and…”

“You rejected him. That was why Leo wasn’t effective. He wondered if all of this was worth it and if he couldn’t just be happy with you. Because, like I’ve told you many times, you’re his first genuine lover.”

Raphael bit his lip. He had to ignore Mikey’s words, otherwise, he’d lose it.

“You told me nothing, you little shit, with your damn crazy act of mute boy!” Raphael snapped. “Anyway we’re here,” Raphael added and parked in front of Donnie’s place. “Can we get past Donnie’s staff? They are fanatic about their damn boss”

“Easy, Raph,” Mikey said. “I’ll ask for him. I bit one of them so hard last time that Leo had to pull my hair to free him. I’m a lunatic, a psycho, who’s so unstable and dangerous. I have only to talk and stunned, they’ll let us past.”

Raphael was far from convinced, but what he could do? Maybe Leo was making the biggest mistake of his fucked-up like right now. Anyway, he thought he was indeed so dumb that even Mikey was cleverer than him.

The doorman lets them enter, despite it being late at night and Raphael saw the same man he’d previously seen at the desk. The man glanced at him sulkily, but fear shone in his eyes when he saw Mikey.

“We want to see your boss. Don’t try to stop us,” Raphael warned.

“But Mister Leo isn’t here anymore. He left over an hour ago and in a dark mood.”

Raph and Mikey looked at each other. There was no time left.

“Where did he go?” Raphael asked, in a clipped tone.
The man’s eyes opened wide and he said, “Nobody could ask. That’s not allowed.”

Mikey tugged Raphael by the arm and said, “Leave him. He knows nothing.”

The man was so bewildered that Mikey could speak, he let them pass just like Mikey had expected.

The young teen apparently knew where to go. They took the elevator and Mikey pressed the penthouse button.

“Don’t question Donnie, Raph. We don’t have time for that.”

Raph nodded. Rescuing Leo was his top priority. Whatever there was between his ex-lover and the mad doc was meaningless.

The elevator door opened and Raphael was astonished.

He’d never seen such opulence before. It was unbelievable that Leo had chosen him over this. The hall or living room- he wasn’t sure about which was which-the rooms being so chock-a-block with finery that at first glance its purpose wasn't apparent. It glowed like amber and honey paneled the walls and arched ceilings instead of wood. Chandeliers with crystals that were so perfectly cut they seemed invisible, hovered over polished floors. Even the furniture flirted subtly, shining threads snaking through the upholstery. Everything was perfect and untouched and quiet. Deep green plants were set like emeralds in gold. They were alive but still and a gleaming jaguar sculpture lounged beside the couch.

The luxury was indecent, but Raphael focused his attention on a painting of a lady with such an exquisite face, that looked exactly like Leo’s. She wore a strange white dress with a crown and Raphael thought she must be the Tsar’s wife, but the painting looked recent.

“That’s our mother. Follow me. He must be upstairs,” Mikey said, forcefully dragging Raphael toward the staircase.

Raph was stunned. Leo’s mother was supposed to be a whore and a heroin addict. What did all of this mean?

The staircase spiraled up to the next floor, whirling with designs of circles and wheels. There was another painting at the end of it. It was Leo himself wearing an official white kind of military outfit with a strip of blue across. Raphael knew what that was. A kind of ribbon for crowned people.

“Stop staring,” Mikey snapped. “You could have the original in your bed if you move your ass. If uniforms are your kink, he’ll wear it for you. Now move.”

The spell broken by the young teen, Raphael followed him to another room, still too stunned to oppose.

It was the main bedroom apparently. It was opulent and cold, in silver and lilac tone, unlike the warm living room and it was also pale and empty, apart from the crumpled figure in the bed.

Raphael was then heartbroken.

It was a completely naked Donnie, who was sleeping and smiling peacefully and whose hands were tied by manacles to the bed.

Donnie must be this blissful because Leo had apparently had sex with him maybe two hours earlier.
Leo must have fucked him raw after kinky foreplay with the handcuffs and then must have drugged him, so he could do what he wanted to do, this fucker.

Mikey, who wasn’t at all shocked by the erotic display, slapped him twice. It must be said that the youngster had seen more disturbing things than a naked guy.

Donnie startled, woke up and looked panicked when he recognized Mikey and Raphael.

“Why are you here?” Don asked. “Where’s my Leo?”

“He’s not yours!” Mikey hissed. “What did he say before he left?”

Donnie looked around him. Then realization seemed to hit him and he looked miserable.

“Leo told me that he chose me and he’d be at my side forever.”

“You must know those were only lies. You hurt him too much for him to ever love you. Don’t complain that you’ve been deceived. The cold Leo is your creation. You’re the one to blame,” Mikey chastised.

“Yes. I should expect that,” Don said, his expression gloomy. “For your information, your older brother told me nothing. He came here, shoved me in bed, we had sex and I woke up to your slap, Michelangelo.”

Raphael raise an eyebrow at the pompous and informal name, but there was no time to wonder why Don wasn’t shocked that Mikey could talk.

“You know that Leo wouldn’t have drugged you for nothing. He must go and get the last egg.”

“Untie me and bring me some water,” Don commanded. “I can’t work in these conditions.”

Despite his hatred of Donnie, Mikey obeyed and left the room to get a glass of water, leaving the two rivals alone. Raphael saw the key, which wasn’t even hidden, and freed the doctor.

“I thought he chose me over you. I should have known that wasn’t true. Leo was too different with you,” Don said quietly. “I believed he needed me too much, but Leo’s not his mother. There a long time, ago when I was still a child, I loved her, you know, but…”

Mikey returned and snapped, “Don’t talk about her! You’re disgusting! Now choke on your water and spill the beans! Leo must have said or done something! You know him! Do you have a way of locating him?” he urged.

Don rubbed his wrist and closed his eyes, trying to focus. “Leo entered about ten p.m. He was smiling with the green egg and said, ‘One to go’. And said that after he’d gotten the fourth one, he didn’t care about the rest, because he loved me. He told me sweet nothings, stroking my hair and we came upstairs. I noticed he wore his watch. I put a microchip in it to follow him. I always know where he is.” Hearing this, Mikey looked at Raphael in a way that meant ‘I told you so’. “Then,” Don continued. “He went to the restroom to shower. That was usual, so I waited. Then, he kissed me again and…”

Don suddenly went quiet and Raphael was grateful because he couldn’t stand another word.

“The lipstick!” he cried in blind panic and Mikey paled.

“What about lipstick?” Raphael said, puzzled.
“I have a lab and make cosmetic products. Leo tasted of strawberry shortcake when he kissed me.” Raphael found the statement very cryptic and damn out of place, but seeing Mikey serious, he didn’t voice his opinion.

Donatello, very upset, jumped out of the bed, grabbed his bathroom and strode to a door on the other side of the room.

A cry was heard from the other room and a concerned Raphael entered it.

Panicked, a trembling Don held what appeared to be three silver tubes of lipstick.

“What’s that, Brainiac?” Raphael asked. “What about damn lipstick? Leo’s too masculine to wear this feminine shit!”

“Unless you wanted to feminize him again against his will,” Mikey growled. "For he looks similar to my mother, again!"

Don shook his head and an astonished Raphael said nothing at all. He had to keep his energy to fight the stubborn boss, meaning Leo himself.

“No, they're not tainted,” Don said. “These are drugs or poisons. Some for love, some for sleeping and some for poisoning. Leo used them a lot.”

Dumbfounded, Raphael felt like he was in a bad Mission Impossible episode.

“Do you mean Leo poisoned you?” Raphael asked incredulously.

“No. The vanilla cake flavored one is for sleeping. The strawberry one’s a powerful aphrodisiac. I didn’t notice the nuance at the moment because I was too distracted.”

“What’s so important? He drugged you and…” Raphael asked upset, not wanting to picture them making love.

“Don’t you see, stupid? I only have three lipsticks. Leo must have the fourth!” Donnie yelled, distraught.

“What about the fourth?” Raphael shouted while Donnie was hysterically looking at his phone. Seeing something, his eyes grew wide and panicked.

“Talk now or you never will again!” Raphael growled, showing his fist and grabbing Donnie by his bathrobe. He was about to lose it! All of this was far too much for his simple soul.

“It’s called the Venus-Fly-Trap,” Donnie said, showing Raphael the silver tube. “I mean the missing one. It tastes of chocolate mint to hide the hemlock. Just one kiss and horrible agony follow one hour later. It’s my strongest and affects the kisser, as well as the kissed,” Don paused and said, as tears filled his eyes, “Leo’s now more than thirty minutes away.”

Raphael immediately remembered the plant tattoo. How horrific and ironic if Leo ended up being the victim of his own trap. Dread overwhelmed him, as he pictured his lover’s torture and his beautiful features twisted by the effects of the violent poison.

“Are you crazy? Don’t answer. It’s rhetorical! You have to be to keep poison in reach! Leo must have taken it by mistake and… You have the antidote for the shit?” Raphael asked in fear.

Donnie shook his head again and said, “Leo never makes mistakes. You must know that by now. He
took it on purpose.” Don showed them the last tube in his hand and said, “He also purposefully left the antidote. I mean this one”

That was the last straw for Raphael. That he could bear all of this shit since he’d woken up yesterday was already a miracle for his borderline personality. He couldn’t tame his rage and bad feelings and punched Donnie squarely in the jaw.

“It’s your damn fault, you damn mad scientist!” Raphael roared.

Wiping blood from the corner of his mouth, Donnie didn’t have time to defend himself, because Mikey entered the fray and said, “Leave him alone! We need him conscious, you idiot! It’s firstly your fault for being so cold to Leo.”

Astonished by the unexpected accusation, despite Mikey being half on his body, Raphael shoved and turned his fury on him. “Fuck you, Mikey. If you’d just talked before….”

“To say what? Anyway, I already told you! I’m a deeply traumatized child!” Mikey whined. “You never saw the carnage and to take the cake, this necrophile molested my mother’s dead body. So don’t dare blame me!”

There was silence for a full ten seconds, Raphael staring at the doctor disgustedly and Donnie sighed. “It wasn’t like that,” Donnie said. “And anyway, there are more urgent matters than Anastasia.”

Raphael was at the point where he didn’t want to know more anyway. At least, not about that. “So,” Raphael said. “Tell us more about the shit lipstick. How does the antidote work? And where’s the damn little fucker? I want to punch him for causing all of this fucking stress!” Yes. Raphael was positive. It would happen to him like it had in the Stephen King movie. His hair would be all white tomorrow!

“Leo has one hour left to live if he used the lipstick,” Donnie said. “We must give him the antidote. He’s now at a gay sauna. The egg’s owner must be there.”

Floored, Raphael denied it and said, “If that’s my boss, it’s impossible! He isn’t gay! He won’t kiss Leo! He wore your deadly lipstick for damn nothing!”

“Do you know the ins and outs of your boss’s private life? I don’t think so! If Leo’s there, his prey is there too,” Donnie said contemptuously while finishing dressing.

The word ‘prey’ made Raphael shiver. He’d almost forgotten that him, a cop, had a murderer for a lover. Donnie and Mikey were already by the staircase and he followed them not understanding what the plan was. Did they have a fucking plan, to begin with?

“Okay,” Raphael said. “So we go to the place and then what? Punch him until he’s unconscious and we’ll then forcefully give him the antidote?”

There was no answer and he repeated his question in the elevator, seeing that Donnie had pressed the button for the garage.

“Would you fucking answer? I’ll drive you there and…” Raphael said heatedly.

Donnie coldly answered, “No. This is the plan and our roles. We’ll take my car and I’ll drive. I don’t want to sit in the sweet sixteen party for bacteria that you call your car. Michelangelo’s our last resort. He can’t enter the sauna, his young age being apparent, but if your part doesn’t work out, you can use him as emotional blackmail. I did with Leo many times. He always falls for that, but it would
be quicker and easier by yourself.”

“You mean that I enter the gay sauna? Where my boss is supposed to be? Why me?”

Raphael climbed into the car, reflecting. He didn’t care about being fired. He only cared about Leo. He was the strongest and therefore then only one, who could drag Leo out against his will or punch him hard enough if there was a need for it.

Donnie started his car and he said icily what the real reason was, “You’ll put the antidote on your lip and kiss him. It’s the only way. He won’t kiss me, but he’d never suspect you. He’d think that you forgave him and he’d be too happy to do it because he loves you.”

The last words were sadly pronounced and Raphael then had to accept it. Leo loved him like he loved Leo, and as Mikey had said; Leo had grown desperate when he’d seen his love pushed away. Why had he been so stubborn about it? He didn’t even remember because he was too busy imagining Leo dead on the sauna floor. He must go there fast and kiss him hard and deeply. Not at all, like the fag Prince had done with Snow White with just a quick peck on the lips. Raphael would ravage Leo’s mouth to save him, to convince him to live and of his love and to also release some steam.

Being that chaste wasn’t him and he felt like he’d fantasized about this for decades.

And he’d punch him right after for frightening him. Damn it.

He’d bring back Leo to their simple 2-roomed apartment and he’d ensure the little shit Mikey couldn’t sleep at all with Leo’s noisy moans. That’s would be so damn good.

Then they’d talk afterward and knowing a part of the situation at this point, Raphael would tell him that he had to drop the shit. Anyway, Hamato couldn’t have murdered Leo and Mikey’s mother with Oroku’s help, because they were enemies. He knew that because Hamato seemed obsessed with his hatred of Oroku.

But he suddenly wasn’t so sure anymore. Maybe it had all been a game. Leo had said that hate cops before he’d known that Raphael was a cop himself. He had talked about corruption…

Maybe Leo had good reasons.

“I’ll do it,” Raphael said. “But you, the miracle,” he added and pointed at Mikey. “Must talk and you, the OCD case, must drive damn fast!”
“So, let’s discuss this crap. Mikey,” Raphael said. “And then I want your version, Doc, because I want to know all of the shit before meeting Leo. I need to clearly understand the situation, so I can tell him that it doesn’t matter because I could offer him a lot more.”

Don took a sharp turn and asked in a clipped tone, “What do you want to know? It’s not like you understand anything about history or politics!”

Raphael darkened in anger. He knew that Donnie was stressed, but that wasn’t a reason to be insulting, but reacting to it wouldn’t make the situation better.

“Yeah, Doc,” Raphael said. “Maybe I was a less promising student than you were, but you must see now that your big brain didn’t make Leo fall in love with you and neither did your money. Maybe big nuts are more useful, so tell me the important shit I need to know. Keep it simple.”

Don heaved an exaggerated sigh and said, “All of this might have begun in 1905. Russia had lost a war with Japan and the Russians were extremely unhappy about it. They rioted. Nicolas the second was a weak ruler, but a careful man and he began to place his money in foreign countries. His wife did the same thing, knowing that it mustn’t be too obvious that Russian money was leaving the country. The Tsar was the richest man in Europe and maybe of the world at that time and ruled over more than 125 million people.”

“I don’t want your shitty statistics,” Raphael snapped. “Talk about the girl.”

“Tatiana?”

Raph shrugged. All Russian girl names were the same. Good for exotic dancing and being porn stars.

Donnie assumed it was her because he continued. “Nicolas and his wife were cousins of many European kings. When he lost everything and had to abdicate, he hoped that his family in Germany or in England would help him. He put all of his remaining treasure, gold, and jewels on a train, which never arrived at its destination, the reason being that there were two trains. One with gold and the other only with coal. We now know that the gold was under the coal and was buried. He told his children where in case he was separated from them or killed.”

Raphael didn’t give a fuck about the treasure. As far as he knew, all of the shiny shit had to be cursed, like a pharaoh’s burial furniture or Mayan gold. But, despite his simple personality, the idea of Leo having some blue royal blood tickled him. He ignored the kinky thoughts about fancy foreplay and ordered Don to continue talking, but only about the girl.

“Well,” Don said. “In the summer of 1918, King George V sent a pilot to save the entire family. It was in secret because his prime minister didn’t agree to it. The plane would land behind the Ipatiev house where the entire Romanov family was under heavy surveillance. It was daring and risky and naturally before he could be shot, only one person was randomly put on the plane. That was Tatiana, the second eldest daughter. The planes weren’t powerful enough to cross Russia to the English bases in the north of the country at that time. They had to take the Trans-Siberian railway, which was controlled by the Czech army, towards Vladivostok. An English cruiser was waiting there under the
pretense of presenting the English Marshal's cordon to the Emperor of Japan.” Donnie was animated and obviously loved talking about historical facts, but Raphael wasn’t there for a history lesson.

“What did I say? Keep it simple, Doc!”

Donnie looked at Raphael contemptuously and said, "You slept with a king’s descendant and you don’t even care about his family history. I don’t understand what he sees in you.”

“I told you: big cock and big nuts!”

Donnie rolled his eyes and focused on the road. The GPS showed that Leo was still 17 minutes away.

Mikey continued, “I’ll give you simple, Raph. It was an old movie, man. She was recognized at the station because they sold a lot of portraits and postcards of princesses. Like you said, she was pretty and the short story was that she was brought back to Moscow, despite having an English bodyguard. A powerful guy, a big Soviet dude, kept her prisoner. He ordered her to be sweet or he’d shoot her family, but unbeknownst to her, they were already dead.”

Donnie hissed in disapproval at the too vague facts for his liking and he said, “The Soviet dude was Sverdlov, the chairman of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. He ordered the shooting of Tatiana’s family. He could be a regicide; he was itching for royal flesh. He was married, but he raped her, as vengeance, because he was a revolutionary and because she was alluring and she became pregnant. There was the Spanish flu at the time and maybe because he wanted to protect her, because he really liked her or because he didn’t want her pregnancy to be known, he sent her away to a little house in the south, near Odessa with her hair dyed blonde. It wasn’t vacant and she was carefully watched by twelve guards all of the time. But Sverdlov died of the flu and the widow chased her because she was her husband’s mistress. Nobody knew her real identity, so she walked alone and pregnant in the middle of the civil war between the Reds and the Whites, the independent movements and the non-Bolshevik socialists. The war continued for several years, during which the Bolsheviks defeated both the Whites and all of the rival socialists and then changed their name to the Communist Party and Odessa was a war zone.”

Raphael made a face and Mikey continued, “So I told you about the eggs. Tatiana walked, taking four of them, one for each of her lost siblings, and some jewels to live with. She walked across Romania, which was over 600 miles, pregnant from a rape in a war zone, so she wasn’t just a cutie. She wanted to join her cousins in Germany, but on the verge of dying, she arrived in Yugoslavia, now Serbia. She gave birth to the child and before she died she confessed her secret to the people, who’d helped her and showed the eggs as proof and explained the treasure’s location for her newborn girl, Olga, who was named after her eldest sibling.”

“Yes,” Donnie said. “By chance, it was the Tesla family. The scientist was here in New York, but the family was honest and finding the secret too big, they sent the egg to Tesla and told him the location. Tesla was honest too, having had all of his credit stolen, so he invented the code and wrote down the story, saying that it could be revealed 40 years after his death. But it was still an extremely difficult enigma that only a genius like me can decrypt.

Raphael muttered a curse and Mikey said, “The family was afraid for the little girl and raised her as a simple orphan, but she was fated to be a princess, because the Serbian Prince, Peter The Second, met her and fell in love with her, He married her in 1941, but he was a minor and the regency council didn’t recognize the marriage, but they were married, so Leo’s legitimate in Serbia.

Donnie chimed in, “Although King Peter The Second and his advisers were completely opposed to Nazi Germany, Regent Prince Paul declared that the kingdom of Yugoslavia would join the
Tripartite Pact on March 1941. Two days King Peter, aged 17 years old, was proclaimed of age after a British supported coup d’Etat. Nazi Germany then attacked Yugoslavia in April of that year. Within a week, Germany, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Italy invaded Yugoslavia and the government was forced to surrender. Parts of Yugoslavia were annexed by Italy, Bulgaria, Hungary and Germany and two Nazi puppet governments were set up in the remaining parts of the kingdom of Yugoslavia, namely Croatia and Serbia.”

Donnie checked the GPS again and saw that Leo was now only ten minutes away. Then he said, “Peter left the country with the Royal Yugoslav Government's ministers following the Axis invasion. He made a diplomatic mission to America in 1942 where he met American President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The whirlwind tour was unsuccessful in securing Allied support for the exiled Yugoslav monarch’s cause. Roosevelt and Churchill had already engaged the support of the Communist Yugoslav Government in the Allied effort to defeat Nazi Germany with a view to ending the hostilities. Anyway, I don’t think we can restore the monarchy in Serbia. But the fact was Peter was pressured to marry a real princess. He didn’t know that Olga was half-one and from a better house than himself because the Karadordević dynasty was very recent. So he agreed to marry his third cousin, Princess Alexandra of Greece and Denmark in London in 1944. They had one son, who was born in 1945 and on almost the same day that Maria, Leo and Mikey’s grandmother, was born. Both were born in England. To avoid scandal, he’d been forced to send her away. Peter divorced his spouse in 1953, but it was too late. Olga had remarried. Living in Yugoslavia was hard during the cold war under Tito’s dictatorship, but she’d refused his money and help because she was too proud.”

Raphael’s heart pounded with all of the information. He’d sucked at history and the shit wasn’t even American history, so he was lost. The high attitude of this Olga, refusing money from the king, who’d ditched her, sounded so like Leo.

Donnie rambled on about Tito’s government and then he said, “Peter died in 1970 and he revealed that Maria was his legitimate eldest in his testimony, but she couldn’t make it to America because Tito’s goons blocked her from doing so. She also became pregnant by an unknown father. She never wanted to marry, because her mother had told her that men were monsters. I don’t blame her. Maria gave birth to a girl named Anastasia, like the tradition. Then the real drama began.”

Donnie repeated the name Anastasia, his eyes misty with tears. “Anastasia was born in Belgrade on May tenth, 1976. She was beautiful and wild but in an artistic way. She looked so like Tatiana, it was insane. She was gifted in many ways and her mother, Maria, raised her like a princess with the means she had. But this all changed in 1983, which was 40 years after Tesla’s death, when she knows that a heritage was there to collect, too. She was seven-years-old and dreamed about America. Her life was dull and she wanted to be an actress or a ballerina. She loved dancing, rock music, and the movie Grease. Leo’s inherited her dancing skills.”

Mikey and Donnie were crying now and Raphael decided that was enough. They were nearly at the sauna and he didn’t really want to know the rest. All of the dead women in Leo’s family tree weren’t important. They were dead and Leo was still alive. They had to come up with a plan

“So,” Donnie said. “So after her mother’s death-she was killed by Milošević-you know that madman? He died at LaHaye. That’s why Leo’s fascinated with the International Court. He’d promised his mother that he’d work there one day. Anyway, Anastasia decided to enroll in an agency that placed young women in America as nannies to rich families. She was chosen by my parents to give me music lessons. She was a talented pianist and came to America in 1994. I was ten. She was my first love.”

They’d arrived at the sauna and the name of it was written in the fucked-up Cyrillic alphabet.
“Fuck your love story,” Raphael said heatedly. “You can talk about that later after the mess is over. Tell me how this shit works,” he added, showing the silver tube.

Donnie upset, snapped, “Like all damn lipstick. You put it on your lips and then you kiss Leo, but it must be a deep kiss. The Venus Fly Trap one is very powerful. This one is also only efficient one hour after application.”

“Tell me about this place.”

Mikey, who had the cell, read aloud, “It’s the largest sauna in New York, is four stories, including the rooftop terrace and is where the most beautiful guys come from all over the world and their fantasies are met without any compromises. Do you want the official shit or the kinky one?”

Raphael wasn’t sure how to answer and said, “Both”. Then he carefully applied the lipstick, not wanting too much and it was too glossy. Leo knew him as an extremely masculine man, who didn’t wear cosmetic products.

“Well,” Mikey said. “The Russian bath is said to have many health benefits. Excessive heat stimulates sweating, thus removing unwanted materials from the blood and improving the work of the kidneys. Sweating releases excess water and salt from the body and opens the skin pores, cleansing them and making them softer and fresher. The process helps rid the muscles of excess lactic acid, which relieves muscle fatigue and soreness. Platza is a traditional Russian experience unlike any other and is when a massage specialist continuously applies a bushel made of oak leaves called a venik, which is soaked in warm water and placed over your entire body. The procedure naturally removes toxins and skin-dulling residue from your body. The treatment is performed on the uppermost bench to maximize the amount of heat rising from the stone oven. The venik creates a sedative effect, which melts away stress, opens your pores, removes toxins, and exfoliates dead skin.”

“So the kinky one,” Raphael said. “People don’t go sweating the boring way at one in the morning.”

“The sauna has a large rooftop terrace and several well-equipped play areas. High definition sixty-inch screens in all of the eighteen rooms and king size mattresses. New Donjon now open and new open showers for voyeurs.”

“And I have one hour to find the jerk in there, right? Is your GPS accurate? I mean, can you show me where he is exactly?”

“It should be if Leo hasn’t removed his watch, but he won’t go in the Russian bath with such an expensive one. It would be weird. The moisturizing ambiance would ruin it. And as you see, Leo didn’t move. It must be locked in a locker, and he’s only dressed in a towel.”

“So I now have 57 minutes to find him and kiss him before he dies. It’s like a twisted mix of a cliché action movie and a Disney Cartoon.”

“Yes,” Donnie said sternly. “You can do it. If Tatiana walked pregnant alone and with no money through Romania war zone and managed to keep her treasure, you can find Leo in a gay sauna. Just use this supposed thirteen iches Rasputin cock of yours” he sneered, but Raph was too caught in his anguish to talk back or hit him.

“I hope Leo kissed the asshole before you stop him!” Mikey said darkly.

Shocked too much this time, Raphael looked at Mikey and said, “Hey! Your bro’s already in deep
enough shit! I don’t give damn if Leo had the time to kiss my boss. I won’t wait for him to and lose time to save him. It was your mom, Mikey, and I don’t know the full story, but she’s dead now and you won’t feel better if Leo dies too, so shut up! It must be easy for you, mute boy!”

Mikey sulked, but Raphael knew the teen understood his point of view.

The dead remain dead and there was already an overdose of drama in the fucked-up family.

Before Raphael got out of the car, Donnie gripped his wrist and said, as he stared at him intensely, “When all of this is over, I’ll leave you alone with him. I’ve done enough bad things to him when I met him. He deserves freedom and happiness and I don’t care if he’s with you if he is happy. Good luck.”

Raphael blinked and muttered, “Yeah. Thank you.”

Then Raphael got out of the car and entered the sauna.

Chapter End Notes

The next would be the last. It is already written, waiting to be beta.
Vodka make it feel better

When he’d entered the sauna, Raphael cursed Donatello. He felt even less prepared than when he’d gone into Adamate’s house as a fake accountant and unaware of what lay ahead. A man with a neutral expression was behind the desk at the entrance and Raphael realized he couldn’t register to become a member by taking out his papers and filling in forms. His self-control was thinner than ever.

Without thinking, he asked the man, “Have you ever been in love?”

The guy, a blond giant, looked at him and raised an eyebrow, while a hand slipped to his belt.

“The man I love is here,” Raphael continued. “We quarreled and he left very angrily and helpless. I'm afraid he's doing something stupid, like opening his veins here or whatever. Please tell me if you’ve seen him. I’m sure he’s here, but I don’t want to search all of your rooms for him.”

The man looked at the distraught Raph, analyzing him and said, “A lot of people are here. I don’t remember all of their faces.”

Raphael’s eyes lit up hopefully and he eagerly opened his wallet. It was his big secret. He had Leo’s photo in it. Leo had taken photos in a photo booth one day, probably with the intention of creating a new fake ID. Raphael had taken one, hoping Leo wouldn’t notice. Taking out the 2x3 photo, he looked at Leo’s serious face. The student was bearing sins that weren’t his. He could understand the young man’s anger. He, himself, had been wild in rage when his father had been killed in the war, but since he couldn’t get revenge on the Middle East, he’d learned how to channel and to deal with his pain and anger.

Leo would too with his help and love.

“Here’s my boyfriend,” Raphael said. “You can’t forget such a stunning guy.”

The man glanced at Leo’s photo and said, “Yes. He came here about an hour ago and appeared to be in a dark mood. He reserved the banya and not a room. He’ll be in there maybe, but he could also be on the rooftop. It’s heated up there and it’s not that cold outside tonight. I need your information if you want to enter and you must pay.”

“Keep it. Take the money and fill in the form yourself. I don’t have time for that shit,” Raphael replied, throwing his wallet. If the man wanted to stop him, he’d be punched. Leo had been there for one hour and had maybe already put on the lipstick. He didn’t know how many minutes remained before Leo would die. And he didn’t know where his lover was.

Like Donnie had guessed, Leo was in locker 204. He placed his forehead against the cold metal because he had a migraine and he wanted to feel something from his lover, so he’d feel comforted. Oh, yes. If Leo ended up alive, he’d be spanked to hell, blue blood or not.

Raphael asked the first man with a towel around his loins where the banya was. The man showed him with a trembling finger. Raphael knew that he must look like a lunatic and worse a bulky lunatic, but he didn’t give a damn.

The steam was thick in the banya and the temperature was pure hell with his clothes, but his eyes soon adjusted and he was able to see. Only five men over 40 were there and no Leo.

Raphael climbed the 4 floors, still holding Leo’s photo to show to people who could help him. He
noticed there was no sign of Leo or Commissioner Hamato on the crowded terrace. Anyway, he was positive he wasn’t even there. Admitting yes, how could Leo have known? But Donnie and Mikey appeared really sure of themselves and both were smarter than he was.

Raphael went down again and stopped on the second floor, seeing an extremely long corridor with many doors. Should he knock on them all? He started shouting Leo's name a furious man opened a door, stepped out and yelled, “Shut up. We’re trying to have a good time! If you don’t, I’ll call security!”

Raphael shoved the man up against the wall and showed him the picture.

“I’m a cop and I’m looking for this man,” Raphael said. “He’s a terrorist.” Raphael had said that without a second thought. Maybe people would be more eager to help him with his search if their lives were in danger.

The man trembled and said, “Yes. I saw him. He was on the dance floor. I flirted with him, but an old Asian guy put himself in my way. They left together, going upstairs. It might have been half an hour ago.”

Raphael paled. So, Don and Mikey were right. Leo was there with the intention of sending his boss to hell. But why? Why hadn’t Leo taken the antidote? Why did he want to follow Hamato in death? Why did he want to steal the egg only to die afterward?

Did Leo love him to the point that he didn’t want to live without Raphael’s love, even though he was a billionaire and might be recognized as a Prince?

What was Leo thinking?

Then the second man in the room showed himself and said, “What happened?”

His partner filled him in, nodded and said, “The Asian man must be in the Donjon. He’s into sadomasochism. Everyone thinks he’s too sick and they don’t want to be his partner and I don’t understand why they allow him in here. The guy you talked about must be having a hard time with him.”

Raphael knows why Hamato, even with his borderline fantasies was still admitted. His position in the NYPD made him too powerful. The idea of his boss maybe hurting Leo made him blind in rage.

“Where’s the fucking Donjon? Hurry up, because the guy will blow up the place,” Raphael said.

“Third floor, an iron door at the end of the corridor. It’s probably locked and soundproof, but there a window to watch if they haven’t closed the curtain.”

Without thanking them, Raphael rushed towards the stairs, thinking they made up for his missed jogging.

The iron door was indeed locked and he pounded on the door. There was still no answer after an agonizing minute. He placed his ear against the door and only heard a faint noise. Someone was in there.

There was another door next to that one. Maybe that was the room to “watch” if there were no curtains. He went in the narrow unlocked room.

There were a sofa and a little table with a box of tissues. It was beyond Raphael’s understanding that people could jerk off to torture, but he wasn’t there to judge. Anyway, he could think of nothing.
The curtain was open and he saw Leo through the one-way mirror. Leo only wore leather pants and was holding a whip and even at this distance, Raphael could see that he was sweating profusely. His beautiful black hair was soaked and he was flushed. Whipping seemed like a good exercise to lose weight. His naked boss was tied to a Saint Andrew’s cross and he had a raging hard-on, despite bledding a lot. It was a rather shocking sight but Raphael didn’t care what floated Hamato’s boat. Only Leo mattered.

He punched the one-way mirror and he saw Leo frowning at him, but his lover couldn’t see him and he saw Leo shrug and return to the whipping. He’d never seen Leo look that way. Hatred was etched on his handsome face. How could Hamato have perceived that it wasn’t foreplay at all?

He knocked harder, making the glass shake, but maybe Leo didn’t hear it with the noise of the whipping.

It was impossible to say whether Leo was wearing the lipstick or not because it was transparent and Leo was 25 feet away and sweating and seen through a mirror. Raphael looked around in panic and then he saw the table. Grabbing it, he smashed the mirror, which shattered into many pieces and without worrying about being cut by the shards, he leaped through the window into the room.

Leo turned and stared at him in shock. “Raph?” he said.

“Jones?” Hamato bellowed in an offended tone.

It would be very bad for Raphael to have seen his boss in such a compromising position, but Raphael didn’t give a shit. He remembered Leo’s pleas for him to change his precinct and saying that Raphael was too good to work for Hamato. Anyway, he couldn’t be a cop anymore and if he didn’t give a damn if he ended up being a mechanic.

Leo’s eyes were shimmering with emotion and he was still quite dazed.

“What are you doing here, Raph?” Leo said. “And why are you breaking furniture? Are you out of your mind?”

Leo seemed normal and not in pain. Did he have to kiss him anyway? How could he convince Leo to do so?

“I love you, Leo,” Raphael said. Leo blinked but didn’t reply. “I want to be with you the way we were before Christmas,” Raphael added, nervously approaching Leo.

Leo stepped backward, “It’s too late, Raph. You know I have someone else.”

Raph knew it was bullshit.

The Commissionaire spoke, “Aren’t you cousins? Jones, untie me and you won’t be disciplined.”

Leo turned his head sharply, an evil gleam in his gorgeous steel eyes, “Shut up, bitch, or I’ll discipline you.”

Raphael was flabbergasted. It was a mystery how Leo had made the powerful and strict Commissioner his bitch in only a few meetings.

“You’re not worthy of such a loyal employee and of his dedication and his big heart,” Leo continued in a threatening tone. “Raphael deserves a raise. Maybe I should let you call your secretary about it.”

Raphael wasn’t listening. His income wasn’t a concern. He did well with what he got, but when Leo
had talked, he’d come close to him and now he saw his glistening lips.

Raphael threw himself at Leo, trying to forcefully kiss him, but Leo struggled furiously.

“Stop it, Raph!” Leo said. “How did you find me by the way?”

“Kiss me, babe. I love you so much,” Raphael begged.

Then seeing the fear in Leo’s eyes, Raphael understood. Leo wouldn’t let himself be kissed! Not knowing that Raphael wore the antidote, the young man didn’t want to poison him.

“Stop it! I told you that I have someone.”

Then, Hamato, who’d been yelling, fell silent and appeared to be choking.

“Fucking let yourself be kissed, Prince or not,” Raphael said. “Otherwise your next kiss will be from the grim reaper.”

Understanding then flashed in the steel eyes and Leo said, “You saw Donnie, didn’t you?”

“Yes. And I’m wearing this fucking girly bubblegum lipstick, so kiss me already, Leo.”

“No,” Leo replied quietly, despite battling a bit to breathe. “I won’t. I’m tired.” Raph suddenly remembers Leo’s past allusion about being tired, this night, in the alley, when he had chosen Raph over Donatello.

Hamato was seized by convulsions and Raphael understood there was nothing he could do with insane stubborn people. Leo could be tired of all his evil and complicated vengeful schemes. At 17-years-old and Raphael was only obsessed with sex, car, and alcohol. This treasure hunt and revenge were burn-out worthy, but there was another way than death.

Leo blinked, choking and Raphael gave him a sucker punch. Leo didn’t even see the blow coming. Then Raphael gave him the sloppiest kiss ever, rubbing his lips against Leo’s and then, thinking about the lipstick still in his coat pocket, he pulled it out, crushed it and rubbed the softened part onto Leo’s lips. Now there was a thick layer of bubblegum lipstick, but he still wanted to get Leo to Don, who was a damn doctor, and who would take care of him in case the antidote hadn’t done its job.

Raph was too nervous to check for the vital signs. His eyes fell on Hamato, who mouthed "help me" and Raph wondered if he should take some of the residues on Leo's lips to save the commissioner, but seeing the man convulse again, he realized that it was too late. Regardless of his crimes, Commissioner Hamato would give the accounts of them where his badge didn’t matter now.

Taking the unconscious student in his arm, he looked around him. There were no shirts or coats and Raphael removed his to cover Leo, because it was freezing outside too much to a bare chest man. He threw Leo over his shoulder and went downstairs.

He hurried to the entrance and saw Donatello arguing.

“It’s about time!” Don shouted, rushing to Leo to check his vital signs. “Why is he unconscious? Why are you bleeding all over?”

Raphael looked down at himself. The mirror shards had pierced him in many places, but they were minor injuries. The guy at the desk seemed to be out of his mind and Raphael remembered there was a corpse and a smashed place upstairs.
“Like I said,“ Raphael explained, “This guy’s a terrorist. We had a fight, I smashed the mirror and broke some cheap furniture. I knocked him down. We’ll take care of him. My boss was there and was looking for this little communist shit, but he had a heart attack and died. You must remove the body. My friend here will pay for the broken shit and the trouble caused,” Raphael concluded, forgetting with all the stress he’d suffered, that it wasn’t the first version he’d given.

Donatello’s eyes went wide and he said, “Smashed mirror and broken furniture? An unconscious Leo? Haven’t you heard about discretion?”

“Hey, Doc,” Raphael snapped. “Have you seen me? I’m not a damn James Bond and you suck at being Q. You gave me nothing but a lipstick and I didn’t have a diamond cutter! What a genius you are! And you know that this asshole’s the most pig-headed bastard ever! I should have whipped all of you!”

Raph was beyond mad. He could now have his break-down and call Leo a jerk, asshole and whatever. The motherfucker was alive now and safe. But before leaving, he noticed some a fancy vodka in a crystal bottle:

“And I take out this for MY trouble. Need a strong drink to forget that shit.” This fucker of Leonardo has shortened his life by 5 years each damn minute since the day they met.

Raphael picked up the unconscious teen in his arms again and carried him to the car far away from inquisitive eyes.

He placed Leo next to Mikey, who began to fuss over him.

“Is he okay, Raph?” Mikey asked. “Why’s he out cold?”

“Shut up” Raphael replied and began looking for headache pills in the Mercedes while untwisted the cap of the vodka bottle. “You two are grounded when we get home!”

Surprisingly, Mikey smiled at that and said, “I don’t care about being grounded if you and Leo are back together. And he won’t care either if he doesn’t have to sleep in the bunk bed anymore.”

Raphael muttered some curses. He still didn’t know what to do with Leo. Yes, he loved him. Yes, he wanted to be with him. But Leo had some shit to explain before he was pardoned from all of the mess and anxieties.

Donnie got back in the car and said crossly, “Hopefully, I have some cash on me. Damn it! You cost me $7 000. We must hurry, because the ambulance is on the way.”

Raphael didn’t bark back something about cash. It didn’t matter to him. Only Leo did. Donnie wasn’t upset at all about cash. He had a fucking pure gold Jaguar in his damn hall. Don was in a bad mood because he must be remembering that he’d given his word to stop chasing Leo. His beloved was alive, but not his.

“If you have the fucking microchip in his watch,” Raphael growled. “You must know where I live. Drive us there and fucking disappear from our lives. Ask one of your cocksucking staff to bring my car.”

“I will,” Donnie said. “But I first need to talk to Leo and I want to be there when he wakes up to check if he’s okay. I’m a doctor and you’re not. You’re just a mindless bulldozer.”

Raphael shrugged. Donatello’s insult wasn’t important, but Leo’s health was.
Back at his apartment, Raphael carefully placed Leo in his bed and left room for Donnie to work.

“Give me some wet towels and icy water,” Don said.

Mikey went to get them, while Raphael stood and watched Donnie.

“Don’t look at me like that,” Donnie said. “I love him and I won’t hurt him.”

“I don’t know,” Raphael said furiously. “You admitted hurting Leo before and the brat said you were into corpses. He’s mute, but he seems to talk the truth when he speaks. And I know for sure that you’re a weirdo, so understand my concern.”

Donnie, outraged, looked up and said heatedly, “I’m not a necrophile like Mikey thinks. I never could explain what happened. I believe he misunderstood what I was doing. He was a child.”

Raphael folded his arms and when Mikey returned with the cold towels, he sent him to “cook something, because he needed to eat to deal with his emotions.”

“Talk, Doc,” Raphael ordered. “Be to the point or I’ll smack you harder than Leo.”

“Such a kind person you are,” Donnie sneered and glared at him. Then he seemed sad and said, “I told you how Leo’s mother, Anastasia, came to New York when she was eighteen to work for my family. She was beautiful, like Leo. I was ten and I stared at her during my piano lessons. I think she found me endearing and I think she was sorry for me, because my mother didn’t care about me, so she gave me more cares and paid me more attention than I was used to. I think she only considered me a child though.”

“News flash: you were,” Raphael snapped.

“I’m not talking about the first months, but when I was about thirteen or fourteen I became very fond of her and I spied on her a little bit.”

“A little bit? Go figure! I bet you stalked her nonstop!”

“Shut-up! I never went to school! My parents didn’t care about me. I had an old teacher at home and my nanny and never see other kids. So, excuse me if I didn’t know how to deal with an older alluring woman!”

Seeing tears in Donnie’s eyes, Raphael fell silent. He was easily able to imagine what kind of kid Donnie had been. Rich and spoiled, but with no love and care, apart from a splendid woman.

“So one day,” Donnie continued. “She celebrated her twenty-first birthday and told me that she had to go to the city to receive papers about her heritage. She took me with her and I saw the four eggs and the letter from Tesla. I knew about the scientist and admired him a lot. That was why I’d asked my parents to choose Anastasia, because she was from his country. I was amazed, because Tesla died poor, but he could have sold them and have become wealthy. Anastasia knew she was from Serbian aristocracy, but illegitimately. She never wanted to discuss that, because the war was there and she didn’t want to go back. She told me about all of this, because I was her confidant, but she didn’t know that she was a Romanov too. Can I smoke?”

Raphael disliked smoking, at least inside his apartment, but he nodded anyway. Donnie was shaking like Leo had done earlier, and he never wanted to see that again. Donatello lit his cigarette with his fancy lighter and took a deep puff. Raphael noticed that it didn’t stink like the usual one and that smelled like dried flowers. It wasn’t a good or a bad smell and was just weird. Raphael pictured dried lavenders or lilacs in a coffin and felt nauseated. Don was creepy.
Don didn’t notice his unease or didn’t care, because he continued, “I took the paper from Tesla and saw that there was an enigma. Anastasia didn’t care, because the eggs were magnificent and shiny things were enough for her, but the enigma bothered me and I told her that I’d find out about the mystery and that she must hide the eggs. It took me three months, but I succeeded. She became obsessed with the idea when I told her and she wanted to be a tsarina. My mother became harder on her with each passing day and she wanted to be free. She didn’t earn much, because she lived and ate at our home, so she couldn’t afford to go to Russia. She loved fancy things and would use the money for designer purses and perfume and her ballet classes. I already had a university degree, but I was still a minor. My father promised to emancipate me at eighteen, so I told Anastasia to wait four years. Meanwhile, I found the egg code, which I hadn’t cracked yet. I told her that when I was of age, she and I’d marry and we’d go to Russia and that my father would give money or I’d earn it myself. I already had a doctorate and I knew that Columbia would eventually hire me as a professor. I was taking distance courses and I had to attend the Uni for real the day after that conversation, despite my young age. She promised that she’d wait and told me that it was a very good plan. Then she kissed me and I don’t know how the plan was discovered, but when I returned from Columbia the following day, Anastasia was gone. My mother had thrown her out, because according to her, Anastasia was a whore. My mother never told me where she was sent. The eggs were also gone. My parents sent me to England and Anastasia was dead the next time I saw her.” Donnie crushed out his cigarette, pain etched on his face and said, “I did everything I could to find her before that, but my mother divorced my father and left for South America. Even being wealthy, I couldn’t find her. When I turned eighteen, I returned to New York, but Anastasia had been gone for four years and could be dead. I remained chaste for her and I was still searching. I studied a lot to keep my mind occupied. I invented a new lie detector in my free time and I studied drugs and poisons too. I wanted to test my machine on one of our staff, but before I could, I was asked to test it on criminals. Then I received a call about a massacre and that the suspect was a young boy. I have a degree in criminology too and I’m so rich, so the NYPD know me well. It was Leo.”

Leo mumbled something and Raphael grabbed his hand. He wanted Leo to be the first person he saw, but he also wanted to know the story. Leo was such a liar, but he suspected that Donnie wasn’t.

“I was shocked when I saw him and asked who he was,” Donnie said. “His eye color was the same as Anastasia’s and the other Romanov’s. He told me his identity with disdain and I asked for his parents’ names and his age. He told me to read his file and I saw his mother’s name. She was the victim. I asked the police to leave me alone with him and asked him questions for over eight hours. He never told the truth. I now know that, because he didn’t trust know or trust me at the time, but my machine failed with him. I was mad and I admit jealous, because his father was another man, so Anastasia had been unfaithful to me. I told Leo to screw himself, but I gave him my business card anyway, because I wanted to know who Anastasia’s killer was. I allowed them to bring Leo to a kind of jailhouse, but before I went, I used my degree to be alone with Anastasia’s corpse to look at her. I undressed her to see if she’d changed. I’d never seen her naked up close.”

Raphael was so disgusted that he had to restrain himself from punching Donnie. The asshole had let Leo, who he knew was innocent, go to a jailhouse, because he was jealous and had then molested a woman’s corpse. He’d always known that Donnie was mentally ill.

“You can judge me. I don’t care,” Donnie said. “She had changed a lot. Her hair was shorter and she had piercings and tattoos. I was fascinated by the changes, but she had been very fond of grunge music when she had arrived here,” Don explained, his eyes misted by tears, still stirred by the souvenir of his dead love.”Then Mikey suddenly appeared. Maybe when he was escaping the cops, because he was sent to the jailhouse too. Anyway, he arrived when I was kissing her goodbye.”

That was it. Raphael was done. “No wonder the kid hates you!” Raphael said irately. "You knew they were innocent and allowed them to be punished and you fucking kissed his mother’s corpse! As
if he wasn’t traumatized enough by the butchery!” Donnie lowered his head in shame but Raphael suddenly remembered something and said, “Who was responsible for the murders?”

“Me,” Leo said, his eyes blazing and full of hate, awake. “There were three people. Yakuza sent by Oroku. My mother tried to blackmail them. She was given to a criminal gang as a prostitute by in the nineties. Don’s mother gave them two of the four eggs, asking the men to make her pay. She’d smashed my mother’s leg, because she didn’t deserve to be a ballerina or even an exotic dancer and said that she deserved to be on all fours. My mother had worked for a long time where we met, but she was reserved for Hamato and Oroku. Hamato was a sergeant like you when I was born. Yes. I was born at a pleasure house. My mother didn’t know which of the two men my father was. Hamato and Oroku were crime partners. Hamato covered up Oroku’s crimes. One day, before my third birthday, a man, who was in love with my mother, ran away with her. That was Mikey’s father. Until he died in the war, I was relatively fine. I told you that and it was true. When he died, my mother didn’t have enough money. She couldn’t work, because of her leg and she didn’t have an American degree. She suffered so much pain and she couldn’t stand for long and she took meds a lot. We were so poor, so my mother wanted her eggs and tried to blackmail Oroku and Hamato saying that one of them was my father. They sent three men one night to silence her for good. The men injected her with a syringe, so people would think she’d died of an overdose. That’s why it’s written heroin addict in her file, but that’s wrong. She only took codeine for her legs and she wasn’t a prostitute either, as I made you believe to touch you, but gave “Russian” massages. Maybe she gave extras, but I don’t think so. She painted Russian dolls with Mikey that she sold on the internet, but they changed everything in her file to discredit her and therefore me and Mikey, her children, too. They even made her an illegal citizen, but that was false. Anyway, two men were on me when the other was killing her. They raped me and locked Mikey in the basement. Then the other also wanted me, but he wanted to be alone when he screwed me. The other two went to get Mikey. They never went upstairs. Mikey did. He knocked the guy on me with his nunchucks. I didn’t want Mikey to bear this alone, so I killed the man and it meant that Mikey wouldn’t be charged at eleven for slicing a man, but like I said, they fabricated the crime scene. Donnie, there’s a sample of Hamato’s blood in my pants pocket. You can analyze it and since Oroku wasn’t my father, I guess he is.”

Leo’s tone was cold and Raphael squeezed his hand. It was more shocking than when Darth Vader had confessed to Luke Skywalker that he was his father. Raphael now understood why Leo hated cops.

“And,” Raphael said. “Bring me some painkillers for my head and maybe some antiseptic for my hands.”

Don muttered but left.

Leo looked at Raphael and said, “Do you want to ask anything, Raph? About my past, I mean. I won’t lie to you. Not anymore. Like I said, I’m tired.”

“No wonder, babe and yes I have many questions, but they can wait until another day. My head’s killing me. I’ll only ask one and then you’re okay for a while.”

“You want to know where the fourth egg is, don’t you? Or do you want to know how I know about them?”

Raphael shook his head and did a few more times when Leo tried to gauge what questions Raphael wanted to ask. Donnie then entered and gave him Advil.

“Do you know why the CIA took my case?” Leo said when the doctor had gone. “Donnie didn’t know, but I worked for them too. They heard about how I made fail the detector. If I eliminated Oroku and Hamato and gave them some files, they were supposed to erase mine and Mikey’s files.
You won’t have any trouble with your work. Mikey was supposed to be mute because if he was traumatized, it would be easier to say he’s innocent and he’s a terrible liar. We’d be caught if he’d opened his mouth. Anyway, you know about Karai being Oroku’s heiress. I wanted to be Oroku’s bodyguard, so I could be close to him, to take a blood sample, find the egg for myself, stole document for the American government, and avenge my mother. Then Karai and I killed them and false documents were created out of gratitude. They stated that she was his heiress and that she’d inherited all of his money and his assets because I didn’t need any of it. Having Oroku had been long. When he saw me, he ran away in Japan. Maybe because he remembered my eyes. The blue hue is peculiar to my family. We’ve waited a lot for his return and Donnie had tried to bring him back, many times before he succeeded. It was the reason I saw him on this day. Not the art kit. But I told him that I was happy with you, and then, you learn about my age and kicked me out...”

“Please shut up, Leo,” Raph muttered, not wanting to bring up these painful memories. "I just want to know one damn thing. Why did you “forget” the antidote lipstick?"

Leo didn’t answer immediately and when he did say, “Were you serious when you said that you wanted me the same way as before?”

“Is that important to you?” Raphael asked softly.

“Yes, Raph. I mean, with you…I thought that Donnie was my Tesla, because he’s a genius too. I’m talking about a guardian angel, who gave me everything he could and asked for nothing in return. But Donnie didn’t love me. He loved my mother, his idea of my mother to be more accurate. That was clear when Karai contacted him to free me. It was only to have a living souvenir and to avenge her. I’m talking about the foreplay. He wanted me to look like her, saying that I must grow my hair and have the same piercings and tattoo, whether I wanted to or not”

"I knew it! This fucker could be loving you only for poesy! I bet you never show it to him. You can have written the same loving word to him than me! It was only a lie, to mix me up more! You tried to picture me as a caveman driven by hormone when he was the big perv, getting off to watch you in garter and black-laces panties!” Raph exclaimed.

"Are you done being jealous?"Leo snapped, irate."For your information, he did enjoy some of my poesies. Donnie had given me some lesson to act as a prince and to improve my knowledge. He liked me as a student, because I’m very devoted to studies, being a fast learner. But, as you had guessed, it wasn’t the first reason for his commitment to me. Neither my fine ass, as you could say. He offered me his help, but he wanted to avenge my mother and didn’t care if I was okay. He kept Mikey in the horrible place to ensure my obedience, but he…I don’t know. I was confused. I was afraid of him at the time and disgusted, but he put some ambitions in my mind that weren’t mine. He wanted to give me what he had wanted to give to my mother. But when he’d met my mother they’d been young too. He didn’t really know her and she knew real love after him. She didn’t care about being a tsarina or a ballerina and just wanted to keep her children safe. She wanted me to have a good life with a real job in a free country and helping abused people. When I met you, I understood that even though Donnie was sweet to me, he didn’t love me and I didn’t love him either. He sensed it and treated me like a real individual than he’d done in months, but, I love you. And I was ready to complete my mission because I didn’t have you and I’d do it for Mikey, but life with just gold doesn’t make people happy. Look at Donnie. He’s a kind man, but the dramatic events made him into a monster. Anyway, I don’t care about any of that and I’d rather be a Jones with you than a cursed Romanov. I want the egg to be given to the MET and to forget about everything. Donatello will move on without me and...”

“Don’t give a damn about the nut case, Leo! Stop talking about him!”
“Are you still jealous?” Leo asked with a mocking smile.

“Yeah,” Raph admitted. It was pointless to deny it.

“So my seventeen-year-old ass doesn’t bother you anymore?”

Raphael flushed. The number was so low, but seeing hope in the blue-steel eyes he said, “It’s true that you’ve learned a lot from the old lady. I mean she died young, but anyway, the one who escaped. All of the ladies in your family had similar names,” Raphael explained as a lame excuse.

“Tatiana,” Leo said with a smile.

“Yes. She was a badass lady, I mean, and you’re exactly like her, so I like to think that you were born more than a century ago, so you’re very old. I mean your soul.”

“Call me by her name and dress me like her, and we’re over,” Leo growled. “I won’t wear feminine underwear ever again.”

Raph flushed, an idea now in his mind, “I won’t. In fact, I kind of hoped you’d wear the white military outfit,” he said, slowly.

Leo flushed too, but he was faster to regain control of his emotion. Seductively, he whispered, “Maybe I will if the make-up sex is incredible.”

It was time and Raphael had decided that with the life Leo had lived, Leo would never think he was immoral for having sex with him and he’d enjoy it to the fullest.

“Oh. It’s going to be incredible, Leo, but after the spanking of your life.”
One week later.

“Where the fuck have you been, Leo?” Raphael demanded.

“Calm down, sexy. It took longer to the Museum than I expected and I took longer with Karai too. I wanted to wish her good luck. She helped me all the way, despite being disgusted with Oroku. We had stolen some very important document for the secret service, and now, as a thank, she also has a clean slate and can find her real father in Japan.”

“It wasn't Oroku?”

“No, dummy. I told you that. They were fake documents and that the criminal gang’s gone, she can live in peace.”

"How are you managed to hide me all of that?” Raphael wondered for the hundredth time.

Leo had this smug smirk that Raph never know if he wants to kiss or hit.

"Many of these documents were in these porn movies that upset you so much, you jealous guy."

“I'm not that jealous,” he replied, offended. "I don’t mind your little kunoichi friend. You know that.”

“Yeah. You talked about Donnie.” Leo said, still with this self-satisfied grin. Damn arrogant little shit.

“You know I hate it when you go to that fucker’s house,” Raph grunted, looking elsewhere, flushed.

Leo kissed him to shush him and when he’d broken the kiss said, “You’re still jealous, Raph, but you know I won’t lie to you ever again.”

“Yeah. I know. It was only to find out the blood test results and you were gone all day, leaving me alone with knucklehead and dinner to cook. I didn’t argue because you told him that was the last time…”

“I didn’t think the kitchen missed me and you must stop being so jealous about Donnie because I will continue seeing him.”

Raphael’s face darkened in anger and said irately, “Over my dead body! You won’t fool around with him anymore and you won’t dare because we’re over if you do…”

Leo smiled and said, “Shut up and listen. Hamato wasn’t my father.”

Raphael was relieved at the statement. Parricide made him uncomfortable, even if the so-called father had deserved it.
“Oh. So you’ll never know. Too bad.”

Leo’s smile grew bigger and he said, “I do know. My mother wasn’t kicked out because she kissed Donnie. It was probably a chaste kiss and Donnie overreacted. She was fired and given to a criminal gang, because she was Donatello Senior’s mistress, forced or not. He’s my father!”

“What the fuck? You slept with your own brother! I’ve never heard such sick shit before!” Raphael screamed in revulsion.

“Well, Donnie’s very wary of your opinion and he won’t touch me with a barge pole again. I mean sexually. For the rest, he’s still my brother, like Mikey is. Talking about brothers, yours is coming over for dinner, right?”

Still shocked, Raphael said, “Yeah, they will all come over, Casey, April and my mother. I’m a shitty liar, but when I told Casey that I loved you and that his refusal made me upset, he yielded. Anyway, now, with his promotion, he is too busy to care about his bro love’s life and this is kind of true. What do you have in this bag and why are you grinning as a fool?”

“They come over in more than one hour, right?”

“Yeah,” Raph replied with caution.

“ I bring back from Donnie’s place my Tsar Uniform…”

Fin

Chapter End Notes

I suck at happy ending story, but I wanted to be kind, to my beta Kerry-Anne, who corrected all my English in this so long story. Thanks to all of you to have read it.

I blame this song for this weird story:

In the morning/Jaded :https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WSORqfKKUBw
Chapter Summary

New Art and other updates.

People asked me the portrait of Mikey, and other pictures as well.
Pjoart made the picture of Mikey, as header chapter 10. Go see it, it's gorgeous!
And I updateD a lot all of this story in the last month :)

Other pictures to come
There was something wrong with Leo, Raph decided, and it was scaring the shit out of him.

It hadn’t been five weeks straight that his lover had been acting oddly. With Leo’s history, Raph’s worries were legit and with all the arguments they got into lately, it was even more concerning.

They’d been together for a year now and most of the year had been pure bliss and incredible sex.

The worst part had been settling things between his lover and Casey. His brother was still not very fond of Leo, and Raph couldn’t blame him. Leo was, after all, an ex sex-worker, much younger than Raph, and also an assassin who had lied to Raph big time. Moreover, Leo had a little brother with certified psychosis. Mikey could be normal and Leo was only a university student now, but Casey was still suspicious; he tried to stay polite though and that was the most Raph could ask of his eldest brother.

In fact, if you asked Raph, Leo’s eldest brother was more of a pain in the ass.

Even if he knew it was irrational, he couldn’t help but be jealous of Donnie. Each time Leo went to see his half-brother, Raph was on pins and needles. Each time Leo was coming back with a new gift and it pissed Raphael off.

When Donnie had learned that Leo, the guy he had been obsessed with for so long, was his brother, he had been shocked, but after that, in fairness, he had wanted to give Leo a part of his money, their father’s legacy. Raph, however, had fiercely refused, arguing he could support Leo just fine on his own and Leo didn’t want money from people who had treated his mother so badly.

Leo had made no fuss about Raph’s refusal, but Donnie had then offered to buy them a house on the Upper East side, more fitting with Leo’s and Mikey’s origins. Raph had opposed that too. He wouldn’t move his ass into a place paid for by Donnie, like he was a gigolo.

Donnie had offered again to pay Leo’s part of the rent, his school fees, and give him an annuity. ‘Just some pocket money to avoid Leo having to work, then he could focus on his studies,’ he had said. The so-called ‘money pocket’ was more than Raph’s income and he had refused, insisting they would be fine on their own.

But Leo had objected then, saying Raph’s refusal was crazy talk, lead by pointless pride. Raph couldn’t pay for his studies and Mikey’s. Indeed, Leo’s little brother had asked to go to a special art school in Italy. Even if Mikey living alone in Europe was worrying Leo, he refused to be a barrier to his ambition. Leo didn’t see any harm in making Donnie pay for Mikey’s education ‘as compensation for his years of trauma’. And he had insisted Raph accept Don paying for his University as well, arguing that Raph couldn’t afford to pay Columbia’s fees as well as the rent, the bills, and the groceries.

Raph had borne it because it was indeed true. He couldn’t pay and he didn’t want Leo to take a loan either, at his young age.

Once this had all been settled, life has been good, until Mikey left around the end of August.

Mikey, being the one with the most free time and having the skill, had been the one doing the cooking and even making up Raph’s and Leo’s lunch boxes.
Each evening, Raph would come home to an appetizing dinner on the table and a loving boyfriend, and he couldn’t have been happier. He had even gained some weight with Mikey’s cooking, and Leo loved to tease him about how much more he had of Raph to love every day.

But when Mikey had left, it had been a huge shock to the system.

He had learned very quickly that while Leo could learn a language in three months, he had not, in almost eighteen years, learned how to read a recipe. His three first attempts, Raph had enough love in his heart to taste the goo on his plate. But after almost ending up at the hospital for a stomach ache, after Leo’s meatloaf, he had had to face the facts.

Leo couldn’t even do a mere sandwich to save his life.

After the meatloaf incident, Raph had started doing the dinner. He was not as good as Mikey, but he could cook some pasta without poisoning them. But, like fate was against them, Raph was doing overtime more often than he wished, but he needed the damn money. Almost every weekday he was returning home too late, too hungry and too tired to even boil water.

Delivery had been made for this kind of inability, but it was more expensive, Raph noted. When Mikey was not there he should have been spending less money on the groceries, with there now only being the two of them. But it was the other way around. Each week the food was costing around $80 more than when Mikey was there. That was more than $300 monthly, and Raph watched his bank account melt with worry.

Of course, if Leo could work part-time somewhere, this $300 would be covered but Raph refused to ask that of his boyfriend. Leo had to study hard and it would look like Donnie had been right, that Raph was inadequate for Leo, unable to support him. And so he accepted more overtime.

The fact he knew about his lover having blue blood was making the situation worse tenfold. Even if Leo wasn’t complaining, Raph couldn’t help but think his lover could live in a dreamy palace, in Russia, with servants and people worshipping him, like in the Frozen Disney movie. Leo could mock him and say Raph watched too many movies and it affected his judgment, but Raph knew it. Leo could have a better life if it wasn’t for him. He had been the one refusing Donnie generosity because he was stupidly jealous.

Leo could claim he wouldn’t touch Donnie with a barge pole because of incest, but Raph had been reading about royalty on his lunch break, when Leo wasn’t there to make fun of him.

He knew nothing about history, even less about European history, and he wanted to know more about Leo’s dynasty. Raph had indeed learned a lot of things. Like the fact crowned people seemed very comfortable with fucking their cousins, and that even Pharaohs had taken their sisters for a wife.

Okay, Leo wasn’t Egyptian and Leo could argue it was Raphael making up scenarios, but Donnie was only his half-brother and they hadn’t been raised together. And Don had been too madly in love with Leo to forget him so easily.

But even with Donnie’s shadow and Leo lack of culinary skills, they had managed to be happy.

Until their fucking first anniversary.

Raph had never been good with dates and such things. He might love Leo with all his heart and remember it was at the beginning of November, but at the time he had not believed it would be a date to remember. And the fact was that at the moment, Raph had much more urgent worries than their anniversary.
But not until his last breath, would he remember it was the fucking November 3rd.

It was a Friday and all day, he had been stressed. He had to change his tires, since his were scrap and the winter was coming. The last power bill had been higher than usual since the Fall had been colder than the year before. So his account was now empty until the next Thursday.

How the fuck they would eat was the question that had been tormenting him for days, keeping him awake at night, while Leo was sleeping, blissfully unaware of their money trouble.

All week they had eaten delivery food, except for breakfast, but now the fridge was empty.

That morning Leo had asked for money to buy cereal, yogurt, and fresh fruit and Raph had proposed buying some already prepared meal. Leo wasn’t picky but ate mostly healthy food and everything, which wasn’t junk, was expensive as fuck in the police officer’s opinion. Raph had given him his last $120, asking him to only buy what was on discount, but he wasn’t sure how much he could trust Leo doing errands.

In a year, he had never asked Leo to do it because it was obvious that Leo had not been built to walk with a grocery card and a bunch of discount coupons in the hand.

He wondered if he could borrow some cash from Casey.

Since the death of commissioner Hamato, Casey had got a promotion and a raise, but Raphael was reluctant to ask such a thing of his eldest brother when he was already not Leo’s number one fan. Casey would bitch about how Leo was eating into Raph’s income, even if it wasn’t exactly true. But he preferred bear Casey’s bitching than admit it to Leo, or have his boyfriend ask Donnie for money.

Just imagining Donnie’s smug smirk, meaning ‘I told you he couldn’t support you like I could’, was dangerously raising Raph’s blood pressure. The idea of feeding Leo on box mac and cheese and canned beans, when he was born to eat caviar on crystal plates, was filling him with shame.

When he had come home, sick with anxiety, even more from knowing he had to hide it, so not to attract questions, a stunning show was waiting for him.

The lights had been turned off, and only candles were lit and some incense was burning somewhere he could tell from the aroma, giving at the apartment an unusual ceremonial atmosphere.

Lying on the kitchen table, like an offer for Divinities, Leo was there, wearing an opened blue silk kimono, unveiling his flawless body. His skin seemed to have been covered with some golden powder because he was glistening. His face had been painted with white makeup and his lips were red as a geisha’s and even his nails were done and painted in the same garnet color as his lips. To make the illusion better, the student had pinned a jade butterfly accessory in his raven hair.

Since Mikey had left, Leo was letting his hair grow again. Raph had noticed it but hadn’t commented on it, even if he preferred Leo with short hair. It was Leo’s business and his body and he was gorgeous either way, but the longer hair reminded Raph of Leo’s stripper past.

Raph’s eyes had landed lower and his throat had grown dry with desire at the sight of the very apparent butt plug, with a fake jewel at the end, between Leo’s spread legs. Leo was a rich feast like Emperor in their forbidden palaces could have. It made him clash with Raph’s shabby kitchen even more.

“It’s about time you arrived! I was about to fall asleep! There’re limits to overtime!” Leo complained.

It was then that he noticed the sushi, settled as an arrow on Leo’s belly, as though he was a living
plate. A wine bottle was waiting in an ice bucket near Leo’s head. It was the sexiest thing Raph had never seen. Leo had always been a creative sex partner and Raph knew himself lucky. Any gay man would have been crazy with lust to see their lover offered and pampered that way, but Raph didn’t react as he usually did.

His mind counted the sushi and he guessed it must have cost around $40 and the wine must have cost maybe $25. He wondered where Leo had got the kimono, the hairpin, and the golden powder. And what about all these candles? Had he bought them when they were so short on the money? And this prick dared blame him for doing too much overtime when Raph was exhausting himself to take care of his selfish ass?

All his worry and stress, which had been eating him all day, bubbled out in an ugly way.

“Are you fucking kidding me?” he roared. “Did you really waste the money I gave you on sushi, wine and dress up? And who the fuck helped you to set up this?” he asked in blind fury. Leo could not have prepared himself alone. Someone had to have helped him and so, had seen Leo in this intimate posture. Miserly greed and jealousy were tearing his soul apart, neither sin winning over the other.

Leo’s shocked painted face brought Raph back in reality and he had tried to calm down. Leo wasn’t aware of their cash problems and the guy had been spoiled, living like a pasha in a penthouse with a pure gold leopard. Of course, Leo didn’t know how doing something as simple as doing the groceries. The guy was a walking Google Translate, a gifted student and an elite swordsman, but he had no idea about what was a fair price for a bag of potatoes.

He tried to start apologizing, but Leo didn’t leave him the time to do so.

“Do you know what day it is?” he snapped, his eyes flashing with anger.

The sharp question told Raph all he needed to know. He had seen enough romantic comedies to guess it was a fucking anniversary, probably of their first encounter. Now, he must look like a jerk and be in deep shit for yelling at his lover, who had remembered the date and prepared a surprise when he, Raph, had not only forgotten but had too empty a wallet to give Leo something.

Shame and disappointment made him angrier.

“Whatever! You’re not a chick to make a fuss over foolish things like anniversaries or Valentine’s! If you want to fucking please me better, learn how to spread peanut butter on damn toast so that I don’t have to pay for delivery every fucking day, instead of your legs!”

Leo looked at him with wide eyes, his stupor and white face making him look like a mask. Then, with a quiver, the student turned away, getting down from the table while closing his kimono.

Raph knew he had greatly hurt his boyfriend and tried to explain himself.

“Babe, it’s not only you. But you know I had to buy new tires for my car because we are supposed to go to Massachusetts for Christmas. I can’t risk our lives with bad tires. Then the damn power bill is huge. You call Mikey twice a week and talk for like twenty minutes each time. You sent him a birthday gift last month and shipping was expensive as fuck,” he reminded. “I’m not blaming you, Mikey is your little bro and you’re worried. But I am too because all the delivery food costs a lot. We spend more on food than when Mikey was there!” he exclaimed. “I have to do overtime to pay our bills, and me doing overtime prevents me from doing the dinner. The money I gave you this morning was all I had left until next week. But you had spent it on one meal when we won’t eat for a damn week!” he yelled when he saw Leo splashing his face with the tap water to remove his makeup,
without looking like he cared.

Again stress and shame made him lose his nerve. Admitting to his lover that he had no money, after having refused Donnie’s, was the deepest he could fall into misery.

Leo wiped his face with a hand towel and removed his hairpin without a word. He smoothed his black hair like Raph had not spat his worried soul at him. When he was done, he looked at Raphael with cold eyes. His face was still pale, enhanced by the lipstick that remained, that Leo hadn’t been able to totally erase.

“This is the first time you’ve told me about this, but if it worries you that much, I didn’t use your money to buy the sushi, nor the wine, or any of my dress-up. I used your money to buy what I told you I would,” he said, disdainfully accentuating the ‘your money’. “I bought five bananas, four apples, two mangos, cut honeydew melon, two cucumbers, a head of broccoli, orange juice, a loaf of bread, strawberry jam, eight raspberry yogurts, milk, an apple pie, vanilla ice cream, pesto, pasta, frozen sweet potato fries, a pack of sausages, a frozen lasagna and two steaks. Oh! And your favorite cookies,” he had enumerated. “I think also you have around ten dollars left in change.” And Leo had pointed the folded banknote on the counter with a few quarters with the demeanor of a Marie Antoinette telling to people to eat cake.

It was hard to tell which feeling had been the stronger in Raph. Relief to know that at least, there was something to eat for the next days. Or the shame to look so cheap, when he would give his damn kidney to Leo if his lover needed it. But all of this was crushed by a feeling Raph could never get rid of, no matter how hard he tried.

Suspicion.

It was a feeling every man who loved a former sex worker must know and Raph felt like the ‘Tango of Roxanne’ from the Moulin Rouge movie was playing in the background. Jealousy overwhelmed him and he had grabbed the delicate silk of the kimono.

“How the fuck did you pay for it then? And who the fuck helped you? Don’t tell me! I know! This is your sick, crazy, so-called brother! He gave you money in exchange for seeing you like this, since cross-dressing is his kink! He jerked off on it while you were sliding that thing in your ass, huh?” Raph was now shaking him and Leo gave him a hard shove after breaking his hold in a sharp move. “Are you done playing the whore with him? He is your fucking bro!” he had shouted, losing it.

“Fuck you,” Leo had replied lowly. “Donnie has nothing to do with it but you’re sicker than you claim him to be, if you believe my brother jerked off on me, knowing who I am and that I did it to extract money from him.”

Anger was pouring from Leo in icy waves, but Raphael refused to yield and be impressed by his boyfriend. Leo often had the upper hand when he played the outraged princess, but Raph would not let himself be distracted from the point.

“If it’s not me, nor him, then who?! Don’t lie to me, Leo! If you do, soon or later I will know it and you’ll regret the day we met!”

“Maybe I’m already starting to regret it!” Leo dropped, walking toward the bedroom and putting some cotton sports pants. “But if you want to know, I found a job I can do between classes as an art model, for the Visual Art department. I’m paid $120 a week. My dress-up, makeup, and the candles had been borrowed from there. I paid for the sushi, the wine and the jewel butt plug with my own money,” Leo had declared proudly.
Raph’s first reaction had been to apologize, but then, possessivity nagged him again.

“Are you fucking naked for this modeling?”

“It depends.” Leo had shrugged and Raph made a big mistake.

Still stressed out by recent events and the fact that Leo didn’t seem overly concerned by their situation, when Raph was unable to sleep at night, he slapped his lover.

“The fuck? You’re showing off your naked ass again? Do you have any idea how ashamed Tatiana and all your ancestors would be of you? You’re a Romanov for fuck’s sake.”

“Oh, you remember their name when it comforts your petty jealousy, and ask me to act a certain way to honor them, but you didn’t want their money,” Leo retorted.

“It wasn’t theirs, it was Donnie’s!” he countered even if it wasn’t what he had wanted to reply. He only wanted to cuddle his lover and explain to him that they only needed to be more careful in the future, and Leo didn’t have to undress. But it was all going downhill.

“I can’t do modeling at University because I’m a Romanov, but you want me to be your cook slave now that Mikey is gone?”

The argument had escalated from there, until Raph had left. He had invited Casey to drink, using the change left to buy himself two cheap beers and Casey had bought him two others. When he had been drunk enough, he had managed to get the courage to ask him for $60 to complete the groceries.

When he got home, Leo was sleeping, or faking it, in Mikey’s bedroom.

Raph had been overwhelmed by regrets. Leo had only meant to celebrate their anniversary. Usually, a couple went to a restaurant for an occasion like this and it would have been even more expensive than what Leo had planned and less sexy. But it was too late.

Of course, he apologized for the slap and the harsh words the next morning, but Leo brushed it aside like it wasn’t important.

From then, Leo had not been the same and even if Leo had joined him in his bed, he never again sat at the table at the same moment as Raph.

He ate a yogurt standing near the sink in the morning and had an already prepared salad, that Raph didn’t remember buying, at lunch on the weekends. Obviously, the proud asshole was only eating what he had bought with his own money. At dinner, Leo never ate, arguing that he had already eaten at school.

Raphael was worried Leo was starving himself to cost him less and had the impression his lover had lost some weight. Leo was stubborn and this Gandhi act out of pride was pissing Raph off as much as it was worrying him sick. But sometimes, and he didn’t know why, he preferred being called to the scene of a mass shooting than confront Leo directly.

Leo had excused himself on remembrance day the week after, instead of accompanying Raph to see his family. Even if it broke his heart that their relationship was so at odds, it was better he didn’t come, so Raph wouldn’t get questions from his over imaginative mother.

They were falling apart and Raph had hoped to fix the issue with Leo’s birthday. Leo would turn 18 years old and that was a very good news. Even if it was legal for him to be with Leo, Raph could
only be glad that his lover would turn one year older to feel less like a pedophile.

He had got some tickets to go to a stand-up comedy show, hoping humor would do them some good, but then Leo had returned from school with...THIS. Donnie’s gift for Leo’s eighteenth birthday. A damn dark-blue, brand new fucking Audi A8L. How the fuck could Raph compete with a $100,000 gift?

“Why the fuck did that screwball buy you a damn car? You’re only five minutes from the subway to University, and I have mine if we go out of the city!”

“Donnie is worried about me on the subway. He said that the trains are full of germs and are a health hazard, and that someone could grab my ass.” Leo shrugged. “Whatever, sell yours and use mine!”

Raph was sure as fuck not sitting his ass in a car Donnie chose and paid for.

He had been the one sleeping in Mikey’s bedroom that night and the gap between them had grown wider.

Raph had done less overtime in order to be home more and have more time to bond with his lover, but the fact was that, most of the time, Leo was getting back later than he was, from University. Leo last classes ended at 6:00 and some days, earlier, and yet, Leo wasn’t home until 8:00.

He hadn’t dared asked why, not wanting to bring up the naked modeling issues again, but the fact was that Leo was at home less and less. Was Leo really modeling to get his money? Leo was a lying son of a bitch. He could be returning to pole dancing or doing a client.

Raph’s mind was playing images of Leo sucking off an old law teacher in their office. No wonder he got a top grade after that. Trusting Leo was hard as hell but he knew that if he voiced his doubts and was wrong, he would never hear the end of it. But another point was bugging him pretty hard.

Raph wasn’t getting any sex, not even a kiss since the Geisha night. It was very concerning when Leo was the most sensual creature Raph knew. Being chaste wasn’t Leo. Raph felt like he was his substitute brother instead of his boyfriend. It was insane and how Leo could seem unbothered by it was odd.

November had ended and Raph had decided he would start the incoming month in a good way. He missed his lover and maybe Leo was waiting for Raph to make the first step. Raphael was the adult of them both and had to prove it.

It was a Saturday and so Leo was still sleeping at his side. Raph summoned his courage and took his lover in his arms. Leo stiffened but didn’t make a fuss until Raph tried to kiss him while grabbing his ass.

Leo had jumped out of the bed, so suddenly Raph didn’t have the time to prevent him.

“Don’t touch me! I’m not ready!” he shouted.

Raphael, shocked, had seen fear in the blue chips of his boyfriend’s eyes. Raphael knew better than force Leo. The last man who had done that had been sliced with a katana. And anyway, he loved Leo too much to do something so against his will. Maybe his slap had brought back some memory for Leo, of when he had been raped next to his mother’s corpse. Leo must have been really traumatized to bear chastity at this point and for so long.

But the rejection had hurt him deeply.
Last time he had been turned down like this and left without sex was by Lisa. He had lost Lisa’s love because she thought he was a skinflint and maybe he would lose Leo’s for the exact same reason. But the idea of Leo dumping him and loving another man was too even painful to even imagine. It couldn’t be.

And now Christmas was around the corner and Raph had no idea about how to fix things between him and Leo. Knowing very well he was lacking the cleverness his lover had and that he only had the imagination to make-up a catastrophe-scenario, he decided to call his only ally, Leo’s little brother and Raph’s pupil, Mikey.

On his lunch break, he called the teen and flooded him with his insecurities.

“You know I love your brother to death, Mikey. But he is a stubborn son of a bitch, no offense to your mom! The asshole would starve himself to death to shame me and deny me sex out of spite because I turned him down one fucking time!” he shouted down the phone like Mikey couldn’t hear him from Toscana. “With your bro, it’s his way or the highway! I hate that! I fucking hate him too! He drives me crazy as hell! You must help me to make him forgive me for what I said and that I slapped him. I shouldn’t have done that but I was jealous and mad he was showing his ass again for money. I love him so damn much.”

Mikey sighed

“I told you I didn’t want to know about your sex life with Leo! He is my damn brother, it’s gross!,” he explained and Raph had hit his forehead. It was indeed true that he wouldn’t want to know about Casey’s sex life.

“I wish his other bro thought like you do,” Raph snapped. “I’m sure that nutcase just wants to pin Leo to his bed sheets again! You know how crazy that man is. Incest won’t stop him. Pedophilia and necrophilia didn’t!”

Mikey sighed again and Raph regretted bringing back these painful memories.

“Please, you’re the crazy one being still jealous of him! He has nothing to do with yours and Leo’s fight. I think you should start by trusting him. Then I think you should surprise him in a totally not-Raph way,” Mikey continued. “I not telling you to cross-dress because bulky as you are, it would be weird, but I think Leo loves to cosplay. Besides, when you met him you wear wearing a disguise, right? This is a meaningful element for both of you. You could maybe surprise him with something kinky like that for Christmas.”

“Mikey, I won’t fucking dress-up as Santa Claus!” Raph stated firmly. “I prefer being blue-balled than dressing-up with a white beard.”

“Enjoy the palm of your hand then! If you have too much pride to please my bro, I don’t know what I can tell you more than that!”

After hanging up, Raph told himself Mikey’s idea wasn’t that bad. Without choosing Santa as a costume, he could choose from many other things, he told himself, thinking of red and furs.

Then it had struck him. Cossack. It was more a male outfit, much more fitting for his muscular body. Then, he had an idea of a dinner, maybe Russian themed. He could make it to honor Leo’s root. He could even try to write something in this language to impress Leo.

But all of this would cost money, on top of the real, nice present he had to get for his boyfriend. It was already December 10th. Asking Casey for money again was impossible. Selling his car would
maybe give him $1500, but his pride forbade him from using Donnie’s gift.

He needed to get a loan. His happiness with Leo was at stake and nothing mattered more to Raph. He called his bank and took an appointment for the next afternoon, at 1:30 pm.

To go to the appointment, Raph asked to finish at noon. All morning he had only thought about how much he wanted to borrow and for what exactly. He knew very well he couldn’t tell the guy at the bank he wanted money to buy a costume for a kinky night with his lover and to buy him a nice present. Anyway, what he could buy that was hotter than a fucking Audi?

Leo had never been very talkative about himself and Raph felt awful that he had no idea what to give him. The only thing Leo was missing was probably his little bro, but Mikey wouldn’t be home before July.

But… maybe they could go to Florence instead of Massachusetts? They never got to go on any trip, because last year Raph had broken-up with Leo before the vacation in Florida. Leo had not seen Mikey for already almost four months and would be very happy. Leo spoke Italian, the weather was warmer than New York and also, the food was great. Leo would eat there and gain some weight. He had no idea of what it would cost if they stayed there ten days. Probably at least $5000, but it would be great. It was something Leo could be only happy with it!

To be sure to not have to restrain himself too much, Raph asked for a loan of $8500. The bank had asked him for a 48-hour delay before giving him an answer and Raph had left with his head full of dreams.

Leo in Italy would probably let himself go and be his normal lustful self. Keeping this a surprise until Christmas would be hard.

The urge to see his lover and kiss him was great, and Raph remembered that on Tuesdays, Leo last classes ended at 2:30. Maybe Raph could fetch him and they could just get a coffee and eat a donut somewhere, and actually talk. Maybe being out of the place where they had fought so badly would do them some good.

He sent a quick text to Leo and parked his car in front of his school building, waiting for the reply from his boyfriend. It was starting to snow harder and it was cold outside, and Leo would probably be happy to come home with him, Donnie’s car being at the garage to get winter tires and a remote starter.

‘I’m sorry, I’m not ready to go home now. I have my pro-bono to do. I will be there around 7:00 pm.’

Raph bit his lip in annoyance. 7:00 pm was after dinner and Leo would so starve himself again. And what in fact did pro-bono mean? Usually, when Leo wanted to confuse him he used some fancy word, too complicated for Raphael’s simple mind. It was one of the bastard’s favorite tricks.

Raph was done texting and yielding. He had been patient. Yes, he had been mean to Leo and had slapped him, but that was like five weeks ago and Leo was still sulking! His heart and balls had been aching since then, and now it was time to put an end to Leo’s drama act.

He called him.

“The fuck you mean? Where the fuck are you all the time? With who the fuck are you eating with all the time? I want a damn report of what you do with damn well who and where!” Raph yelled, without any greeting when Leo picked up the phone. He was very aware to curse a little more too, a
habit which displeased Leo, but he was too done to care.

“Calm down! I told you I was busy with school! I’m studying law, not flipping burgers!” Leo snapped. “I don’t remember our passage to Vegas, for you to be asking me for a report of what I do! I will be home when I’m home and that’s it!”

Leo hung up and, angry, Raph hit his steering wheel twice. But before hitting it a third time, he reflected on Leo’s words. Leo had spoken about Vegas, nagging Raph that they were not married and therefore Raph had no right demanding a report, but maybe it was what Leo wanted? Maybe Leo wanted to get married? Last year, Leo had asked him but that had only been a part of his scheme, but maybe now Leo wanted a ring for good.

His heart was pounding, imagining a honeymoon in Toscana. Leo was now 18 years old and so they could get married. A part of his mind was yelling that it was crazy talk. How he could marry Leo, a man that his own brother disapproved of so much? His very Catholic mother might like Leo, but it wouldn’t mean she would agree with her son marrying another man.

But Mikey had told him to do something the usual Raph wouldn’t do. Going in Florence and proposing to Leo in front of a Renaissance church was very appealing to Raph’s soft side.

He was thinking of the kind of ring he could get, shopping online, when instinct made him look up.

Leo was walking on the sidewalk next to a gorgeous blonde girl. Out of habit, he analyzed the scene. Leo had no bag and no book, neither did the blondie and so, they were unlikely to study whatever. Anyway, who he was kidding? No guy would study with such a hottie with him. He wanted to hope anyway and, feeling more dread filling him, Raph started his car and began to tail them.

Leo couldn’t be with a girl. That couldn’t be. Leo was gay and had him, Raphael as a gay lover. But another voice was snarling in his head about how Leo had more hetero movies than gay ones and how he had insisted many times to top, until he decided it was asking too much of Raph.

He didn’t have to wait long before seeing them entering a hotel.

Raph waited in front of the hotel for thirty minutes, his mind and heart racing, cursing Leo in his head and begging Jesus that the motherfucker would get out of there soon, alone and with a fucking good explanation.

But after this half an hour, Raph was aware of how hard his nails were digging into the flesh of his palm and how staying there was doing him more harm than good.

He left, regretting his idea to fetch Leo so much. Wiping his tears and trying to stay in lane while driving, Raph wished to still be blissfully unaware. Because now he knew why Leo, the lying snake, was able to stay chaste. The fucker was cheating on him.
When Leo returned, Raph was sitting at the kitchen table, absolutely drunk, forehead in hand.

“Raph?” Leo asked with concern.

Raphael being drunk alone on a weekday, at 8:00 pm, was odd. The sergeant wasn’t the kind of person to indulge in alcohol like that. Not since Leo had known him, at least.

“What are you doing? Are you alright? Did something happen with your family?”

Raph snorted with derision. How dare the fucker fake being concerned for him? He stretched out his hand, intending to take a last gulp of his beer but Leo walked the distance between them and grabbed Raph’s hand, to prevent him from drinking. Raph snatched his hand out of Leo’s.

“Don’t fucking touch me, you asshole!” he yelled. He didn’t want to be touched by the hand that could still reek of the girl’s fluids.

Just thinking about Leo cheating was giving him the urge to flip the table, punch Leo, and jump from the window. He had never felt such pain in his chest but of course, Leo would not stay quiet after being yelled at.

“Are you mad at me because I refused to come back with you? I told you I was busy with a school project!” the student protested.

There. Leo just did it. Raph had passed the critical point, hearing this bullshit.

With a harsh move, he stood up and slapped Leo across the face twice.

“You’re nothing but a little bitch, you fucking liar!” Raph roared.

When his hand dropped after the second slap, panic took Raph for one moment, seeing the red-marked face of Leo, pale and eye-wide. He had once again struck Leo but then, his anger and heartache took over. Leo deserved much more for cheating on him.

Leo touched his lips, apparently not believing he got slapped and he flinched. Raph had burst his lip and the policeman felt his heart sink in realization. He had crossed a line. Leo and he were over. The student wasn’t the kind of man to accept being called a bitch and being slapped. He almost regretted not faking being unaware and just bearing being a cuckold. He was enough of a fool to prefer keeping Leo, even if he was cheated on. But now it was too late.

“What the fuck is your problem?” Leo growled, giving his boyfriend a hard shove.

Raph was blinded by rage again. How dare Leo fight back and keep his chin high when he should be ashamed of himself? Leo needed a lesson. Raphael had been too docile and patient with this blue-blooded son of a bitch.

“You’re my problem, you motherfucker!”

Before Raph could help himself, he threw himself at Leo, knocking him back over the table to kiss him forcefully. He loved this damn bastard so much. He couldn’t’ let him go.
“You keep jiggling your ass at me, refusing to give me any when it's free to anybody else! I’m sick of it. I’m taking back what is mine!”

He pulled hard on Leo’s coat and lifted Leo’s black t-shirt, to stroke his pecs, rolling his finger around his right nipple to make it harden, but much more roughly than usual.

“Don’t play hard to get, you’re fooling nobody!” he snapped when Leo struggled to free himself.

Leo’s skin was so soft and he had missed it so deeply, stroking the satin over the hard muscle given by hours of working out. But then, on the pale skin, he noticed an ugly burn scar. Leo hadn’t had it the last time he saw his lover bare-chested.

Awful scenarios came to his mind. The mad doc was running reunion like in the ‘Eyes wide shut’ movie, with rich and masked twisted people, who took pleasure in wicked ways, like inflicting pain. The student was doing it for money, accepting being burned with hot wax to pay for the groceries. Raph would not let anybody hurt his boyfriend.

“Babe? The fuck happened to you?” he exclaimed, all lust and anger fading. He would beat the shit out of the one who had dared to harm his lover. “Who did this to you?” he asked, fussing, trying to carefully touch the scar

“Don’t touch me!”

It was then that Leo kicked him, hard. The student covered himself, looking like a wild, frightened animal and Raph realized what he had done. Seeing his lover so scared of him made him forget about the blond girl.

“I can’t live like this anymore,” Leo decided, in a defensive position, like Raph was about to attack him or something.

Raph’s heart broke even more. That was it. Leo and he were over and he had been the one to wreck their relationship. If he had just banged Leo on the table, instead of being pissed over some sushi and a bottle of wine, a few weeks ago, they would be still happily together. Because before this day, they were fucking fine! But for less than 100 bucks, because he was such a miserly greedy ass, he had lost the love of his life. Raph felt like the ceiling had just dropped on his head.

"I’m gonna live at Donnie’s place for a while,” Leo continued, walking to the door.

The stab he felt at the despised name was enough to kick Raph out of his self-pity party and his drunken state. Leo was about to leave for good. If Donnie could haveLeo sleeping at his place once, the black-haired law student would never come back. The genius fucker would make sure of it.

“No! We will work through this! I won’t lose you over some sushi!” Raph shouted, his voice strained with feeling. And he reached out, grasping Leo’s bicep to prevent him from leaving.

Leo snapped his head back toward him and snatched his arm away.

“Do you really think this old sushi story is the issue?” he asked with bewilderment and anger on his face.

“Yeah!” Raph replied with passion. “We were fine before that day, when I was a jerk with you! I told you I was sorry! I was stressed by money trouble for a while and being unable to take good care of you! I know it’s not an excuse for slapping you and yelling at you, and I regret it very much. Please forgive me.”
Leo looked at his explanation with such an expression of disgust that Raph shut up. Leo seemed beyond forgiveness and he felt a cold pit in his stomach. He knew his lover. Leo was stubborn as fuck and if he had decided to leave and stay at Donnie’s, Raph could do nothing about it now. Not until Leo calm down and figured some things out for himself.

“This has nothing to do with the fact you slapped or yelled at me a month ago! We need some time apart,” Leo retorted. “Well, I know I need a break,” he muttered, running a hand over his face. “Donnie is my brother and will not mind me staying there for a week or two. And don’t start a jealousy tantrum,” he warned, his hand typing on his cell phone already. “I’m not in the mood.”

Raph was beyond jealousy. He had seen Leo entering a hotel with a girl a few hours ago but didn’t care about it anymore. He was ready to forgive this misstep if Leo agreed to stay with him and not go to his so-called brother’s place. How he was pathetic like that now, he didn’t know.

“Please, babe, don’t do that. Just sit down and we’ll talk,” Raph kept insisting, but with a soft voice.

“There nothing to talk about,” Leo hissed. “I need a damn break from you. If you can’t keep your hands to yourself, I need to leave even more.”

Raph didn’t get a thing. How it had all gone downhill to this point, he didn’t know. But Leo’s answer hurt him even deeper. Leo was unhappy with him and obviously done, to be asking for a break.

“But you liked sex with me! Is it because I don’t bottom as much as you want?” he asked, distressed. “Is that so, Leo? I can do it more often! Let’s say I would do even top and bottom?”

Leo shook his head stubbornly.

“That has nothing to do with it,” he retorted. “Just shut up. You make everything worse.” Leo looked deeply upset and Raph froze. “I need a break and that’s final. You can call me a bitch and slap me, but I hope you respect me enough to respect my decision.”

Raph pleaded, begged, apologized profusely, but Leo was still packing some books and clothes. Raph cursed his lack of vocabulary, failing to find the right words to make his lover stay.

Leo’s phone rang and the student gave it a brief glance.

“Donnie is here.”

Pride left Raphael completely. He fell on his knees, grabbing Leo’s leg like a kid.

“Please! Don’t you know how much I love you?”

Leo looked at him, a sad smile lightening his features.

“I know. This is why I must leave.”

The student disengaged himself and left their home to join the doctor, leaving Raph soul crushed and confused. What the fuck did Leo mean?

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The next two days were a slow agony. Being alone in the apartment where Leo and he had once been so happy was filling him with sorrow. The only thing preventing him from turning crazy was that it was only a ‘break’. Leo had said he would stay at Donnie’s for a week or two, so he would
come back. But it wasn’t like it was definitive. Raph was clinging to this tiny hope with a vice grip. From there, he would have the money to show Leo how much he meant to him.

Work was like a haze. He didn’t even have a memory of it, except for Casey asking him how it was going on the second day.

“There and I are taking a break. His idea, not mine. Don’t say a word. I don’t need any smart ass comments about my boyfriend,” Raph warned. “I’m still in love with him.”

Yes, he was. Thinking about Leo all day, texting him many times, even if he didn’t get any answer, yet. Even if his boyfriend really seemed done with him, Raph was still hoping that the Italian sun and a silver ring would be the answer to all his sorrow.

It was there that life bitch slapped him.

The bank refused to give him a loan.

The trip, the ring, the cossack cosplay were Raph’s only plan. Now that he knew he didn’t have the cash, he was screwed. Christmas was in ten days and he had no ideas and no money.

Many ideas came to mind to get the money, like dealing drugs, but he knew that if he got caught, his life would be even more over. He was not a clever son of a bitch like Leo or Dr. Don, to be able to meddle in criminal organizations and come out unscathed.

Dr. Don wasn’t only clever though. He was a motherfucking billionaire. If Raph wasn’t a proud asshole, he could go see Donnie and ask for a loan. For Leo, Don could make it rain blue diamonds. But Raph hated his guts and Donnie hated him, too. But it was either Donnie, his mother, or Casey.

His mother was the most likely to accept, but Raph doubted she had the money and the chance of Casey learning about it one day was high. To say Casey wasn’t fond of Leo would be an understatement. His brother would blow a fuse to learn that Raph wanted to borrow almost ten thousand to propose to his young boyfriend. Casey would call Leo a useless fancy bitch and the two brothers would end by throwing punches at each other.

Raph’s only way out was to fuck his pride and get down on his knees to beg the genius to spit some cash.

Of course, Donnie was far away from being Raphael’s number one fan, but to have the pleasure of rubbing it in Raph’s face that he needed him, maybe the doc would accept. Besides, in the long run, it was to please Leo and spoiling his little brother, the son of his teenage crush, was Don’s favorite thing to do.

It was so pissing Raph off to have to ask Donnie for help that he still hesitated for a week, hoping meanwhile that Leo would change his mind.

It was alienating how Leo’s absence was depressing him. He couldn’t sleep with the empty spot in the bed. He was cold. Usually, Leo was the one who was cold, looking for Raph’s warmth, but now Raph was alone. To sleep better, he had tried to cuddle some of Leo’s clothes in the bed next to him. It was there he noticed Leo had taken his Tzar uniform with him and the realization had filled him with desperate jealousy.

Leo was at Donnie’s with his uniform and probably seeing this unknown blond girl too, and Raph couldn’t do a thing.

But it was now December 23rd. His two vacation weeks were beginning and Raph was, sure as
fuck, done waiting in despair.

He reached for his phone to call Don. He didn’t want to go to the doc’s luxurious penthouse and meet Leo. He was already finding himself on the borderline of harassing his boyfriend with his many texts, and he didn’t want to annoy his lover too much. He needed to make sure the doctor was alone.

His rival took the call at the first ring.

“Leo isn’t here,” Donnie said, his voice clipped. “He is at school and then has his pro bono to do.”

What the fuck was a ‘pro bono’? Leo had told him about something sounding Italian like that. Raph didn’t know and he didn’t care.

“I need to see you. Mano a mano,” he said, straightforward. “It’s about Leo,” he made sure to add to be sure the genius would let him talk.

“Of course,” Donnie sneered. “We will have the time. Leo won’t be home for hours.”

Raph restrained himself from barking that Leo’s home wasn’t at Donnie’s and only replied he would be there in thirty minutes. For his lover, he was ready to do anything, even if it meant he would be humiliated by Don.

Forty minutes later he was standing next to the golden leopard, accepting, with reluctance, a dry martini from his rival.

Donnie was impeccably dressed, in a well-tailored dark purple suit. His intelligent brown eyes were looking at Raph with an obvious gleam of mockery and Raph struggled to calm down. He was there as a beggar, so he couldn’t afford to have an attitude. Not with his relationship with Leo at stake.

Suddenly, he noticed something he never noticed before. Leo and Donnie must be real brothers because, in fact, they looked slightly alike. They had the same slender silhouette and long limbs, pale complexion, and also the same arrogant demeanor. Even their pout was similar. Thinking about it, Donnie looked more like Leo than Mikey. Mikey was closer in age, but apart from the eyes, he didn’t share too many physical traits with Leo. Mikey didn’t look like a Romanov at all, not even like a simple aristocrat, just an ordinary blond-haired teenager. If Don was twelve years younger, their blood relation would likely be more apparent.

If Don was still lusting over Leo, despite what they now knew, he was a sick fuck.

“I’m a busy man,” Don started, unaware or uncaring about being stared at. “I would appreciate it if you might not beat around the bush. What do you want?”

Raph needed to spill the beans before his nerves got the better of him.

“I need money,” he replied and he almost died of shame, seeing Don’s sly smirk. "I need it because I want to propose Leo at Christmas and to do that as he deserves, I need cash and the bank refused to give it to me.”

Don had paled and Raph held back a smirk of his own, now relieved to have got over it. Donnie clearly hadn’t expected Raphael to be serious about his precious little brother to such a degree.

“Well,” he said, putting down his glass, “I didn’t expect that. And I bet Leo doesn’t expect it either. Since you slapped him the last time you saw each other,” Don concluded dryly.

Raph felt his cheeks burning at the memory. Indeed, he had hit his lover for a second time. He had
never been violent with his past girlfriends and nor had he been with Leo before that dreadful anniversary. He had been stressed out the first time and the second time, it was out of jealousy, but Raph knew it validated nothing.

“Yes, I slapped him and I regret it. I apologized for it and I would do so again until he forgives me. Because I love him and want to be at his side for the rest of my life.”

Don didn’t seem a bit impressed, but Raph had never dared hope it would be easy.

“Tell me more about what your plan is,” he asked, taking an idle sip of his drink. “Be concise and accurate.”

“I told myself what Leo missed the most was Mikey,” Raph began. Seeing Don nodding, he continued, encouraged. “So I figured a trip to Italy would please him. I thought it was a romantic place, like for a honeymoon. I told myself ‘why not?’ I really love him. Mikey suggested to me that I buy some dress-up to spice up our sex life and...”

Raph was so caught in his explanation, he was surprised when Donnie shushed him.

“I don’t need to know about your sex life with Leo!” he snapped.

Raph noticed how Mikey had reacted the same but using the word ‘brother’ to explain why it was gross. Donnie looked only jealous.

“So you need money for a trip to Italy. Indeed, Leo would be happy to see his brother,” Donnie continued. “But nothing is forcing you to make official vows. Why do it?”

“I told you. I love him. I want to spend my life with him and show him how important he is to me,” Raph insisted. “You should be glad I want to treat your brother right.”

On purpose, Raph had emphasized the word ‘brother.’ Don caught the drift.

“I guess so,” he sighed. “The fact is, I don’t like you. You know that and I know you hate me as well. Despite that, you divorced your pride to ask me to help you. And this is about Leo, not me. And he is deeply in love with you. I will never get why,” he added bitterly.

Raph felt validated in his jealousy. It was obvious Donnie had not entirely given up on Leo, sibling or not. But he didn't, waiting anxiously for Don to continue.

“Follow me to my office,” Don told him, turning his back to walk away. “Did you have a sum in mind? Or a kind of stay you wanted, or a kind of ring?”

“Not really,” Raph replied, not commenting on Donnie’s snort at that. “Maybe a kind of YMCA, near Mikey’s place.”

Don looked at him with disbelief.

“I have all papers attesting Leo belongs to Romanov and Serbian royalty lineage. He is handsome, elegant, skilled and clever. Leo could marry a damn Princess. He is fool enough to love a mere dumb, rude but bulky police officer. Don’t push your luck and dare propose to him in a place with bed fleas!”

“What the fuck are you proposing then?!” Raph snapped, mad. He didn't need Donnie to rub it in his face that he was unworthy of his boyfriend.
“A private villa, at least! You can even rent a castle! Let me show you…” the doctor said, opening a laptop on his desk. The background was a picture of Leo, smiling in a candid way. Raph didn’t even bother to grow jealous.

“No! No need for that!” Raph exclaimed. “Just a cozy studio, well situated near Mikey with a huge bed and maybe a terrace to get a romantic view!”

“Leo deserves better than a mere studio,” Don countered. “He is…”

“I know who he is!” Raph snapped. “But I can’t afford to give him fancy habits! I’m only a cop! I won’t ever be able to give him what he would deserve in terms of material. But I love him a hell lot and I know Leo would be content to be with me and to see Mikey, whatever the background is!” he assured with fire.

Raph wasn’t so sure about that. His relationship with Leo wasn’t as simple as it has been once but he couldn’t show Don that he was not so confident.

Without a word, Don typed some keywords and showed him a rental ad for an apartment.

‘Modern styled apartment with one bedroom and a modern bathroom, with shower. Can accommodate up to 2 people. The kitchen is well equipped with 4 gas burners and traditional oven, and a dining table for 4 people. The living room has a corner sofa and flat-screen TV. To the right of the living room, French doors lead out onto a small terrace, overlooking the red roofs of Florence. To the left of the living area, there is the double bedroom with large wardrobe. The house has picturesque windows overlooking the Duomo and Brunelleschi’s dome.’

“Does it satisfy you?” Don asked. “My damn living room is wider than all this place but whatever.”

Raph looked eagerly at the photo, overstepping on Donnie to click on the mouse.

“Yeah! It’s perfect if we can get to see Mikey easily!”

“You can. You are a fifteen-minute walk from him,” Don grumbled. “I can make the reservation with my credit card as well as buy your plane ticket. Tell me the dates.”

Excited, Raph replied that he wanted to leave as soon as possible, and stay until January 7th. He didn’t even want to go to his mom’s place. Without Leo and him together, it would be a heartache.

Don made all the reservations for the plane and the apartment.

“What about the ring? Platinum? Diamond?”

“I only need a ring, you know,” Raph didn’t want to owe too much to Donnie. “Just something in metal to put around his finger.”

He felt how discouraged Don was with him.

“There. Don’t look at the price. Only tell me which one you want.”

All the rings looked the same, some more girly than others and Raph choose one randomly, with a black stripe on it.

Don paid for it, choosing the in-store pickup option.

“Now, we are almost done. What do you want about this…costume.”
Embarrassed, Raphael explained about his idea.

“I already have a Cossack uniform. Since you and I are around the same height, I can give it to you. It was a bit too slack for me, so I guess it would be too tight on you, but with such short notice, you won’t find anything better!”

Don showed him a red Cossack costume and Raph tried it, even if the idea that Don had bought this to please his lover was pissing him off. The uniform was too tight like it had been expected but it wasn’t too bad.

“Now, you’re ready to go. But of course, you won’t be getting all of this without something in return.”

Raph’s blood froze in his veins. Of course, it had all gone too smoothly. Don had an ace up his sleeve. What could it be? Having a video of their lovemaking?

“I want you to stop being jealous of me,” Don said quietly. “Leo refused the car and returned it to me because he said it was making you mad.”

Raph was shocked. He didn’t know Leo had refused the car. His boyfriend had told him it was at the garage.

“I know you refused my money because you’re such an old-fashioned macho man, and you can’t stand your junior lover making more money than you. It’s ridiculous since Leo, in ten years, will probably make more, anyway,” Don stated. “Besides, Leo always feels bad when he visit me because he knows you are waiting for him, pumped up on adrenaline at home. Leo is my only family. Understand, I like to see him and would appreciate it even more if Leo wasn’t stressed out whenever he came over.”

Raph stayed silent, not sure if he believed the doc. The kind of attachment Donnie had for Leo didn’t look a bit brotherly to him, but what could he say? The guy just spent more than Raph’s full two month’s income in only a few clicks.

“Okay, Don. I promise to keep quiet when Leo comes to visit you.”

“I guess you’re done then. You only have to pass by Tiffany’s and then you can join Leo. He is going to call you soon, I guess,” Don said, with a hint of melancholy.

Raphael frowned.

“What you mean? The jerk ignore me for days!” he growled.

Even if he hoped it would be so easy, he doubted it. Leo was a prick, loving to drive him crazy. Raph could have found something to please Leo, but he needed to see the guy before, to tell him.

“What of course, I hope you will never hit Leo again, as well. If you do, you will wish to have been caught by the KGB instead,” Donnie threatened with an evil gleam in his eye.

“I won’t. The last time I did… it was…”

He remembered the helpless pain he had felt at seeing his lover entering a hotel with a girl. But since then, he had suffered more from Leo’s absence than his apparent betrayal. But he needed Donnie to know he wasn’t a brute.

“I saw him with a girl, entering a hotel. You know we are at odds with each other after the Geisha
argument. We’ve had no sex since, and seeing him cheating on me was too much to bear.”

“The Geisha argument?” Don repeated. “No, don’t tell me, I really don’t want to know. But what I am sure of it is that Leo is not cheating on you,” he stated, very serious.

Raph looked at him incredulously. Had Donnie heard him? If Leo had been in a hotel with such a babe, it wasn’t to do homework. But the fact his rival was trying to cheer him up was even more confusing.

Raph’s phone vibrated and he pulled it out of his belt, not daring to hope it was Leo.

‘Raphael. I need to see you. Come to this address. Be here in thirty minutes’

Briefly, Raph told himself he was an arrogant jerk, giving orders after having ignored him for a week straight. Leo acted like he was sure Raph would crawl to him the moment he snapped his fingers.

The asshole knew Raph well.

“It’s Leo!” he exclaimed, in a high excited pitch. “He wants to see me! I need to move my ass because I don’t want him to be pissed at me!”

Don rolled his eyes with a mocking smirk in the face of Raph’s display of eagerness. But the doctor could find him ridiculous, Raphael didn’t mind. Leo wanted to see him. But what about, he suddenly wondered. Did Leo want to break-up definitively?

“Don’t think, it could hurt you!” Donnie sneered. “Don’t make Leo wait!”

Donnie was right and Raph walked away with rushed strides. Before leaving, he turned around.

“Thanks, Don. I will remember the hand you’ve given me!”

Without waiting for an answer, he stormed out if Donnie’s penthouse.

Outside, snowflakes were falling languidly, covering the ground with a thick white carpet. The address Leo gave him was around thirty minutes away by car and he decided he didn’t have the time to stop by Tiffany’s. Anyway, their flight was for the evening of the 25th and it was only the 23rd. He had still time. And besides, he didn’t even know what mood Leo would be.

Arriving in front of the place, Raph was confused.

It was a place called ‘Legal Gallery Bar Top Quality!’ and it seemed a mix between a coffee shop and an attorney’s office, under what looked like a regular apartment. He glanced again at his phone to be sure he was at the right place. Indeed, he was there and he pushed the wooden purple door open.

The first person Raph saw was her. The blond chick.

“Are you Raphael?” she asked. “Leo’s boyfriend?”

The shock was so huge, to see this woman he had been so jealous about talking casually to him that police officer stammered that he was indeed named Raphael. Though he didn’t dare to walk in and be heartbroken, learning that Leo was moving with her.

“Leo! Your boyfriend is there!” she exclaimed, smiling. “And he dressed up for you!”

Raph after one moment wondering what she meant, looked down to see he was still wearing the
Cossack uniform under his coat, having left his clothes at Donnie’s.

But he was too late, Leo was there.

It had been so long since he had seen his lover. He felt butterflies as he detailed him. Leo was wearing the white Tsar uniform, with his hair cut short, and he was so handsome. If it wasn’t for the confusing presence of the blonde girl, Raph would have thrown himself at him for a kiss.

Leo seemed as confused as him, staring at Raph with a stunned expression.

“What are you doing, dressed up like that?” Leo’s steel blue eyes gleamed with desire. “If you wanted to seduce me, you’re on to a great start.”

Raph was speechless. Leo was in a playful and horny mood, obviously, which he hadn’t expected.

“I’m not done but Vicky could show you around,” Leo suggested, before disappearing inside, to the left.

Raphael nodded, too dazed to ask what the fuck Leo was not done with, in a Tzar cosplay, and who this Vicky was, and what there was to be shown.

He stepped in, following the blond woman.

“My wife is supposed to be done but she is still working on a case. When she’s finished, we will leave you and Leo alone,” she explained, smirking.

“But another thing caught his attention. On the entry wall there were many pictures, paintings, and sketches, and on most of them he could recognize his lover.

“It’s Leo?” he asked in wonder, pointing at one of them.

“Yes. He is a very good model. I met him in an art class but I didn’t have the money to ask him to pose for me in private. So we found another kind of currency,” she replied.

“What kind of currency?” Raph asked, hoping it wasn’t sex, but too impressed about how good his boyfriend was looking in a picture to really be mad.

“I work as cook’s helper in a hotel. For each hour he poses for me free, I teach him how to cook!” she explained cheerfully. “Then, I learned he was a law student and my wife is an attorney who specializes in LGBTQ rights. That’s why the name of our place. We are about to expand her office. I always liked to cook and also art. We opened a coffee shop and art gallery next to her office. We will have events here promoting LGBTQ rights and a part of our profits from these and from my art will be used to help people who don’t have enough money to pay for a lawyer. I asked Leo because he is gorgeous and in a gay relationship. My wife, Xenia, wants him as a partner to run with her company after he is done with his studies. He is doing his pro bono with her and from next Summer, she will hire him as an assistant. His linguistics knowledge would help her a lot but he needs to have a least two full years done for that.”

“What the fuck does ‘pro bono’ mean? “was all Raph was able to say for now, too shocked.

So Leo wasn’t cheating on him. His lover was really doing work for his studies and he was taking cooking classes. This last part was surprising him the most. Leo had gone out of his way to please him. But that didn’t explain why Leo had called for them to take a break.
“Its mean free work to help citizens or something like that,” Vicky told him, shrugging. “Come now, I’ll show you the coffee shop. Leo must be fussing over his pots right now!”

“He is really cooking? Raph asked, remembering painfully what Leo’s meal looked and tasted like.

“Yes. It’s your Christmas gift. A four course supper done by him,” she answered, inviting him to sit in a cozy room with a dozen square tables. In a corner was a Christmas tree giving at the dining room an enchanted light.

It was too much and Raph dropped into the first chair.

“A supper for me,” he repeated again, still incredulous. He had been so upset, making up the worst-case scenario for weeks that the one-eighty was dizzying.

His boyfriend was coming from the kitchen, with a self satisfied grin on his lips. It was real, he was there for a surprise Leo made for him and he had been so jealous over a lesbian woman, who was just a friend.

Leo leaned over him, kissing him. It was more a quick peck than a passionate kiss but it burned Raphael like hot coals, since he was so love deprived. He was thirsty for more but he wanted to understand what Leo had on his mind.

“But you said you needed a break from me!” he countered. “We haven’t had sex for more than a month! You were avoiding me like the plague and now you tell me it was to play housewife?”

Leo pursed his lips, and Raph regretted his use of the word ‘wife’. Leo hated to be feminized. He was about to apologize when Leo smiled, apparently in too great a mood to get angry.

“I guess so… Let me bring you the soup! We will talk after!”

Leo left the dining room to go into what Raph supposed was the kitchen, a little nervous. His boyfriend looked eager to show off his new skill but Raph was remembering the stomach cramps from Leo’s meatloaf too much to not be worried. His lover was an awful cook and he doubted he could have improved so much in such a short time, but he knew that if he didn’t eat the meal to the last bite, Leo would be pissed and that was an understatement.

Leo came back from the kitchen, beaming, holding a bowl. He put it down in front of Raphael with the excited grin of a kid giving a bouquet of dandelions to his mother. It was a rare sight, to see Leo so candid and so genuinely happy.

When Leo had learned mandarin, after Dutch, in a few months, Raph had been strongly impressed and complimented him a lot. Leo had brushed it off like it was such a common thing. But now his lover was putting this bowl of green goo in front of him, radianting pride. Raph guessed that the Tzar uniform was probably meant to make Leo look like a waiter and Raph though that Peter the Great must be tossing in his grave to see his descendant play pretend.

“It’s broccoli soup,” Leo exclaimed proudly. “I did it all by myself! Now taste it!”

A huge fake smile plastered on his face, Raph took his spoon, plunging it in the soup, which seemed to him more hazardous than licking the wall of the nuclear reactor from Chernobyl. However, his lover had gone to a lot of trouble to please him, taking secret cooking classes when he was already so busy with his studies, his model job and this pro bono thing. So even if it would be battery acid, he had to eat it, no matter if he would end up in the emergency room.

Bracing himself, he put the spoon in his mouth, under the anxious glance of his lover.
He swallowed in a gulp very quickly, half-expecting his taste buds would melt, but in fact it tasted not bad. He took a second spoonful to be sure. The soup tasted like cum, salty and a bit bitter and he wondered if Leo could be kinky to this point. But his boyfriend was waiting for his verdict.

“Well, it’s great Leo. You have improved for sure!”

It was indeed true. It wasn’t very good, but it was edible and Raph couldn’t ask for more. He managed to eat half of it in four other spoonful and, to distract his mind, he asked Leo to explain to him why he had left.

“I vowed to not have sex with you until I was able to take care of you like you take care of me,” Leo explained seriously. “I was so ashamed to not have seen you were worried about money and it was my fault since you decided to take charge of all the bills. I couldn’t help you with the money and I was useless even in the kitchen. To motivate me to learn faster, I decided to not indulge in a display of love until I was worthy of it. When you tossed me on the table, I was too close to giving in. So I ran away, because I wasn’t ready.”

Raph looked at his lover, speechless.

“The scars you saw has been caused by boiling oil. I couldn’t tell you without you guessing my surprise,” he continued in a tender voice. “Raph, are you crying?”

Looking down, while a teardrop was falling in the soup, Raph denied it.

“I’m not. Not really. It’s only because the soup is spicy!”

“How it could be spicy? I only put chicken broth and broccoli!” Leo protested.

Raph didn’t answer, too stirred, only eating the soup. Suddenly, he felt it tasted like the sweetest thing in the world.

The blonde girl and another woman stepped into the dining room.

“Oh my god, Leo! An anonymous patron bought all my works with you on it! He didn’t even bargain the price!” she exclaimed.

“Oh, that’s great,” Leo muttered with a weak smile.

Raph knew what Leo have on his mind. Both of them knew that Donnie must be the anonymous patron and that he didn’t buy it out of brotherly love. Leo knew Raph knew and his lover supposed Raph was pissed again and jealous. But it reminded Raph how Don had helped him and even cheered him up in his odd way. Suddenly it’s hit him. Don must have known about the cooking classes and it’s why he had told him Leo wasn’t cheating and loved him.

Raph realized that he had nothing to fear from Don and so, had been pointlessly jealous. Leo had never been attracted to him, even when he didn’t know he was his brother. Even if Don had no pure intentions, he had no chance at all of scoring with Leo. Besides, Donnie seemed to love Leo too much to do something against his will and the doctor knew how Leo loved him, since, obviously, Leo was confiding in him. Donnie knew how far Leo was ready to go to show his attachment to his lover.

And he had slapped Leo twice and called him a bitch when Leo had entered the hotel to learn for how to cook for him, the ungrateful jerk.

He was such an asshole.
The two women left them, wishing them a good evening with a teasing smile and Raph turned to Leo, serious.

“I have a present for you as well, Leo,” he said hoarsely. “I hope you have nothing planned in the next few weeks because we are going to Italy to see Mikey.”

Leo’s eyes went wide and he gaped in surprise.

“But how did you get the money?” he asked, suddenly concerned. “I don’t mean to sound ungrateful, and I’m very touched and happy but I don’t want you going to more trouble for me.”

“I asked Donnie to give me money,” Raph replied, not even bothering to lie because it was useless, and he saw the expression of a pure shock altering the perfect features of his lover. “I wanted to please you because I was feeling so bad and scared you didn’t love me anymore, so I asked for a loan and got refused. I asked Donnie then and he bought it. He gave me this costume too, you know to spice up…I was ashamed but I love you more than my pride,” he finished lamentably.

The burning kiss took him by surprise. Never Leo had kissed him with so much love without horniness and Raph deepened the kiss, taking delicately his lover in his arms, as though afraid to scare Leo off. Then, Leo broke the kiss, flushed and his eyes misted with tears of joy.

“You got over your silly jealousy for me and it’s the best gift I could have dreamed of.”

Raph didn’t want to spoil the moment about arguing that it wasn’t silly to be jealous of a guy going so far as to buy all the art pieces with Leo as model. But Don could jerk off on the picture, he thought. He got the original model in his bed.

“You thought well about this trip, too,” Leo continued. “I would be head over heels to see Mikey. And as for the Cossack uniform… it really turns me on. There’s nothing more you could offer me. I feel bad to give you only a supper when you went so out of your way for me.”

Raph thought about his other surprise and cursed himself for not having stopped by Tiffany’s, but then his eyes landed on the small napkin ring.

“You can give me something else…” he shouted on an impulse and he left his chair to fall on one knee, the napkin ring in one hand and he grabbed Leo’s with the other. “The real one is at the store but I can’t wait for it. Please, marry me,” he asked, putting the ring on Leo’s finger. It’s fitted as the shoe for Cinderella.

Leo stayed still but then he stood up, very serious.

“Xenia asked me to be her assistant but then we will run this office as partners. I already have an office. Let me show you.”

Raph followed, heart racing, wondering why Leo didn’t answer. Was Leo was making him visiting his office as a distraction because he needed to think about it? Or didn’t he want Raph as a husband at all? Had the napkin ring been too cheap? But he didn’t remove it.

Raph wondered about it until he was pushed onto a desk, not even having time to look around.

“You spoke about bottoming more, didn’t you?” Leo asked. “I’m so happy right now, I need to do something about it and I’ve had a boner since you stepped in in this costume.”

Bottoming always filled Raph with anxiety but, this time, he lets himself go. Leo was happy and wanted to show it and Raph was fine with that.
“I love you so much,” Leo whispered, pulling down Raph’s trousers and kissing the inside of his thighs. “I don’t deserve someone as pure and caring as you,” Leo said. “Marriage is not necessary because I would never leave your side but I’m still blissful you proposed to me. I would very gladly be your husband,” he said before pushing his tongue in Raph’s puckered hole.

Raph yelped but relaxed again, melting under the soft ministration. When Leo slid his swollen cock into him, he did it very carefully, giving him time to adjust when Raph was now so horny that he was about to lose it and beg to be fucked.

Sex was amazing. Raph was firmly gripping at Leo and their lips stayed joined almost the whole time. They had missed each other and were thirsty for the other’s touch.

It didn’t last long because both being abstinent for more than a month, they had too much sexual tension, but Raph didn’t mind. They had their trip to Italy to make up for it, and the rest of their lives.

“Wow, Raph, this is the best gift I’ve ever received and the best Christmas I ever had,” Leo exclaimed in a languid voice.

“Yeah… me too babe… You surprised me a lot.”

“Shit!” Leo shouted and he rushed out of his office.

Worried, Raph pulled up his pants and ran after Leo. It was in the kitchen that he saw Leo, desolate, holding in a plate with what looked like a coal log.

“I burned my roast beef,” Leo whined. “I was so horny, I forget about it! I’m so sorry!”

Raph wasn’t sorry at all but he knew better than show it.

“Let start it over, together,” he proposed. “Maybe I will learn some things from you.”

Leo looked at him fondly, his eyes shining as brightly as the napkin ring on his finger.

“Oh yes, I will teach you things,” Leo whispered seductively, dropping the roast beef to the ground to grab his lover.

Chapter End Notes

For advent Calendar, ( if you want to follow this event go there: https://tmntfanevents.tumblr.com/) Alessa suggested me to do a Devil’s Playground Xmas Bonus chapter. I liked the idea to show Raph and Leo, one year later, when the routine had settled.

People asked me to do once a marriage ending because my characters had too much a hard time. To show I'm not just evil, I did this one. For the last sentence, it's a wink to my inspiration for all Devil's Playground. This is a song that I will pole dance if I was a stripper. Here some lyrics of it:

I ain't lookin' for a ring 'cause I got what I want and I got what I need, uhu
I'll teach you things, baby, teach you things
Show you every move and make you reach for things
I'll teach you things, baby, teach you things in the morning

Now Dp is really over, and I guess I can continue other stories!
Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!