The President and the Agent

by DarkJediQueen

Summary

Aaron Hotchner, Senator from Virginia, didn't expect to be that attracted to Spencer Reid when meeting him at a fundraising event. After being elected President of the United States, they are thrown together again. This time they both have trouble denying the attraction they feel for each other.

Notes

I want to thank SpencnerTibbsLuvr for her utterly perfect art for this story. She took my jumbled wants and made such beautiful chapter banners. SpencnerTibbsLuvr's art homepage can be found here. Please drop by and give her some love for her lovely art.

Year: Season 7 (2012) and forward

Spoilers: Up Through Season 8

Notes: Minor crossover with MacGyver but no knowledge of the show is needed and can be treated as OCs. As always Jackson and Victor lovingly borrowed from rivermoon1970 with permission.

Warnings: Canon Level Violence, Attempted Assassination, Homophobic Slurs, Racial Slurs, Minor Character Death,

Beta: rivermoon1970
See the end of the work for more notes.
Chapter 1-May 2012

The President
&

The Agent

By DarkJediQueen

Starring: Aaron Hotchner as the President, and Dr. Spencer Reid as the Agent who loves him.
Spencer glared at his companion in the driver's seat of the sports coupe. Ethan had talked him into this when he was drunk and now Ethan was holding him to it. Spencer hated politics. He understood it, and he followed it, but he hated it. He found it unethical to be a Government employee and to not follow politics enough to make an informed decision. He never put faces to to the names though. Spencer read transcripts so that everything would always be in his brain.

Ethan, though, was all for this Aaron Hotchner, the Senator for Virginia. Spencer wasn't sure that Ethan didn't have a celebrity crush on the man. Spencer couldn't remember if he had ever seen the man. Spencer liked Hotchner's politics. He was truthful and so far had done right by Virginia. Spencer lived in Alexandria now after moving to be closer to where Ethan was after just a year in the BAU. His run-down apartment he had bought when he had first moved to DC had been nice, but Spencer could afford better, and so he had found better.

"Why are you glaring at me?" Ethan asked with a smile on his face.

"I still can't believe that you are forcing me to go to this."

"You promised."

"I was shit faced." Spencer turned his head away to look at the line of traffic. Not only had Ethan forced him to go but they were in the line of people arriving before the event started. Spencer had never been to this particular country club, but he doubted that they would want him based on his looks and his job. The fact that he had money wasn't something that Ethan knew too much about, which was why Spencer made Ethan foot the five hundred dollars a plate bill for this. Ethan's little firm did really well for him, and Spencer was happy about that. The sports coup was just rubbing in faces that he did well, without being unethical in law.

"Yes, well."

The line of cars moved, and Spencer knew that it meant they were next. Spencer unbuckled himself and looked into the backseat at the messenger bag that he wasn't allowed to bring in. Spencer had insisted on being armed and had already cleared that with the people running security. The under the arm holster was secure, and Spencer had his credentials on him. He was still a little
too jumpy from a few cases hitting too close to home and Prentiss faking being dead so that she could recover from Ian Doyle's attack on her. The security firm had been happy to have another person on hand if anything went wrong. There were the usual threats against someone running for President but as far as Spencer knew nothing too big.

The door to the car was opened, and Spencer smiled at the valet as he got out of the car. Spencer buttoned the jacket of his suit which Ethan had insisted that he wear. The valet looked Spencer up and down, grinning when he saw Spencer's footwear. Ethan had not noticed Spencer's shoes just yet, and Spencer was looking forward to that. Spencer waited for Ethan to make it around the car. Ethan jokingly held out his arm like he was asking a lady to walk with him. Spencer slapped his arm away with a laugh.

Ethan handed over his invite as they stepped up to the guards at the door. His name was checked off, and he was allowed through. Spencer nodded and followed. The security measures were located inside, and Spencer looked for the area that he was told to go to.

"Where are you going?" Ethan asked as Spencer split off from him.

"I have to check in through a different area," Spencer said. Ethan's eyes got large when Spencer patted his chest where the gun was.

"I thought you were joking."

"No. Don't worry, I'll see you on the other side." Spencer stepped up and unbuttoned his jacket before handing over his credentials from his inside pocket as well as his gun before he stepped through the metal detector. Nothing pinged on him, and his weapon was handed back to him to put away as he watched one of the guards check his badge ID number against a database and the picture in the database.

"You are set to go, Agent Reid. Would you like an earwig just in case things go bad?"

"Is it really that much of a threat tonight?"

"We had several threats from slightly credible sources. I don't think anything will happen. You can keep it in your pocket and give it back at the end of the night if nothing happens."

"Sure." Spencer held out his hand, and the guard dropped a piece of equipment that Spencer knew well into his hand. He slipped it into a pocket inside of his jacket. He nodded at the guard and walked to meet Ethan.

"I saw them pass you something."

"Nothing big. Just a let's have bases covered because they would rather have me in the know if something happens and out of the loop."

"I heard that a few family rights groups were threatening him. I mean the man divorced his wife when she was caught cheating on him for the third time. He tried everything but giving into her every whim. He went into politics because that was what she wanted. Then yes he had a one-night stand with her after the death of her mother, but she is the one that left the kid with him after refusing to marry him again."

Spencer knew all of that already, but he let Ethan talk. He was like a kid at Christmas finally getting to meet his favorite person in the world.

Tables lined three of the four walls of the room with the middle area open for dancing. There was a
big band playing from the wall with no tables. Name cards were on the tables, and Spencer was a little shocked that Ethan knew where to go to find their table. Spencer sat down and glared at Ethan when Ethan opened his mouth. Spencer crossed his legs and leaned back. He liked people watching, and it was the only reason that he hadn't fought Ethan more on going to the event. Spencer only got to rub noses with people like this on cases, and then he just saw the worst in them.

"You didn't," Ethan said.

"I didn't what?" Spencer asked as he looked at Ethan again, seeing that Ethan's eyes were locked on his shoes. Spencer grinned. "Of course I did."

"I'm going to mingle, don't run away."

"I'll be right here."

Spencer watched Ethan make his way over to someone that Spencer sort of recognized from the news before turning his eyes to the crowds. Spencer was a little shocked to see John there, talking with a group of people that Spencer knew as other higher-ups in other branches of the lettered agencies. John gave him a grin and then turned back to his wife. Spencer was ever thankful for the man who was still his sponsor.

The crowds got deeper and deeper, but it gave Spencer a lot of chances to see the upper classes as they rubbed noses with each other. No one bothered him at all, and even as the trays of hors-d'oeuvres wandered around, no one stopped to offer him any. Glasses of wine were passed around on trays, but the harder things were at a bar in the corner. Spencer had no want of either of those things.

"I don't think I have ever seen anyone wear a Brioni suit of any style with Converse before. Nor make it look like you make it look," a man said.

Spencer looked up at the man and saw that he was very handsome. Spencer smiled at him, and when the man sat down across from him, Spencer raised an eyebrow. He wasn't sure if that comment was the man hitting on him or not.

"I've been talking nonstop all evening about politics. You look like you are people watching, which begs the question of why you are here." A waiter stepped up to the man's side and offered a tray that only had two glasses of drink on it. The man grabbed both and offered one over to Spencer.

"I am not partaking of alcohol tonight."

"Neither am I. This is the punch from across the room. I asked for two glasses to be brought to us."

"Hmmm," Spencer said, but he took the glass and took a small sip of it. It was indeed just a sparkling punch of some kind. The wait staff was catered in, and Spencer doubted that one would want to be accused of drugging someone, so he trusted that the drink was not drugged.

"Doctor Spencer Reid," a voice said.

"Oh, hello." Spencer looked at the woman who was talking to him. He recognized her as the woman who had been up Gideon and Morgan's butt about the prostitute case they had a few years back. Spencer hadn't realized that she was still in politics after that. Thankfully someone called out to her, and she wandered away.
"How do you know her?" The man asked.

"I sort of worked with her on a case a few years back."

"Case?" The man looked Spencer up and down. Spencer knew that he was trying to put together the clothes, the shoes, the doctorate, and case into something that made sense. "What kind of doctor are you?"

"I hold three doctorates but none of them medical. I'm in the Department of Justice, FBI."

"Interesting. I only hold a Juridical Science Doctorate as well as my various degrees that make up the ability to practice law in Virginia."

"Still most do not go that high. It's laudable that you would want that."

"I did it because my father hadn't."

"That sounds very familiar. I hold most of my degrees to spite my father as well. Well, that and I wanted them."

"So why are you here?" The man asked.

Spencer realized that the man assumed that Spencer knew who he was and that was why he was not introducing himself. So someone in politics or at least in the public eye. Spencer would let him keep it to himself. Ethan would be able to tell Spencer who he was.

The man was dressed in a very fine fitted suit that Spencer had no clue who the creator was. He was apparently up in at least suit fashion because he knew the brand of Spencer's suit, which Ethan had never noticed. His entire put together facade he was wearing told Spencer that he knew how well his appearance at this event would help him, so he dressed to impress.

"A friend of mine got my agreeance when I was under the weather, and I figured that it wouldn't hurt and I don't get to rub elbows with these type of people unless I am suspecting them of a crime. It can't hurt to expand my knowledge base."

"Practical but there are better places to actually observe the people in this room, in a more natural setting like getting into the country club on your own."

"They would spot me as out of place and not be natural. Here they make the assumption that I am just here for Hotchner's favor or something else from somewhere else and afford me the courtesy of at least not being too much of a snob to me."

The man laughed. It was an honest to God full laugh that Spencer wasn't expecting. He covered his mouth and lowered his volume, but Spencer saw a few people looking at them. He tried to ignore them.

"I'm sorry, but I don't think I have ever met someone who looked at High Society like it was an experiment that he gets to watch. It's refreshing."

"Life is an experiment. I regularly do social experiments on my co-workers, they just don't know it. All of my findings are personal but still. I've learned from them how to manage how people see me."

"Your honesty is very refreshing. I have to ask, right now who are you going to vote for in the coming election?"
"You ruin a good conversation with politics?" Spencer asked with a smile on his face. The man's eyes crinkled with mirth, and he smiled back.

"Politics ruin a lot of good things. And I know an evasion when I see one."

"As of right now, Hotchner is my vote. He has never been caught in a lie, and I have voted for him each time he has run for Senate."

"Really?" The man asked. He looked a little proud.

"You are with the Hotchner campaign aren't you?"

"You could say that. Well, it looks like it's time to eat."

"Which means speeches," Spencer said.

"Speeches after. Nothing to upset the digestion. Doctor Spencer Reid, Agent it was a pleasure to speak with you tonight. I truly hope that over the next many months we have the chance to do it again and again. Maybe something a little more intimate?"

"S-sure," Spencer stuttered because it meant that the man had been flirting with him.

"Do you have a card on you?"

"Yes." Spencer dug into his pockets and found his credentials which he had a few cards tucked into. It only had his work phone numbers on it, and Spencer wasn't ready to give an unnamed man his personal cell.

"Thank you," the man said as he wrapped Spencer's hand into a shake that felt like a wholly consuming kiss between their hands.

"Did you know that concerning the spread of germs, it's safer to kiss than it is to shake hands?"

"Really? Well, this setting doesn't do well for kisses so I'll have to take my chances with shaking hands. Don't worry though, much like kissing, I would rather do both with just you." The man stood up before Spencer could say anything in response to that. He was gone before Spencer could even open his mouth much less say a single thing. Spencer had never been attracted to many people. He knew his type, but he hadn't met many that were his type. Spencer liked smart, which his own genius sometimes scared away, and kind. The man seemed kind, but then they were at a function that the primary goal was ass-kissing.

Spencer spent the last half hour before the dinner potion started watching the man as he worked the room. Spencer was too far away to hear any of the conversations, especially with the band playing but he wasn't too interested in getting to know the man's name. The ball, as Morgan would say, was in the man's court.

Ethan came back to the table as everyone started to get seated. The two couples that were at their table were kind, but Spencer could tell that they were a little perturbed to be sitting at the table with the gay ones. Ethan though started to talk about his girlfriend at one point, telling them that she was working and that was why he brought his childhood best friend. Ethan was a master at making people do what he wanted, which was why he was a damned good lawyer.

After the dinner, the speeches started. Spencer had his back to the podium area, but he just closed his eyes and listen. There would be a transcript of everything said at the dinner during the speeches so even if Spencer didn't remember the exact words, verbally, he would be able to read them and
retain them. It was the same people who always spoke at the fundraisers for Hotchner. Spencer knew their word choices well.

Then it was time for Hotchner himself to say his bit and close out the speech portion of the night.

"Thank you all for coming out," Hotchner said, and Spencer froze in his seat because he knew that voice. Spencer spun around to look to see the man from earlier standing there. Spencer reached for his glass of water and took a sip. Spencer's mind swirled with the fact that it was Aaron Hotchner that Spencer had been talking with, that had flirted with Spencer and Spencer had flirted back.

"What's wrong?" Ethan asked, leaning over and whispering in Spencer's ear.

"Just needed a sip of water."

"That doesn't explain why you went white as a sheet."

"It's nothing. Something that came to mind that was work and case related." Spencer hoped that Ethan believed him. When his friend leaned back to his spot, Spencer sent up a mental sigh. There was nothing in the profile of Aaron Hotchner that Spencer had made up that ever put him as anything other than straight. Spencer always did what Morgan called UnSub profiles on politicians before he voted for them. Hotchner was a voice for equality for all races, genders, and for all walks of sexuality. It was part of why Spencer voted for him again and again for the Senate, but to have Hotchner sit there and flirt with him was something that Spencer needed to think about.

The worst part was that Spencer knew that Hotchner knew that Spencer didn't know it was him. Spencer tried to remove any bias that he could so he didn't watch debates. He didn't watch televised things at all. He read everything that came out though.

Spencer barely remembered a single word that Hotchner said. He just sat there and tried to push the thought that a Presidential candidate had flirted with him at a fundraiser where it could have been overheard, or Spencer could go out and tell the world. Spencer wasn't sure what he was going to do.

When the speech was over, Spencer slipped outside with the smokers. Spencer did not smoke, and he stayed far enough away to not get second-hand smoke, but he hoped that Hotchner wasn't aiming to find him and hoped that if he waited outside, Hotchner wouldn't see him. Ethan would most likely want to leave soon after he was done schmoozing with the rich.

Aaron tried to find Doctor Reid again after his speech. He wanted to give the man a chance to revoke the card given or not considering that Spencer had not known who he was. Aaron had not realized that it would be slightly horrid for him to have not shared who he was when talking to him. It had been a breath of fresh air for someone to not know him. Aaron did want to know how someone who voted for him had no clue what he looked like.

The man that Spencer had arrived with talked to a lot of people but Aaron wasn't going to ask him where his friend was. That was inviting too much scrutiny.

As people started to leave though, Aaron pulled out Spencer's card, and he was shocked to see that Spencer wasn't an analyst of some kind with the FBI, he was with the BAU. Aaron knew about the BAU in passing having worked a few of their local cases when he had been a lawyer. That brought his thoughts of Spencer into a whole different light.

"Senator Hotchner," a voice called out, and Aaron turned to look at the man who Spencer had arrived with. "Ethan Cordar."
"Thank you for coming tonight."

"Anything for the man I want to see in the President's seat."

Aaron did small talk with the man for a few minutes before he bit the bullet and actually asked about Spencer.

"I've spoken with everyone but the man you came with. Your partner?"

"No, best friend since school. Spencer's a little more reserved than me. I'm not shocked that he escape your mingling. He likes to watch. I would say that it has to go with his job, but it doesn't. He was like that in school too. I know you are gearing up to leave. I don't want to take up your time. Thank you for speaking with me, and I want to tell you that you have my support."

Aaron told him thank you, and then Ethan was leaving. It was as if Spencer Reid read Ethan's mind, he appeared as Ethan got to the doors. Aaron watched him hand back one of the mic sets to the security for the event, and he was waved around the metal detectors. Aaron had seen only the guards doing that, which meant that Spencer had been armed. If security allowed that, he was clean with the FBI. That fit with the type of man he presented himself to be but still, Aaron was very shocked. His security was very good at what they did.

"Need anything?" A female voice asked from his left. Aaron turned to look at the woman there and smiled.

"Jessica, when did you get into town?" Aaron stepped forward and hugged his ex-sister-in-law. After the divorce, he and Jessica had lost contact, but after Jack's birth, Jessica had come back into his life. She worked and did a little travel for that job, but she had been getting tired of it for a long while.

"I came in last night. wanted to talk to you about your offer."

"Hmm. We can do that after I get out of here. Felix will drive you to my house. While I'm on the road, even when I am home in Virginia I don't get to stay at home much. Elenora has already put down Jack for the night but if you want to stay overnight, you can. I don't have anything until late, so Jack and I have plans for French toast."

"If you don't mind me crashing the party?" Jessica asked.

"Jack will love it. Felix will arrive back here just in time to pick me up I think so I'll be home shortly after you get there."

"Thank you, Aaron."

"See you soon Jess."

Aaron watched Jessica as she found Felix and asked him to drive her to Aaron's house. Felix sought out Aaron's eyes, and he nodded. Now Aaron needed to find his campaign manager, Victor Marks. Victor found him first with a smile on his face.

"Tonight went well. Though I am looking forward to going home."

"Jackson in town?" Aaron asked.

"Yes. Jax misses me and wants to cuddle. He's already waiting at home. Red-eye from London to
"I wondered where he was. Do you remember when we started this? That offer you had me make to Jessica?"

"Yes?"

"I think she is going to accept to be Jack's full-time nanny with Elenora getting married and wanting to settle down with her fiancé, I would rather have Jessica."

"She's out right? Lesbian? No serious girlfriend?"

"Yes. To all three. Her family will probably start to give information to my opponent about that. However, with her being out and proud, it will stop rumors that I hired her to fuck her."

"Very true. I'll work on the press release first thing in the morning. It'll be out by lunch and ready for the evening editions of the papers. Make sure she is okay with her sexuality being blasted over the news."

"I will, but she knows that taking this job means that there will be little in her life that isn't front page news. If she doesn't take it, I'll text you so that we don't jump the gun."

"So speaking of personal lives. Who was the looker earlier? You had him blushing and eating out of your hand."

"Doctor Spencer Reid of the FBI's Behavioural Analysis Unit. I thought he knew who I was and he didn't at least not by sight. He was a breath of fresh air, and while he supports me and has voted for me for Senate, he made it clear that that wasn't going to get my vote. Well, he kept saying Hotchner. He was wearing a Brioni suit with Converse shoes. I had to talk to him."

"I'll look into him."

"He gave me his card. Before he found out who I was, he was quite willing it seemed to maybe give me a date. I am unsure now."

"I'll be discrete. He won't know."

"Good. I'll say my goodbyes and last few greets, and then I'll go home. Is Jackson sending a car?"

"Yes. With the pushy driver. He won't let me delay longer than Jackson tells him to allow me to delay. It's so hard being in love with a man who is used to getting what he wants."

"He wanted you, and he got you. Give Jax a kiss for me."

"On his lips or his cock?"

"I know you don't kiss cocks, Victor. If I wanted to have his cock kissed for me, I'd pay one of his escorts to do it," Aaron whispered in Victor's ear. The man's laughter followed Aaron to the rest of the sucking up that he had to do for the night. Aaron just wanted to go home and go to sleep. He had a little bit to go though.

Almost two hours later, Aaron was settled in bed with his laptop. Jack had not woke up when Aaron gave him his goodnight kiss. The boy was happy to be home for however long they could be back.

Doctor Spencer Reid was actually easy to find online. There was a small profile page for him on
the splash page for the BAU section of the FBI website. Aaron knew what that was, showing him off to attract others. The list of degrees he held though was shocking. There was no mention of his IQ, but Aaron figured that it was high. There were articles about him joining the BAU, getting his degree, and other accolades in various online publications as well as a few print papers. A single one mentioned his parents and Aaron looked them up. There was little on Diana Reid other than she was a Professor of English Literature at a college in Vegas and William Reid's name popped up a lot more as a lawyer in the city of Summerlin, before that Las Vegas. There was something fishy there because nothing with Spencer mentioned Summerlin, but there was also no mention of divorce or anything like it for the Reids. When articles on William started to list Summerlin, Spencer could have been a preteen given his actual age.

Spencer didn't look his age, nor did he act it. He looked a few years younger than his age and acted a lot older than his age.

Only after Aaron had learned about Spencer's past did he start to look at the articles that he had found in various local papers across the country about him. There were even a few new clips that he had given. There was one that Aaron liked from San Francisco that had him verbally taking apart an attention seeking idiot. It was fun watching it, and Aaron admitted that he felt interest stirring in him.

The only thing left was to see precisely what Spencer would be willing to do with Aaron running for President. There had been no Presidential candidate who had campaigned and dated at the same time. Aaron was one of the few who had tried to run without a spouse. The news reports cast him as tragic in love. High school sweetheart who broke his heart twice.

Aaron's sexuality had never come up, but he knew that it was only a matter of time before someone asked him. They were prepared to take that on when it happened. Victor was damned good at his job. He had been the President of Media Relations for Grimes Tech since Jackson had moved out of the small office that they started in. Aaron had been the lawyer of record back then, and after it grew too big, he had found someone that he trusted to take care of Jackson and Victor. Aaron, of course, owned stock in Grimes Tech as well and the money from that, if he was elected President, was going to go to charities. Aaron made enough money on trusts that he had and the very diverse portfolio that was managed for him that he didn't need to work again and Jack probably never would as well.

Jack was the light of Aaron's life. He looked at the picture of Jack that was on his nightstand. It went with him everywhere. Two-year-old Jack had come running to him when he had come to where his dad worked. Aaron had picked him up, and Elenora had snapped a picture of them with their foreheads pressed together.

"Aaron?" Elenora said as she opened Aaron's bedroom door.

"Yes, Nora?" Aaron closed his computer realizing that it had gone to sleep while he had been thinking. He set it into the little open space shelf on his nightstand.

"You have nothing until early afternoon tomorrow that's going to take you from the house. So are you okay with me taking the night and morning off?"

"Leroy in town?" Aaron asked with a smile.

"He is."

"Go. If I have something that pops up, Jessica is here, and she'll watch him."
"Is she going to..." Elenora trailed off.

"I am unsure, but she and I are going to talk in the morning. Have a good night Elenora."

"Goodnight, Hotch."

Aaron turned off the light as he heard the door click. He settled down into the large but empty bed and let his mind pull up the look of Spencer as he had sat there in his expensive suit with a pair of black Converse like it was the most casual thing in the world. Aaron had wanted to talk to him from the start but waiting until everyone was already otherwise engaged had made it easier for him to get away for long enough that they were not bothered.

Spencer had looked so beautiful as he had blushed under Aaron's gentle flirting and it was the thought that carried Aaron down to sleep.
Aaron knew that the newscast coming up had Victor more worried than anything else. Aaron wasn't going to let it bother him. They had come up with contingency plans for everything that they could think of.

Jack tossed his stuff camel at Aaron's head to get his attention back to the game of Snakes and ladders that they were playing. Aaron smiled at his son and picked up the camel before handing him over. Jack was a quiet boy when they were in the room with other people. Aaron knew that his shyness came from Aaron because he was much the same way growing up. It was one of the main reasons that his father had disliked him practically from birth.

"Aaron," Victor said as he sat down on the couch beside where Aaron was sitting. Aaron finished his move in the game before turning to give Victor attention. It was almost Jack's bedtime, and Jessica would be coming in to take Jack to their room in the suite. Elenora had been an excellent nanny for Jack, but she had held herself back from the boy to not get too attached as she knew that she was leaving.

Jessica was like a breath of fresh air, and while he had taken a few hits on polls with the inclusion, there was a lot of good that came from it. Aaron knew that he was doing well in the polls for the younger generations. Victor was shocked by that, even before Jessica’s orientation had hit the news, Aaron had done well with them. Aaron was afraid that a lot of that was looks, but there wasn't much that he could do with that. There were more than enough sound bites of young adults talking about there never being someone as hot as Aaron in the White House.

"Yes, Victor?" Aaron asked as he winked at Jack. Jack started to laugh but began his turn.

"We have a problem."

"You know, you use that word a lot."
"No Princess Bride jokes, please," Victor said with a long-suffering sigh.

"You keep walking into that."

"Anyway, as you know Jackson is in New York right now, and he just happened to be around the studio that's breaking this big piece of news for the past four hours."

"He just happened to be."

"Well, he decided that he needed to be there and he almost didn't have his phone out in time to see this person who is getting ready to out the worst secrets of your life that you want to keep secret, according to the news studio."

"Victor..." Aaron trailed off as he watched Jack win the game. "Way to go, Buddy. You are getting better at this game, and I think it's about time for you to go to bed."

Jack jumped up from his seat and came around the side of the small table that had been set up for their use. Jack jumped into Aaron's lap and hugged him tightly.

"Love you, Daddy."

"I love you too, Jack. So much." Aaron pressed a kiss to Jack's forehead as the connecting door opened up and there came Jessica. She was already in her own pajamas.

"Are you joining me later?" Jessica asked Victor.

"Yes, Ma'am," Victor said with a smile.

Aaron shook his head because he was pretty sure that Victor had a small crush on Jessica and it manifested by the two of them sharing a bed, platonically. Jack stayed in the same room, and while Victor said that it was for protection as Jessica was not trained in hand to hand as Elenora had been, Aaron knew that Victor missed sharing a bed with Jackson since they had started on the campaign trail. The man had slipped into Aaron's bed on occasion for just that, a night cuddle. Jessica though had been shocking in the fact that she allowed it.

Victor was silent until Jack and Jessica were out of the room. Jack had been so happy over the past months with his Aunt Jessica being the one to take care for him. Jessica had never cut herself off from her nephew even though that meant that her sister didn't speak to her. To Haley, Jack didn't exist. Haley was too old now to have another child, so she was forced to find a husband with children already or someone else who didn't want children. Jackson would have been the best option, and she had tried that according to Victor, but Jackson was irrefutably gay. Victor had found Haley going after Jackson by trying to play the victim in all of this hilarious and every time it was brought up on the news, Victor got a case of the giggles.

"So what has you so worried?" Aaron asked as he held his hand out for the phone. There was a picture on it, and even though the image was one of the best quality ones that could be taken by a phone at the moment, Jackson did nothing by halves, it was still too far away. So Aaron swiped, and it wasn't until he hit the third picture that he realized who it was. Aaron sighed, and his hand started to squeeze the phone. "I see."

"We knew this was a possibility. Jackson has tried to keep a close eye on him, digitally but being in New York means nothing."

"I wonder how much he is being paid. Okay, tomorrow, set up a press conference here in Los Angeles. We will handle everything that this throws at us."
"Yes, we will. We have an hour and a half until the newscast airs. I will get my laptop set up, and we will be ready. I have my staffers watching it as well. Just you know elsewhere."

"I know. I think I'm going to take a few minutes for myself because I don't think I'm going to get much of it after this." Aaron leaned back on the couch and closed his eyes. He had hated his childhood and was very happy when he had gone to college a year early, it got him away from his grieving mother who had not cared that her husband beat Aaron regularly. Sean was their prized child, and as long as Sean had what he wanted, things were good. Sean had grown up as the spoiled rich child who expected everything to be given to him. It was why when Sean had gotten into trouble with drugs in college and Aaron had not used his influence as a prosecutor to help him out, Sean had vowed to make Aaron pay. That he was showing up so late to make Aaron pay was actually a shock. Aaron had expected him to come out of the woodwork not long after Aaron had started his campaign. Sean was the reason that Aaron had been so hard on drugs during his tenure as Senator.

There was not a lot that Sean could use on him. Most of it would actually be a win for Aaron and easy to prove if Sean tried to lie. The most significant thing though was Aaron's sexuality. That was what had Victor so worried. Having a campaign manager who was a close friend had been the best thing about this stupid campaign. Victor knew all of the skeletons in his closet already.

The hour leading up to the newscast was spent with Aaron helping Victor set up the conference for the next day. Thankfully there was a venue that was perfect for what they wanted and set it all up before Sean dropped his bomb which would look good for Aaron in the polls. Every news outlet inside the US had been contacted and invited to it. Many would have to scramble to get from the East Coast to the West, but Aaron knew that they would. The whole country was braced for this newscast.

"Sir," an aide said as she stepped up to Aaron. There was a folder in her hand, and he nodded his thanks. Aaron opened it up and saw that it was a report from inside the FBI, cleared of classified information.

"Oh, good. One of your friends from your days as a prosecutor said that he was sending over something that might interest you. I don't know if you want to open it before the newscast or wait until it's over. Waiting might taint it if it's good." Victor sat down with a bottle of what smelled like beer in his hand, but Aaron knew it was a non-alcoholic one. Victor liked his beer and Jackson had bought a brewhouse to make many kinds of non-alcoholic so that Victor wouldn't be cut off for as long as the campaign went.

Aaron glared at Victor, but he opened the file. Aaron would know what it was even if Spencer's picture hadn't been nearly life-sized as the first page.

"From what I've found out that was him during a case after his leg was injured. The case notes remark that he had stepped into the wrong room at the wrong time while CSU was getting shots. The UC at the time had the picture saved and printed it out to make Spencer laugh at being a pinup. I asked it to be sent along."

Aaron nodded and forced himself to turn the page. Spencer in a suit with the cane in hand was erotic in ways that it shouldn't be given that he was fully dressed and the number cards on the floor as well as the yellow tape meant that he was on a case. Spencer's hair was longer in the picture than it had been when Aaron had met him. Aaron's attraction to the agent was still as strong, and while he was using his connections as a Senator in a not very good way, he wanted to know everything that he could about the young man.

"Jackson has asked that if you bomb with him if he can take him on a date. I slapped him for it but
he still told me to ask you, and if I didn't, he was going to ask you in person."

"No," Aaron growled. He shut the file to save it for after what was coming.

"Wow, the exact reaction I said that you would have. You know you, and your heart keeps writing checks that reality can't cash."

"I know Victor, and I am not in love with him. In lust, maybe and infatuated, yes."

"I remember him from that night. The Converse made me cringe, but they fit him. I see that he wears a lot of them when I looked him up. You've never answered my question. When you become President are you still going to pursue him?"

Aaron stayed silent and knew that Victor would let it go as soon as the new program started which was seconds away.

"Hello, America. I know that everyone is looking forward to meeting and talking with our special guest so without further ado, can we give a round of welcoming applause for Sean Hotchner, younger brother of Presidential hopeful, Aaron Hotchner."

Aaron's gut clenched because he could tell by looking at his brother that he was still using drugs. That gaunt look was still on his face. Aaron had tried so hard to save Sean from that life, but it just wasn't to be.

"He's still using drugs," Aaron said to Victor.

That fact would help discredit a lot of things that Sean said, but Sean knew of Aaron's first boyfriend, and his name and the man was married and happy now in northern California. Aaron got Christmas cards from him, and the last had shown him comfortable with his husband and their two children.

"Good. That will help. I know that you hate this Aaron. I'll be gentle."

"I know."

Aaron dropped his head down into his hands because listening to this was going to be hard enough. He didn't need to see his baby brother blasting his name all over. Aaron had done so much to protect Sean from their father, and Aaron wondered, not for the first time if he shouldn't have. Sean resented Aaron for not mourning their father when he died while Sean worshipped the ground the man walked on.

It was ten minutes into the program when Sean dropped the bomb that he had walked in on Aaron making out with a boy in his bedroom. Sean was asked the boy's name, and Sean gave it. Aaron grabbed his phone and texted Alexander. Alexander though must have already been watching as it was only seconds later that Alexander told Aaron that everything was fine and his husband was well aware of what had transpired between them when they were underage. Aaron told him to be safe, and then he set down his phone. There were texts and emails already coming in about the program. Aaron was just thankful that his parents were dead and unable to add to this.

The only saving grace was that Sean did not lie. Sean's own issues were not brought up, and the only reasoning behind why Sean was doing what he was doing was that Sean wanted the world to see the flawed man that his brother was. Aaron had never tried to cover up his flaws and had embraced them with his run on the Presidency. The most prominent weakness before now was that Aaron had never served in the military, but that could be overlooked given his law background. His opponent was going to have a lot of fun running him down for this.
"Not as bad as it could have been," Victor said as he turned off the TV.

"Yeah. Sean didn't deviate from the truth at all. I wonder how much he's being paid for this." Aaron rubbed his fingers on the bridge of his nose. "Tell Jackson that the private investigator is a go. As soon as Sean buys drugs, have the cops called and told."

"Jackson is already doing it. There was one in place just after Sean went into the studio. I know that it hurts you, Aaron but maybe this time will the one that gets him clean."

"When we figure out who lands the case, tell them that I want no favors for him at all. He gets treated like the drug addict that he is."

"Sure. Look, I know that you are stressing but why don't we go to bed early and deal with this in the morning. Why don't you go slip into bed with Jack? He'll like sleeping in the bed with his Daddy. Then we will all be in there together, and that will lessen my mind."

"Sure. I'm very worn out all of a sudden." Aaron stood up and debated getting a real beer from the fridge, but he didn't want to smell like beer at all while in bed with Jack. That he never wanted.

Aaron looked out at the reporters that made up the sea of people from in front of him. Victor had already given everyone the order in which he was going to answer questions before it became a free for all.

The cameras were still being sorted, and Aaron gave a big smile.

"Aaron," Victor said as he came up to stand beside Aaron, facing where there were no cameras so that no one could capture his words or read his lips. "Alexander and his family are here. Alexander is going to grant a single interview to the reporter of your choice, and then from then on out he will give no more."

"Tell him that he doesn't have to do that."

"He wants to. His husband talked him into that. The kids are here with them as well and really want to meet their Pop's first boyfriend."

"You pick who gets to interview him. Tell him that whatever he wants to tell about our entire relationship is up to him and none of it will upset me."

"Aaron?"

"The relationship started because he was the one to help me get bruise cream and the muscle relaxant cream on my back and my legs after father beat me. He knows about the whole of the abuse I suffered at father's hands."

"Okay. It'll be a reveal all from another source. I'll talk to Alexander and make sure that he knows that you are asking him to hold back nothing." Victor nodded and turned to go back to where he was going to be for the whole of the press conference. Aaron wanted to be alone on the stage. He could see Jessica and Jack going over to where he saw Alexander was standing with his family. Jack looked excited to meet them. Maybe a lunch out for them was a good idea. Victor would know of a place that would open for them to have a private meal. Aaron usually didn't like to shove his money in people's faces but there times that it was nice.

Aaron looked out into the crowd as the last cameras were settled into place. He saw the red lights across all of them that stated that they were ready and recording. Victor nodded from the side that
all of them were ready to go."Hello," Aaron said with a smile on his face. It was rare that he smiled, it was one of the things that were brought up constantly in the media but Aaron never really cared.

"I invited you all here to discuss what was revealed by my younger brother on the air last night. I have never lied to anyone about my sexuality. The fact remains that no one has ever asked me. I married a woman and had a child with that woman many years later after we were married, so everyone made the assumption that I was straight but I have never been. I have always known that I was bisexual. I noticed males first because I went to an all-boys boarding school after Sean entered kindergarten. I fell in love with Haley my first year at a regular high school before I left to go to college a year early. I have loved two people in my life that I was not related to by blood or by marriage. Alexander De Soto, the boy mentioned by Sean last night and Haley Hotchner, nee Brooks. I did not want to make the entirety of my campaign about my sexuality, and I have always held that sexuality and who you love should be private. I was faithful in my marriage to Haley even when she was not. I took my marriage vows seriously, and to this day I would never have cheated on her, no matter who offered. I know that my opponent is going to start a smear campaign against me. I have already stated what I feel needs to happen for this to this country to make it a country that is better than the rest. We cannot stay in the dark ages and hold that we are the best country in the world. I already started my platform for marriage equality and my campaign manager is an asexual in love with a gay man. My nanny is a lesbian woman. Is it really a shock that I am bisexual?"

Spencer rarely watched the news. He would instead save the time and read it later but the big announcement the night before and then the press conference that had been announced before the show the night previously had aired intrigued Spencer.

Sean Hotchner was a drug addict, Spencer could see that as soon as he saw the man. Spencer could also read the anger that simmered underneath the calm exterior that Sean was portraying.

"Reid," Morgan said as he tossed a straw wrapper at Spencer. Spencer turned his head to smile at Morgan.

"Yes?" Spencer asked.

"So Ethan dragged you to that rally for Hotchner. Now Hotchner is out of the closet so to speak. What do you think about that?"

"As a what?" Spencer asked.

Morgan groaned. "Come on, Pretty Boy."

"Are you asking me as a voting citizen, an FBI Agent, a Profiler, or as a gay man?" Spencer asked.

"You are killing me," Morgan said. His eyes darted up to where the waitress was walking toward them. He leaned back to allow the waitress to set down their food. When everything was set down, a second waitress came up with a fresh carafe of coffee. She set it down and stepped away. Spencer grabbed the carafe and filled up his coffee before topping off Morgan's.

"Sexuality does not determine if Hotchner is going to be a good President or not. I actually checked the polls today, and while the ratings for him in some age groups dropped, the younger groups rose."

"I didn't watch the news thing last night, just this mornings. So how bad was it?"
"Not that bad. Sean Hotchner came off as a jealous brother who wanted to take his brother down a peg. Also, he is a drug user." Spencer wanted to keep his head down, but he knew that Morgan would make him look at him, so he forced his head up.

Morgan looked at Spencer sharply. Spencer shrugged and shook his head. Spencer's addiction to Dilaudid was well documented in his work file since it was an UnSub who drugged him with it while working a case. Three and a half days Spencer had been in the hands of Tobias Hankel, and his two alter egos of his father and an Angel named Raphael. Morgan hadn't given Spencer the chance to hide that he was mentally addicted and on the way to physically. Spencer had detoxed in Georgia before being shipped back to DC for a stay at a facility until they said he was ready to go back to work.

"So personal gain to spill the beans on his brother. Yet, Hotchner never said a thing about him on the air, nothing about his drugs or anything."

Spencer nodded his head as he started to cut into his pancakes. "Sean hates his brother. I could see it in every single movement that he made. He tried to hold it back, but it's the truth. It's not going to be long before the truth comes out about what Sean Hotchner is into. The fact that he's been left out of everything so far is a shock. Then again by Hotchner's own statements when he was a Senator, he hasn't seen his brother in years."

"So did you know that you blush when you say his name?" Morgan asked.

"What?" Spencer could feel the heat on his cheeks now that Morgan had pointed it out.

"So do you have a crush on him?"

"A man my age cannot get a crush," Spencer refuted, and the grin on Morgan's face said that Spencer had not convinced him of anything.

"A man your age my ass. So I thought you stayed out of visual politics."

"I try to but do you remember that fundraiser thing that Ethan dragged me to?"

"Oh, I remember it well. You bitched about it for days. I figured that you had a horrible time because you never mentioned it after you came into work that Monday. So did you?"

"No. I actually had a good time. I people watched but while I was doing that a man walked up and started talking to me. He commented on my shoes with my suit."

"You wore converse with a nice suit again didn't you?" Morgan asked.

Spencer stuck his tongue out as his only answer. Morgan's hand shot out like he was trying to catch it but stopped just short of actually touching Spencer's tongue. Morgan laughed, and Spencer let out a short chuckle.

"He had punch brought over, not spiked, and we talked."

"And? I know that you talking to a strange man wasn't the highlight of your night there."

"But it was. Because it turned from talking to flirting. I actually flirted back too."

"Go, Pretty Boy. So did you and he meet up anytime after?"

"No. I expected something. I gave him my card and hoped he would call or something but nothing.
Of course, I didn't know his name until later that night."

"Why not?"

Spencer pushed at the food on his plate and sighed before he dropped his fork and sighed. "I think that he assumed I knew who he was. It wasn't until later that he gave a speech that I realized who he was."

"He was one of the ones that put on the fundraiser right? That's why he assumed you knew who he was?"

"How many people do you know go to a fundraiser for a Presidential hopeful and don't know the face of the hopeful?" Spencer asked.

It took Morgan a few seconds to understand what Spencer had said and just as Spencer was getting ready to say it a different way, Morgan's mouth dropped open.

"You flirted with Hotchner at his own damned fundraising dinner?"

"He flirted first but yes."

"Maybe he didn't want an agent as a whatever he calls the men he starts relationships with."

"He knew I was an agent long before the flirting turned truly serious. That lady politician who wanted the prostitute case kept quiet because she was about to announce that prostitution was down was there, and she called me by Doctor. I stressed that I wasn't a Doctor doctor when I explained that I worked a case with her, sort of. He kept on flirting and didn't run."

"But there's been nothing?"

"Yeah. I don't have a way to contact him that's at least slightly secure, and I don't want to call the campaign headquarters and be like 'He flirted with me at a fundraiser, and I want to know what he's doing because it's been months and there has been nothing.' I'd probably get a letter wrote to me by his security or even a visit from the Secret Service."

"So you weren't shocked at all about what Sean said last night."

"No." Spencer let his eyes travel all over Morgan's face, and the man didn't seem upset at all. Morgan was straight, but he had never made Spencer feel sorry for figuring out his sexuality while in a pool with a very hot actress, except for the fact that it happened while on a case. That he had been yelled at for.

"Do you want to start something with him? I mean that's...as high profile and public as it gets. There isn't a way to hide dating like that, even if he doesn't get elected, he's going to be a Senator."

"I liked him when we were talking. I think that there could be something there."

"Whatever you need, Reid, if you need to talk, need a friend to do something, I'm there. This is the first guy you've ever talked to me about liking at all. I'll do anything that I can to help."

"He'll probably never contact me. Being a bisexual man in name is one thing while actually dating someone, especially while on the campaign trail would be political suicide."

"You never know. Maybe he realized that you really didn't know who he was and was worried that you wouldn't want anything to do with him."
"And how do I go about that?"

"Think about it Pretty Boy. I am sure that genius brain of yours can come up with something. Meanwhile, why don't we head back to my place and we can work on that movie marathon you were talking about before the case."

"Sure." Spencer smiled at Morgan. Morgan was the only one on the team that accepted him for who he was. Things had been rough in the beginning, especially after Kevin Lynch had joined the team with Gideon pulling him in. Gideon thought he would be perfect to work as the analyst for the BAU. Morgan had called the team the merry band of misfits and Lynch called them Misfits in a way that made Spencer think that it was a popular culture thing that he wasn't getting but he didn't care.

Spencer wanted to unwind like Morgan said with scary movies where both of them knew the killer within moments but laughing at the idiotic things done were what made the films enjoyable to them. Morgan was looking forward to one about wax and seemed to really want to see someone in it die, but Spencer didn't look at him negatively for that.

It was way too late for Spencer to take public transit home and Morgan had one too many beers, so Spencer decided to stay the night. Morgan left him with his laptop in the living room, and Clooney was asleep on the couch. Spencer had his feet tucked under the loving dog. Clooney, unlike most other dogs, liked Spencer. Even when Spencer had been a little scared of meeting him, Clooney had just licked at Spencer's hand and dropped to get belly rubs. Spencer, and Morgan, knew that Spencer was going to fall asleep on the couch, so there was a pile of blankets and a large pillow on the floor right in Spencer's reach.

Spencer knew the password to Morgan's laptop and used it a lot when he was hanging out with Morgan. Morgan had never cared that Spencer needed to focus on more than one thing sometimes when they were watching movies. He let Spencer do his thing. There had been an attraction to Morgan back in the beginning but that had turned to just affection and something that Spencer assumed was brotherly love.

The main website for Hotchner's campaign was simple yet elegant, much like the man himself. There were testimonials from constituents and a page of every single speech that Hotchner had given since he had been elected to the Senate the first time.

Spencer found the contact page and opened it up. He stared at the box that would allow him to email some lackey that worked under Victor Marks, and he hoped that Hotchner saw it at some point. Spencer spent too long figuring out what he was going to say.

Senator Hotchner,

As election time gets closer, I think about our discussion we had at the fundraiser. I would love to discuss it in more detail, but I realized that you may not want to discuss it using my work email. So I am responding here to give you my personal email. I hope this reaches you promptly.

Doctor Spencer Reid, Agent.

Spencer looked at the body of the email and hoped that it wasn’t too much. There were any number of subjects that Spencer could think of to discuss with him if someone emailed back and wanted a topic to forward to the Senator. Spencer typed in his personal email that went to his phone. Spencer disliked emailing people to talk to them, but there was something intimately personal about sending an actual letter to Hotchner that Spencer didn't want when he wasn't sure that Hotchner really meant the flirting as anything other than a ploy to get Spencer to vote for him.
Clooney chuffed before he moved to lay along Spencer's legs, his head on Spencer's thigh. Spencer reached down and petted him before he shut down the laptop. Spencer turned the TV back on after putting the laptop up. Morgan paid for a science channel tier on his TV package, just like Spencer had the sports tier on his.

Finding a channel to listen to while he wound down for the night wasn't hard. There was a newer show on planet Earth that Spencer hadn't got a chance to watch yet, so he set the remote down and wiggled down on the couch. Clooney raised his head up until he could lay it down on Spencer's stomach. The couch was just wide enough to allow the both of them to lay together. Morgan had bought the couch for him and Clooney to lay on. Spencer grabbed the blanket and draped it over himself before tucking it between him and the dog. The pillow was next, swapped for the throw pillow that Spencer had laid his head on.

As the science program held Spencer's attention more, he realized that with it playing he wasn't going to get to sleep anytime soon, but that was okay. There was no work the next day, and Morgan would go about his thing with Spencer asleep on the couch.
Spencer frowned as he entered the bullpen. A strange man was standing at his desk. Spencer was an hour early for work after taking an hour off the day before to celebrate with Ethan after a massive win for rights for non-heterosexual couples. Spencer had refrained from drinking, but they had eaten for hours.

If it weren't for the fact that the man screamed Secret Service, Spencer would have drawn on him. As it was, the man had gone through Spencer's desk, at least what was on top. Spencer knew the order that he had left his pleasure reading books on his desk. Morgan hadn't messed with his desk in that way in years. Spencer just wasn't sure why the man was there. Spencer had only sent the single email to Hotchner and never heard anything back, so he assumed that the flirting had been nothing more than a bit of diversion in the middle of the campaign.

"What can I do for you?" Spencer asked as he shifted his messenger bag to his back to be able to get to his gun quickly.

"Doctor Reid, my name is Rick Stealey. I'm with the Secret Service."

"How can I help you, Agent Stealey?" Spencer eyed the man as he passed him to set his things down on his desk.

"I am sure that you heard about the assassination attempt on President Hotchner's life yesterday?"

Spencer had, and he had kept track of the news since hearing about it. Spencer nodded at the agent.

"When my boss approached the Director of the FBI about getting together a few people from various agencies, CIA, FBI, and Interpol about terrorists, homegrown ones that is, I was a little shocked when a name popped up that I had never heard before. Your name. I had already looked at all of the agents in the various terrorism units of the FBI scattered across the country. Deep background. Your name was new. I spent the evening looking you up, what I had access to. I didn't
realize that you were the one that was in New York a few years back and figured out the plot of the cell before it made it to the hospital that I was securing."

Spencer remembered that case well. He regretted that he wasn't able to put it together before SSA Kate Joyner had died. It was her death that had laid out the plan. Morgan had pushed Spencer to find a niche in the aftermath of Hankel and Spencer had chosen terrorists. Hankel had been one in his way, going after the rich.

"So you want a profile worked up on the people who were behind the attack?"

"Oh, no. We already know who did it and the FBI is going after them. For the next month, you are assigned to the White House and the Secret Service as part of a training exercise to give White House staff and the Secret Service training in terrorists. You are going to be working on homegrown terrorists and the more subtle signs of them. Keywords to look for. This group that attacked the President was good."

"I can say no right?" Spencer asked.

"You can. The Director of the FBI made sure that no one was going to pressure you into this. You'll stay in the White House for the duration to make it easy and will have a new Secret Service agent assigned to help you."

"Watch me?"

"No. Help. The Director called him a lackey. That he will do your every bidding."

"I would have unrestricted ability to come and go?"

"Yes, and you'll be able to send your letters to your mother as you normally would. I am the only one who knows about that. We are going to put a transfer on your mail so that you don't have to give her a new address. Her dislike of the Government is documented, and I would not want this to be a reason for her to look at you under that same gaze. It'll all be done locally, and the stamp on your letters won't change."

"That's a lot of work for someone like me."

"I have an Uncle who is in a facility. He was my favorite as a child, but that was because of his loose grip on reality. He does not know what I do so that I can keep my relationship with him. I will do whatever I can to make sure that your relationship with her isn't damaged."

"How long do I have to think about it?"

"End of lunch today. You'll have the rest of the week and the weekend to get materials done up and lesson plans done. Monday starts the actual classes and things. We are doing it inside of the White House to make it easier."

Stealey pushed himself off of Spencer's desk and handed him a card. There was an email address and a cell phone on it, and when Spencer looked at the back, there was another cell. "That's my personal. Just in case. If you agree just call my work. If I don't answer it call my personal. There are some spots inside the White House that my work cell phone doesn't work. I'll have your lackey pick you up and bring you to your new residence for the month."

Stealey left before Spencer could say anything. Spencer sat down and thought about what he was going to do. It was an excellent opportunity. Ethan would tell him to take it but to leave the team for a month, so close to Prentiss leaving and Blake joining wasn't something that Spencer wanted to do to Morgan.
"I don't think I've ever seen him this still," JJ said making Spencer jump. He turned to see that Morgan, Lynch, and JJ were standing there staring at him.

"What's up, Reid?" Morgan asked.

"I think we need to talk in your office," Spencer said as he grabbed the card that he had set down. He looked at his coffee cup, which was empty and frowned. "After I get coffee."

"How about I bring coffee up to the two of you?" JJ asked.

"Sure, Jayje. Thanks." Morgan gave JJ a smile and laid a hand on Spencer's shoulder as he stood up. Spencer passed his mug to her as he passed her before swallowing.

"No. I..." Spencer sighed and dropped down into the chair in the corner of the office that was farthest away from the desk. Before Gideon and Falcone had failed so utterly at the job and an investigation started which ended with Gideon retired after he didn't show up and Falcone fired, Spencer had hated this office. It had been Falcone's, and Falcone hated Spencer. When Morgan was pushed up too early in most opinions into Unit Chief, Morgan had installed the little sitting area because Spencer hated sitting in front of the desk. Falcone had ripped Spencer a new one many times while sitting at the desk like a lord. Usually, Spencer ignored the yelling, but at the end, Falcone had done it a lot, over stupid things like Spencer trying to explain something. Spencer's little babbles as Morgan called them got shorter and shorter after Falcone had joined the team just a month after Spencer. Falcone on that final day that he had worked on the team had cut Spencer off before he even got five words out and many had died because of that. Morgan, JJ, and Prentiss had backed Spencer and case files were gone over, and every time that Spencer mentioned being cut off, the case was looked at, hard.

"Reid, spit it out."

"The Secret Service want me as part of a joint task force that's going to brief White House staff and the Secret Service on terrorists, mainly focusing on homegrown ones. I guess that they have figured out who attacked the President's car brigade. I do not have more than that, but I would be based out of the White House for a month, maybe longer as we know how things go."

"That's a boon, Reid. Why aren't you excited?"

"Prentiss is gone, Blake's just joined. We are adjusting to new things. This is not the time to be a team member down."

"We will make it work if you want it. If you don't want it and don't want to say no for fear of reprisal, I will veto it, and I'll have Rossi throw his weight behind it." Morgan stepped over and sat down on the seat on the couch that was closest to the chair that Spencer was in.

"No one has ever wanted me for anything other than reciting facts quickly," Spencer said.

"And...?" Morgan asked.

"I do want to do it but not if it's going to hurt the team. JJ's adjusting back to being the media liaison after a year as a profiler and the fact that she didn't like it that much. Blake's settling in good, but she's not fully settled, and I'm her only friend on the team."

"Maybe it'll force all of us to adapt to her and her to us. If you want this Reid, I say take it because it sounds like it'll be something you'll do good at."

"Yeah."
"Are you worried about the President?" Morgan asked.

Spencer didn't answer right away. After Spencer had sent the email to then candidate Hotchner, he had told Morgan, and for a few weeks, Morgan asked at least every other day and then stopped when asking hurt Spencer because there was no response.

"I hadn't thought about that at all. I hadn't thought about the fact that I would be introduced to him or even be in a meeting with him. It's stupid right to have still a crush on a man who obviously doesn't remember me?"

"No. There was something there, at least on your end. You don't trust easy, and in that night he made you trust him, at least a little. Enough to open up to allow yourself to be hurt."

"He probably won't remember me at all, so I'll act as if I've never met him before if I even get introduced to him. The Secret Service Agent that came to talk to me didn't mention the President in that way. I doubt he cares about the psychological profile of the people who want to kill him."

"Look, whatever happens. If you are there a day, a week, three weeks and you decide you don't want to be there. I'll get you pulled. I promise. Even if I have to go there and pull you out myself."

Spencer smiled at Morgan. "I know you would. I just...I guess I needed to know that the team wasn't going to hate me for this. JJ didn't want to go to the State Department, and you and she fought it, but in the end, she went. I don't want to be resented for taking a job out of the unit, even if it's short term."

"No one is going to. You are going to be working out of the White House, Reid. That's pretty damned big. I don't think that even Rossi can claim that. So what other agencies are going to be there?"

"That I know of CIA and Interpol. There will be more from the FBI from the Terrorist Task Forces, but I'm the only one that doesn't run into that qualification."

"But you have helped with the manuals on dealing with terrorists that don't fit the normal bill. Like Owen Savage and Tobias Hankel. I know that they are two very different cases, but they have a lot in common."

"I know. Still." Spencer blushed as he always did when Morgan brought up what he did that was outstanding. Morgan never made it about his IQ or memory when he talked about things like that even though they both knew that it had everything to do with it. It was what Spencer chose to do with his brain that made him stand apart.

"So you want me to take care of your mail, and stuff like I do when you go to Vegas?"

"I'll have a junior Secret Service agent to boss around. From what I am to understand he or she, will be the one to pick up my mail and drop off my stuff at the post office where I always drop off Mom's letters. That way she's not freaked out that all of a sudden my mail is going from a different routing area. I was a little overwhelmed about that. The Agent in charge of this has done his research into me, and it was very flattering that he had already thought of things to do to keep mom from going nuts about the fact that I'm going to be stuck in the White House for a while."

"Sounds like a good guy."

"He seemed like." Spencer inhaled and exhaled slowly. "I think I do want this."

"Okay. Then you go home and pack up everything. Take my car so that you can fit more in the
trunk. You'll do better in suits and some of your vests than your cardigans and sweaters. Make your
lackey get books for you. Then you can come back and clear out everything that you need to do. If
anything case related pops up I promise we will call for consults."

"Good. You guys need me," Spencer said with a smile.

Eight and a half hours late, Spencer was entering his rooms for the next twenty-nine days. It was
very simple, but it had its own bathroom and a not too small sitting room that stopped people from
just entering when he was asleep. The bathroom connected to both rooms but some locks kept it all
secure and all of the doors deadbolted. He knew that security had keys to all of them, but it was
nice that someone random couldn't just get into his room when he was there or wasn't. He was
given a set of keys for his rooms as well and access to the safe where he was to keep his gun unless
the meeting called for it being allowed to be worn. Spencer had almost left his gun locked in his
desk at work, but when he was collected from headquarters by Stealey himself, he had told Spencer
to bring his gun. Stealey and Morgan had talked for a few minutes alone in Morgan's office.
Spencer was sure that the Secret Service Agent had got a shovel talk of sorts.

Stealey had walked Spencer through all of the checkpoints and got him his temporary staff badge
for the White House. Stealey had promised him two days of doing what he wanted and learning
about the workings of the White House while the rest of the agents were being assembled. He
figured with Spencer's love of knowledge, he would like getting settled in while learning than to be
shoved in with a bunch of strange Agents.

The closet was huge, and Spencer was able to hang up all of his clothes, leaving the vast dresser for
just his underwear, socks, and sleeping pants. Spencer could already tell the White House was
warm so he didn't figure that he would need to sleep with a shirt on but he had them just in case,
those went in the drawer down. There were three hampers for his clothes, and all were labeled with
what went in them and what room they were to be returned to. Spencer didn't like that; he would
rather do his clothes but figured that access to the same machines that the President's clothes were
put in was going to be a no. There was also an area for him to put his dry cleaning. Stealey had
already told him that someone would come through and clean on the schedule of his choosing.

Spencer was most intrigued by the pile of books that were on the desk in the sitting room. All of
them were on the history of the White House. The tomes did not seem like the kind of books that
were in the room all the time, so Spencer figured that Stealey had left them for him.

Checking the time, Spencer realized that he had time to do a little looking around and get a good bit
of the way through a book before dinner was served. Spencer had opted to eat in one of the staff
eating areas for his first night there. There was a Keurig in the room for Spencer and a selection of
coffee, many which Spencer had never tried before. There was even a little filter for him to use his
own coffee in. Spencer would have that added to a shopping list of snacks for himself. Stealey had
filled Spencer in on the things that staff in the White House would do for him, including shopping
for snacks to stock in his room as well as his preferred creamer and coffees if the Keurig didn't
meet his needs. Spencer knew that staying in the White House was going to be very strange, but he
hadn't expected to be waited on hand and foot. Spencer had never been the type of person who
liked that.

Diana Reid had instilled in Spencer an independent streak that was a mile wide. It was also shaped
by his father leaving him to take care of her on his own. Spencer knew that staying at the White
House was going to take a lot of adjusting. Spencer knew that treating it like a case was going to
make it all go over better but that was a weird mindset to stay in for twenty-nine more days.

Spencer grabbed the top book off the stack and exited his rooms. He found the direction that he
needed to go. The map in his head of the areas he was allowed in and could know about helped a lot. There were guards in the areas that were sensitive, and some Spencer had access to and others he did not.

A woman was working in the garden that Spencer had wanted to look around so he made sure that she knew she could go about her job before he looked at the just starting to grow greenery. There were a few starting to bud flowers that were early spring ones.

"Hello," a voice said.

Spencer turned around to see a lovely woman standing there. She had on the uniform of one of the cleaning staff.

"Hello," Spencer said back.

"You are Doctor Reid aren't you?"

"Yes."

"I am Antonia VanFosson. I'll be the person cleaning your rooms. Agent Stealey said you might be out here. I will also handle your clothes including your dry cleaning. Well for you and a few of the other agents."

"It's nice to meet you. Once a week on cleaning my rooms is fine and clothes collection. I brought a lot of clothes with me actually, and I will be fine for a week. If I need something done special, I'll leave a note."

"Okay. I will check for notes. I just wanted to introduce myself. I'm still working on cleaning the rooms out for the other agents." Antonia smiled at him before she gave a little half bow and left. Spencer shook his head and turned to find his way back inside and toward dinner. He was hungry.

Aaron had been briefed on what the Secret Service wanted, but he wasn't made aware of the people that would be invading his home/work until one of them already had. Aaron had not heard the name of the FBI agent who was coming just that he wasn't part of the Terrorism units. However, watching Spencer Reid enter the dining room for staff floored Aaron.

"Victor, do you have that name of the FBI Agent that is supposed to come today?"

"Sure." Victor scrolled through a file on his phone and knew the second that his finger stopped moving that Victor had found Spencer's name. "Well fuck."

"Does the Service know?"

"No. Well, I don't think so. We used mostly what could be found out about him from Jackson for what I gave you but him being here can't be a coincidence. However, he is the BAU's foremost expert on terrorists. I'm just shocked that he was offered up and that he accepted. He's been hard to pull out of the BAU for academic topics."

"I want you to make sure that I know when he's going to be in meetings."

"Yes. Of course. I'll make sure of that and see about finding out why Stealey invited him."

Aaron knew that Spencer was smart and being thrown together like this was going to throw Aaron for a loop. Aaron wanted to ask why Spencer was being invited but that would make Stealey
suspicious if the man didn't already know about Aaron's crush on him, which was bad because he wasn't of the age where he should be crushing on anyone or in the position. However, Victor indulged him when Spencer was on a newsreel.

There were a few hours of peace after dinner where Aaron got to spend time with Jack. It was the best time of any day for Aaron. It was still a little while before he was going to be introduced to the team that was going to be briefing all White House staff on terrorists and what to look for.

Aaron wasn't sure if he was looking forward to it or dreading it.

Aaron liked to take a little break in the East Sitting Room after long meetings. It was a time to clear his mind. However, seeing someone standing outside of it and realizing that it was one of the Secret Service meant that someone was inside. Aaron wondered who. Aaron knew that she was a junior agent and that's why she was assigned to the brigade of agents who were taking care of the visiting agents from the various lettered agencies coming to work in the White House.

"Sorry, Sir. I'll get Doctor Reid out of the room so you can have your break."

"No, it's fine. I'm going to shut the door and introduce myself to Doctor Reid." Aaron knew that he was acting stupid, putting himself alone in a room with Spencer but he couldn't help it. Aaron shut the door, and as soon as he did, Spencer turned around from where he was looking at one of the paintings in the room. Spencer's mouth dropped open before snapping shut.

"Sir," Spencer said before he started for the door that Aaron had shut and taken a few steps from. If it weren't for the way that Spencer's eyes darted at Aaron as he neared him, Aaron would have sworn that Spencer didn't remember him. Aaron reached out as Spencer came even with him and gently grabbed Spencer's elbow.

"Hello, again, Spencer."

"Hello, Sir." Spencer was looking ahead, but his eyes darted toward Aaron for a second.

"This is very fortuitous. Giving us a chance to talk. I have twenty minutes before my next briefing and Victor will be coming and finding me for it. Why don't we sit down?" Aaron asked.

"Okay, Sir."

"Please, you don't have to Sir me when it's just us. If you are uncomfortable calling me Aaron, call me Hotch."

"I wasn't going to say anything, Sir," Spencer said. He wasn't meeting Aaron's eyes as he sat down in a chair while Aaron took the couch beside it.

"Say anything about what?" Aaron asked.

"Nothing. I have a few things that I need to do. If you would excuse me," Spencer said as he started to stand up. Aaron laid his hand on Spencer's knee, and Spencer stopped.

"Spencer, look me in the eye."

Spencer's eyes darted toward Aaron's face but never quite met his eyes. Aaron smiled. He slid his hand up Spencer's leg a little. Just slightly in an improper location.

"I seem to remember something about kissing being better than shaking hands on the germ front.
Before it didn't happen because we were in public, but we are no longer in public.

"It's still not proper," Spencer whispered, but it at least got him to look Aaron in the eye.

"I have a lot of explaining to do, and I want to tell you my reasons for why I did not contact you after the fundraiser. I wasn't sure if you were playing at not knowing who I was but the look of utter shock on your face when you turned around to look at me when I started my speech said that you were not. I second guessed myself a lot, and in the end, I didn't contact you because I felt a off doing it. You hadn't known who I was so I felt that I should wait for you to make the love, instead of possibly pressuring you into something just because of who I am. Victor though has been bugging me to email you. If you ignored it, then I had my answer."

"I sent an email to the campaign headquarters, through the website. I assume since you are not apologizing for that, you never got it."

"No. I was forwarded several from young people who thanked me for coming out. I will have Victor look into who didn't forward it and why. I'm glad that you did try to contact me."

"Aaron," Victor said as he opened the door closest to them. "Oh. Well. I guess the fact that Doctor Reid is out and about is a little late. However, your meeting has been bumped up. Agent Stealey and the rest of the Service are wanting to get out and collect the rest of the agents that are local. You have two minutes."

"You are having your adie stalk me?"

"No. I just wanted to be prepared to run into you. I saw you last night heading to get food and was shocked. Stealey had mentioned he was trying to coax a reluctant FBI Agent into the training group, but I wasn't aware it was you until I saw you last night."

"It didn't take long once I knew that my team wasn't going to hate me for leaving, even for a short time." Spencer's eyes looked down at Aaron's hand that was still on his thigh. Aaron squeezed his hand and let go.

"My lunch today is brief but without a meeting in it. I'd like to do lunch with you if you don't mind. Talk more, personally, before you start work in earnest. If you like I think I know a tour guide who would do you justice on giving you a tour that will make you laugh."

"I got one early this morning with my assigned agent."

"Yes, well see my tour guide is going to be more fun. You stay here, and I'll send him to you."

Spencer was looking at Aaron like he was a little insane but he nodded. Aaron stood up and grinned at Spencer as the younger man stood up. Aaron stepped closer to him. Spencer's eyes darted down to Aaron's lips and back up.

"May I?" Aaron asked.

"Are you sure that you should? Before you were a Senator. Now you are the President."

"I long ago stopped being scared of what might happen. The worst that can happen is that I get impeached. There have been two Presidents that were single when elected."

"One of which got married a year into being President," Spencer finished for him. "You are also the first President to come out as non-heterosexual. I was actually shocked that you were even elected. Though I looked at the demographics and the number of young voters that came out was
"startling."

"Are you trying to talk until Victor comes back in and drags me away?" Aaron asked.

Spencer started to blush, but he nodded.

"Fine. We shall table the discussion of kisses until after lunch." Aaron reached out though and brushed a knuckle down Spencer's cheek. The blush on his face deepened. The door opened, and Aaron turned toward Victor with a happy smile on his face. Victor was grinning as well. When Aaron stepped out of the room, he let the smile drop.

"So, have you nabbed yourself an FBI agent yet?"

"Working on it. Send Jack and Jessica to give Spencer a real tour, would you?"

"Dear Gods, Aaron, are you really subjecting him to Jack already?"

"We both know that Jack's opinion of him will matter more than my own. So let's see how they get along before I have to break my heart because Jack hates him."

"You know that Jack is going to talk his ear off, right?"

"Oh, I hope so. I think between the two of them, they are going to talk each other's ears off."

"Jackson is going to love this. Hell, Jessica is as well. You know that she has offered to be a beard right?"

"I'm well aware. Let's see how this month goes before we start to discuss dates. He's here for a month, and I don't think that anyone is going to find it odd given how much Spencer likes to talk that I would engage him in discussions."

"You are dancing on a ledge."

"And for the first time in my life, I'm trying something that is just for me."

"And Jackson an I are proud of you for it."

Aaron heard the laughing before he made it close to the area where Jessica had told Victor to tell Aaron to meet for lunch. Jack's laughter was a boon to Aaron's heart. Seaver was standing outside of the room as well as the primary Secret Service Agent that covered Jack and Jessica when they were in the White House. Alan Greg was his name, and Aaron had known him since he had first become a Senator.

"Alan, Seaver."

Aaron grabbed the knob on the door and Alan grabbed his arm at the same time. Aaron turned to look at him.

"Victor had me hold onto this to give to you. Told me that you needed to read it before you went in there. Victor also told me that if I said a single thing that was personal that happened on this lunch, he would make sure that I never worked in Secret Service or any government job again. So that tells me that you are serious about this guy. I want to say that Stealey will be happy." Alan's voice was pitched very low so that Seaver couldn't hear him.

"Why would he be?"
"Because once he realized who the FBI suggested and who he was from that night, Stealey is very happy playing matchmaker. That is from him personally so don't worry. I'll make sure that Seaver understands as well."

Aaron opened the door and stepped in. He looked down at the paper and saw that it was the email that Spencer had sent. It was simple and straightforward and nothing in it screamed that Spencer liked Aaron as more than a Senator that he wanted to discuss things with. It was marked as no response needed by a name that Aaron didn't know. There was a handwritten note about Victor looking into it.

"Daddy!" Jack screamed and came running toward Aaron. Aaron grabbed Jack up and swung him up to where Jack was looking down on him. "I want you to meet my new bestest friend."

"Oh really?" Aaron asked, and there was a warmth spreading through Aaron at those words.

"Mister Spencer is very smart, and he knows so much about our house, and I told him all the fun bits about our house."

"Well, that's good. So introduce me to your new bestest friend." Aaron pulled Jack down and settled his son in his arms. Jessica was sitting in a chair while Spencer was on one of the loveseats. Jack wiggled to get down, and he pushed Aaron down into the seat next to Spencer before climbing into Aaron's lap.

"Spencer this is my Dad," Jack said. He grinned at Spencer before looking at Aaron. "Daddy this is Doctor Spencer...Red."

"Reid," Aaron and Spencer corrected at the same time.

"How do you know his name?" Jack asked.

"I know the names of all of the people who are coming to work here."

"Oh. I had fun giving Spencer a tour."

"He's very knowledgeable about the fun aspects of the White House. Including dancing contests and singing ones," Spencer said. He was grinning, and Aaron was glad that he had done this.

"Oh, telling all of my secrets are you?" Aaron asked, and he started to tickle Spencer. The door opened, and Alan came in with a stack of food containers. The door was shut so that no one could see inside and Alan handed out the food. Spencer took his with a small frown. Alan left with no words spoken.

"What's this?"

Aaron lifted the lid on his and found that it was burgers and fries. Two sliders that smelled like they had peppers and pepperjack cheese. Aaron leaned over to look at Spencer's to see one burger and half onion rings and half fries. Aaron couldn't help but steal one of the onion rings. Spencer looked at him shocked.

"I don't like to eat a lot but one every once in a while is good."

"I'll share mine with you, Spencer," Jack said. Jack carefully turned in his father's lap to where he could slip down between Aaron and Spencer, making the two of them press into the arms of the couch.
"Thank you, Jack." Spencer picked up his burger and lifted the top to see what was on it. Aaron saw that there was just cheese and onions. There were a few cups of ketchup in the box, and Spencer popped the lid on one.

Everyone was silent as they ate, even Jessica. Jessica though didn't stop looking at Aaron. When Aaron was done with his burgers, he shifted on the couch and laid his arm on the back. His fingers touched the back of Spencer's neck, and he watched Spencer tense but not do anything else. Jessica's eyes were wide as she took in how Aaron was, but she smiled as Spencer didn't move away from the hand.

"So what are you going to do this afternoon, Spencer?" Aaron asked.

"Jack has talked me into spending it with him and his piano tutor. I've only recently started to play the piano. I like what I have done so far. Miss Jessica has a hair appointment, so Jack asked me to watch him."

"Hmm."

"Come on, Jack lets go get you cleaned up for your lesson," Jessica said when she and Jack were done eating. They left through a door that led into the family area of the White House.

"You could have warned me that my tour guide was a four-year-old boy whose highlights are where you and he get into silly contests and where he once threw up."

"Yes, that statue will never be the same. A new nanny was watching him while Jessica was visiting family and she didn't believe him that he was sick, so she forced him out. I was not happy when word made it back to me that my son had thrown up. She never worked here again, and now we have a cleaning lady who becomes his Nanny if Jessica can't watch him."

"A cleaning lady?"

"Yes, well. Jack escaped from Jessica one afternoon and found him talking to Antonia in a room she was cleaning. Jack likes her, she likes him."

"Does Jack not like a lot of people?" Spencer asked as he dipped a bit of onion ring into the ketchup before eating it. Water had been what the kitchen had sent up for them to drink and Aaron was glad with the heavy calorie content of the food. Jack was allowed to indulge once a week, and the kitchen knew that so this had been a treat for them all.

"No, he really doesn't. I've always thought of having him meet my staff to weed out those that I won't like. We rarely dislike different people."

"So I'm assuming that I passed whatever ritual this was?"

"You did. I couldn't start anything, serious or not if Jack didn't like them."

"And this is serious?"

"Very. Even if I wasn't President, I can't be seen casually dating as a Senator. It's part of why I didn't really do it after Haley. Well, that and a lot of other reasons that my therapist thinks I am over. Trust is a big thing, and you seem to be pretty stable. Working at the same job, your first since college and recently made Lead Profiler. That's a pretty big thing from what I am told. Your jacket was open to me this morning when Stealey went over all of the agents that said yes. Also just to let you know Stealey has you in a different area than the other agents. Your room had no rooms on either side of it that someone will be staying in. I was told that when Stealey was alone..."
with me."

"He knows about-" Spencer waved a finger between them instead of saying it. Aaron nodded. "Why?"

"Because he is good at what he does and the only thing that I can think of is that he overheard Victor and me talking about you at one point. I trust him, and I trust Alan. Alan says that he is going to get Seaver, your agent, in line with it."

"You know that I am out of town more than in it right? I travel for days at a time and can't be relied upon to keep a date."

"A Prime Minister or Dictator or whatever rules a country sneezes, and I'm in meetings for hours. We can make it work if we want it to. We can email or write letters or do whatever we can to keep in contact. Jackson has already offered a phone for you to make sure that you get service anywhere." Aaron set his empty container down and took a long swig of his water before setting it down. He turned to face Spencer all the way and waited for Spencer to clear off his lap as well before Aaron reached behind Spencer’s head to pull him close. Spencer didn't fight him at all and instead tucked a leg up to where he wasn't going to overbalance. Aaron kissed Spencer, and he made sure that he left no chance to the fact that he wanted this.

A knock on the door made them pull apart, and Spencer was breathing hard. Aaron wasn't breathing that steady either, but he had a runner's stamina.

"Let's take the month to get to know one another while I at least have you trapped in my home for the foreseeable future. It'll be quick things here and there, but I'm sure that something can be worked out. Please say yes."

"Yes."
Aaron settled into his desk and worked on some papers that his secretary had dropped on his desk to read. Aaron had done a lot of reading in the months leading up to him being inducted as the President and then the months after as well. Aaron reached for his cup of coffee; he had late meetings, so he had decided to drink coffee all morning before switching to black tea in the afternoon. Aaron set the cup back down after taking a sip, and there was a sound that startled him. Aaron looked and saw that he had hit the button that allowed him to listen to what was happening in the room just outside his office.

"He's young isn't he?" one of the aides asked.

"He's cute," one of the other aides said.

Aaron wondered who they were talking about. Aaron wasn't too young for President; he wasn't even in the top five of youngest to be elected President. He was about average in age.

"He's not an egotistical prick which is what I think of most people who have degrees like he does. He doesn't care if you call him Doctor Reid or Agent Reid," that was from Stephanie, Aaron's secretary. "He's a sweetie. Did you hear that Margo made him blush for the entirety of the presentation he did for the secretarial aides for Senators that he gave?"

"She's eighty!"

"Yeah, she told him if she were forty years younger she would pull him into a closet for a kiss. He blushed for the rest of the presentation and took no more answers from her, even if she was the only one with a hand raised."
"He looks like he needs a good seven minutes in heaven."

"He didn't check any of us out. And I mean anyone who works here. Male or female. Either he
doesn't have a wandering eye, or he is really good at hiding checking someone out."

"I don't know," one of the only male aides that was on shift right now said. His name was Derrick Stevens, and Aaron liked to talk golf with him. He filled in for Stephanie when she was off or sick, or just out of the office.

"What do you mean you don't know," Stephanie asked.

"I've seen him check someone out. He almost ran into a desk watching them pass by."

"Who?"

"President Hotchner."

"Oh, really?" All of the women in the room asked.

Aaron hit the shut-off button on the intercom and groaned. The door from where most of the
Senators and Generals came from opened and Aaron saw that it was the Secretary General and the
Commandant of the Marines. However, seeing Jack with them was a shock. Aaron watched as his
son detailed his plans for the prank he was going to play on Derrick. The two men were listening
with rapt attention. Most of the staff liked to help Jack with his pranks, mainly to make sure that he
didn't do anything to hurt himself or Derrick but this was the first time that Jack had enlisted
someone outside of White House staff.

"Well, Mister Jack, how about we discuss this at lunch?" The Commandant asked.

"Okay. Hi dad," Jack said as he started for the door that led to where the secretaries were talking.
"Bye, Dad."

"Bye, Jack." Aaron smiled and watched his son leave the office.

"He's a spitfire."

"He learned pranks at the hands of his two main uncles, my life manager as he calls himself Victor
Marks and Victor's partner Jackson Grimes. Jackson is horrible because he invents things to help
Jack in the pranks. Usually, it's Jack and Victor versus Jackson or Jack and Jackson versus Victor.
It did not take long for Jack to find someone here to start a prank war with."

"Young Derrick is in for it because the whole of the Joint Chiefs has been wooed to Jack's side. It's
quite interesting to see him talk. You can tell that he's been around very smart people because he
doesn't think or speak like a child of four should."

"So what crisis do we have going on today?" Aaron asked as he closed the folder he had been
looking at. Checking his tablet to see that on his schedule was a full meeting in ten minutes with
the Joints Chiefs, these two coming in meant there was something they wanted to discuss before
the Secretary General left.

"Well..."

Aaron sat in on as many training sessions as he could, no matter who was giving the lecture or
going through the steps. If he made sure that he had time to listen to Spencer's more than anyone
else, no one could say a thing. Aaron was treated to watching Margo flirt with Spencer and the blush that lived on his face afterward.

Spencer was a gifted speaker, once he got over the nerves of talking in front of a group of people. His jokes mostly went over the heads of the staff and the jokes lessened over time. Even just a week into the training for the whole of the White House and Aaron could tell that Spencer was getting more sure of himself.

The staff that was close to Spencer's age had crushes on him and the ones who were older just lusted after him. Margo was harmless. She flirted with Aaron as well and anyone with a pulse really. Her husband had died in Vietnam, and she had followed a Senator from her home state to Washington and just stayed. She had been in the White House as an aide or Secretary for whatever job she wanted for over two decades. She was currently working for her home state Senator again but mainly ran his life more than his own wife did.

Spencer didn't know that Aaron was hiding in the back of the room that was being used as a lecture hall. It was nice to just listen to him talk. Aaron could tell the staff that understood why this was happening and was doing what they could to learn and the staff that didn't like that they were there.

When the Joint Chiefs of staff and the Director of the FBI and Secret Service had met with Aaron to discuss what could be done about the two different attacks on Aaron's motorcades and the threats, Aaron had been the one to suggest that it be staffing wide. The Director of the Secret Service thought that education for just his staff would be best but while the Secret Service was on the front line for everything, when it came to calls and letters and even just talking to people in public, the rest of the White House staff was affected as well.

"Any questions?" Spencer asked. Margo's hand went up, and Spencer sighed. "That has to do with what we talked about today and not if I am available for lunch or dinner today or breakfast tomorrow?"

The whole room laughed, and Margo's hand went down. Aaron understood what the woman was doing, and he appreciated it. No matter the content lectures could be boring. Spencer pointed at a woman who was in the middle of the room. Aaron didn't know her off hand.

"I know that we all signed confidentiality agreements and we were all drilled on what we can and can't talk about when we get home, but it seems like really, we should talk about nothing. Anything can be used by these people."

"It really can, and as evidenced by the cell of terrorists that were connected to the last attack on the President, they are anywhere and can be anyone. Just remember you know the people around you. If you have been on staff for years, you know the questions that are asked and will know if someone is asking more questions than normal. Given the home life of President Hotchner, between raising his son alone and his sexuality, there is a given rise of questions that will be asked, but slowly those will die down. Someone who is wanting more than that, will not stop. If you are new staff, talk to another staffer that has been here a while. If they feel that it's something that needs to be pushed up to the Secret Service, they will tell you. Trust your gut and if you don't, talk to someone."

There were no more questions, so everyone started to file out. Alan grinned at Aaron before he left the room after everyone was gone. Aaron heard the door lock. There was only a single way in or out of the room.

"Did you have a-" Spencer looked up as he started to talk and choked off his words as he saw who it was. "How long have you been in here?"
"Since the beginning, I was strategically placed."

"Where are your guards?"

"Outside. Alan is good at giving me time alone. You are the only one in here, and he's outside the door." Aaron pushed himself up out of the chair and walked to the front of the room where Spencer was cleaning up his things. The laptop that had been provided for Spencer to use was sitting there with notes on the screen. "I know you've been busy since your actual work has started but I wanted to touch base with you and see how you are doing."

Aaron sat down in the chair that was Spencer's and wheeled himself closer to where Spencer was sitting on the edge of the table.

"Good. A few of the Secret Service agents are a little resistant however the rest of the agents are keeping them in line. I know that the others are having the same problems, so I don't feel too bad about it. My youth hinders me a lot in cases like this."

"You have any problems, go to Alan. He will make sure that it's taken care of."

"Alan has already told me that as has Agent Stealey." Spencer looked down at Aaron for a second before looking away.

"Good. Jack's been enjoying the lunches with you as much as you can. Today though he's having lunch with the joint chiefs of staff to work on his plan for pranking Derrick."

"Yes, Mister Marks was telling me about that."

"And why has Victor been talking to you?" Aaron sat up straight in the chair and looked at Spencer.

"I don't know?" Spencer shrugged. He looked unsure of himself for a second. "He was talking to me about my past. Sounding me, I think. Don't know if it was as your friend or as someone concerned about what I could do to your job if I were courting your attention and then going to blab to the press."

"Probably both. Victor and Jackson are very protective."

"You named your son after him?"

"Both of them actually. Jackson Victor Hotchner."

"Mister Marks was talking to me about my past relationships. When I started to ask him about you, he told me that I needed to talk to you about them. I know everything that news reported about your ex-wife."

"Haley, you can say her name. It won't upset me. Jack asks Jessica about her more than he does me. Jack understands that his mother doesn't want anything to do with him. When the news started to talk about her, Jessica talked to him about the fact that he was going to hear horrible things about her but that she wasn't a horrible person just that she didn't want a kid. He's been talking to a therapist some, and since he's not in school formally, it's easy to keep him from most of the news stories."

"Jessica will be homeschooling him won't she?" Spencer scooted closer to Aaron on the desk and Aaron took it as permission to touch. He grabbed Spencer's closest leg and slipped his hand up under Spencer's pants leg. He found a sock and kept going up until he touched skin. Spencer's leg
stilled but he didn't jerk it away from Aaron.

"Yes, it was the plan before I decided to run for President. Before, though, I was going to be hiring a teacher. Jessica is qualified enough, and she's doing some online classes to make sure that she's covered. Georgetown bent over backward to get her what she wanted before I was elected. Jack's in a homeschool soccer group that meets twice a week right now so he will have socialization."

"He's a very bright child, and I think that homeschooling will be good for him."

"Do you really want to talk about my son and ex-wife when we are alone like this?"

"Yes. I usually am not alone like this with anyone that I am dating. I don't invite people to my house until I feel safe enough to. Call it a byproduct of the job. I have never kissed anyone before an actual date either."

"Really?" Aaron asked as he leaned forward. Spencer was blushing and leaning back from where Aaron was getting closer to him. This blush was deeper than the one that he had been sporting from Margo earlier. Aaron really liked him with a blush on his face.

"Yes. You make me want to do stupid things that I have no business doing with a man I barely know much less the President of the United States."

"I won't be President forever. Four years at minimum and eight at maximum, after that I'll go back to being a Senator or something like that."

"Really?"

"I hated politics in the beginning but I've come to like it, and I feel, right now, that there is more I can do. If Virginia will have me as Senator, I'll run again."

"You surprise me every time that we talk," Spencer said.

There was a knock on the door, and Aaron sighed. He looked at his watch. It was time for him to go to a meeting. Victor had probably made sure that Alan knew.

"I've got to go. I want to have a meal with you again, this time without my sister in law and son. Just send word with Alan or Jessica on when." Aaron ducked in quickly and pressed a kiss to Spencer's mouth before he left. Aaron heard the stuttered words that meant nothing in the wake of him leaving. He knew that he wasn't off the hook for the whole Haley thing and he did want to tell Spencer all of it, the truth and the whole truth, not the watered down versions he told the public.

"Hello, loverboy," Alan said as Aaron stepped even with him.

"Keep it quiet."

"I am. I think it's adorable and I've been threatened by your friend Jackson that if I do anything to allow you to screw this up, he's going to make sure that technology never works for me again. As I like my video games and like my new system, I'm not going to do a thing to allow my systems to come to harm. I'll make sure that a date happens in private whenever you want."

"Thanks. He's supposed to send word with you when that is going to happen."

"Good. I'll make sure to talk to him even for a few minutes every day."

"I'll be happy when the teaching sessions are over. My revolving door of agents on me is a little
tiring, but I understand why it's happening. Life as normal would be nice."

"But without it, you wouldn't have got your man."

"He's not my man yet." Aaron laughed as Alan opened the door for him and Aaron saw the group of people who were waiting for a meeting with him. There was going to be a lot of hot air going about in the meeting.

It took just over a week for Spencer to find a room that he liked to read in for his few moments each day of alone time that wasn't in the evening. Lunch had been eaten alone in the same eating area that Spencer had been eating in since he had started to eat lunch in there. He usually read a book, so most people left him alone. Sometimes one or two other agents from the FBI joined him, but it wasn't for long as it was usually as he was finishing up eating.

Today, Spencer had eaten just as lunch was starting to be served and then slipped away. He had three hours before he had to do any teaching and it was the class that gave him the most fits. It was wholly Secret Service agents, and many of them felt that he was too young for them to have to pay any attention to him or actually do anything that he said. He was used to that, local enforcement officers around the country did that to him all of the time. It was basically the standard operating procedure for most men who felt like real men shouldn't do a lot of shit that they really should. It had stopped bothering Spencer a long time ago and every single second of everything done during this large-scale training was being recorded. When some of the recordings were gone over, Spencer was pretty sure that a few people would be reassigned. Spencer had also sent in a few reports to the Director of the FBI about a few Secret Service agents who were racist at best. It did not serve for them to protect the President as there were all walks of life that the President met with. While yes when something happened the Secret Service's job was to protect the President, there were other people around all the time as well, and they were to be protected as well, and a fair few of them were not white.

The door opened, but Spencer didn't pay any attention. Staff was always in and out of rooms, cleaning them and just checking on the rooms in general.

"We need to talk."

Spencer looked to see Agent Olmstead from the Secret Service, one of the agents that Spencer had a hard time with. He had caused a really big scene the day before.

"How can I help you, Agent Olmstead?" Spencer asked as he set down his book and stood up. He wasn't going to give the agent a chance to loom over him. Spencer had six inches on him in height, but the agent was mostly muscle so in weight the agent probably had a good sixty pounds on Spencer.

"You need to leave."

"This room? Gladly."

"No, you need to step aside and let a real agent, a real man take over the class. You and your namby-pamby everyone is a good person attitude. You are trying to make terrorists white, and everyone knows they are niggers, towelheads, or spics."
"As I said yesterday, the two attacks that have happened on President Hotchner have been from white Americans whose families can be traced back to the founding of this country."

"They aren't terrorists, they are trying to save American from people that shouldn't be here and from queers like you. You have made the American people fear their white brethren instead of who they should be fearing."

Spencer knew that he wasn't going to make it out of the room, so he stopped where he was with plenty of distance between him and Olmstead. Someone should have realized that Olmstead was not in the class he was supposed to be in with the Secret Service agents that were not on duty. He hoped that someone found them soon.

"I think it's best if I leave."

"No, you aren't going anywhere until I teach you a lesson."

Spencer thought about the fact that he was going to get his ass kicked in the White House of all fucking places where he should have felt the safest. It was supposedly the safest place in the whole of the United States. Spencer calculated the odds of him making it to the door and out of it and he knew that he had to try. He didn't have his gun on him and thankfully neither did Olmstead. He hadn't been on duty so no weapons for him.

Taking a few steps to his left, Spencer watched to see what Olmstead did. He just rotated instead of moving like Spencer wanted. Spencer's eyes darted trying to find the best route, and the only option he had would hopefully put him against a wall that had someone on the other side of if he kicked it, someone, one would hear.

Spencer darted that way, and Olmstead moved with him. Spencer rushed the door and about six steps from it, Olmstead hit him like a ton of bricks. Spencer's head cracked off the wall, and he was dazed long enough for Olmstead to get a gut punch in. Spencer didn't fight back at all. He knew that Olmstead would be able to use anything on him as a reason for the fight, so Spencer took the four jabs to his stomach while protecting his head from hitting the wall.

Olmstead went for Spencer's groin next, kneeing him in the balls. Spencer doubled over in pain and brought his arms to protect his head and face. The knee tried to hit him there but glanced off of his forearms. The door slammed open, and Spencer heard shouting as he was caught in the stomach by another punch as Olmstead pulled him up but the hair on his head to get at his stomach again. Spencer was jerked forward and tossed to the ground, and he prepared himself for a strike to the stomach from a kick when he heard the discharge of a taser.

"Doctor Reid are you okay?" A voice asked, and Spencer didn't recognize it.

Spencer didn't move at all and flinched back when hands touched him.

"Spencer," a female voice said and that voice Spencer knew. It was Jessica. Soft hands touched his face, and Spencer didn't recoil. "Look at me."

Spencer opened his eyes and turned his head enough to where he could look at Jessica. She looked worried. Behind her was several people, all Secret Service that Spencer recognized from his classes. There was a scream, and Spencer turned to look where it came from and saw Olmstead fighting being put in cuffs.

"That faggot attacked me. He was trying to rape me."

"You don't have a single mark on your skin or hands like you were fighting him off. He did nothing
to you, Olmstead," Alan said. Alan stepped up and pushed Olmstead's eyes to look at him. "We have a recording of every single word you said. Everyone. As soon as you proved to be a threat to him security was dispatched. You just found your way into jail time. Hate crimes are a bitch to get out of. And I will make sure that you see jail time for what you did. Get him the fuck out of here."

Spencer didn't try and move to watch Olmstead get taken out of the room. He focused on Jessica's hand on his face, and that was it.

"Don't move anymore."

"Ribs hurt too much to," Spencer answer honestly. He didn't want to move at all. Spencer groaned as Jessica pressed his head a little.

"Medics are on their way inside," Alan said.

"I don't want to go to the hospital," Spencer said. He had spent too much time in a hospital in his career as an FBI agent.

"Too bad. You were assaulted while on the job by an agent from another agency. You are getting your injuries looked at and documented. He won't go to jail if you don't get your injuries documented."

"Anyone ever tell you that you are an asshole and drive a hard bargain?" Spencer asked.

"Yes, every time I bully the President into doing things that he needs to do and doesn't want to for his own protection. Miss Jessica, thank you for your help and for making sure that we could get into the room after Olmstead locked it."

"He locked it?" Spencer asked.

"Yes. Jessica, though, is getting better in her lock-picking classes with the other agents. She picked the lock after trying to enter the room on her own after Olmstead started to scream." Alan looked towards Jessica, “Jack's probably done with his lesson. If you aren't there, he is going to get upset."

"Okay. Let me know how he is doing?" Jessica asked.

"Of course."

Spencer heard the noise of wheels on the floor and knew that the medics were close. He turned his head a little to look at where Alan was still standing over the top of him and when he did a pain seared in his ribs, and his head throbbed. Spencer's vision grayed out, and he knew nothing.

There was the sound of people talking that alerted Spencer to the fact that he was awake again. Spencer blinked his eyes open, adjusting to the light in the room. He saw that he was alone in a very opulent room. There was a man and a woman standing at the door to his room though, and they were talking low enough to where Spencer couldn't understand them. He tried to sit up but gasped and regretted that when pain flared on his ribs.

"Woah, Doctor Reid," Alan said as he ran toward where Spencer was in bed. Spencer didn't fight it when the man's hands pushed him back down onto the bed.

"Prognosis?" Spencer asked as he remembered what put him in the hospital in the first place. He remembered the look on Olmstead's face when he thought he was going to get to beat Spencer to death.
"Low-grade concussion and one broken and two fractured ribs. All on your right side, lowest three ribs. You are going to be kept here on my orders today and go back to the White House tomorrow morning. There will be around the clock guard on you here as well as there when you are in a room alone until we make sure that no one else is going to attack you. Stealey already has every single person who even thinks about stepping into the White House as an agent tested for this shit. Between the attack on you and the email that your Director received from you just an hour before you were attacked, no one is happy."

"I bet not. Was anyone else hurt?"

"Other than Olmstead? No. He broke away from the agents putting him into the Sedan, and when he took off running, with his arms cuffed behind his back mind you, he tripped over a hose where a gardener was doing some watering and well...he has a dislocated shoulder that he is being treated in his cell for. FBI took over jurisdiction, and well my bosses aren't fighting it. Hate crimes are federal, and there is no way that anyone could spin that anything but a hate crime."

"It's not the first time that someone has made assumptions based on how I dress and how lithe I am about my sexuality. It won't be the last."

"Seaver is going to the store. She found the list of books that you were going to order and is buying them. Most of the agents on duty as well as the ones who didn't realize that he wasn't in class pitched to get them for you so that you have something to read while you are in here."

"She doesn't have to do that, none of you do."

"You were hurt on our watch. I approved him to work in the White House, Spencer. It could have been anyone that he attacked. Why didn't you fight back?"

"Because bullies love to crow when they get hurt. I learned that the second time that a bully attacked me. If I don't defend myself, they can't say that I hit them first. I learned that when I was eleven. That doesn't go away. I had no gun and no way to escape from him. My only hope was making enough noise for someone to come. He had sixty pounds on me, and most of that is muscle."

"Your mind is ever a wonder. The doctor will be in to see you in a few minutes. There is an allergy to beta-lactams and opiates listed in your file. Anything else that needs to be known?"

"Why do you need to know?" Spencer asked.

Alan laughed and raised his hands.

"We have staff in the White House that is to act as sick maids basically. Currently on staff is a lovely young man who is going to school to be a doctor. He works as a nurse right now, and when he is needed, he helps tend to staff. I've already been told to make sure that he's around to help you for the next while. Your ribs are going to have to be wrapped, and you will need to be unwrapped for bathing."

"President Hotchner?" Spencer asked because that sounded like something that he would want. Spencer wondered if he was going to escape without getting a visit from him as well.

"The one and the same. News traveled fast that someone had been attacked. When word got to him that it was you, I was glad that I was the one who got there right after. Jessica kept her mouth shut, but others did not. He's pissed that it was a Secret Service agent that attacked you and that it happened in his house. We are all ashamed that someone with such bigotry managed to get inside
of the White House to work, but we can only deal with the fallout and make sure that it never happens again."

Spencer didn't say anything just closed his eyes and leaned his head back a little more. His head was throbbing, and he knew that he wasn't going to get anything until he convinced the doctor that he was fine. He hoped that Alan would leave soon so that he could do just that. Spencer regretted going to the White House. He had never had another agent from another agency disrespect him like that. Spencer heard Alan walk away from him and he waited until he heard the door shut before he slowly rolled to his left side, hissing in pain a little. Spencer pulled his legs up and debated calling Morgan and having Morgan get him pulled but that would mean telling Morgan that he had been attacked and then having to endure Morgan coming to check on him.

There was a lot to be done, and Spencer did need to go back to the White House to get his shit and to get things ready for a new teacher. President Hotchner would get over it, but it was too much to stay there where everyone hated him.
Spencer was dozing on his bed, the pain meds for his broken and cracked ribs making him a little sleepy. He had not been given anything with a narcotic in it, but the painkillers were strong enough to make him tired. Which was a good thing as when he was not sleepy he wanted to move and that hurt. Seaver had made sure that he had enough books to read and had them piled by the bed. She also had delivered his lunch that day, sitting with him and eating.

Supper was getting closer, and that meant more pills, but until then, the pain was getting worse with every breath. The sound of his outer door opening and shutting had Spencer on alert. His gun was in the safe, and there was no way that he was going to get to the safe in time to have his gun in hand before whoever it was got into his room.

Spencer knew that he had some sort of emotional issue from the attack and a therapist had come to talk to him before he left the hospital. Spencer, however, had not contacted his therapist from where Morgan had got him to talk to one post-Hankel. Spencer wanted to wait until he was home for that and he wanted to go home, not to Morgan's or even JJ's which was where he would be forced to go if he left before he could move around easier. Spencer promised himself that he would get his gun from the safe when he got up to the restroom next.

"Spencer?" A voice called out through the door making Spencer look at the door. It was muffled, but it sounded like the President. Spencer thought about not answering the call and hoping that the man thought him asleep. Spencer really didn't want to face him.

Spencer carefully rolled over on the bed to put his back to the door, thankfully that was his good side so he could stay like that for a while. The door opened, and Spencer tried to make his body relax, but he had to have done something because the President came across the room and sat down on the bed his hand going to Spencer's hip. Spencer hated how good that felt.
"Spencer? I know you are awake. Seaver told me that your pain medicine starts to wear off around now and you can't take more until later."

Spencer didn't move, he barely breathed at all.

"Spencer, please. Don't shut me out."

It was easier to ignore when Spencer was alone. It was easier to give into the darkness in his head and to say that he was going to leave and not come back. The hand on Spencer's hip squeezed, and Spencer sighed. He rolled onto his back, slowly. The President's hand didn't leave him until he was entirely on his back and looking up at him. The President settled his hand on Spencer's stomach, gentle in the touch.

"You've put up a wall between us."

"I'm hurt and in pain, what do you expect me to do?" Spencer asked, looking away from the man.

Spencer counted his breaths as the President didn't say anything to Spencer's words. When he hit one hundred and ten, Spencer turned his head to look at the President.

"You are leaving aren't you?" The President's hand twitched on Spencer's stomach, and Spencer wasn't sure if he wanted the hand to move or to stay.

"It's not personal. I've never had this much resistance, and it's not just Olmstead. It's the fact that many of the people who were here don't see terrorists as anything but white. It's not so much racist as it's that they've never quite put white with someone who would do something like what the people after you are trying to do. There have been two attacks, one public that everything is known about but the second was more personal."

Spencer used his arms to try and sit up in bed, but it pushed at his ribs wrong. Spencer dropped down, breathing hard and a light sweat breaking out on his body. Spencer felt the President get up off the bed only to come back and kneel on one leg beside Spencer. He reached out and laid a hand on Spencer's arms before coaxing Spencer into grabbing the arm with both of his hands. Spencer allowed the President to help him sit up in bed. The man even made sure that his pillows supported his back.

"I have a new appreciation for one of my coworkers, Derek Morgan, who moves like it's nothing when he's had a broken rib."

"The location changes things as well. Where are yours?"

Spencer eyed the President before sighing. "Bottom three. I can understand why that would feel different. The body moves more in that area, organs pushing up and such but it still hurts."

"Alan told me nothing besides the fact that you were not in serious condition. Your private medical information is just that private. There are those that know more, but that's because they need to be nosy to make sure that Olmstead gets the most deserving punishment."

"I'm used to my medical information not being as private as a private citizen's would be. I'm only hurt on the job. I've never been shot, but I have been close."

"Close?"

"On a case in McLean. I had another co-worker with me, but I figured it out too late what was really happening and ran out to save the victim that the UnSub was targeting. My coworker pushed
me out of the way, and she ended up having to shoot him."

"Unknown Subject, yes?"

"Yes. It was coined so that we weren't giving the people we chased the power of naming them. There are some that still get named like the Boston Reaper, but it helps us not deify them to the detriment where the case suffers for it. There are also cases where giving them a name hurts the case for other reasons. Gary Ridgway is a good one. If the people after him had stayed in the Green River, we would have less. There are other cases but those I can't speak about too much."

"All that horribleness. I hate that you see it, but then we never would have met if you didn't." The President reached out with his hand, seemingly wanting to touch but he withdrew it when there was a knock on the door. The President looked at Spencer.

"Come in," Spencer called out and made sure that there was nothing about the way that they were that would set off any vibes. When Seaver entered, Spencer was glad to see a tray in her hand.

"Turkey, bacon, pepper jack cheese sandwiches as well as chips and fruit," Seaver said as she stepped over to the bed and settled the tray over Spencer's lap. Spencer kicked down the legs on the tray and waited for her to put it down all the way before he grabbed a bottle of pop. He realized that there were two sets of everything on the tray and looked at Seaver. "For you and President Hotchner."

Seaver left with no other words spoken, leaving Spencer alone with the President.

"You know that this isn't going to help with the feelings of why I was attacked."

"I refuse to hide what I am, but I am upset that one of the people who I was trusting to protect myself, Jack, and Jessica was so overcome that he attacked you. I've already had the Secret Service, as well as the Uniformed Division, run through for other bigots."

"One bigotry goes hand in hand with another, and you can't pick the delegates sent from other countries, so they have to protect without bias," Spencer said. He sighed and picked up his bag of chips before opening them carefully. "I've had no problem with the Uniformed Division members that I have met, but as there are a vast amount of them that work in and around DC, all of the lectures are recorded for them to view at a time when they can. There are specific teams that I have met with and such. They are a good group of people. The sniper division was pleased to have me speak to them. There wasn't a lot of information that I could give the EOD, but they at least listened."

"That's good. Eat so you can take your pills when it's time." The President moved the plate with the sandwich and fruit on it just a little bit closer to Spencer. "I'm surprised that none of your team has tried to visit you."

"I've not notified them yet. I will when I can move around better because then I can go and see them instead of having them come here."

"And you don't want them to come here?"

"Not really because it's not fair because our technical analyst can't come. Kevin Lynch is his name, and he was blocked by the CIA when we helped on a case of theirs when we went onsite and Stealey already told me that Lynch wasn't getting anywhere near here either. I wouldn't want him feeling left out. So I thought that as soon as I can move and walk without severe pain, I'll go to Quantico and visit them. Let them see that I am fine. I'm sure that the attack has already made
"news there but given that Morgan hasn't descended on this place that the name of the attacked agent hasn't spread."

"The FBI wants that suppressed for a various amount of reasons as well as why the agent was attacked. Until they have a full case against him. The audio picked up your responses as well so it won't blow back at you at all."

"You hope," Spencer said.

"You think that someone would be stupid enough to put you at fault for this?"

"Stupider things have happened, and the bigotry against homosexual men is widespread. It takes one good lawyer with a good defense that he felt that just being in a room with me meant that he feared for his person to get the jury or judge to his side and it's anyone's guess on what would happen."

"You know, I thought that your mind was a thing of pure beauty. I've listened to a lot of your lectures, and your scientific mind has allowed for almost no bias to invade your thinking. However, that means an ability to see both sides and to fear the worst and plan for the best. That has to be tiring. You would have made a good lawyer."

"My father was a lawyer. I thought for a few years about becoming one as well to show him up, but in the end, I didn't want that and stuck with just getting degree after degree."

There was silence after Spencer's minor confession. The both of them ate their sandwiches and most of the fruit. The chips were all gone as well. The silence wasn't oppressive but friendly, comfortable in a way that it shouldn't be.

"My father was a lawyer," The President said after he finished off his fruit. Spencer looked up at him as he laid down, resting his chest above Spencer's ankles. It was intimate to Spencer in a startling way, that Spencer allowed it and that the President did it without asking. Spencer covered his silence by taking the last drink of his pop.

Spencer was dressed for the day, even if he didn't get out of the bed too much. He hated laying around alone in a room with his pajamas on. The button-up shirt was for ease of getting it on more than anything else.

"He was a great lawyer, and his professional side was perfect. It was his home life that lacked."

"I've seen the allegations that some news channels and papers had put out. I don't generally believe that stuff but..." Spencer stopped and looked down at his hands, useless with nothing to do. There was fruit on his plate to eat still, but he was full. Spencer shoved the plate toward the President. He grabbed a piece of pineapple and popped it into his mouth.

"But?"

"Seeing you with your son in the news, seeing some of your body language when asked questions. Of course, the press conference you gave after your brother's outing of you, that was the most telling. It was the first one I actually watched instead of just reading the transcript."

"For body language?"

"Yes."

The President sat up on the bed barely moving it. He grabbed the tray and set it down on the floor,
snagging the last two pieces of fruit. One was a grape and the other another piece of pineapple. He held out the pineapple to Spencer who couldn't refuse it. The President's fingers brushed at Spencer's lips as he drew his fingers away. He scooted up the bed to where he was sitting right at Spencer's hip.

"Don't," Spencer said when the President leaned in for a kiss.

"Why? Give me a good reason and I won't." The President didn't lean back but stayed right there, with their faces a scant two inches apart.

"I won't be able to say no."

"Say no? You just did."

"When I tell you that I am leaving and you ask me to stay, I won't be able to say no."

"Do you really want to leave? Do you want to stop this before it really starts?"

"I-" Spencer bit his lip after stopping. He wanted to look away. There were so many better reasons that he could give, but none of them came to mind.

"I want to figure out if this can become something wonderful but if you leave, I can't do that so I'll fight dirty." The President leaned in before Spencer could say anything and kissed Spencer. Spencer reached up and cupped the back of the President's head holding him close.

Spencer inhaled too deeply, and pain flared on his side. He pulled out of the kiss and grabbed his side.

"Sorry," they said at the same time.

"Not your fault," Spencer said. He leaned back on the pillows, stretching his chest and stomach out some. "I knew not to breathe that deep."

The President smiled before leaning in a to press a kiss against Spencer's cheek. "You are ever a wonder."

Spencer blushed at those words.

"Jack wants to come visit and talk about otters again. I told Jessica to ask, but I saw you first so send word with Seaver about when you would like to visit with him."

"Lunch tomorrow if I can get a good burger."

"Jack's going to want what you get so I'll give up burger meal with Jack so you can have it."

"Oh, no." Spencer shot forward and grimaced as the pain flared again. The President pushed Spencer back and rubbed at Spencer's neck as he breathed through the pain.

"Don't worry. I still get taco night with him. That you are not taking away."

"Are you sure?"

"I like taco night better than burger meal. So yes I am sure." The President cocked his head to the side and looked at Spencer. "You don't think of me as Aaron do you?"

Spencer felt his face heat up at the words and knew that it was answer enough when the other man
laughed.

"You did build a wall. I'm glad I came tonight. Alan tried to talk me out of it but I think that if I had come tomorrow, you would have been set to leave and nothing I said could have stopped you."

"It's hard to change my mind when it's fully set. You did come at the right time because I still had doubts. I've never left a job unfinished."

"Is it time for your pills?" Aaron asked. Spencer was trying to think of him more as Aaron and less as the President. It would be too easy and Spencer kind of worried about that. He usually wasn't that attached to anyone that quickly before. It was seductive to forget that Aaron was the President and that outside of the White House no one would be that happy about the relationship.

"Yes. I have bottles of water in the fridge, and the pills are in a bottle in my bathroom. Help me up, and I can get them."

"No. I'll do it. I can do it to make up for making you hurt, twice."

Spencer relaxed back and watched Aaron as he went to the bathroom to get the pills and then grabbed a bottle of water out of the fridge.

"Muscle relaxer and painkiller right?"

"Yes. I take one muscle relaxer in the morning so that I can get dressed and such and then in the evening so I can shower and sleep."

Spencer took the bottle of water first, cracking it open and taking a sip to wet his mouth before he picked up the pills. Aaron watched him as he did it and Spencer wasn't sure why. If he was afraid of Spencer hurting himself or he just really wanted to watch him do something so mundane.

"I'll leave you alone now. Let you relax before the nurse comes to unwrap your ribs so you can shower. Did you need anything before I leave?"

"No. I have books on hand, and I'll be fine. Thank you."

"For what?" Aaron asked as he stood up. He looked perplexed.

"For caring."

"Don't have a lot of experience with people that care?"

"Other than my team. No. That's something for another time though. When I can drink or something."

"Okay." Aaron ducked down and pressed a chaste kiss to Spencer's lips. Spencer pressed up into the kiss as much as he could before settling back down. Aaron stopped at the bedroom doorway and looked back at Spencer with such a look of longing on his face.

Spencer closed his eyes and thought about a world where Aaron wasn't President and Spencer, and he could have had an average start of a relationship.

Aaron exited Spencer's rooms and saw the nurse heading toward him. The man only nodded at Aaron before knocking on Spencer's outer door. Aaron made himself keep going to not listen if Spencer called out to the nurse.
Alan was halfway down the hall, where he could watch the door to Spencer's room but be at a
distance enough to not hear anything. Aaron couldn't help shake his head at that.

"Afraid of what you were going to hear?" Aaron asked.

"No, Doctor Reid seems likes someone who would throw things if he was pissed off and if I heard
that, I would have to come and rescue the Princess."

"And who is the Princess in your mental scenario?"

"I plead the fifth. You can fire me and Doctor Reid in a snit kind of scares me."

"I didn't ask him but do you know why he didn't fight back?" Aaron asked. It was the only thing
with what happened that had Aaron confused. While Spencer's file that Aaron had read, just the
work sections, said that he was capable when he needed to be there was no reason why he
shouldn't have fought back.

"You made a comment once that there was one type of person that you hated more than any others,
besides racists and bigots but that most of those two types of people were also a third."

"Bullies."

"What are bullies good at?"

"Playing victims. He let Olmstead break his ribs and bruise his stomach so that Olmstead couldn't
claim that Spencer had attacked first?" Aaron asked. Alan said nothing. Aaron thought about it, and
it made a lot of sense. He knew that Olmstead had tried to counter that Spencer had tried to rape
him and he held to that even two days later and with the audio in glaring reality. It was insane that
Olmstead really thought that anyone would buy that. Olmstead had a lawyer, but the woman was
no Government issue. In fact, it seemed that the Secret Service and the government, in general, had
abandoned him. Aaron was sure that the woman had a time on her hands getting the man to see
reason.

"Doctor Reid has a good mind," Alan said as he opened up the door that led to the private section
of the White House. Jack and Jessica would be in there, and Aaron really wanted to cuddle with
Jack. Alan shut the door as soon as Aaron was clear of it. Aaron could drop the mantle of President
in his private quarters. He could be the father that he wanted to be and the friend to Jessica that she
needed.

Aaron looked at the time. There was still over an hour before Jack had to go to bed, so Aaron
slipped into his study without Jack seeing him. Something was nagging Aaron about Spencer and
while he could ask and he was a little ashamed of himself for even accessing things that he really
shouldn't. Aaron wanted to understand something, and he didn't want to hurt Spencer by asking
him.

The complete files on all of the agents were accessible by Aaron, he just hadn't done it. He found
Spencer's file, and it was long compared to some of the agents that had been in their agencies for
longer than Spencer. However, it was the older part of the file that Aaron wanted to know about.
Spencer's childhood.

Aaron found his school files, college and high school and his short stint in grade and middle
school. There were also files on his parents. Aaron looked at the list of addresses for both of them
and the years. William Reid had left his wife and child and moved a handful of miles away when
Spencer was ten. Diana Reid's address didn't change for a long time after and then it was an address
with a link. Aaron hovered over the link but didn't click it. Bennington Sanitarium. Aaron looked at the change of date and looked at Spencer's birth year. Spencer had put her in, or she had gone into Bennington willingly on the day that Spencer turned eighteen. Aaron was pretty sure that it wasn't willingly as it was the day that Spencer turned eighteen. The point where he could legally force her.

That was enlightening in a lot of ways. One, Aaron hated William Reid, and he had never met the man. Two, Spencer was a lot stronger than he seemed. The only way to interpret Spencer’s childhood was that he graduated early and gone to college while dealing with a mother who should have probably been in Bennington long before she went. Aaron didn't understand why William hadn't taken Spencer with him. If Diana was to that point and it was why William had left, he was one of the worst father's in the world without ever raising a hand to his son.

Diana Reid's diagnosis was listed in her file. Schizophrenia. Hard for an adult to cope with a loved one with it but impossible for a child to do so without some kind of damage. Aaron closed the file and looked at Spencer's again. His years at college and notes on his sexuality. There was nothing confirmed. Hell, up until he joined the FBI there was a note that he had no sexual leanings at all. Someone quirky had to have made the most recent notation on his sexuality that he was something called Demi or just attracted to intelligence.

"Going to hide all night?" Jessica asked.

Aaron looked up to see her leaning on his study door.

"You know the more I learn about humanity in general, the more I am disgusted."

"This about Spencer?"

"You know I thought that at one point that my father was the worst there could be. Some though can damage without leaving physical scars."

"They can. There are not many who can take a beating like Olmstead gave Spencer for the reasons that Olmstead gave and not come out of it damaged in some way. I wouldn't be shocked if he was shy about anything with you for a while."

"He was going to leave. Stop on this joint task force and leave. He wants to do lunch tomorrow. He wants a good burger so find Seaver and get one from that place that we all love. The doctor hasn't cleared him for back to work until the day after. Don't let Jack hurt him."

"I won't. Come and spend some time with your son. It will make you feel better about life in general."

"He let me kiss him. If it wasn't for his ribs, I think that I could have got further." Aaron grinned at Jessica as he stood up.

"You know, I think that not pressuring for sex is the way to go with this one."

"Not sex just...more kissing. I don't want to rush that with Spencer. No, he wanted more, I think, but his ribs stopped him."

"I am happy to see you liking anyone, even if you did not contact him for months. I thought after what Haley did and then leaving you with Jack, you might never allow yourself to like anyone again."

"I know it's why you stayed away from me. You were afraid that you being around me would hurt
me but I never blamed you for what Haley did, Jess. You were always a better sibling than Sean.” Aaron wrapped his arms around Jessica in a hug. Jessica had never pulled punches, with Haley or with Aaron. She told them both when they were being assholes or hurting each other. Jessica had been livid when she had found out about the string of lovers that Haley had, after pushing Aaron to take more active political roles. Aaron always wondered if she did that so she could have the prestige as well as have time for her affairs.

"I know you didn't, but I think that you needed a break from all of the Brooks family. We did a lot of damage to you before the end of the divorce and then with Jack after that. The distance was better. I'm glad that you let me get to know my nephew though."

"I would never have kept him from any of you. He deserves his family."

"My father is an asshole. I'm glad that you had that gag order as part of the divorce decree for the entire family. I am unsure of what Haley or my father would have said to the news when you ran for Senator, much less President." Jessica hugging Aaron back tightly before she let go.

"So what is Jack doing?"

"Letter tracing. He caught Spencer writing a letter to his mom a few days back, that's when otters were brought up. So Jack wants to be able to write you letters when you go overseas for things."

"Really?"

"Yes. He's taking to learning his letters well. I had been working on just getting him to know and recognize the alphabet, but he was soaking it all up so fast I'm glad that he wanted to learn how to write."

"How is he doing on reading?"

"Very well. We are up to high-level books, with you reading to him starting when he was a baby as well as his nanny, he already has a great grasp on learning the hard words. Those workbooks that Spencer mentioned are wonderful. Jack loves them to bits."

"Where did he come by them?"

"Something to do with his Godson, that's all he said. I take it that he and Jack are pretty close in age."

Aaron nodded and thought back to the file. "Actually Jack is older than Henry by exactly 21 days. The file I have looked at on Spencer states that he is pretty damned close to his Godson."

"So if this works out, Jack and Henry, was it? They'll be friends?" Jessica asked.

"Yes, I believe that they will." Aaron smiled at the thought. Aaron knew that Jack would find friends on the soccer team that he was going to be a part of, but he wasn't going to be going to school with other kids. Having a friend that is his solely because they want to be could be really good for him.

Aaron and Jessica entered the living room area of the suite that was only for family and watched Jack as he copied over letters from a page on the left side to the right. He was doing it so slowly, and his tongue was peeking out from behind his lips. To Aaron, he was never more adorable. Aaron took a picture, knowing that the sound of the phone taking the picture would disrupt Jack. Jack looked up, and his mouth crept into a grin.
"Hold on, Daddy, I'm almost done." Jack turned back to the page and finished the row before he dropped his pencil down and came running. Aaron picked up Jack and slung him up to where Jack was looking down at him from the apex of Aaron's reach. Jack was giggling and trying to wiggle. Aaron let him drop and caught him in his arms to where they were face to face. "Come look what I did today, Dad."

"Okay." Aaron walked over to where the workbook was and settled onto the floor in front of it so that Jack could grab it. Jack pulled it to the edge of the coffee table and flipped to the front of it. Aaron saw the age was six-years-old and looked at Jessica. Jessica smiled and nodded.

Aaron listened for half an hour to what Jack was saying, going over every single word that he learned. Jack started to yawn when he got to the last page that he had been working on. Aaron pulled the book from his son's hands and stood up, starting toward the bedroom that was Jack's. Jack didn't fight going to bed at all, except when Aaron tried to leave, so Aaron read him another chapter before turning off the light and leaving Jack alone.

Jessica wasn't in the living room anymore, and Aaron didn't feel that he needed to track her down. Instead, Aaron walked to his set of rooms. Aaron wanted to take a shower and use it to relax before he went to bed. He needed a good night of sleep to be the man he needed to be for the American people.
Aaron knew that the FBI's presence inside of the White House was coming to an end. Spencer had already been there just over three weeks. Aaron found himself very upset at that. He didn't want Spencer to leave, but there was no way that Spencer would choose any posting that took him away from the BAU forever.

Jack liked Spencer as a friend and Aaron made sure that Jack wasn't aware that he and Spencer were sort of dating. After Spencer left the White House, it would be awhile before Spencer came back for a visit because if he did, the relationship would be out there. Jack would get too attached to Spencer if the relationship were known.

"Where is your head?" Victor asked as he pushed a bite of salad into his mouth.

"When the end of the week happens."

"Jackson warned me that you get attached way to quick, but I didn't think. You'll be able to talk to him still. It won't be seeing him in the flesh, but it'll have to do."

"I know. I can't quit my job to follow a man that I'm not even sure a relationship would work with. I'm just a little upset and melancholy."

"You are allowed to be. You didn't expect this, and after what happened to you with Haley, you are deserving of happiness."

Aaron smiled at Victor. The timeline for Spencer's last week in the White House was empty for
Aaron. He didn't have anywhere to go thankfully so Aaron could eke out time to spend it with Spencer in the evenings.

Since the attack and Spencer going back to work, Spencer was never seen alone anywhere. If Aaron had a say in it at all, Spencer wouldn't have gone back to work as early as he did, which had still be longer than Spencer wanted to be away. The thing was that it wasn't Seaver or any of the Secret Service that was with him, it was other FBI agents that where there. They were on him like glue.

Aaron had no clue what had made it out of the White House about who was attacked, but none of Spencer's team had arrived to check him out. Aaron was sure that calls had been placed.

There was the weekend coming and Aaron knew that Spencer had plans with his Godson that involved a new bookstore and a museum trip. Alan had reported that back to Aaron after hearing the younger man make plans.

"So, Jessica told me that you are waffling about having him come to your rooms for a date," Victor said after Aaron had been silent for too long.

"I want it to happen, yes but I don't know if he wants it to, and I don't want to pressure him into it."

"He doesn't strike me as the type to do it if he doesn't want to. If you want, this can be like high school. I can go and ask him if he would go steady with you." Victor was grinning as he said the words and Aaron wanted to smack that grin right off of his face. Aaron settled for throwing a pepper strip at him. Victor caught it and ate it, still grinning.

"You are getting snarky. I think that you need to go and visit Jackson for a week."

"Sick of me already? It's only been two months!" Victor frowned and settled back into his chair with a pout. "You don't love me anymore!"

"I don't know why Jackson puts up with your theatrics," Aaron said as he was grinning. He knew that Victor was doing it to make Aaron smile. Aaron reached over and snagged two of the pepper strips from Victor's lunch. Jack was on a health kick, and so all sides were veggie based and not potato or any starch. Aaron didn't mind it, thankfully he liked raw vegetables.

"Because he loves me and we have complementary kinks. I may not like to have sex, but I love to watch him fuck."

"Freak," Aaron whispered with a smile. Victor grinned before letting his face fall to resting as the door opened. Aaron looked at the time. His next appointment was early, but then Aaron wasn't shocked about that. He was certain that some of the Senators from other states were wanting to see if they could catch him fucking on the desk inside the Oval Office.

Aaron didn't get to put Jack to bed that night, hell, he didn't get to see his own wing of the house until after even Jessica had gone to bed. Aaron pulled his tie off and stopped in the small sitting room because there was someone in there. Aaron frowned at the shape on the couch. The room was dark, and not even the ambient light from the windows showed who it was. Aaron flicked on a wall light to see that it was Spencer, asleep on the couch with a book spread over his chest like he had been reading it and fell asleep.

Not wanting to disturb Spencer yet, Aaron fixed himself a single finger of scotch with an ice cube. Walking to the couch, Aaron lifted Spencer's legs and sat down before laying them on his lap. Spencer wasn't wearing shoes so Aaron was treated to the sight of two different socks, both in
The door opened, and Alan stepped inside, when the man saw Aaron on the couch he nodded and stepped back out. Alan must have been the one keeping Spencer company until he was presumably called away. Alan wouldn't go far, but he would give them privacy.

"Spencer," Aaron said as he shook Spencer's foot slightly. Spencer huffed in his sleep, and the book slid off of his chest. Spencer bolted up when the sound of the book hitting the floor echoed around the room. He was wearing his glasses, and so it wasn't hard for his eyes to focus on Aaron at the other end of the couch.

"Sorry, Alan was talking to me." Spencer looked around for Alan. "Where is he?"

"I think that you fell asleep talking to him. He just came to check on you. I've just sat down myself."

"Alan had me reading over some letters this afternoon after my last session with the press staff."

"He said that he wanted you to read them over. And?"

"Not the same group but a group that wants the attention of being like the other group." Spencer started to swing his legs off of Aaron's lap, but Aaron pinned them down. Spencer gave Aaron a half-hearted glare but relented and after a few seconds laid back down. He looked at his side for the book, and when it wasn't on the couch, he looked on the floor and picked it up. Aaron looked at his glass of scotch and tossed it back. He limited himself to only a single glass when alone at in his own rooms in the White House. During state dinners and other official functions, it was up to three glasses of wine with food and never anything harder.

"Victor will push this tomorrow if I don't ask today. Spencer, would you like to have dinner with me? Alone tomorrow?" Aaron swallowed, his eyes on the empty glass in his hand. This relationship was one of the strangest that he had ever been in and that was saying something given a few of the ones that he had in college when he had Haley had been off again and then on several times. Aaron had felt back then that being in a horrible relationship was better than being alone. The divorce had taught him differently.

Aaron felt fingers on his chin, and he followed the pressure. Spencer was sitting up again, leaning in toward Aaron. Aaron swallowed because Spencer's face was unreadable.

"I thought that the President of the United States of America was supposed to be all stoic in the face of bad news?"

"With things like the fate of the country and her people, yes. With the fate of my heart? It's hard to be." Aaron owed Spencer honesty because at the moment there was little else that he could give him.

"Yes, Aaron Hotchner I'll have dinner with you tomorrow. However, it's taco night, and I expect these tacos that Jack raves about."

"I'll eat a little bit with him and then do a bigger meal with you. Are you okay with it being a little later in the evening so that I don't miss time with Jack?"

"That's perfectly fine. I should go to bed. Alan had me come in here with him because he wanted to talk privately and didn't trust his office. I think though that he was setting me up for you to ask me out."
"He and Victor are very buddy-buddy right now. It's like I became President to get a boyfriend."

"Well, you started this, so you get to deal with your friends being all in your relationship." Spencer laid down again, and his eyes seemingly started to drift shut of their own accord. Aaron shook his leg, and Spencer's eyes shot open. "I think I better get all the way up."

"I think that it might be a good idea." Aaron let go of Spencer's legs and watched Spencer get up, book in hand. Aaron was shocked though when he slipped the book back on Aaron's shelf.

"I'll read it another time," Spencer said with a smile.

Aaron stood up and settled his drink onto the drink cart before catching Spencer with an arm around his waist. Aaron stayed gentle to not disturb Spencer's still healing ribs. Spencer turned in Aaron's hold and his eyes locked onto Aaron's before dropping down to his lips. Aaron gave a small smirk before he leaned down to take what Spencer wanted.

Pulling back before he wanted, Aaron nuzzled the side of Spencer's face. Aaron used that to hide his yawn. When he pulled back, he saw Spencer covering a yawn of his own with his hand.

"I'll send word for when dinner is, please don't feel like you need to dress up."

Spencer yawned again before pressing a simple kiss to Aaron's lips. Aaron watched him near stumble out of the room and there Alan was to escort him to his room. Aaron was glad of that. The kiss was a little shocking to Aaron, the natural affection of it and it helped settle Aaron on the fact that Spencer wasn't just playing with Aaron's heart.

Jack was a bear to get down after a night of tacos and a movie. The audience for the movie was more prominent than usual as Aaron was relegated to the love seat with Jessica as Jack and his menagerie of stuffed animals, creatures, and people were taking up the rest of the couch.

When Aaron had got back to the rooms after a day of meetings in the Pentagon, Aaron had found the stuffed menagerie on the couch already, and Jessica had the stuff for their tacos ready. Aaron had planned on having the kitchen prep the taco meat for his date that night, but Jessica had canceled that order and the meat for later was on the back of the stove ready to be rewarmed up closer to when Spencer was going to get there. Everything cold was cut and in the fridge and Jessica's guacamole was prepared as well.

Aaron had kissed Jessica's cheek for that. Aaron loved her guacamole, and it made the tacos worth eating. He also liked the way that she made her taco meat which Aaron had found out after taco nights started was the way that her mother had made it and that's why Haley had made it that way as well. Instead of using as much water to help the meat thicken, salsa was used with just a little water, and then after the meat was cooked, the refried beans were added in. It tasted better than any taco meat Aaron had ever eaten outside of an actual Mexican restaurant.

"Want me to disappear all the way?" Jessica asked as Aaron shut the door to Jack's room.

"You don't have to. He's not staying the night."

"Really?" Jessica asked.

"There is no sense in pushing this that far this early."

"So you have really grown up," Jessica said with a grin.
Aaron stuck his tongue out at her before going toward the living room. Alan was going to make sure that Spencer wasn't hassled as he made it through to Aaron's kitchen. Aaron had started to set up the bar area where he wanted to eat dinner. He was starved, and the tacos he had earlier were just a small appetizer.

Jessica's laughter followed Aaron all the way there. The meat was already warming up on the stove, and there was a bottle of wine in a bucket full of ice. A note on it said that it would pair well with the tacos and to have a fun night. Aaron blessed his sister-in-law before double checking everything in the fridge was where he thought it was.

"Aaron?" Alan called out as a door was opened. The door was shut before Aaron could respond. "I've got your lover boy!"

"Call me boy another time Alan, and you'll find out how little of a boy I really am," Spencer deadpanned.

Alan's laughter was sharp and smooth, and Aaron could even hear a short laugh from Spencer. Aaron came around the corner into where Spencer and Alan were only to stop in his tracks. Spencer wasn't dressed in a suit like he had been all day but had changed out of it, mostly. Gone were the dress pants replaced with a pair of deep blue, nearly painted on blue jeans. The dress shirt was the same, pale lilac with dark purple threading. There was no tie, but the vest had been swapped to a soft looking sweater vest. Spencer's hair was tousled to look like he had messed it up after getting out of the shower and hadn't done a thing to it after.

"Hi," Spencer said as he looked at Aaron who had only ditched his tie and suit jacket and unbuttoned the top two buttons on his shirt. He hadn't even felt like changing before eating dinner with Jack.

"Hi," Aaron said back.

"And I'm not needed anymore. Have a good night you two." Alan left with no other words said.

"You look good," Aaron said as he stepped up to welcome Spencer with a kiss.

"Thanks." Spencer was blushing, so Aaron kissed him, gently. "You look good too. I like this."

Spencer's fingers tangled in the open collar of Aaron's shirt. His fingers curled briefly in the small bit of chest hair that was visible.

"Hungry?" Aaron asked because if they didn't eat, Aaron was going to go back on his words to Jessica.

"Starving."

Aaron was silent as he prepared his tacos for eating. Spencer shocked Aaron by picking up five shells and making them up with a lot of the ingredients.

"I was released to work out again without having to worry about hurting my ribs too much. So I ran a few miles on the track this afternoon between lectures. I'm ravenous."

Spencer piled a handful of cheese on the plate but didn't put any on his taco. He looked around and saw the bucket of wine and turned back to look at Aaron.

"That would be Jessica. She said it should go well with tacos."
Spencer laughed but set his plate down before picking up the wine to pop the cork. By the time that Aaron sat down, Spencer had two glasses full and the bottle was back in the bucket.

The dinner was nice. A few topics that were personal were discussed and even a little bit of current events. Despite the near sixteen years difference in their ages, Aaron found that Spencer was a damned good debater and his knowledge on really random shit was astounding. It was one of the best first dates that Aaron had ever been on and that meant that it was over way too soon.

Spencer insisted on helping Aaron wash up the dishes, so that gave them another fifteen minutes of time together. There were enough taco items left to have lunch the next day for Jessica and Jack or maybe even breakfast for Aaron. The wine was gone, and the bottle in the recycle bin after Spencer rinsed it out.

Aaron would typically walk his date to their door but that wasn’t possible and Aaron didn't want to tempt himself by having Spencer walk him to his bedroom door.

"I had a perfect time tonight, but I do need to get going. I have a meetup with a few other agents to do their morning run with them on the grounds. So I need to get a good night's sleep. Austin has offered to have drinks and croissants ready for us when we get done running. He likes to run at lunchtime, so he's getting up right about when we are done with our run."

"What do you run in?" Aaron asked, stepping close to Spencer to kiss him goodnight.

"A T-shirt and shorts." Spencer looked at Aaron with a weird look on his face, but when Aaron waggled his eyebrows at him, Spencer started to blush. "Tight lycra running shorts. Morgan got them for me as a joke when I started to run, and I think that he was shocked that I wore them at all much less that I still do."

"I've seen the group that runs in the morning. I'll have to make sure to keep an eye out for you." Aaron cupped Spencer's cheeks before kissing him. Aaron wanted to take it to more, wanted it to be something for Spencer to remember the night by but he lost the urge as this kiss was perfect the way that it was. "Goodnight, Spencer."

"Goodnight, Aaron." Spencer pressed a two-second kiss to Aaron's lips before turning to leave.

Aaron knew that he was in trouble because Spencer was perfect and Aaron's heart was already falling way too fast, but he didn't want to stop it for the world.

Spencer sipped at his latte as he read over the morning's paper. He was used to early mornings again with running with fellow agents in the dawn hours. He had been watching people but stopped when he kept getting weird looks. He was seated at a table for ten and had been alone for over a half an hour. The restaurant wasn't busy, so when he had showed up early, the waitress had seated him at the table that JJ had reserved.

However, everyone who had arrived after now thought that he was being stood up.

"PEN!" Henry near yelled as JJ, Will, and he entered the restaurant. The staff laughed, used to the way that the team was when they ate there.

"Henry," Spencer said quickly setting down his latte, so it wasn't spilled on either one of them. He crouched down and held his arms out to catch his godson. Spencer stood up with him in his arms, wincing a little as it pressed on his still healing ribs but he didn't care. "I missed you so much."

"I missed you so much too."
Henry didn't seem to be letting go so Spencer moved him to the side and held out his arm for a hug from JJ. Will shook his hand as soon as JJ stepped back.

"So the four of us. Rossi, Prentiss, Lynch, Anderson, and Morgan is nine. Who else is joining us because Harley asked who was our tenth as we are always nine."

"Well, you know how we all have wondered if it was just becoming Unit Chief after the whole him and Rossi were sharing it for so long or if he had found someone to settle him down?" JJ said as she took the seat beside Spencer at the table. Spencer had taken one of the ends instead of a side seat, not wanting people to move behind him. His back was to a wall, and he was content with that for the moment.

"And I assume since it's ten and you bring that up that we are meeting this person?"

"Savannah Hayes is her name, and that is all we know about her."

"Oh, I know her," Spencer said.

"What?" JJ asked.

Spencer sat down in his seat, pulling Henry to his lap. Henry carefully picked up Spencer's cup and took a tiny sip. He grimaced as he downed that sip. Spencer laughed. Henry really wanted to like the way that his Godfather took his coffee but he was still to young to even think about drinking much coffee. Sips though didn't hurt.

"She's an ER doctor."

"Why were you in the ER?" Will asked as he finally sat down as well. Harley set down their usual drinks as well as a fresh latte for Spencer and a small hot chocolate for Henry that looked exactly like Spencer's latte.

"I assume that you guys heard about the big kerfuffle at the White House."

"FBI agent and a Secret Service agent got into it. That's all we heard," JJ said. She frowned. "You got in a fight?"

"Can't call it a fight when the other guy attacks and I don't defend myself. He was a bully who wanted to correct me of my homosexual ways just because I was the lead person on the homegrown terrorist seminars and such. He seemed to be of a like mind that American people wouldn't become terrorists if those of other religions besides Christianity and people other than white weren't in the country. I was the target because he thought he could scare me. I took what he gave and never raised my hand. He was tased by his own co-workers. I had some breaks and fractures to my ribs, but that is it."

"And you didn't tell us?"

"I was going to, and then you guys ended up on that case, and I knew that if I told you and didn't let you guys see me you would worry. Every time that we had plans, a case came up."

"I know. Still." JJ pouted at Spencer before she smiled.

The door to the restaurant opened, and Anderson, Lynch, and Prentiss entered. Spencer was glad that Henry was on his lap, so he only had to suffer a half hug from Prentiss and a handshake from Anderson and Lynch. Rossi came while Harley was dropping off the newcomer's drinks, leaving Morgan and his girlfriend to arrive last.
"Doctor Reid?" A voice asked as Spencer was listening to Henry tell him about his day in preschool the day before. Spencer looked up to see Doctor Hayes standing there with Morgan.

"Hello, Doctor Hayes. Up, Henry." Spencer bounced his leg, and Henry giggled before slipping into the empty seat on Spencer's other side.

"Pretty Boy, how do you know my girl?" Morgan asked.

"I survived a fight with a racist, homophobic asshole with only a few broken and cracked bones. Your lovely girlfriend was the one to patch me up."

"Survived a fight? Not picked a fight?"

"No more than being genius can pick a fight with a small minded person."

Morgan laughed and stepped up to hug Spencer. Spencer gave into the hug with grace, feeling a little better for it for once. He had missed Morgan. Morgan cupped the back of his head, not letting him leave the embrace of his arms until he was ready to let him go.

"So Pretty Boy, you've got a little something right here," Morgan said as he stepped back and brushed at the underside of Spencer's chin. "I know what that is."

"What is it?" Henry asked, standing on his seat to look.

Spencer ignored the both of them and turned toward Doctor Hayes. "Doctor Hayes, it's lovely to see you under better circumstances."

"You as well Doctor Reid. Please though call me Savannah."

"Spencer."

"Uh huh, ignoring me ain't gonna work," Morgan said, but he sat down on the other side of Henry letting Savannah take the seat between him and Anderson. Rossi was at the other end opposite Spencer and Prentiss, and Lynch was across from Anderson and Savannah.

"I don't know what you mean." Spencer looked away from Morgan, knowing that it wouldn't work but it was a familiar game between the two of them and Spencer actually missed it.

"You should have tried to cover that up because your bruising from the fight wouldn't be that dark after all this time. So unless you found someone else to pucker up to inside that big old White House, you landed you the man you wanted."

"What?" JJ asked.

Spencer glared at Morgan. He looked around, and most of the people inside the rest of the restaurant had cleared out. It was only an older couple in the corner and staff.

"Back in May of last year, our little Pretty Boy flirted with a gentleman at the fundraising event that he went to with Ethan. He was hoping to have something come of it, but it didn't. Then this whole teaching thing at the White House and the object of his affection is there."

"You took a job to try and start a relationship with someone?" Prentiss asked sounding very shocked. It was very out of place for Spencer to do it but it hadn't been the only reason.

"That was like five percent of the reason that I took it. Seventy percent was the actual job itself. Who would turn that down? It's an opportunity of a lifetime."
"And the other twenty-five percent?" Anderson asked.

"Getting away from Morgan," Spencer said with a grin on his face. The whole of the table laughed, including Henry who had no understanding of why everyone was laughing. Morgan mimed getting shot in the heart, but it was lost as he was grinning.

"So who is it? Some aide to President Hotchner?" Will asked before taking a sip of his black coffee. Spencer turned to glare at Morgan because this was not the time or the place to discuss this if Spencer wanted to keep it silent.

"Oh, no. Pretty Boy ain't going for an aide. So JJ when it comes to politics, what is Reid's stance?"

"To not listen but just read transcripts because then he can remember everything they say for their whole political career and see who lies the least."

"Uh huh, and do you really think that he could ever pick out our Senator from a lineup? Much less than Senator Hotchner?"

It took a few seconds, but seven sets of eyes turned to Spencer with shocked looks on their faces. Spencer shushed them all, especially when it looked like JJ was about to really say something.

"Don't," Spencer threatened. JJ nodded.

"You're serious?" Rossi asked.

"Yes," Spencer and Morgan answered at the same time.

"That's...I can understand why you want to keep your mouth shut on that. The press hounding you while working would be...horrible." Prentiss gave Spencer a sympathetic look.

"Yes, I agree. Especially with the few hate groups that are circling him just for being elected and being bisexual. I can't talk about a lot of it, but whatever is in the news, the truth is a lot worse. Their letters are almost worse than the UnSub who kept the journals about his victims that I had to read." Spencer heard Harley stepping around the wall, and she appeared behind Rossi with a smile on her face.

Everyone was distracted by ordering their breakfast, so Spencer was thankfully left alone. Henry crawled back into his lap before the boy ordered his own breakfast, including his scrambled eggs with the yummy white cheese on top that he always got so Harley knew which cheese Henry wanted.

"You look like death warmed over," JJ said when she was done ordering her food.

"I just...kind of hate Morgan right now."

"You knew that he could see the mark, Spencer. Hell, I didn't even notice it, but he did. We can go to the bathroom after we eat and I can cover it up for you."

"No. It's fine. I only have a few days left there, and then it's back to the BAU and normal life."

"And away from him. God, what do you call him?"

"I call him Aaron. He calls me Spencer and JJ the way that he says it makes my heart melt. He steals kisses when we are alone and touches me so much. It's not bad touches just...touches. He
likes to touch my face before kissing me, and I kind of hate him for it because soon I'm going to not be there and I don't know what I am going to do. It's going to be hard to do anything together, and it's not like he can just go out on a date with me. And me showing up there for one would draw media attention."

"I'm sure that you'll figure something out, Spence. What about his son? What does little Jack think of it?"

"I got a tour from Jack, including the place that Jack threw up and he seems to like me, but Aaron wants to keep as much of it from Jack as possible. Jack has big attachment issues, and I would say that it comes from being abandoned by his mom at a young age and Aaron's career. Aaron doesn't want Jack to get that attached and then me not be there that much. Jack likes me though so I don't think he would have an issue with his father and I dating. Jessica, the ex-sister-in-law/nanny, likes me. She knows what we are doing, and so far she seems to approve. She made the taco meat and prepared the food for the big date we had a few days back. She even got us wine. I hope it's her way of saying that she approves."

"I know that you don't discuss politics and never who you vote for but could you really date him if you didn't like his politics?"

"No," Spencer admitted.

Thankfully, Morgan turned the topic from Spencer and his love life with the President of the United States of America to other things that had been happening around the office. By the time that food arrived, Savannah was talking about the worst things that she had pulled from human bodies, but thankfully Will had curbed that when food was dropped off.

The rest of the team had plans for their Saturday, but Spencer was going out with Henry and Will as JJ had plans with Prentiss. Morgan invited himself and Savannah along for that, but Spencer knew that Morgan wanted to talk about the fight. Spencer was just glad that the man was out of Morgan's reach. It was also going to mean that once Spencer was cleared for hand to hand again, he would be going through it all with Morgan, even though Spencer knew that Morgan understood why Spencer didn't fight back. Spencer was also glad that Savannah was the one that he was going to be going back and seeing to get cleared. She would curb Morgan's antics some.

Spencer had missed this. Even though he was enjoying his small break from the team and from the UnSubs that they chased, he had missed just hanging out with his friends. He had planned the next day to spend the afternoon with Ethan at a new jazz bar that had opened. While he missed this, he was going to miss Aaron more when he no longer sort of lived with the man.
Spencer hated pomp and circumstance with a passion. He had got used to it to a certain extent working for the FBI. Press conferences before and after a case ending. A public ceremony when he had been instrumental in killing Phillip Dowd before he killed an ER full of civilians. Spencer was used to it, but that didn't mean that he wanted to be on the south lawn of the White House participating in a media filled barbeque to celebrate the ending of the training of White House staff in various forms of terrorists and how to spot them.

He blamed his boyfriend for him even going to it. Aaron had talked Spencer into going to it the night before. Spencer had plans to go home and enjoy being home. His things had been returned there the night before, except for a single go-bag which was in the backseat of the town car that was going to be taking him home after he was released from the media storm.

Aaron was talking to everyone that was there with Secret Service agents milling around as well. Spencer was wearing his gun in a shoulder holster. It was the style of the day for all of the agents that were not Secret Service to give the illusion that they were not armed. It had been interesting to get used to since the time that he had been attacked, but Alan had started to force him to wear his gun so that next time Spencer could shoot someone in knee who attacked him.

Alan was beside Aaron the entire time, most everyone who was there knew exactly who he was even though he was not dressed like the rest of the Secret Service agents.

"Hello, Pretty Boy," Morgan said from behind Spencer. Before Spencer could turn, he felt a hand on his shoulder. Spencer leaned into him when Morgan came to a stop at Spencer's side with his arm thrown around Spencer's shoulder. "Why did I get an invite to this swanky affair?"

"I didn't even know that you were going to be here, so I have no clue why you were invited. But as free food is being offered, I am not shocked to see you here."

"Did you try that pulled pork yet?"
"No. Let's go get some food. I grabbed a handful of chips earlier." Spencer turned in Morgan's hold and gave his friend and co-worker a hug. Morgan returned it with a good bit of gusto telling Spencer Morgan had missed him.

"You and your chips. Let's go and get you more than chips. I'd worry about what you ate while you were here except you look in better shape and even have more definition to yourself now. Don't think that I didn't feel those muscles when you hugged me."

"The other agents have taken to beefing me up as they call it and running and weights are about the extent of what they could get me into. So my arms are a little more what do you call it, beefy?"

Morgan laughed and started to tug Spencer with him to the food table. Spencer filled his plate with the things that he liked and watched as Morgan piled his down. Spencer was going to miss the burgers that were made here. One of the cooks had their own blend of spices that they put on them.

"So when are you released?" Morgan asked as he sat down at an empty table. Spencer sat down across from him.

"After this media circus show is over. I've got my bag in the town car that is supposed to take me home."

"I had, I think her name was Seaver slip it into mine. She looked a little disappointed."

"Seaver was my babysitter for the first little while until I was used to where everything was. We all had one so that getting lost wasn't going to be a reason we were late to anything. She likes books, and we've talked about them a lot. She got me to read some of her favorites so I can actually talk about a few romance books to JJ when I get back."

"That's good."

"Actually, I also have a message to give Rossi from her." Spencer picked up his burger to take a bite.

"Really?"

"Hmm," Spencer said as he had a bite of hamburger in his mouth. He nodded and chewed as fast as he dared. "Her mother's maiden name is Seaver. Her father's name is Beauchamp."

"That name is familiar."

"Charles Beauchamp is her father's full name."

"As in..." Morgan trailed off, and his eyes widened really big. "The Redmond Ripper?"

"Yes. She was in the Academy, but she left after it was found out who her father was and the other candidates were...less than cordial about it. She moved on after graduation, and other agencies picked her up with ease. She chose the Secret Service. She told me about it last night, she didn't want to see the look of revulsion in my eyes. She gave me a few bits of personal information about what her home life was like to help she said with other situations like his."

"Would have been good in that case with the gated community."

"I thought that but didn't tell her that. She's promising to make me a memoir of sorts about her childhood. To add to the materials to have profilers read. She's going to use her birth name for it."
"Agent Reid," Aaron said as he stepped up to the table. Spencer looked up at him to see that he had a few people with him.

"President Hotchner, may I introduce my Unit Chief, SSA Derek Morgan. Morgan, President Aaron Hotchner."

Morgan wiped his hands on a napkin that Spencer handed over and stood up. Aaron held out his hand for a handshake, and Morgan pumped it hard. Aaron's eyes widened a little bit, and he gave a smile. Morgan smiled back, a little feral. Spencer shook his head as he thought about the fact that he didn't need Morgan threatening his boyfriend. Which Spencer still thought was a little odd to call the President of the United States but they had spent two hours debating it over the week since their date and it was the only term that fits what they were at the moment. Aaron found it funny, and Spencer liked to give him humor where he could.

"It's wonderful to meet the man that has to keep up with Agent Reid on a daily basis."

"It takes a lot of work. He's shown me that the training I took for a position like this is flawed when it comes to him. He's a wonderful agent and the team has missed him while he has been gone."

"You mean they miss me helping with extra files when I get bored and run out of my own work to work on."

"There is that as well. We've also missed not having to search for really weird shit on Google. I really don't want to ever have to look up some of the shit that I've had to look up that you know because of your serial killer database in your head."

Aaron laughed and started to sit down. Alan waved the other agent away and sat down on the other side of Morgan. Spencer was shocked that Aaron had sat down beside him.

"He does have quite the repository of knowledge in his head. It astounds me what he draws out of it on the quick in the lectures and classes that he gives. He's a boon to the FBI."

"You know that you don't need to fawn over him in front of me. I don't care how much you talk him or yourself up, Sir. I only care about you never hurting him."

Spencer snorted. He looked at the shy smile that was on Aaron's face. It was going to be hard for the next almost four years. There was going to be hurt on both sides, missed conversations and just a lot of pain of being apart. Spencer wanted to try it all, and he wanted to see if he could fall in love with Aaron. He owed it to himself to try. Aaron was right, and he was strong, and he was loyal, and that was the biggest thing. Spencer could see his heart safe with the man. He could see that Aaron would never leave him if he had any other options in life. After everyone Spencer loved leaving him, his mom even though it wasn't her fault, his father, and Gideon. Spencer knew that he was gun shy as Morgan called it.

"I've already been talking to the Director of the FBI. He's going to give me a tour of their holdings in Quantico, I hope that it can be done at a time when your team is there. I want to meet them, and I do want to meet Miss Jareau. I want to meet the people that Spencer calls family since he has met all of mine."

"I see that southern charm in you, Sir and I'm glad that you are who you are or I'd probably be threatening you."

Aaron smiled.
"Aaron you have about half an hour before you have to give the final speech and everyone can start to wander off. I'll have a few agents take you to the gardens, and you can talk about a few things in private."

"Good. You stay here to keep an eye and make sure that no one follows us. Seaver, Morgan, Spencer, please come with me." Aaron stood up, and Spencer saw him make an aborted move like he was going to come around to help Spencer up. The gestures when they were in private had been interesting, but Spencer saw it for what it was, Aaron honoring his southern upbringing. Not Aaron trying to treat Spencer like a woman. He did it for women more, but he really did for those that he had affection for. Spencer saw Jessica get it more than anyone else. She handled it with a grace that showed how much she liked it. Spencer was sure that Aaron had done it for Haley before.

Watching news clips revealed that he had done it for the nanny before Jessica as well.

Aaron walked level with Morgan and Spencer walked with Seaver. There were three other Secret Service agents behind them. When they reached the garden area, the other agents stopped on the outside, spreading out to give protection but privacy as well. Seaver walked with them but stopped just short of where Aaron stopped. It was as much privacy as they could get.

"I wanted to apologize for what Spencer suffered here," Aaron said to Morgan. Morgan opened his mouth, but Aaron glared at him, Morgan shut his mouth. "He was supposed to be safe here, and he wasn't. I know that the Service made restitution for the fact that he had been allowed to do it. The full investigation was released to me this morning. Two other agents were covering for him not being in class and had told Olmstead where Spencer would be. Those two have lost their job in the Secret Service because if they allowed that to attack another agent, what the hell would they do if it came to foreign ministers and diplomats? I've not heard what is happening to Olmstead.

"That's good that the Service is taking it seriously. Reid told us all about it, and we never blamed you, just the people who do security on the White House."

"And a lot is being done about that. I hate that someone was attacked in my home."

"I would be too."

Spencer heard something weird behind so he nodded toward it, and Seaver turned with him to go look. Spencer laid his hand on his gun. He didn't want to get Morgan on alert if he was just hearing the agents looking around or doing whatever they did to keep their minds active while on duty.

Spencer rounded the edge of the garden wall and was hit in the face with something that was hard, and it hurt like a son of a bitch. He dropped like a rock before he heard the sound of a gun go off with a silencer attached to it. Spencer prepared himself for a gunshot, but he heard Seaver gasp instead, painfilled and horrible. Spencer's head was spinning, and he couldn't see, but someone grabbed him by his shirt and pulled him up. Spencer stumbled where he was shoved.

"What the hell!" Morgan yelled then the gun went off again, this time right by Spencer's ear.

Something hit Spencer again in the head, and he crumpled down.

"How the hell did you get here?" Aaron demanded, and Spencer could barely understand him.

Spencer felt for his gun but didn't draw it.

"You and I are going to have a long talk before I kill you," Olmstead said. Spencer felt his hands being grabbed and the bit of a zip tie as it secured his hands together. Olmstead didn't check him for weapons though. Spencer blinked open his eyes. He realized that part of his problem was blood. He used his tied hands to wipe across his face, across his eyes to clear them. He brushed again and
again until he could see better, blinking away the rest of the blood. Olmstead was above him with the gun trained on Aaron.

"You are the worst scum in the world, you fucking fag. You are fucking this whore of an agent and screwing all over this monument to True America. He batted his eyelashes and spread his legs, and you are making America a shithole. Everyone is worried about the wrong people, and you are going to get True Americans killed."

Spencer wiggled his hands, trying to snap the tie but it wouldn't budge. Instead, he checked to see if he could get his gun out. Spencer blinked again, glad that he had worn his contacts. He looked at Morgan who had been shot in the stomach. He had no weapon on him and was holding his stomach while glaring at Olmstead.

"Do you truly believe that you are going to make it out of this?" Aaron asked.

"I won't care because you'll be dead and your whore will watch it, and I'm not going to kill him." Olmstead moved his gun away from Aaron and Morgan acted like he was going to try and lunge, but he cried out and slumped back down. Spencer knew that he was going to get shot, but it wasn't going to be a kill shot. He would be hurt in some horrible way. Spencer closed his eyes and waited. He wasn't going to beg because that is what bullies wanted. They wanted begging from victims, and Spencer wasn't going to give it to him. Spencer heard the gunfire, and before he could even process it, he felt the bullet shoot through his leg. It felt like it was on fire. Spencer grimaced and opened his eyes. He felt blood trickling down his face and wiped at it before laying his hands on where he could get his gun.

"Be hard to fuck now since he can't get on his hands and knees like faggots do. I guess he'll have to just lay on his back like the rest of the whores."

"At least I don't have to pay people to fuck me," Spencer said.

"Spencer," Aaron pleaded. Olmstead turned from Spencer because Spencer knew that he knew that he wasn't going to get what he wanted from Spencer. There was every chance though that he would get what he wanted from Aaron because Aaron had a son that he wanted to live for. That he had a life, he wanted to live. Spencer knew what kind of man Olmstead was, and he wasn't going to let Aaron live. Olmstead was entirely focused on Aaron and didn't pay any attention to Spencer at all. Spencer drew his gun, and he knew that he would have to make a headshot because Olmstead's finger was tight on the trigger and had it half pulled. If he did anything other than a headshot, Aaron could be shot, and Spencer wasn't going to let that happen.

Spencer took the time to aim and pulled the trigger of his gun. It would draw everyone to them, and he slumped to the ground when the blood started to pool from the hole in Olmstead's temple. Spencer dropped his gun to his chest and laid there. He looked up into the perfect blue sky and tried not to cry. The sound of what seemed like a small platoon came running, and Spencer let his body go wholly lax because he didn't have to protect Aaron anymore. Others were coming.

"WE NEED MEDICS!" Alan yelled.

"Aaron, where are you hurt?"

"I'm not. Spencer." Spencer felt hands on him, and he opened his eyes again not realizing that he closed them to see Aaron above him. He felt a hand on his leg, holding it down. Spencer screamed before whimpering as a hand came down on his face. He could feel the warmth of his own damned blood on his face from Aaron's hand.
"I'm fine, Aaron."

"You are anything but fine, Reid," Morgan gritted out.

"You've been shot in the gut, Morgan. You can't talk."

"You've been shot in the knee."

"Above the knee," Aaron said. "Just to be technical."

"Yeah, Morgan, above the knee." Spencer knew that Morgan was going to bitch up a storm about this and never let him out alone for a while. He had been injured twice by the same fucking man at the White House.

"I'm going to pass out now, okay?"

"Spencer. SPENCER!" Spencer didn't know anything else except the relief that the darkness brought from his pain.

Aaron checked his phone again. He had been promised by Alan that as soon as anything was known, he would know. Morgan and Seaver had been rushed to the hospital, but Spencer had been left to wait for the third ambulance as there was only two that arrived in the first wave. The other three Secret Service agents were dead before the backup had arrived. Olmstead had spared them a long and painful death because he didn't see an issue with them. It would have been at least twenty minutes before Alan had come looking and by then Morgan and Seaver would have probably been too far gone to save. Aaron would have been dead as well, leaving Spencer to grieve all of them.

If Olmstead had killed Morgan and Aaron, Aaron wasn't sure what would have happened to Spencer. Aaron would have been just a small part of his grief, but it was the thought of what could have been that might have fucked with Spencer so much. Losing Morgan though would have made Spencer inconsolable. There would have been no way to talk Spencer out of the grief.

Aaron was stuck inside of the White House under severe guard. Jack and Jessica weren't leaving the family areas, and Aaron was glad of that. The attack on the White House by one former Secret Service agent who should never have been able to make it in at all much less as far as he did was making Aaron's life a living hell. Chief among them was the fact that it was twenty-four hours later and Aaron had heard nothing about any of them. He knew why the news was silent on it. The terrorist cell could try again. There was already word going around that Spencer was going to get medals of some kind.

The world was watching as America dealt with a terrorist in the highest ranks within its agencies. Even just roughly twenty-four hours later, the full breadth of the reach of the organization was astounding. The FBI was manning the search and pulling in agents that were "pro-everything" as Alan had put it. There was a mix of sexualities on the team just to have the proof that it wasn't gays hunting straights. Olmstead's computer was a fountain of information because the man was paranoid and kept everything on everyone. He was also not the brains of the operation, Aaron knew that he was being kept out of the loop on who the other players were until the Director of the FBI came and briefed him personally.

Aaron had given a speech the day before, covered in Spencer's blood from where he had tried to help keep the blood flow down after Spencer passed out. Aaron's approval rating was the highest it had been for any President in the past twenty years, and Aaron hated that it took his stance on hate crimes to get it. Aaron had spoken from the heart about the world that he wanted to create for his
son and that it was tragedies like this that made America look worse than some of the third world countries. It was horrible that blood had to be shed on White House soil for even the ones who hated anyone who wasn't heterosexual to look at what was going to happen more and more.

The three agents who had been killed for Olmstead to get to Aaron had been heterosexual and had families. Aaron was making sure that those families were taken care of. It proved the point though to some that the group that Olmstead belonged to didn't care about anything other than what they wanted. They did not care who they killed to get at what they wanted. America would be destroyed by the time that they felt like it was the country that they wanted it to be.

"Sir," a voice called out, and Aaron turned to look at Alan. The man did not look happy at all. "Agents Seaver and Morgan will make a full recovery after a slightly longer recovery period. Spencer came through his surgery just fine, but his road to recovery is going to be long. I'm sorry that it took so long but Spencer was refusing to see anyone, and I wasn't being told anything about him."

"Refusing to see anyone?"

"Agent Morgan said that it wasn't anything personal, that he deals with things alone and only when he has a grasp of them does he let anyone else in. Doctor Hayes who is currently taking over all of their checks has said that she will text me if anything changes. She is Agent Morgan's girlfriend and was the doctor that treated Spencer after Olmstead's first attack."

"Thank you, Alan."

"You are welcome." Alan stepped up to the chair that was in front of Aaron's desk. He dropped down into it and sighed. "The hospital is a zoo. Media is camped out there, and the FBI has taken over the protection of it from us. Which is good because they are better at blending in. They have obvious guards, slightly obvious, and three that I can't even pick out on the floor that they have the three in. Morgan bullied everyone until he and Spencer were put into a room together and Seaver is in the room next door. The chance of infection in them is high, so they are being watched like a hawk."

"This is...I've seen the outcry about all of this. I've done little more than read the cries from the people of the country. The LGBTQ community is in mourning that this even happened. Most are pissed, but nothing violent is happening thankfully. I don't want this country to start a riot over this. I have everyone who is anyone coming to a meeting tomorrow to happen in the press conference room, and we are going to figure out a plan to go forward because this can't happen again. Do you know what would happen if we had a violent revolt over this?"

"Mass chaos and innocent people getting hurt over this."

"The Secretary of Defense is already preparing the ceremony in which Spencer is going to receive the Medal for the Defence of Freedom, as well as the others but he really wants Spencer up there getting the medal on live television. It's probably going to happen at the hospital. The Director of the FBI said that he was going to make sure that Spencer accepted it."

"It sucks that he can't get anything better than that. I know the Purple Heart stopped being handed out to non-military in what ninety-seven? He's going to hate being the center of attention though. It'll be a few days before he's up and moving around at all, if that even. I am allowed to tell you that Spencer might have to have more surgeries. It's unsure until they see how everything starts to mend. Morgan has already started getting a few of his friends to get one of his properties fixed enough to where Spencer can move in there as Morgan told me Spencer's apartment is a third-floor walk up and he's going to be on crutches for a while."
"Good." Aaron closed his eyes, and he could see it again. Olmstead firing the gun and Spencer's lack of any reaction. Aaron had been prepared to beg for his life, for Spencer's, hell for anything from Olmstead. It was the single worst moment of Aaron's life. Knowing that Morgan and Seaver had been shot and Seaver's status unknown. Olmstead had held all of the power in that single instance, and Aaron had known it. Aaron didn't know if he could have done what Spencer had. Given the man gave no reaction to being shot. Spencer hadn't made a noise of pain until Aaron had touched him.

The shot that took out Olmstead had been something that Aaron would never forget. Aaron had been about to open his mouth when he saw the blood spray and the sound of the shot. It was so loud after the near silence of the shots from Olmstead.

"You need to see him," Alan said never saying who the him was.

"Yes." Aaron opened his eyes as the door opened. There standing was Jessica and Jack as well as a troupe of seven Secret Service agents behind them.

"Jack's decided that we are going to see Spencer and he's not taking no for an answer. So, Alan, you get to pick who goes. Jack's agreed to whatever is needed." Jessica's words caught in his throat a little as she spoke and one of the agents behind her held up the small vest that had been made for Jack. The fact that Jack agreed to the use of the bulletproof vest told Aaron that he really wasn't going to win because Jack hated that vest. With a burning passion.

"I'll go and take care of your family. I'll go with them personally."

It was a week before the hospital would allow the award ceremony to happen. A week before Aaron could see Spencer. The whole of the hospital was locked down by the FBI and the Secret Service, working in tandem. The fact that Aaron was going to be there wasn't whispered anywhere at all. Spencer didn't know. Aaron had asked for the honor of putting Spencer's medal on him, and the Secretary of Defense had allowed it.

Spencer didn't look at Aaron at all during the ceremony and even when Aaron was pinning the medal to the suit that he was in with a cut off pant leg to allow his leg freedom with the brace and the still slightly swollen skin. Spencer didn't meet his eyes. No one would be able to tell that though as Spencer looked right past Aaron's ear and he reacted like someone who was humbled for doing what they considered to be their job.

Alan cleared the floor that Spencer was on and kept Seaver and Morgan back from it until Aaron got his time alone with Spencer. The floor had already been cleared of all other patients as it was the ward that was used when anyone of high status was in the hospital, but there was no staff.

"Spencer," Aaron said as he entered Spencer's room.

"I figured that there was a reason that Morgan wasn't back in here. He thinks he can protect me from his hospital bed. He thinks he can protect me from his hospital bed. Neither of us are allowed guns right now due to the medications that we are on and Rossi told us both that if we shot the nurse coming to check on us, we would be the laughing stock of the FBI." Spencer was in bed by the window, and he was looking out it.

"Tell me what is wrong."

"I..." Spencer lifted up his hand, and Aaron saw a tissue in it. He wiped at his eyes. Aaron couldn't help crossing the room and sitting down on his bed. First, though he shut the blinds so that no one could see inside and Spencer couldn't see outside. "I can't do this, Aaron. I can't be the reason that
you are shot at. If this continues after I have left the White House, there is no way to keep it secret. I have no reason to go back to the White House, and you have no reason to come to see me. It's going to piss off more people, and you can't do your job if someone is gunning for you for who you see, romantically. Obviously, we weren't as discrete as we thought inside of the White House."

"He slotted you into gay without confirmation so with you gay and me bi, in his mind that meant we had to be together. The only thing that us not being together would have done was you not being there at that moment to save my life." Aaron could feel his heart breaking because he hadn't thought that this was what was wrong with Spencer. He hadn't seen this at all.

"Olmstead had been fine for months. While you had come out as bi, you hadn't been with a man that they could track since before you married. That meant to them that you were straight. I was the inciting incident."

"You can't."

"I can because you can't order me to be your boyfriend as President. I'm a free citizen, and I make the decisions in my own life."

Aaron looked at Spencer's face, and he could see the pain there. The utter pain of what he was doing. The problem was that Aaron could understand. No matter their actual distance, it was going to be a long distance relationship, occasional calls when Aaron could spare the time. The letter that was read by too many people to ever have anything in it that Aaron would want to put in it.

"Look at me, and I mean really look at me." Aaron sat down on the side of Spencer's bed, making sure to miss Spencer's leg wholly. He didn't want to hurt Spencer like that because a broken heart was going to hurt him enough. Spencer looked at Aaron, and there was such pain in his eyes. Aaron reached out and cupped the side of Spencer's face. Spencer pushed into the hand, and his eyes closed, taking what little comfort he could from it.

"I'm sorry."

"You have logic on your side, and I know you are all about logic. So I want you to make me a promise."

Spencer opened his eyes and looked into Aaron's. "Anything, well almost." Spencer smiled at that and Aaron cracked a small one even as his heart was breaking.

"When I am done at this in just under four years, I'm going to find you wherever you are and I'm going to take you on a date. Even if you are dating anyone else because I want this to truly happen. I'm going to woo you, and I'm going to win because no matter how short of time we have actually spent together, you already have my heart, Spencer. I'm not saying the words and I'm not going to pressure you right now, but I'm being honest. I don't want to lose you."

"Okay." Spencer tried to wipe the tears from his face but Aaron's hands were in the way, and Aaron didn't let go of him. Aaron scooted closer so that he could kiss Spencer, tears and all. It was the best and worst kiss of his life because he poured all of his emotions into it and Spencer was trying to hold back, to keep himself separate from all of it. Him and his damned logic.

Aaron pulled back and brushed his thumbs over the skin under Spencer's eyes.

"You promised to write to Jack, and I would like you to keep that up, and maybe occasionally I'll write a little postscript for you. Will you do the same?"

"Yes." Spencer nodded, forcing Aaron's hands up and down.
Aaron's watch beeped telling him that he was out of time. He had things that he had to do, and he needed to do them. He had to step out of that room and show the world a confident man who was secure in who he was, not the man with the broken heart that he was. Aaron ducked in for a last kiss. A kiss that would have to last him for almost four years.

Spencer clung to Aaron throughout the kiss, his arms around his shoulders, holding him right there. Aaron forced himself to get up though, and he closed his eyes against the pain that was going to be in Spencer's eyes. It would also stop Spencer from seeing the pain in his.

Aaron didn't stop when he made it to the door, and the first sob escaped Spencer. If he didn't leave now, he was never going to. Aaron just hoped that Spencer allowed Morgan to comfort him because there wasn't anyone else that Spencer would allow to do that.
Chapter 8-May 2014

Aaron was settled on a couch watching Jack write a letter back to Spencer. Jack wanted a special paper to write to Spencer on a few weeks ago so Jessica, and he had gone to a craft store to find the perfect paper set.

Spencer's letters to Jack were long, usually rambling about whatever Jack had asked about in the letter before. Jack's responses had grown over the year since and his writing had jumped leaps and bounds. Spencer wrote letters to Jessica, but it was always about Jack's schooling and little things that he had found while researching homeschooling. Spencer had not written a letter to Aaron at all, only post scripts in Jack's letters that were short but no less endearing to Aaron. Aaron always wrote back to him in postscripts.

Aaron wanted so much more, but he understood where Spencer was coming from. While the terrorists had not slowed down on trying to get to Aaron or stopping at all on the threats, it was better that there not be a public relationship. Without Olmstead at the front, no one could link Spencer and Aaron together.

The Secret Service had been shaken up by the fact that members of their agency allowed an attack to happen. There had been a lot of confusion and really strict comings and goings at the White House over the past year. Jessica had chaffed a little on that front, but she got used to it. She was for all intents and purposes the First Lady. It had been a while since it wasn't the spouse of the President but the American people adored her. She had given up her job to be a nanny to her only nephew and had followed Aaron from the campaign trail to White House.

The A-Team for the BAU still got a lot of attention when working higher profile cases. Two agents who had protected the President were on it. Spencer still gave interviews about it that never
wavered in what he would do to protect his President. The his President thing had caused a stir until a more in-depth interview was given to explain. Spencer had outed himself on national TV and was proud to call Aaron his President because for the first time there was someone in the White House that wasn't going to bend to pressure when it came to issues that impacted people in the LGBTQ community.

Aaron had reports where openly non-hetero people were signing up for the FBI in droves. The FBI became the first Government entity to welcome all walks of sexuality and gender into their fold.

In the wake of the assassination attempt, Aaron's approval rating had gone up. Mainly because there was no witch hunt for all hetero people protecting him. Aaron had a mix of people protecting him and always had but the fact that he didn't "fear" hetero people showed that sexuality wasn't the problem but instead people who felt that they had a right to choose what was best for other people.

"Daddy," Jack said as he crawled into Aaron's lap with his letter in hand. The page had been carefully torn from the journal.

This letter was all about otters and what Jak wanted to know about them. It was full of word mistakes, but Spencer would take care of that when he wrote back. Jack's grammar was sometimes better than Aaron's because of Spencer proofing them.

"Yes, Jack?" Aaron asked

"I want to go to the zoo, but Aunt Jessica said that it would be hard."

"It would, but I would make sure that it happens. Want to see otters?"

"I want to see a lot of stuff. The otters, the penguins, and the lions. It's really cool. Then I won't run out of things I want to ask Spencer about. Aunt Jessica got me another journal that I can fill up with things I want to ask Spencer about, but she's limiting me to three things in each letter. I have four pages filled up already."

"I'm glad you like to write to Spencer."

"I miss him, Dad."

"I know, but he had to go home."

"I tried to talk him into marrying Aunt Jessica so that he could stay here forever and then he told me that he was gay. I asked him to marry you. His face got really red."

Aaron wrapped his arms around Jack and hugged him tightly. Aaron laid his head on the top of Jack's, just holding him tight. There was nothing that Aaron wanted more than that when the time was right, but Jack was already so enamored with Spencer that finding out that Spencer and Aaron had sort of dated would hurt the boy.

"Sir," Alan said as he opened the door. Aaron looked up at him, and there was such a gaunt look on his face.

"I'll meet you in the Oval Office as soon as I pass Jack off to Jessica."

Alan nodded and stepped out of the room.

"Something happened, and you have to go to work?" Jack asked as he pushed himself back out of Aaron's hold.
"Yes."

"Okay. Be good and don't forget to let people know when they have made you mad." Jack kissed Aaron's cheek and slid off of his lap.

"I won't." Aaron smiled as he watched his son go off toward where Jessica was in the house. There was a loud knock that repeated three times so Aaron knew that Jessica had him. Aaron straightened his tie and double checked himself in the mirror that was by the door. Jessica had put it up after Aaron had been in the White House just a month because he came back to visit Jack as much as he could and always asked if his tie was straight so this allowed him to check for himself that he passed his own muster.

Alan was right there as Aaron exited the room.

"We have reports of a possible not related to you terrorist attack in Texas. The FBI team on hand is having their Section Chief join them before it's actually called a terrorist attack. We are unsure of anything really at this moment, but the Director of the FBI is worried, so he wants you briefed."

"The Director is here?"

"No. One of the Assistant Directors actually. A man named John Richmond."

"I've not met him yet." Aaron walked with Alan to the Oval office where there was only Richmond in the room. Aaron was used to a gaggle of people. Alan stayed in the room but stayed back as Aaron sat on one of the couches in the room.

"Sir. John Richmond."

"You can call me Aaron. I'm sick of being called sir all of the time. What's going on?"

"Unsure really at this time. There is a massive problem in Silverton, Texas that is in Briscoe County. A team was dispatched to profile the murders of prostitutes."

"Profile?" Aaron asked. He looked at Alan who was looking just as shocked.

"Oh, yes. You know some about profiling. Doctor Reid was very thorough in his evaluation of his time here. There seems to be something deeper going on in that town right now, and it's unsure if more help would hinder or escalate what is going on. What we know at the moment is that Section Chief Cruz is on his way down to meet up with the team and help and that a single agent has been harmed seriously. Another was shot in the vest, but he's fine."

Aaron didn't want to ask because if this case turned this bad quickly, it was the A-Team that went and that meant Spencer.

"How was the agent injured?"

"There was a shootout, but the Unit Chief doesn't want to believe that what happened is what really happened. I think that cop involvement is more likely than terrorist but with everything going on in the country right now, the FBI doesn't want to seem like they are covering up everything. We want you aware in case it does turn that bad. Back to your question, the agent was shot in the neck, but he's in surgery, and we don't know how he is yet."

Aaron looked at Alan again. His heart in this throat.

"Who was it?" Alan asked, seemingly knowing that Aaron was too afraid to ask.
"Doctor Reid."

Aaron stood up and moved to the window that looked out. Aaron could feel Richmond's gaze on him. It had to be questioning, and it had to be watching Aaron closely.

"What's going on?" Richmond sounded very confused.

"How thorough was that report?" Alan asked.

"It detailed every minute that he was working."

"Just working?" Alan's voice was thick and full of emotion. Aaron had no words. Spencer's job was hard, Aaron knew that, but he hadn't let himself understand how dangerous, not really. He knew that they hunted the worst, but Spencer made it seem like he wasn't in the thick of things that much. That he wasn't in danger. Yet now he was in a hospital in Texas with a gunshot to the neck and Aaron didn't know if he was going to live or die.

"Yes. Doctor Reid's personal time wasn't needed to be covered. Why?"

Aaron nodded his head, feeling Alan's gaze on him.

"Because what little personal time that Doctor Reid had after he was attacked the first time by Olmstead, he spent with President Hotchner, including a few, as they called them, sort of dates."

There was silence in the room as Richmond digested that. Aaron kept looking out the window until he heard a chime on the phone. He hoped that it was an update on Spencer, but he figured that was a fool's hope.

"Doctor Reid is out of surgery and is resting in his room according to his Unit Chief. He's expected to make a full recovery. He is not awake yet."

Aaron felt his knees give out and didn't stop himself. He let his knees crack off of the floor, and he held his upper body up by pressing it into the glass. He took a shaky breath, not letting himself give into the tears that he wanted to give into. Aaron's cell phone, his personal one, wasn't with him. He had left it in the personal area of the White House. It was highly encrypted and allowed no GPS or location services of any kind, but it had Spencer's phone number in it. Aaron could call and talk to him. He had no clue if Spencer had his phone with him and in the ward, he was in, he probably wasn't allowed it.

"Alan, get someone to get Victor here, please." Aaron stood up and straightened his clothes. He took a deep breath to steady himself and looked at the time. Whoever Aaron would send would arrive in the middle of the night, but he didn't care. He had to have someone there if it seemed like things were as bad as the FBI thought they were. Cops shooting agents in a shootout.

"What are you doing, Aaron?" Richmond asked.

Aaron turned around to walk around the desk and take the seat he had been in before and looked at the AD. "I'm just going to send someone to sit with Spencer while he is in the hospital."

"Are you and him still a thing?"

"No, but that doesn't mean that I don't care for him."

"Did Spencer tell you about his brush with a very disturbed man and the aftermath during his third year on the team?"
"Tobias Hankel and his almost addiction to Dilaudid. He told me that he was helped before it became a true physical addiction but there was a minor emotional addiction to it and he sometimes goes to meetings to help with it. He's also taking a precaution and making sure that he's not given narcotics, even to the detriment of his own healing because of it."

"Yes. You've shown me a trust by telling me any of this so I'll share one back with you. I met Spencer for the first time at his third Beltway Clean Cops meeting. It was the first I had been to since I had started. I became his sponsor that night, as he was called away to a case that ended up with him seeking me out afterward. I am worried about him but adding a Service agent will only cloud the issue."

"I'm not sending a Secret Service agent. I'm..." Aaron looked at the door and sighed. "After the second attack by Olmstead, I was worried about him and his safety at home. Jackson has a man from his private security team living in Spencer's building. Spencer does not know but now he will. I was afraid that someone else would think what Olmstead did and go after him because he would easier than trying to get me."

"I see. Well, that waylays some concerns that I have about his apartment."

"Morgan's house wasn't that bad, and it had good local security. The neighborhood was pretty zealous about making sure that he was fine. It wasn't until he went home after he graduated to the cane that Jackson put someone near him. The man, just watches, doesn't report anything back at all that's personal. Nothing about dates or days alone. Just that he is safe."

"What kind of guard is he?"

"Jackson hired him after he was discharged from the military, severe PTSD after most his team was killed in front of him. Jackson got him help, and he's been on Jackson's private team since. Victor thought that he was the best for watching Spencer. He also has his own genius that he protects who works for Jackson as well. That genius is who rescued him from the people who killed the rest of the team."

"So sort of dating?"

Aaron said nothing. He did not trust the FBI man to not tell Spencer and Aaron himself hadn't realized his own feelings for Spencer until long after he was gone. Jackson called him tragic in love. For Haley, it was loving a woman so deeply that he almost gave up what he wanted in life to make her happy only for her to not love him back at all. For Spencer, it was loving a man that gave him up for duty. Aaron was afraid that Spencer would move on in the years it took for him to get out of the White House. Aaron had realized that he had fallen for Spencer about two weeks after Spencer had broken up with him with the promise that when he was done, it would begin again.

Victor came in with Alan, looking sleep rumpled. He was dressed in a soft, thin sweater and a pair of chinos.

"What's up, Aaron?" Victor asked.

"I want Spencer's protection in the air as soon as possible. I want him in Spencer's hospital room, protecting him."

"You'll explain later?" Victor looked at Richmond as he talked and pulled out his phone. He texted something and seconds later there was another back. "Jackson will have him there as soon as possible. A flight plan is being filed as we speak and Jackson is making sure that he'll get inside the hospital with a gun for protection."
"Good, good." Aaron looked at his hands. It was hard to sit here and not go to Spencer. He wanted to see Spencer. It had barely been a year since the last time that Spencer had been shot. Aaron looked up at Victor, pleading. Victor walked over and pushed Aaron back in the seat before sitting down in his lap. Aaron wrapped his arms around Victor's waist. Aaron heard the sound of the door shutting.

"We are going to sit here and then go back to your rooms. Spencer will be fine Aaron. Jackson's going to make sure that your heart is fine."

Spencer heard talking around him. There was a voice that he kind of knew and two voices that he did know. His brain was slow, and he couldn't remember why his brain would be slow until he heard something that was a strange tinny voice talking about something in the cardiac ward. Spencer remembered the shootout and getting shot in the neck. His body felt slow, so he didn't react to the way that he wanted to jerk his hand up to check on his neck. It moved slow but he was too tired to lift it up all the way, he felt it just kind of jerk.

"Doctor Reid, are you awake?" the voice that Spencer sort of knew said. Male, cultured, and with diction and accent that said he was from one of the northeast coast states. Maine popped into his mind, and he wasn't sure why. It was probably making leaps in logic while drugged with sedation meds. He couldn't trace the logic, but he hoped that he could with filing away the remainder of the information that he was getting.

Spencer tried to force his eyes open. Everything was blurry.

"Don't worry about anything, Doctor Reid." It was the voice again and the way that he said Doctor Reid was respectful and full of something close to awe. Spencer knew that it was familiar, but he couldn't place it at the moment.

"Who are you again?" Blake asked. There was another noise, and Spencer knew that it was Lynch moving around with his slightly squeaky shoes. Spencer blinked his eyes a few times to look up to see a Dalek. He grinned despite everything because there was a table with two Doctors on it and two Daleks. It was definitely Lynch in the room with him. Spencer knew that Lynch wouldn't let him escape without a few nights of Doctor Who marathons with him being injured. He didn't mind it as Lynch knew the points where to keep his mouth shut and when Spencer wanted the quiet babble of talk. Morgan had called the friendship that they had a bromance. It had been a term that Spencer had to look up. Lynch was firmly heterosexual and would never look at a man sexually even if they were alone on an island as the last two people on Earth. Which was kind of nice for Spencer, someone he could be friends and that was it with.

"My name is Jack Dalton. I'm one of Jackson Grimes's personal bodyguards."

Spencer closed his eyes because he had never figured that Dalton wasn't just a random guy who had moved in on the same floor. Spencer wanted to march to the White House and give Aaron a piece of his mind because he was a God damned Federal Agent and didn't need a babysitter/bodyguard.

"And my new next-door neighbor, well not new-new but you moved in about a week before Morgan finally let me escape staying at his place."

"Yes, I did."

Spencer blinked again, finally clearing his eyesight all the way. He looked at Blake who looked really upset before looking at Lynch to see that he looked the same. Spencer smiled at the both of
them. Blake smiled back, and Lynch gave one of his nervous grins/grimaces. That made Spencer smile even harder.

"Why are you here?" Spencer asked.

"I was told by Jackson to come and watch over you while you were in the hospital. I arrived about half an hour behind Section Chief Cruz and Analyst Lynch here." Dalton opened his suit jacket, and Spencer saw that he was wearing a gun in a shoulder holster. "Yours is in the clothes bag over on the other side of the room. Mister Lynch was a little put out about that as he had picked up the bag and moved it never knowing."

If Jackson had sent him, that meant that Aaron knew that Spencer had been injured or would soon know. Spencer sighed and let his body relax. He knew that he would fade in and out of consciousness and be very muddled for a while.

"So I'll walk you through what we know," Blake said.

"Teakettle," Spencer said, his eyes snapping open and he tried to sit up. Gently, Dalton pushed him back down and kept his hand there.

"Yes. Morgan figured it out after your rambling in the ambulance," Blake filled in for Spencer.

"He was shot." Spencer looked at Blake, pleading for her to tell him how bad it was.

"In the vest and nothing is wrong with him beside deep tissue bruising that is normal with shots to a vest." Dalton was firm in keeping Spencer down on the bed.

"How?" Blake asked.

"I have good hearing, and your phone is a little loud. Don't worry, on the flight here I filled out a lot of paperwork so that I could stay here as Doctor Reid's bodyguard. Technically I am a civilian consultant for the duration of this case. Section Chief Cruz and AD Richmond weren't happy about having Doctor Reid's only protection Analyst Lynch. Nothing on you but from what I am to understand you hit the dirt more than the broad side of a barn."

"Yes, I do. Even with Reid working with me," Lynch grinned as he spoke and it helped to settle Spencer because it meant that Lynch wasn't upset.

"Morgan put two and two together. Hydroshock rounds, police issue, is what shot the sheriff and killed him. That is not the weapon that shot Morgan. Given that the Preacher was alone inside the restaurant, that meant that someone else was firing from that direction and your brain processed the different sounding round even if your conscious mind didn't. Morgan and the team are looking into what it could be."

"The team needs you, I've got my guard dog and my bro."

Lynch laughed despite himself as he always did when he called Lynch his bro. Morgan had started it, and it had kind of stuck.

"You stay there in bed." Blake stepped up and rubbed his shoulder before she left the room.

"I'm going to take a nap," Spencer said as soon as she shut the door. He looked Lynch who was walking toward where a table was set up with his laptop on it. Dalton sat down in the chair beside Spencer's bed and pulled out a Grimes Tech E-Reader. "Hey, that's not released yet."
"No, it's not. I've got a second one with me that Jackson wants you to give a go. He wants to see if it can keep up with your reading speed or not. I know it'll be a little before you want to read anything but I downloaded the three newest physics texts to it."

"Oh, I've not read those yet. They are sitting at home waiting for me to read."

"Well good. You sleep, Doctor Reid and I'll be right here."

"You can call me Spencer."

"Jack. Now sleep."

Spencer closed his eyes and let his body make him sleep.

Spencer woke up to the sound of his door slamming shut. He jerked and moaned when he moved his neck. He felt a hand on him, keeping him steady. Spencer blinked his eyes open to look at Lynch who was leaning against the door and looked scared with a phone pressed to his ear.

"The team is looking for a deputy, and that deputy is here right now. On his way here."

"Tell Morgan that I'll get Doctor Reid to safety," Jack said.

Spencer listened as Lynch relayed that to Morgan and then hung up. Spencer started to sit up as carefully as he could as Jack moved the wheelchair in the room over to the side of the bed that his IVs were on. Lynch stayed at the door. Jack buttoned his suit jacket so that it would cover his gun.

"This is going to hurt and I am sorry." Jack was careful as he picked up Spencer but as Spencer's whole body still kind of hurt from the gunshot to his neck, it did hurt. He couldn't keep his neck stiff enough to not have it move and every time that he was shifted in Jack's arms, it hurt like a son of a bitch. "Lynch, grab his clothes bag and slip that into his lap and grab your laptop. The first fire alarm that we pass, you pull that. We have to create a bit of chaos to stop the cop from killing Spencer. He obviously saw something that he shouldn't have for that man to come after him."

"Owen McGregor is his name."

"He was just coming off his 4/40 when the case started," Spencer supplied.

"Then we shall see exactly what he's willing to do to get after Spencer here." Jack worked on getting Spencer's IV's transferred to his wheelchair. Lynch was ready with his laptop bag over his shoulder, and he settled Spencer's bag with his gun in it into his lap. Spencer gripped it tight. There was no way that he could fire it, but he didn't want to leave it in that room for McGregor to get. If the man were the one behind all of this, he would be trying to think ahead to what he could do. Getting Spencer's work gun could be horrible.

It was about five feet down the corridor that Spencer saw a fire alarm. Lynch kind of rushed forward and pulled it. Spencer would make sure that nothing would happen to him for that. Spencer looked around as they left and spotted a man that he knew standing at the far edge of the crowd of people. He was in a cop's uniform for the area, and his brain linked that face with the one he had seen after he was shot.

"Lynch I need your phone or mine, someone's phone."

The first phone to be handed over was Spencer's.
"I had it in my pocket," Jack said.

Spencer said his thanks and dialed Morgan's cell phone number.

"Reid, what's going on?"

"We made it out of the hospital, and McGregor was here. He just got into his car and left. Morgan, he was there at the restaurant. When I was leaning against the car, I saw him walk past, and he looked at me. That's why he's after me. He doesn't want to leave a witness. He would have the rounds that hit the Sheriff."

"Thanks, Reid. Look Blake talked about the man with you. Do you trust him?"

"I'm pretty sure that while he's Jackson's guard, Aaron sent him."

"Cruz told me that AD Richmond is keeping the President informed on this as it wasn't confirmed if this could be a terrorist case or not but as we know it's not, it's worse. Cruz is seeing about getting the Rangers here. Any other group would take longer."

"Jack will protect Lynch and me. We are covered."

"Good."

"Be safe, Morgan."

"You too, Pretty Boy."

Spencer hung up and handed the phone back to Jack.

"When we get back into the room, you are going back to sleep," Jack said.

"My body needs it, you won't have a fight with me on that." Spencer closed his eyes. He was really worn out and wanted to go to sleep. Jack kept a hand on his shoulder, reaffirming that he was right there. Spencer would rather it was Aaron there at his back.

Their romance had been so short-lived, but it had lasted in Spencer's mind. He had been so enamored with the man that even now Spencer ached at the absence in his life. The letters were not enough but even now the reasons for them being apart still stood. There would be no way to stealth date as Morgan called it with Spencer, not in the White House.

"Okay, we can go in," Lynch said a while later. Spencer wasn't sure on how long exactly it was because he was getting really sleepy again.

It was no time at all before Spencer was settled in his bed again. A nurse checked him over to make sure that his IVs were still good in his arm and he was good to go. She made a comment on someone being in soon to give him his newest round of pills. Spencer could hear Lynch typing on the computer, so he was probably looking up stuff for the team.

Spencer tried to will himself to sleep, but it wasn't coming. His body was worn out, but his mind wouldn't shut down. The room was quiet, but there was nothing for him to focus on to sleep. Spencer opened his eyes and looked at Jack and debated asking him to read whatever he was reading on his Kindle aloud.

Nixing that idea, Spencer thought about Aaron. What it had been like waking up that one time with his legs over Aaron's lap. Feeling the weight of Aaron's hands on him. The feel of his hand under
Spencer's pant leg that one time. Aaron's hands were always warm. Spencer had never liked touch before, his childhood didn't lead to him being used to it. His father had never touched him, even for hugs and things. His mother touched him when he was younger, but as her disease got worse, those had stopped. Spencer never had an issue with Aaron touching him, and it had worried Spencer for a while.

Spencer missed Aaron so much, and distance really did make the heart fonder. It was horrible how much Spencer craved that touch. It wouldn't have been bad except for the fact that Aaron had followed through with his threat of being shown around the Quantico base. Aaron had started with everything else and left the Academy for last so by the time that Aaron and his entourage had made it to the Academy, word had spread hard and fast.

The team had been out on a case so Spencer was alone in the bullpen. Every team had been out and Spencer had been playing help for every team. Lynch had even set up on his laptop in the bullpen to give Spencer company. Then the entourage had arrived. Alan and Seaver had been first, both smiling at Spencer. Seaver had hugged Spencer and while she had been doing that, Aaron had arrived. It had been hard to miss the fond look that Aaron had given Spencer when Spencer had got up to shake his hand. Spencer was still on crutches at that point, and that was why he was left at the Academy while the team was out.

Before the visit had ended, Aaron had coaxed Spencer into Morgan's office as a pretense to talk about his injury and such. Alan had stood guard outside. Morgan kept his blinds closed when he wasn't in the office, so that hadn't been a show of the fact that they weren't talking in there. Spencer had been leaning on his crutches as he talked about how he was healing and his physical therapy before Aaron had stopped in front of him with an infuriating smirk on his face. Aaron had stepped close enough that Spencer had gone backward to get away before he found himself against the wall.

Aaron didn't stop there, he kept coming forward, divesting Spencer of his crutches before using his own body to keep Spencer upright. Before Spencer could say a single word though, Aaron had kissed him. Between kisses, Aaron told Spencer how much he missed him. Spencer had uttered the words back as well, but it hadn't stopped the kisses. It had felt so good, and the sound of Aaron's voice had carried Spencer to sleep on the nights that he ached for someone to hold him while he slept.

That voice was what carried Spencer to sleep then as well.

"Doctor Reid had his meds an hour ago," Jack said, and it woke Spencer from the sleep that he was getting. He had been woken up that hour before to get the meds as they wanted him to get some food down. Which Lynch had already got him soft and liquid things to eat and drink.

"Post-Op antibiotics," the new person said.

Spencer looked at the new nurse that had stopped and didn't like the look of him. He tried to see the name on the bottle that the man.

"Carbenicillin?" Spencer asked and his eyes cleared to where he could read that ti was in fact that.

"No, that's not right. I have a severe reaction to beta-lactams."

The nurse picked up the chart and looked at it.

"That's not in your chart."
"In fact, it is," Jack said as he reached across and grabbed the bottle from the nurse's hand hopefully before he could get any of it inside of the needle. Spencer though wasn't taking any chances. He started to work on getting his IV out of his arm as he looked up to see that the man had got some of the Carbenicillin into the needle, enough to give Spencer a severe reaction. Jack helped him remove the tape, and Spencer jerked the needle out. The nurse had the needle in the IV and was pulling it out, Jack used the chart clipboard to smack his hand. The man reacted by turning around and going down to get the needle.

"GUN!" Spencer yelled as he saw the gun in the waistband of the man's pants. The nurse reached around to pull out the gun, and when he straightened up, Spencer saw Jack had his gun out. Spencer heard the shot and when he looked after the body crumpled the shot was to the heart. Spencer swallowed. There was no help for him. Spencer waited for the guilt to come out but there was none.

"He killed the sheriff before," Spencer whispered.

"What?" Jack asked.

Spencer looked at him. He held up his phone and waved it.

"The sheriff before died of an allergic reaction to a medication while he was in the hospital recovering from a gunshot. I'm sure that we will find that this nurse was on duty and his chart was modified in some way. I know that my file states what I am allergic to and what I am not. I heard Morgan talking about it on the ambulance ride over. I checked this chart earlier."

"He was probably going to swap it with a different one," Jack stated.

There was a flood of people into the room to try and save the dead man. Spencer ignored most of them and instead just tried to think it all through. He was worried about the team. Corruption on this level was hard to get rid of, and the Rangers were going to have a time of it. Spencer was glad that Cruz was there because it was going to make everything easier, especially for Jack. While Spencer knew that Jack wouldn't face anything for killing the nurse, there was the fact that he was killed while on the job as a nurse, even if he was trying to kill a patient.

"Do you want something to help you sleep?"

"No."

Lynch picked up his phone and looked at it. "I'm going to go and set up in the waiting room down the hall. I think the team is going to need me and I'll be on the phone a lot, so I'll just make sure that he gets some sleep."

"Thank, Kevin," Spencer said with a smile.

Jack walked him to the door and watched him get into the waiting room before he came back. It was twenty minutes later that the room was cleared of the dead body and other staff. Jack shut the door and locked it before looking at the time on the clock on the wall.

"So, when I had you alone for a little while and awake enough, I'm supposed to give you this." Jack picked up a small black case from his bag in the corner and handed it over. "Mac could explain it a lot better but something about end to end it's protected, and no one will be able to hack it. He explained it like mirrors in Harry Potter for me. The ones that Sirius and James used."

"Gotcha." Spencer opened up the case was looking at a tablet of some kind. He turned it on and found that it was limited. Jack stepped up and tapped an icon. It looked like it was making a phone
call and when it connected, Spencer saw Aaron's face. "Aaron."

"Spencer, it's so good to hear your voice. How are you?" Aaron looked like he was someplace that Spencer had never seen before. He tried to remember if there was talk of the President going anywhere. Spencer couldn't remember.

"Really sore. I'm happy that you sent Jack to me. He just..." Spencer looked away and looked down at the floor where the blood was cleaned up but still there in Spencer's mind. "The corruption is horrible, and a nurse just tried to kill me with something I am allergic to."

"Are you alone?"

"Other than Jack, yes."

"I miss you."

Spencer heard the noise from Jack and looked at him with a sharp eye. Jack mimed zipping his mouth shut and throwing away the key. Spencer figured that Jackson would talk to him about it all not long after they got home to DC.

"I miss you too, Aaron. Don't tell Jack about this. Please. He worries so much. He's trying to talk Jackson into making a suit that repels bullets for me. He's a sweetheart, and I don't want him worrying. It's not like my team makes headlines in DC that much so I'm not worried about it being something that he hears on his own."

"I won't tell him. Yes, after the assassination attempt last year he's been very focused on making sure that I don't get shot either. You getting shot again would just make him more zealous. He wants to go to the zoo and see the otters and other creatures so that he can ask you more questions."

"Otters huh? I'll have to do some research on my E-Reader that Jack brought for me about otters so that I can properly respond to him. I want to talk longer, but I'm so tired. Every time I am asleep, and I think I'm good something else happens."

"Dalton's taking good care of you yes?" Aaron's tone left nothing to be desired about what he thought about Jack.

"Jack's doing perfectly fine. He barely felt me up as he was pulling me out of bed in my gown." Spencer smirked at him, and Aaron laughed. It took years off of his face when he laughed.

"Not worried about Dalton feeling you up. He only has room in his life for one genius who can order him about and Angus is that genius."

"Angus?" Spencer looked at Dalton with a quirked eyebrow. Dalton just raised an eyebrow back at him. "Wait...Angus. I remember reading an article about an Angus and Grimes Tech. Angus MacGyver. The article said that he was straight."

"Straight except for whatever the hell he has going on with Dalton."

"And sometimes Jackson. Victor likes to watch and watching Jackson being taken apart by Mac really revs Victor's motor when he actually wants sex for once. No one touches him but Jackson, by that point though I'm working on Mac. Mac called it a brother bond or something but we both only really trust each other, and for a while after the mission, we couldn't handle touch from anyone else so when we needed something, we went to each other. It's better now, but yeah, women are for fun and finding a nice release in but we are when we need that trust."
"You have friends that are not normal, Aaron," Spencer said as he looked at Aaron in the screen. "None of them are normal at all."

"Neither are you," Aaron said with a fond look on his face. "I attract the weird ones it seems."

Aaron closed his eyes and exhaled. His eyes opened again, and Spencer could see so much emotion in them, and he didn't know what to say or do.

"Protect yourself. I wish you were here so that I could make sure that you are safe with my own two eyes."

"I'd rather be back in my room in the White House with Jack playing nursemaid and Jessica giggling like a loon as Jack tried to figure out if there was a way that I didn't have to get up to even pee."

"We both need sleep and if we keep talking it's not going to happen. Give the tablet to Jack and lay down. Stay safe."

"Stay safe," Spencer whispered back, and he closed his eyes to hold back the words he wanted to say, and when he opened them again, the screen was black. Spencer let the tablet drop to his lap, and Jack was there just a second later picking it up. Spencer watched as he slipped it into the case.

"There is a security setting you need to set up with your fingerprint and eye scan, but that can be done later. It won't leave our sight. Don't worry about anything except sleep."

"We are talking about the depraved things you do that Aaron knows about when I can talk coherently."

"He never took part. Jackson just likes to make him blush. Don't worry, he's all yours."

Spencer pouted at Aaron being called his but he was so tired, and now he had Aaron's voice in his head, and it was all perfect and just right.
"Dr. Regan?" Spencer called out as he knocked on the door. The door opened on its own, sending a chill up Spencer's back.

"It's open! Come in!"

Spencer opened the door and frowned because no matter what someone in WitSec wouldn't keep their place unlocked, even if they were expecting the cops. Spencer wished that he hadn't been the one that Rossi had sent to meet with the man from the NSA. Yes, Spencer knew that he was the one who had figured out that it had to be someone that the NSA was at least watching because he was too dangerous to do anything with but the cloak and dagger shit was Rossi’s area, not Spencer's. Just like this was Morgan's area, the breaking into places and hunting someone. Spencer knew that Rossi couched it as Spencer was the second in command. That was still taking some getting used to. Morgan and Cruz hadn't fought it. Rossi said he wanted more time to write and less time working but Spencer was pretty sure the man was wearing out. Spencer had heard Rossi call it a young man's game many times over the past year.

There was every single chance that Lewis had beat him there and this was a trap. There was nothing that Spencer could go except for fight the man if he dosed him. One of the victims showed that it was possible. Spencer wasn't going to let this monster hurt him or his family. Worst fears sucked and for Spencer his worst fear had changed two years before.

"Are you all right?" Spencer called out as he cleared the area in front of the door.

"Agent Reid? I got Agent Rossi's message."

Spencer followed the sound of the voice.
"Doctor, you're in danger. You need to leave the house."

"I understand. I'm in the study."

Spencer kept going, quietly and waited for her to speak again so he could orient himself. He was shocked though when the study was right there, and she was leaning over the desk. "I'm so glad you're here. You need to see this." Regan picked up a knife. "He wants you to see this."

Spencer could only watch as she stabbed herself in the neck. Spencer felt the urge to run forward but didn't. Instead, he put his back to the wall just inside the room and looked around. Regan was dead no help would be able to get to them fast enough. Spencer could see the blood spraying from her neck. The house was dark but not too dark. Spencer started to slide down the wall away from the doorway, but a mist spray appeared in front of his face. Spencer darted forward toward the desk and grabbed the pitcher of water there to clean off his face. His other hand was on his gun, and when he turned from the cold water hitting him, he was hit again. Spencer saw the mask that Lewis was wearing and knew that he needed to get that mask off of him.

Forcing himself to not breathe, Spencer raised his gun to shoot, but his vision started to mess up. There were two men in front of him, and Spencer got off a shot that missed them both. Spencer felt the spray hit his face again and he knew nothing.

Spencer recognized where he was when he opened his eyes. His arms and legs felt like lead, and he wasn't that far from where he had passed out. Lewis was in front of him, looking very smug while sitting in a chair. Spencer could hear his phone vibrating. He looked around to see it on the floor beside him. Lewis started to take off the breathing mask that he was wearing so Spencer knew that he hadn't been out long. Keeping his thoughts in order was taking all of the brain power that Spencer had, but he had to keep it going because he wasn't going to let this man win.

"You can't move," Lewis whispered. Or Spencer thought he was whispering. "Because I say you can't move. Do you see how this works? You do what I say."

"Peter," Spencer started.

"I didn't say you could talk."

Spencer turned to look at Regan who was slumped on the floor, the blood soaking the carpet.

"Don't cry for her. She was stupid. And wrong. She used to burn sage during the sessions. She said that made it safe to talk about Mr. Scratch. What do you see when you look at me? Do you see Mr. Scratch?"

Spencer tried to look away from Lewis but he couldn't.

"You can talk now. I want to know. I want to know what you're feeling."

Spencer heard his phone vibrating again. "That's my team. They know where I was going. They're going to come looking for me, and if you harm me-

"What are you talking about?" Lewis interrupted. "Your phone isn't ringing."

"It was ringing."

"No, it wasn't. Very interesting."
Spencer made his head go up, to get him as high as he could be. Lewis's words were churning in his head, and it was taking longer and longer for his brain to put them into a puzzle that made sense, but he was. "You gave yourself away just now.

"I did?" Lewis looked slightly alarmed, and Spencer could tell that he was trying to figure out how he messed up. Anyone else on the team would have caught it as well. Lewis was used to being the smartest person in a room, but this time he wasn't.

"You slipped up."

"How do you figure?" Lewis sounded like he genuinely wanted to know.

"You have no idea, do you?" Spencer felt himself laugh, it was almost involuntary, but it felt good. Damn, it felt so good to let himself go. "You said that Regan, she would burn sage. But how would you know that? Unless she questioned you, too. I know, Peter. I know how those interviews worked, how coercive they were with children who were innocent and helpless."

Spencer did know because he had studied those interviews over the years. It helped when people who were helpful in cases were only being helpful so that they could derail the suspicion from themselves.

"Shut up." Lewis sounded small there, and Spencer kept on going.

"She questioned you about your father. And she wouldn't stop until she got the answers she wanted. So you gave them to her."

Lewis moved, his face full of pain and Spencer heard the cocking of his gun and then it was being pressed to his head. "Shut up." Lewis pressed the gun harder for a few seconds, but all Spencer did was stare up at him. "Oh, that was good. Oh, that was so good. That was so impressive." Lewis lowered the gun and looked at Spencer like he was a shiny toy. "The way you got into my head. It makes me want to know how I get into yours."

Lewis looked away as Spencer heard noises that spoke of a vehicle pulling up but what followed wasn't the sound of the team. It was voices that Spencer knew but didn't know.

"You were right. They did come calling for you."

"They'll kill you." Spencer wasn't sure that it was the team at all, but he was going to go with what Lewis thought.

"Are you sure about that?"

The door opened, and Spencer was shocked because it was Alan followed by Seaver. Spencer watched them clear the room before Aaron, Jack, and Jessica stepped in. Spencer kept his mouth shut on what he was seeing. It seemed so real, but there was no way that it could be real.

"Morgan!" Spencer yelled and tried to move, but Lewis stopped him. Spencer started to utter nonsense.

"Now I know what scares you," Lewis stepped up and fired a gun down into the floor. Spencer flinched and waited for the image to disappear. He could still see Aaron and Jack there, Jessica had moved on. "It's okay. You can move now."

Lewis started to stand up from the chair he had been sitting in and handed over something. "And here, I have something for you." The windows lit up like a light had shone over them much like a
car. Lewis laid the knife down in Spencer's lap. "I'm about to come through that front door. Kill me before I kill you."

Spencer looked at the door that Lewis was talking about. Spencer lifted the knife like he would fight off an attacker.

"My gun. I need my gun."

Lewis tossed it down to where it landed between Spencer and the dead woman.

"Look, here I come. Kill me."

Spencer leaned forward to grab the gun and cocked it before he started to aim at the door. Just as the door was opening, Spencer spun around fired quickly. Spencer heard the exclamation of pain and watched as Lewis dropped down.

"Reid!" Morgan yelled. Spencer saw him and Rossi running toward him. Spencer let the gun fall from his hand after putting the safety on and then he relaxed down. Morgan took the gun and Rossi rushed to look at Lewis.

"Suspect down," Rossi uttered.

"Rossi?" Morgan asked as he cupped the side of Spencer's face.

"Shot through the neck." Rossi stepped back to where Morgan was still crouched in front of Spencer. "If you hadn't told me about his ability to work at his best under pressure I would have thought it impossible."

"It's that, and he's been at the range a lot, again."

"What?" Rossi asked. He looked at Spencer in shock. "You stopped that after Prentiss came back." Rossi gave Spencer a look that told him that he really was shocked. Morgan knew the reasons behind what Spencer was doing. Rossi saw it as Spencer finally, indeed coming into his own but that wasn't it. Anything less and Spencer would renege on what he knew he needed to do and that was stay away from Aaron.

"And he picked it up as soon as he was able to stand on one foot and shoot without hurting his leg. The medics are right behind us, Reid but I would feel better if you walked out of here under our combined steam, so how does that sound?"

"It sounds good."

Spencer allowed the two of them to help him up. They all three stayed still while he was getting used to standing. Spencer took the first step and realized that there was no way that he was getting out without their help.

"You seem to be doing okay so far," Rossi said.

"I'm so far from okay." Spencer knew that it was true and he knew that he wasn't going to get out of this without going to the hospital. He didn't want to not go to the hospital, but he wanted time to himself to get his head on right. Spencer knew that his greatest fear was losing Aaron and Jack before he ever really got to them as his. He just hadn't expected to see them in place of the team. If Spencer had seen the team in that waking dreamscape that Lewis tried to instill in him, he could have shot whoever was coming through the door, but Spencer had only seen what his brain feared.
"Should I call Alan?" Morgan asked.

Spencer spun his head so quick to look at the dark-skinned agent that he stumbled because it was too much too fast. Morgan caught him, spinning to stand in front of him.

"How the hell do you have Alan's number?"

"Who is Alan?" Rossi asked.

"Shh." Spencer glared at Morgan, and Morgan just stared back at him. "He doesn't need to know about this."

"Reid, Alan told me that he wants to know everything because he cares."

"He doesn't need to know!" Spencer tried to push himself up to stand on his own two feet but that was a mistake, and he nearly fell. Morgan grunted as he fell into him.

"Let's fight about this after we get him sat down," Rossi said.

"Let's not fight about this at all. I don't want him to know, and that's the end of it, Morgan."

"This isn't over," Morgan said.

"Yes, it is." Spencer turned his face away from Morgan, done with the conversation.

JJ was right there, helping Spencer to sit down on the bumper of the ambulance. She sat there beside him and touched him. Grounding him. After the medic was done checking his eyes, Spencer leaned into her.

"You need to tell him," JJ said.

"Not you too," Spencer whined.

"Spence, he's got his own eyes and ears here watching you and wouldn't you rather that you reached out first."

"Look, I get that this something between the three of you but whoever this he is, Reid he should be told by you. Or at least through someone from you." Rossi sounded like a helpful father figure, but Spencer knew that it was a ploy for him to get information. When nothing happened with Aaron after Spencer had come back, the team besides Morgan and JJ had assumed that it had failed. Lynch knew the truth and helped Spencer keep track of everything that happened with Aaron from the minute to the big.

"I can see you want to ask who this he is." Spencer looked at Rossi. Morgan was standing there as well with his phone out. He sighed and nodded at Morgan.

"You need to be checked out by a doctor," the medic said.

"I know. Let me talk to my team, and then I'll let you take me."

The medic nodded and moved to the front of the ambulance to start on the paperwork. Spencer looked at Anderson and Callahan as they stepped up behind Rossi and Morgan. Spencer looked at Callahan who was there but hadn't been part of the team that rushed the house.

"Alan is Aaron's main Secret Service bodyguard."
"I thought that ended?" Rossi asked.

Spencer looked at each member of the team, and Callahan looked really confused, but Spencer wasn't shocked on that one. The team didn't gossip on relationships. Not like that. "No. I let everyone think that, and it kind of did end, but Aaron's the reason that I had a guard in Texas last year. It was better to let everyone think that Cruz had called in a friend from his time in the State Department than it was to let you all know that he was Jackson Grimes's main bodyguard right up until I was finally released from Morgan's dear clutches. He's been living on my floor since about a week before I left Morgan's house after getting shot."

"So it kind of ended but it didn't?" Anderson asked.

"The attacks on Aaron were getting worse, and if the relationship continued after I left the White House, there was going to be no keeping it secret. Which would put him in more danger and I would become a target. So I ended that day that I was given that stupid medal and that hurt so much. We both knew our duty though."

"Sometimes duty sucks," Callahan said.

Spencer looked at JJ and then nodded at Callahan. JJ nodded that she would fill the newest agent in on everything else that she would need to know.

"So I double what I said before. Having Morgan call Alan is the best option."

"Aaron's in France for the wedding of the Prime Minister. I really don't want to bother him with it when he's so far away, but I'll let Alan make that decision."

Morgan started to wander away from the group, probably to make the call that was going to send more guards of some kind to Spencer's side.

"Rossi, I'm ready to go to the hospital now."

JJ gave Spencer a hug and a kiss on his cheek before she stood up and wrapped her arm around Callahan's to pull her away.

The ride to the closest hospital wasn't that long, but still, Spencer settled down for it and closed his eyes. He could feel the effects of the drugs in his system and hated that. He didn't like being drugged against his will at all, but at least this wasn't something that he could get addicted to.

Spencer was given a private room given the effects of the drug in his system and a full blood panel that would test for anything and everything. Spencer felt like he had no blood left after the first two hours that he was there. He was hooked up to IV fluids to keep him hydrated, and sleep should have been easy to come, but it really wasn't. His mind kept going back to seeing Aaron and Jack and the thought that he could have shot them, even in his mind. He could understand the victim that had taken his life instead of the life of his son. Spencer would never want to hurt Jack.

"Excuse me, Sir. You can't go in there."

"I'm going in there unless you want to have security take me out," a voice said.

"Sir, he's being treated."

"Yes, I know that. Thank you."

The voices were getting closer, and then the door to Spencer's room opened, and Spencer saw that
it was Jackson Grimes with Victor close behind him. Jackson shut the door as soon as Victor was through, shutting out the nurse who squeaked as the door was almost slammed on her face.

"Doctor Reid, may I introduce Jackson Grimes. Jackson, Spencer Reid." Victor walked around Jackson as he gave the introduction. He stopped at the foot of Spencer's bed, reaching out to touch Spencer's blanket covered feet.

"Where is Jack?" Spencer asked.

"On vacation with Mac. Somewhere warm I think. Aruba or something like it. I didn't listen that hard after Jack asked to use one of my villas. I'm sure that Victor remembers."

"Shouldn't you listen to your employees?" Spencer asked.

"He should, but he has a hard time when someone has a mouth on his cock," Victor said with a smirk on his face. Jackson blew a kiss at Victor.

"I wasn't telling Victor no when he asked if he could blow me. It's so damned rare. My secretary was supposed to keep everyone out, but Jack slipped past her. But that's not why I am here. Since Jack was in some other place, I promised Aaron that we would check on you. I was going to come alone, but Victor said that you might actually shoot me if he wasn't here to temper me."

"I have a feeling that it might be possible, except my gun is in evidence at the moment for shooting the UnSub."

Jackson grabbed the chair and carried it around to the side of the bed that didn't have machines, his eyes darted over Spencer's monitors, and Spencer figured that his true scope of how he was doing was going to be making it to Aaron before the end of the night. Spencer looked at the time. It was just after midnight his time which meant that where Aaron was, it was just after six a.m. meaning that Alan had been woken up and Aaron as well.

"This could have waited until the morning," Spencer said.

"Pfft." Jackson waved his hand as he typed at a tablet that Spencer wasn't sure where the hell he had been hiding it. "I'm sure that security will be here soon to try and throw us out but don't worry about that. I regularly donate to this hospital, and I make sure that the pediatric ward has all the equipment that they need. They aren't going to throw me out. I just emailed the CEO and the President of the board."

"I try not to piss off the people who are taking care of me."

"It's okay. No one is going to give you substandard care," Victor said as he finally came around the bed and sat down at Spencer's feet, nudging Jackson's legs with his feet and Jackson moved his legs over so that Victor could slip his feet there. "So Alan was a little lacking on the details to Aaron because Morgan was tight-lipped as well."

"I was the closest to the next victim, so I went alone. The UnSub was already there and was prepared for me to get there. Instead of just killing her and leaving, he staged it so that she killed herself in front of me. He dosed me with his standard cocktails of drugs meant to make me suggestable and that I would only remember what he wanted. However, the drugs didn't react the same with me. The UnSub also didn't predict well enough what my worst fear was. He thought it was my team, killing my team."

"Who did you see?" Victor asked.
"Aaron, Jack, Alan, and Seaver. The thought of hurting Jack was so abhorrent that it helped me stay away from even lifting my gun until I knew that I had a good chance of killing the UnSub. He's dead, and my team is safe."

"And here you are," Jackson said before he leaned forward in the chair that he was in and touched the side of Spencer's knee. "So you've been drugged against your will and forced to see your worst fear. I don't have a therapist for that, but I do have one on staff that helps victims of sexual abuse when they have been drugged."

"The Bureau has someone on staff," Spencer stated as he picked at the blanket over his lap.

"And that someone is someone who is probably used to the other agents of the FBI. I have geniuses on my staff, Spencer." Jackson leaned forward and laid his hand over Spencer's on the blanket. "I have therapists of all walks who know how to deal with someone who is talking about what the issue is. I pay them a generous salary no matter how many people they talk to and they have offices inside of my main building but will also come to you."

"It's not the first time I've been drugged against my will."

Spencer watched the two of them share a look of horror before looking at Spencer with their poker faces in place.

"I had a good therapist for that, but they retired. Morgan didn't give me an option then and he won't now either." Spencer hated relying on people to help him, but a good therapist would be wonderful. "So fine, I'll meet your person at your offices. I don't like to have strange people in my apartment."

"Good, Good. I'll text her in the morning." Jackson looked at the time and then at Spencer and to the bed on the other side of the room. "We are going to room with you tonight. I'm tired, and I was sleeping well before Aaron woke me up. I just have a single question for you."

Spencer looked at him, telling him to go ahead but that he wasn't exactly going to be nice.

"Aaron deflects me every single time. Have you, and he had sex yet?"

"Good night," Spencer said, and he scooted down in the bed as Victor started to laugh. Victor grabbed the blanket and covered Spencer up before he forced Spencer to look at him.

"Aaron told me to tell you that he missed you and to give you this." Victor leaned over and pressed a kiss to Spencer's cheek. "He also said to tell you to stay safe."

Spencer couldn't speak, so he nodded his head and closed his eyes. He was shocked that Jackson had stayed silent, but he probably feared what Victor would do to him. Spencer laid his bed down and started to force himself to sleep. He felt so alone, with the drugs slowly leaving his body. The vision he'd had of Aaron made him feel so alone.

It was impossible for Aaron to sleep in the room had he had been put into. He had no clue why he was having trouble. He had drunk enough wine and champagne that it should have put him right to sleep. Yet instead he had tossed and turned all night long. He had ended up reading on his Kindle.

There was a knock on his door, and he heard Alan call out to him. Aaron was actually in a small suite, and Alan and Seaver were sleeping in the front room of it. Jack and Jessica were in the bedroom next to Aaron's. It was a lovely estate for the wedding which had lasted longer than Aaron wanted it to but he had talked to a lot of world leaders as this seemed to be the It event for
the year.

Alan came in when Aaron called back to him. The look on Alan's face was not good.

"So, everything here is fine and everything that you need to worry about as far as President is fine. It's...Spencer, again."

"Alan."

"Morgan called, and Spencer is on his way to a hospital in Bethesda, Maryland after he was drugged by an UnSub. Spencer killed the UnSub who it seems was wanted for a lot of shit having to do with hacking the Department of Justice and the Witness Protection Program but now that he's dead, they are less worried. Morgan is worried about Spencer mentally as the UnSub made people killed their loved ones using drugs. It seems though that while Spencer did see his loved ones, it wasn't the ones that the UnSub thought he would see and it was what allowed Spencer pull himself from the delusion and save himself."

"Who did the UnSub think Spencer would see?"

"The team and instead he saw you, Jack, and Jessica along with Seaver and I for protection."

"Fuck," Aaron said. He pushed himself up from the reclining position that he had been in and draped his legs over the edge of the bed. When Aaron had agreed to be apart from Spencer until he was no longer President, Aaron had not figured that Spencer would be the one hurt time and time again. Hearing about Spencer being hurt was painful, but Aaron could understand why Spencer didn't want to be the reason that Aaron was hurt. Aaron wasn't the reason that Spencer was hurt, but it still hurt that Spencer was hurt and Aaron was unable to be there for him. He was in France and nowhere near the tablet that Jackson had made sure was able to be connected to Spencer. It wasn't like Spencer would have his with him either. They didn't use them often, just checking in really. Aaron had called Spencer on his birthday, Spencer had called Aaron on his birthday, and then again on Jack's. There hadn't been a lot of time to talk otherwise. Aaron missed him too much to talk to him any more than he did as it was.

"Dalton's in Aruba right?" Aaron remembered that Jackson had sent word with Victor that there was a secondary guard on Spencer for a little while. Aaron did not begrudge Dalton wanting to get away with his lover for a while.

"Yes."

"It's what, just past ten there? Do you think that Jackson and Victor would mind going to see him in the hospital?"

"I'll call Victor and ask. I know that I am not your assistant, but I think right now you need to process."

Aaron nodded. He was in France, and there was no way that he was going to fly home early. He was in France for another three days. Jack wasn't going to like that he was sick, again. Aaron hoped that someone talked Spencer into talking to someone about everything.

Spencer had shared the last time that he had been drugged by an UnSub and none of it was good. While this wasn't that bad because it seemed like a drug that caused hallucinations, not a drug to help Spencer cope with what the other two personalities were doing to him. This drug wasn't the means to an escape, it was a means to an end. Aaron worried about who they were each going to be when the time came for Aaron's duty to the American people to be done.
"Jackson and Victor are both going to him. You look like shit. You looked like shit before I came in here and told you."

"I'm not going to get much sleep."

"Try. Go slip into bed with Jack. You can usually sleep with him. I'll stay up and make sure that you get up in time for the last breakfast that is planned."

Aaron knew that Alan would pester him until he gave in, so Aaron just gave into him. He grabbed the robe that he wore and donned it before slipping into Jack and Jessica's room. Jack was dead asleep in a starfish position in the middle of the queen bed. Jessica was in the second queen bed, but she was on her side. Aaron looked at them before slipping off the robe and laying it on the chair beside Jessica's bed. Aaron shook her awake.

Jessica looked at Aaron, and when she saw his face, she rolled back to her side and held up the covers. Aaron was too keyed up to sleep in the same bed as Jack. Jack kicked, but Jessica would let Aaron hold her.

"You only do this when you are emotionally overwhelmed. What happened with Spencer?"

"His job is too damned risky. An UnSub got him again. Didn't shoot but messed him up. There is something else, but that's private."

"And you are here, and he is there, and you have no way to really talk to him that isn't risky. You want to be there, and you need to be here. It's just two more years."

Aaron buried his head in Jessica's neck and exhaled. Words were not needed and would probably turn everything worse. Aaron wasn't sure that he was going to make it through the next two years without breaking his promise to Spencer to stay away.
Aaron marveled at the changes to his house. He hadn't been inside of it in four years, and Jessica had spent the last few months of his Presidency getting it ready for Aaron and Jack to move back in. She also picked out her room and made it perfect for herself. There was also the construction of a much smaller house on the edge of the property and the fence that surrounded the whole of it. Aaron knew that he would never be able to go back to a normal life when he ran for President, and he had planned for that.

The land that his house sat on was ten acres and was more than enough for the house for the security team that would be hired to protect the property and the family when they were home. There would always be Secret Service agents who watched over them, and with the threats on Aaron's life not going away even one week after he had ended his time as President, Aaron knew that he would have to be used to it all. Alan had come with them as his primary Agent protecting him. Seaver stayed at the White House protecting the new President.

"Aaron?" Jessica called out as she stepped into the study. Aaron was standing with his back to the door and his mind lost in his thoughts. "Lunch is ready."

"Okay," Aaron said as he turned to face her. Jessica was leaning in the door to the room with a smile on her face. Jack was thrilled to be home, and while he missed the White House, even Jack had started to get bored of the place at the end.

"What have you been working on in here all alone?" Jessica asked.

"That's a secret until I'm ready to talk about it." Aaron stepped back to the large desk in the middle
of the study and closed the notebook he had been writing in while working on the computer. Jackson had made sure that the digital security in the house was on par with his own and would be monitoring it all the time from his primary hub in DC.

Life was very new to Aaron, not having to worry about much of anything any more than Jack and he knew that it was going to take time to get used to but for now it was taco night.

Aaron walked around his desk and caught up with Jessica, wrapping an arm around her shoulder so they could walk down the stairs to the kitchen. Jack was at the small table that looked out on the back of the property with books scattered around him.

"He's working on science. Science and math are learned in the kitchen he's decided," Jessica said with a smile on her face.

"I know that reading and literature are in the library on the third floor."

"Yes. He's not decided if he wants to do history in there as well. It's nice moving around more in the house, and I know that he does it because we used to wander around the White House and learn wherever we wanted."

"Jackson is looking forward to getting a media room set up for Jack as well. We just need to pick the actual room inside of the house."

"Jack picked that out today. The room that you were using for storing your law books that connected to the library. He wants to pull all of the science books from the library and then put them in the media room, putting your law books into the library. Then he wants to do computers, math, and science in there."

"I think between you and Jackson; Jack's going to have many options on what he wants to do in life."

"He's going to be smart enough. I got the new information on that soccer group that meets in the area. Jack's looking forward to getting back into that again. I know that last year's broken arm upset him that he could only cheer from the sideline for the season."

"I know he tried to talk me into renovating the basement of the house to make him an indoor field and workout room. I talked him down to a treadmill that he can run on and a big TV in front of it so he can watch things."

"Most people would say that you spoil him."

"If I spoiled him the TV would have cable hooked up to it instead of whatever apps can be downloaded on it. Jackson made sure that every single inch of this house has the best signal that it can have. When it comes to education, I can't say no, and Jack still loves soccer, and it's getting him moving, and that's a nice thing. Most kids his age don't want to leave the couch from playing video games."

"Jack only plays about half an hour, and that's in the morning when he wakes up early. He's never been much of a video game player."

"I know, and I'll do anything to keep that from happening. Though he does want a Playstation or an XBox so he can get the FIFA games. So you and I can discuss that."

"You know that you don't have to keep doing this co-parenting thing," Jessica pointed out as they finally stepped into the kitchen. "You can devote all of your time to him now."
"I'm not going to push you out. Given my plans for what I want to keep on doing with my life, I will still need a nanny, and as long as you want to do it, I'll gladly keep on letting you. He needs a motherly influence, and you are perfect because you love him already."

"Jackson had Victor talk to me about taking over a few duties for them. It sounded good and could be done from the media room with the addition of a laptop, which he would provide."

"Yes and he talked to me about it first. If you want to, that's awesome. It'll help you with not getting bored, and I'm sure that days you have to go into the office I can watch him, or he can go in. He's already interested in spending a day a week in the lab there."

Jack was still just writing away at whatever he was doing and ignoring them.

"And what about you?"

"What about me?"

"What are you going to do with your life? You are still pretty damned young in the grand scheme of things."

"Well, I guess that depends on what happens tomorrow."

"And what happens tomorrow?" Jessica asked.

The ding of a timer told Aaron that the taco meat was ready. It was marinated chicken instead of ground beef or turkey. Everything else had been made by Aaron a few hours before and put into the fridge while the meat had been shredded and been put into a crock pot to keep warm and to soak up the spices that Aaron had mixed in.

"Tomorrow I go to Quantico."

"Aaron," Jessica said and forced Aaron to turn around to look at her.

"I thought you had decided to let him come to you." Jessica looked really concerned. Aaron knew that she had right to be. Spencer hadn't written a postscript to Aaron in the letters to Jack in six months. There was nothing in the news that gave Aaron a clue why. There were a few things that had made the FBI sit up and take notice of the A-Team for the BAU but nothing that bordered on Aaron needing to know as President.

"I need to know. If he found someone else, then I need to be able to move on."

"Whatever you need after you go there tomorrow, I'll be here."

Aaron could feel her eyes on him as he stepped over to take the lid off of the crockpot and stir up the meat before declaring dinner ready. It was a Tuesday, and Aaron had the rest of the week to get things ready no matter how the next day went. He just really didn't want it to be that Spencer had found someone else. The calls from the secure tablet had gone unanswered, and while Aaron had missed a few calls back from Spencer as well, there was the fear that Spencer had found someone. Aaron had forbidden Alan from calling Morgan to ask. Aaron would rather hear it from Spencer's mouth.

Dinner was sedated with Jack taking up all of the silence with talk of what he wanted to do with his bedroom since the last time he had slept in there it had been when he was a baby. Plans were made for Thursday to go and get an actual big boy bed with new mattress and all of the things for the bed that he would need. It was like Jack knew that Aaron was distracted and didn't want to talk about it.
because he didn't ask Aaron what was wrong at all, just stared at him for long periods before starting up discussion of something else.

Aaron put Jack to bed that night, and Jack asked for a chapter of the book he was reading to be read to him. It was something that had fallen by the wayside as Jack had got older, but he seemed to want it sometimes when he was sick or knew that Aaron was upset.

Bedtime for Aaron was not long after and in spite of his nerves he was asleep in seconds.

Aaron hadn't been inside of the Quantico Base in years as his job had never had a reason for him to come past that first and only visit. Aaron's ID had been updated and a new car bought by Jessica for him. Using his money of course but her time to go out and do mundane things the last month of Aaron's Presidency had been easier than Aaron sending someone else to do it. Aaron had sold his other car after the election results.

The guards at the gate for the FBI Academy had stared at Aaron like they were unsure if they should do anything other than let him in, like call one of the higher up to come and escort him.

"I'm just visiting a friend, guys. There is no need for a big thing. I'd rather just slip in and see him and slip out without the big wigs knowing that I am here." Aaron knew that the presence of Alan in the seat beside him was a big deal, but Alan had promised to stay in the car or at least near the vehicle and let Aaron go into the building on his own.

"Sure, Sir," the older of the two guards said as he handed back the ID and waved Aaron through after giving him directions to where he was going. Aaron was glad that he had because he had been stuck in a vehicle the last time talking with people. Aaron parked in the visitor parking and saw that there were not named spots but just generic spots. There was, however, a deep purple colored car sitting in the place for the Unit Chief of the A-Team of the BAU. Beside that car was a spot for the Unit Chief of the IRT, which Aaron had heard more about as that group helped Americans abroad with severe issues in other countries.

Aaron found the visitor entrance and endured the walk through the metal detector and the eyes that stared at him as we walked through the halls to the elevator. Aaron knew the BAU was on the sixth floor and when the elevator doors opened and a few people who had been staring at him entered, he decided to go into the stairs and head up that way. He was still in excellent physical shape and had started up his morning runs again as soon as he had got home. The fence had a path of concrete around it giving a perfect place to run for him without having to endure going out and making someone else run with him.

The sixth floor was full of workers when Aaron stepped out of the stairs. Every single desk had someone sitting at it except for a single one. The desk that had been Spencer's the last time that Aaron had been in the BAU. Aaron marveled at how no one looked up at him as he entered through the glass doors, a single head popped up when Aaron got near his desk, and then looked back down. Aaron remembered him from Spencer's team. It was seconds later that the head popped up again. Aaron nodded at the man before stepping up to Spencer's desk.

Aaron stopped as he took in the name on the desk because that was not Spencer's name. Aaron looked around at every single desk that was there and realized that they were all full. The door to the office where David Rossi had been was shut, and it had the name of Emily Prentiss on it. Aaron remembered her from Spencer talking about her team. The office where Morgan had been was open so Aaron couldn't read the name on it and he couldn't see anyone sitting at the desk.

"Sir," a male voice said, and Aaron turned around to look at the man who had looked up at him.
Now though everyone in the room was looking at him. "Why don't you head up and into the open office? I'm sure that someone in there can help you."

Aaron remembered the man then. "Thank you, Anderson."

Anderson looked really happy that Aaron had remembered his name.

"You are welcome, Sir."

"You can call me Hotch. It's an unfortunate nickname I was given in college and was unable to escape." Aaron took the steps up to the office and saw that there was no one inside then he heard the sound of papers being shuffled behind the door. Aaron stepped farther into the room to see a head bent over a pile of paperwork on a coffee table. The person was sitting on the floor, and there was a carafe of coffee at the edge of the table and a cup that was still steaming just within reach.

Aaron knew Spencer anywhere, but he wondered why Spencer was in Morgan's office. Aaron looked at the door to see that it wasn't Morgan's office anymore. Spencer was the Unit Chief, which meant that the purple car was his. Aaron watched Spencer for a few minutes before he looked into the bullpen. Anderson was working on paperwork again while a woman was standing outside her office looking at Aaron. He recognized her as JJ, Spencer's kind of sister. She was looking at Aaron with a big grin on her face. Aaron looked at the other office to see Prentiss standing there.

"You can shut the door. He'll be happy to see you," Prentiss said. Her eyes darted out into the bullpen before she looked back at Aaron. "Lunch out, and you can meet the newest member of the team, and we can explain how he's the Unit Chief now."

"And you are second in command?" Aaron asked.

"Yes. Though Reid had to kind of beg on that. Go back in there." Prentiss waved her hand and Aaron did just that, stepping back inside of the office and shutting the door with barely a sound made at all. Spencer didn't react at all and was in fact still writing on the notepad that was in front of him. There was a chair in the spot directly across from Spencer, so Aaron sat down there, waiting.

It was five minute by the clock on the wall before Spencer seemed to come out of whatever he was doing and picked up his cup off coffee and drained almost all of it in one go. Aaron wasn't shocked by that at all. Spencer picked up the carafe and swirled it around before pouring out another cup. It looked milky, so Aaron understood why Spencer had swirled it. To remix the cream and sugar if it settled at the bottom.

Spencer had not realized that he wasn't alone in the office at all and Aaron wondered if it was because he was that safe in his office or it was Aaron himself.

"Got a few minutes?" Aaron asked.

Spencer's head shot up from where he was looking at the file in front of him. He looked at Aaron for twenty seconds before he rubbed at his eyes. Blinking like he expected Aaron to disappear, Spencer was silent.

"Aaron?" Spencer asked as he sat up all the way, leaning back on the couch.

"Hello, Spencer."

"What are you doing here?" Spencer stood up and walked around the coffee table that was on the
far side from Aaron. He stepped up to the window in his office and looked out. "Where are your guards? There wasn't anything mentioned about you visiting today."

"Spencer, what is the date today?"

Spencer looked at the calendar on the wall and frowned for a few seconds. "Wednesday, February the first, two thousand and seventeen."

"And when did the new President take over?"

"January twentieth. Damn." Spencer looked at Aaron with a look like he was gutted some. "I meant to call but today is the first day back in the office since the sixteenth."

"One case?"

"Three. Back to back. First, in California and on the way home we were diverted to Denver for a serial bomber and then again to Tallahassee when we were done with that for a child abduction. We were half an hour out from landing, and the jet had enough fuel to get us there. It's quicker to get a team that's already in the air there than to prep another. Today is paperwork day on all three cases, and then we have a week off. Now I understand why Prentiss kept asking me what I was going to do over my week off. I did mean to call on the morning of the twenty-first. Or at least text. It's just been one thing after another since Morgan retired."

"He retired?"

"He and Savannah married two years ago but after a case where an UnSub's family focused on us for putting away a killer who ended up dead by the hands of his league of assassins that he was apart of. He almost lost Savannah and the baby. We ended it, but no one could fault him for wanting to be at home for his wife and child."

"Morgan's a father?"

"Hank Spencer Morgan. My third Godson."

"Michael, right? JJ's second. I remember Jack talking about him." Aaron stood up out of the chair and stepped to stop about a foot from where Spencer was. He wasn't sure what he was going to do or what Spencer would allow.

Spencer's face was unreadable, but Aaron could see a little happiness in his eyes and Aaron really hoped that it was from Aaron himself and not just thinking about his Godson. Decision made, Aaron stepped up and didn't give Spencer a chance to say anything as he gripped the back of Spencer's neck and held him in place as Aaron pressed their lips together.

Spencer clutched the edge of the sweater that Aaron was wearing, it was soft, and Spencer didn't want to let go of it. Spencer didn't want to let go for a multitude of reasons, first of which was the fact that Aaron was kissing him. Spencer knew that letting go of Aaron's sweater wasn't going to make the man stop kissing him, but Spencer could feel the warmth of Aaron's skin, and he wanted to touch. Aaron was only touching Spencer at the back of his neck, holding him in place as Aaron devoured his mouth.

When Aaron took a half step closer, Spencer slipped his hands under Aaron's sweater to find skin. He slid his hands from the stomach to the sides and back to dig his fingers into the small of Aaron's back to bring him just that little bit closer. Aaron moaned into the kiss and pressed their bodies together. Spencer could feel their erections pressing into each other and Spencer wanted to thrust,
but this wasn't the time or the place.

The knock on the door startled them both, Aaron jumping back and hissing as Spencer didn't let go with his hands and his nails scraped along Aaron's back.

"Cruz is talking to JJ, but I think that he's on his way this way," Prentiss said.

Aaron stepped back and waved out of the office, but Spencer shook his head no.

"I have a coffee pot over there if you want to make more. Feel free to sit where you like. I tend to do most of my paperwork right here." Spencer pointed at where he had been. He walked over to there and picked up his mug of coffee to drain it before pouring the last of the carafe. "It's what JJ got me as a present when Cruz all but dumped the Unit Chief position into my lap."

"Dumped it?"

"Rossi spent two years working with me on becoming the second in command on the team, he wanted less paperwork but wanted to make sure that I had the mental tools to be one that could actually get shit done. My age and intelligence sometimes make it a lot harder to get people to take me seriously. The stint at the White House made people at least take me somewhat more seriously, especially after I took a bullet for the President but that didn't mean that it still wasn't an issue. After I got shot in the neck he kind of forced everyone to accept me and told everyone that I was the second in command and everyone else could live with it."

Spencer capped the carafe and walked it over to his coffee pot in the corner beside his very full bookshelves. Aaron was pressing the button to start the new pot. There was a knock on Spencer's door, and then Cruz was stepping in.

"Spencer, I wanted to...oh I didn't realize that you had company."

Spencer looked to see that Aaron still had his back to Cruz.

"It's okay. Aaron, do you want to go and talk to JJ while I talk to Mateo?" Spencer asked.

"Sure." Aaron picked up Spencer's spare cup and pulled the carafe to pour himself a cup of coffee before he started out the door. Aaron nodded at Cruz before he was gone.

"Was that..." Cruz watched Aaron walk to JJ's office.

"Yes. That was former President Aaron Hotchner."

"He's barely a week out of the Presidency, and he's here visiting you?"

"What did you need to talk to me about Mateo?"

"There is a case that's coming from the White Collar Crime Unit in Vegas. It's not coming through the normal channels because they just want you. I don't even understand what the file they sent says, but I know that it's right up your alley as far as paper trails go. They don't want a big fanfare though, and if the whole team goes, there will be fanfare."

"So a vacation/work time for me?"

"Yes. Just to be safe, I'm having Lynch buy the plane ticket and car rental out of your account, and then the FBI will refund you when the case is over. This person is a computer genius, and we can't risk the man knowing that you are there for anything other than a vacation."
"I see. Prentiss can run the team without me. When do they want me?"

"I have Lynch booking a flight tomorrow morning, and we are putting the whole team on
downtime. It's the only way that it's going to work because a rush flight on your end would be
weird. So after the three weeks of back to back cases, we are giving you guys a week downtime.
After the case is over, you will get an actual week of downtime."

"I'll pack accordingly."

"Do take some time to see your mom while you are out there."

"I will. I will." Spencer nodded his agreement to what Cruz was saying. The team wouldn't like
him going on a case alone, even if there were no deaths involved. Spencer at least had the day to
get ready to go away for at least a week.

"I'll send the paper files down. I know you do much better with them. So why is the former
President here?" Cruz looked very interested.

"That's between him and me, and as soon as we are ready to discuss it with anyone, you'll be one of
the first to know."

"One of the first, Morgan and JJ first?"

"Of course." Spencer smiled as Cruz laughed. Spencer watched Cruz leave, his eyes on JJ's office
where Spencer could see Aaron sitting there and laughing at something that JJ was telling him.
Spencer was a little shocked that the office wasn't full of the rest of the team. They were all
busybodies and would be up into his business. Spencer walked over to his desk and sat down,
picking up the phone and dialing a number from memory.

"Pretty Boy, what are you doing calling me right now? Shouldn't you be working?" Morgan said,
but he didn't sound upset at all.

"Well, I was hoping to entice you into the City of Quantico for lunch. Team lunch out."

"I think I can swing that. Hank or no Hank?"

"Oh, Hank will be lovely. Just..."

"Reid?" Morgan sounded a little worried then.

"It'll be team plus one."

"Plus one? Who is the plus one?"

"My boyfriend." Spencer felt the blush creep up his face at that. Because there was no mistaking
what Aaron wanted with that kiss.

"Oh, really and-," Morgan stopped, and Spencer heard a rustle on the other end. "He showed up
there?"

"JJ is currently entertaining him because Cruz needed to talk to me about a case. So if you want to
interrogate him fully, better be at lunch."

"I'll call that Chinese place that you like with the room and make sure that we get it. You had
better believe that Hank and I will be there. He's not the President anymore so I can threaten him if
he hurts you."
"Morgan." Spencer was exasperated.

Morgan just laughed. "See you soon, Reid." Then hung up.

Spencer sighed as he laid his phone down in the cradle. He looked out into the bullpen, seeing Aaron still in JJ's office, still laughing. Spencer grabbed his mug of coffee after walking to the door. He walked around the upper area until he got to JJ's office, leaning in the doorway.

"No, I'm really not kidding. Sometime you'll have to ask Morgan. He's had more offers from pros, of all sexualities and genders, than any other person individually and even if you combined the team. He was in Vegas and talked to a hooker that trolled the casino and left her two thousand dollars because she helped him crack a case while talking about quitting smoking."

"Really?" Aaron looked like he was about to hurt himself from trying not to laugh too hard.

"Oh yes. Morgan used to send him to be the one to talk to the pros because he got the most out of them. They really liked him. We had a case once where he was attacked by an UnSub and knocked unconscious. Five pros found him and chased off the UnSub and took them back to a safe place until he woke up."

"I woke up in bed with two hookers and three of them standing guard with knives. One of them had Morgan's card from a sweep we had done before and had called him. They had me bandaged up and ready to be seen by a doctor by the time that Morgan and Rossi came for me. They had also painted my nails and styled my hair. Morgan did not let me live it down."

"What took so long?"

"Hunting for the UnSub. It was a warehouse district that had been turned into cheap housing, so there was a lot of places that they needed to clear before coming to me. Which took an hour after they arrived. It was better if the UnSub was hunting me to find him instead of leading him to me. But yes Morgan never let go of that. We went back to that city two more times, one for another case and once for a seminar. They treated me to lunch out during the seminar."

"Only you," Aaron said with a smile. He held out his hand, and Spencer stepped up to him and took it. Spencer wasn't sure what Aaron was going to do but pulling him into his lap in the chair was not it. JJ kept her mouth shut, but Spencer could see her pressing her lips together.

"You, this really isn't appropriate while I am working," Spencer said, but he didn't try and get out of Aaron's lap.

"And it was while I was working?" Aaron asked, whispering in Spencer's ear.

"Well, you had downtime, and we only did things like this when you were on downtime. I am not on downtime until lunch." Spencer turned to look Aaron in the eyes. Aaron reached up and cupped the back of his head, pressing their foreheads together. Spencer sighed and closed his eyes, liking this so much. He heard the sound of JJ taking a picture and knew that threats of her not sharing that among their friends would fall on deaf ears.

"Morgan's excited for lunch, he's already texted me that the room has been reserved for us."

"Lunch?" Aaron asked.

"I invited Morgan out to lunch, I was going to have the team join us because I don't want to keep this from them and it's better to get things out of the way now than to have them sneaking around. JJ would tell Morgan everything, so it's better to head her off at the pass."
"Miss Prentiss mentioned lunch out for the team."

"We are all old hat at our SOP for things like this. There is just a little more of us now," JJ said with a smile on her face. She set down her phone. "I'll only share with the team that you allow to have it, Spence."

"Morgan is bringing Hank. I have something to discuss with the team before we head out to lunch," Spencer said. He pressed his and Aaron's lips together. "Stay here in JJ's office, and when I get done talking to the team, we can go to lunch. Did you drive?"

"I did. I spent one day last week driving to get used to DC traffic again. I have Alan outside in the car."

"You left him in the car?" Spencer leaned over Aaron's lap to grab JJ's phone. She dialed a number for him, and Spencer talked to the man who was on general security and asked him to find Alan and direct him up to the BAU's offices. Spencer hung up and glared at Aaron. "No dessert for you."

"I didn't want to make a spectacle and having a conspicuous guard with me would be evident."

"Making poor Alan sit in the car," Spencer said with a pout, but it had the effect that he wanted. Aaron started to smile and pulled Spencer in for another kiss. Spencer knew that they were a lot closer than they should be with a four-year time distance between them but he didn't care. He wanted this, and he had denied it to himself for so long. Spencer pulled Aaron's head back to his, just relishing in the press of their foreheads and breathing the same air.

"I'll get the team into the round table room, Spence," JJ said as she stood up. Spencer could hear her walking around the desk.

"Thanks." Spencer inhaled deeply, waiting for her to leave the room. "I have a case that I'll be working on my own for probably the next week. I don't know what you want, but before Cruz had come into the room, I had planned to go back to yours to spend some time with Jack. I know that he's missed me, but I don't think that you'd like me to be there tonight and then gone out of touch for a week."

"Why are you going alone?"

"My ability to profile paper trails and read massive amounts of files is needed more than anything. I'm being loaned to another department. Don't worry the person that I'm hunting isn't a killer. It's for the White Collar Crimes division. I probably won't leave the FBI field office there except to go to my hotel. I'll be able to talk to you guys."

"Tablet?"

"That's at home, but I might be willing to make a trip there before I head to Dulles to catch my flight. Do I have incentive?" Spencer pressed his lips to Aaron's and relished in just the simple intimacy.

Spencer briefed the team quickly before they all piled into various vehicles with JJ riding with Spencer, Alan, and Aaron. Morgan was already at the restaurant when they arrived. The hostess that showed them to the room was new and stared at Aaron the entire time. Spencer figured that it wouldn't be long until word got around.

"Hotch," Morgan said as he stood up with Hank in his arms. Spencer darted in front of Aaron and took Hank from Morgan's arms, cuddling him into his body before he sat down at the only place that had a fork at it.
"Morgan." Aaron stepped up to Morgan and shook his hand. Spencer watched to see Morgan squeeze hard and all Aaron did was smile at him.

"Do we need to get out a tape measure?" Prentiss asked as she took a seat next to where Morgan had been seated at. It allowed JJ to take the seat between Spencer and Hank's spot. Anderson stepped up to shake Aaron's hand next before he took his seat. Lynch waved before taking his seat. Simmons looked like he didn't know what to do. He looked at Spencer, Aaron, and his seat before finally just sitting down in the only open seat on the other side of Prentiss. Spencer was glad that they got the room as it had a large circle table in it. Aaron took the seat beside Spencer that was left for him.

"No tape measure needed," Morgan said as he finally sat down and looked at Spencer. "I've lost my son for the whole of the meal haven't I?"

"Of course, I get him after Spence," JJ said with a smile.

"Speaking of you." Morgan looked at JJ. "Pretty Boy mentioned you were in an office again."

"I was talked into becoming the Media Liaison again, as well as keeping myself a profiler. No one wants Spencer to be the one to talk to the LEOs and deal with pissed off cops who don't want to share."

"How much time does that add to your day?"

"Nothing really. Spencer lessened the number of consults that I do because of it and took them on. It's all good."

Spencer let the banter between the team wash over him as he looked at the menu. The meals had changed since the last time that he had been there. There were several new ones. One of Spencer's favorites wasn't on the menu anymore. Spencer startled when he felt a hand on his thigh. He looked down to see that it was Aaron's and Aaron looked a little shocked.

"I wasn't expecting it," Spencer whispered to him. Aaron smiled back. Aaron's face turned back to where he was looking over the menu. Aaron's fingers started to trace a pattern that made no sense on the inside of Spencer's thigh.

The waitress came in at some point and took the drink order for everyone except for Spencer. Instead, she set down a pot of tea down along with the usual cup for it. Spencer grinned in thanks as he added a little bit of the packet of sugar to the cup before taking a sip, burning his lip.

"So what's up with this?" Aaron asked touching the handle of Spencer's fork.

"Spencer can't use chopsticks to save his life," Morgan answered before Spencer could. "Well, I'm sure that he could use them to save his life by stabbing an UnSub in the eye but as far as saving his life by using them to actually feed his body, no."

"Really?"

"JJ's tried teaching me several times, and it all fails. Since the team eats here several times a month, we only have to tell them that Doc is coming to eat and they will make sure a place is set up with a fork."

"You know that Jack can use them to eat. It's quite interesting to see him do it but he can at least eat about half of his meal with the small pair that Jessica bought him."
"Maybe he can teach me where others have failed." Spencer looked at the team and glared. Morgan and JJ laughed while the rest of them just chuckled.

"So what are you going to do now, Hotch?" Morgan asked.

"I don't know yet. I'm done with politics, and I don't want to become a lawyer again. My friend Jackson is trying to get me to work for him, but I just don't know what I want to do with my time yet."

Morgan grinned at Spencer wagging his eyebrows. Spencer reached over for one of the wontons that were in the middle of the table and grabbed one to throw at him. Morgan caught and broke it in half before popping said half in his mouth.

"Little ears, Morgan."

"Hank's too young to remember any of this, Reid. You've told me before that memories in children don't really cement until age five so even if he would, he's not going to remember it his whole life."

"I've already had several publishers wanting me to write an autobiography. That would take some time to be able to do and would help me settle into a new life away from the White House. It might have been four years, but it was a lot more work than I expected."

"With the threats on your life, I'm not shocked. That had to make things a lot harder," Simmons said. He looked at Spencer with an eye that said he was a little afraid of asking questions.

"It really did for the first year. After the group of government employees was found that wanted me dead made it easier but there were still those that didn't like a President in office that was anything other than heteronormative."

"I think that Miss Brooks did a wonderful job as your pseudo First Lady. She handled herself well, and it was evident that she loves Jack very much," Anderson said with a big grin on his face.

The waitress came back with their drink orders, and while she was in the room, the conversation devolved back into simple topics. After dropping off all the drinks, it was time for food ordering. Spencer ordered a spicy shrimp dish with rice noodles instead of actual rice. Aaron ordered General Tso's Chicken with the vegetable fried rice. Aaron's hand stayed on Spencer's thigh throughout the entirety of the lunch with the conversations morphing to include them and not when they were talking alone. The team asked Aaron personal questions that had Spencer blushing and glaring in turns, but he knew that they wanted to understand Aaron as a man and not as the President.

"I'm going to go with Prentiss, Spence," JJ said as she pressed a kiss to Spencer's cheek. "You two take your time. It's not like you have anything to rush back to the office for. I'm sure that Hotch will take you back to the office."

"I think I can be persuaded," Aaron said with a grin on his face. Alan laughed, and Spencer realized that he was walking out with Morgan.

"Alan?"

"I'll be outside. Give you guys a few minutes alone."

The team said their goodbyes to Aaron before leaving him and Spencer in the room alone. Aaron's hand still hadn't left Spencer's thigh. It was like it was the only thing keeping Spencer there even though he wasn't going anywhere.
"I wish you weren't going on a case, but I know that it's the way that it's going to go. When you get back from the case, I want to go on a date with you. Whether we go out to a restaurant or I cook for you or you for me, or even us together. I don't care."

"How about we play that by ear because I have no clue what this case is going to be like and after I get back I will have some downtime because the teams' starts tomorrow."

"Sounds like a slight logistical nightmare. Why are they on vacation and you are on the case?"

"That's classified until the case is done, sorry."

"Wow, I never." Aaron stopped talking to laugh, and he shook his head before looking at Spencer with a bright smile on his face. "I've not been on this side of that."

Spencer grinned back at him, ducking in for a kiss. Knowing that they were in public, Spencer kept it light.

When it was time for him to say goodbye in the front seat of Aaron's car, Spencer felt his heart ache a little. He wanted more than this and wanted this case done as soon as possible so that he could get back to Aaron.
Spencer looked at his clothes and sighed. He didn't like anything that he owned for this date with Aaron. Spencer wanted to look good, but he also didn't want to look like he was trying too hard. Spencer turned to grab his phone from the shelf he had stuck it on inside of his closet and dialed JJ before setting it back down and swiping to put on speakerphone.

"I thought you had a date tonight?" JJ asked.

"I do. What should I wear?"

"Over thinking things?"

"Probably."

"Wear that suit that you wore when you first met him, along with the same pair of converse. You said that he looked like he wanted you naked that day. Why not just recreate that?" JJ sounded happy that Spencer was calling her and not that upset that he was intruding on her one night she had with Will. Will had been working a lot of doubles since the team was on vacation. Spencer had been in Vegas five days. Three on the case and two with his mother before flying home. He had got in at two in the morning and slept like the dead. Then spent the rest of the day worried about his date.

There had only been a few moments where his mom had not recognized Spencer at all. Not in anyway shape or form. It was hard seeing her slip more and more into her dementia. He knew the day would come when she didn't know him at all and that day was going to suck.

Jackson and Victor had been instrumental in Spencer not pulling his mom from Bennington to participate in dementia and alzheimer’s medical trials. They had talked sense into him when no one else could. Even losing her mind, Spencer knew that his mom was happier and healthier in Bennington instead of out of it. Just like when he decided to commit her, he was doing the best for
her even though it hurt him. The friendship that had popped up with those two still shocked Spencer. He was closer to Victor who was glad to be home with Jackson. The couple was taking a month and a half long cruise together on a private yacht with no one but their waitstaff there. Spencer had received a few pictures of them on sandy beaches.

"So where is Hotch taking you?" JJ asked pulling Spencer from his thoughts.

"It's a surprise. I don't know where but I know that he said dress didn't matter. I'm worried that I am overdressed."

"He's not going to care. Neither do you. You have wanted this for so long Spence, don't let that wonderful mind of yours ruin it."

"I won't." Spencer turned to look at the phone. "Goodnight."

"Have fun!" The way that she said that left little to Spencer's imagination that it meant something more than just regular fun. Spencer laughed and hung up on her. Spencer grabbed the garment bag that held his Brioni suit and opened it up. He hadn't worn it since that the fundraiser. The shoes though had been replaced once already. Spencer stripped out of the clothes he had put on that morning before going shopping to restock his apartment.

Thirty minutes later, Spencer was in the living room standing up and trying to read. He didn't want to put any creases in his suit before Aaron got there. His mind couldn't focus though. He had no clue what to expect. Spencer knew that Aaron was going to pick him up, but he had no clue what the guard situation was going to be like. Spencer didn't mind if it was Alan. He knew him well enough but also knew that someone else had to be helping.

The knock on his door startled Spencer enough to where he dropped the book. It landed on the couch and made no sound, of which Spencer was very thankful. He walked to the door and looked out to see that it was Aaron. Aaron was standing with an arm behind his back. Spencer unlocked the door and removed the chain, opening the door.

"Hello," Spencer said, stepping back to usher Aaron into the apartment.

"Hello," Aaron said back. When he stepped inside, he wrapped his free arm around Spencer's waist and pulled him close. Spencer surrendered to the kiss. Aaron backed him into the wall and pressed him into it. Spencer grabbed Aaron's hips and kept him there. Spencer heard the rumble in Aaron's chest as he growled when Spencer tried to pull his lips away, so he stayed there. It was several minutes later that Aaron finally pulled out of the kiss. "I've wanted to do that for a very long time."

"I remember." Spencer felt himself blushing as he remembered that night. "JJ was the one who told me to dress in this. I hadn't even thought about it. I've not worn it since that night."

"I've had dreams of stripping you out of it. How opposed are you to that?" Aaron asked, his lips brushing Spencer's ear. He nipped at it before pulling back to actually look Spencer in the eye.

"Right now?" Spencer asked because he was hungry and his stomach was growing, and if they were saying screw it to the date out and staying in for sex, Spencer needed something in his belly.

"No. After. I want a date with you out more than I want sex with you, and believe me, I want sex." "Good because I am hungry. So where are we going?"

"It's a surprise." Aaron looked at the time before ducking down for another short but heated kiss. "Bring a go-bag?"
"Oh. Um-" Spencer swallowed. He did not have work the next day but being there when Jack woke up was a big thing. Nightly calls, while he had been in Vegas, they had talked mainly about Aaron and him adjusting to civilian life and how Jack was adjusting to his new life being homeschooled at a real home. Aaron had been afraid that Jack wouldn't adapt well to not living in the White House, Jack barely remembered a time when he wasn't on the campaign trail or living there. Jack was liking having his dad around more and doing some of his school lessons with Aaron. The subject of Jack knowing about the relationship had not been brought up.

"Do you want to come back here?" Aaron didn't look upset, just worried.

"No. No. I'm sure that your security will not like that. I just." Spencer stopped and sighed. He wrapped his arms around Aaron and laid his head on his chest. He felt off about everything. He felt like he was in the middle of a four-year relationship instead of just going on the first date. "I don't know how to feel."

"Why?" Aaron asked his voice soft. Spencer felt Aaron's hand settle on the back of his head buried in his hair.

"Because this has been going on for over four years and there is so much in my head and my heart but I don't know how I should feel about it all because my heart thinks one thing and my head another."

"And what is wrong with how you feel?" Aaron pulled Spencer's head up to where Aaron could look him in the eye. "We've not had a lot of time together, but we have had intense moments and utterly honest moments. I've been more honest from the get-go with you than I ever have anyone else. I want this to be forever, Spencer. This date is nothing more than a want to show you off. I don't care if anyone else has an issue with what we do."

Spencer didn't know what to say, so he pulled Aaron in for a kiss. Aaron allowed it and kept Spencer right there. Spencer pushed all of the emotions that he couldn't voice yet into the kiss, giving Aaron everything that he was. Spencer held back nothing, and it wasn't until he tasted salt that he realized that he was crying.

"Shush," Aaron said as he pulled out of the kiss and tucked Spencer's head back into his neck. Aaron pressed kisses into Spencer's hair where he could reach and just held him there. Spencer wasn't full out crying, but his emotions were off kilter, and he didn't know what to do with them.

It was five minutes later, counted by Spencer's breaths that he pulled out of Aaron's arms and looked up at Aaron. Aaron looked a little teary eyed as well but gave Spencer such a fond look that the words that Spencer was trying to hold back spilled out against his will.

"I love you," Spencer said.

Aaron leaned in and rubbed their noses together. "I love you, too."

They stood there like that, just starting down their noses at each other until Spencer heard a chime from a phone and didn't know if it was his or Aaron's until it sounded again this time from closer. Spencer pulled back to check his phone while Aaron did the same to his.

"Alan," Aaron said with a smile on his face.

"Same here. Telling me to get my tongue out of your mouth or we will miss the reservations, and he will be put out if he doesn't get his tiramisu." Spencer smiled and pocketed his phone again. Aaron was typing something back to Alan, so Spencer walked toward his bedroom. He had a go-
bag that was packed with comfortable clothes for weekends away, just to be safe after his last time of having to stay with JJ and Will after a minor issue with family down in New Orleans. Spencer grabbed the new reading device that Jackson had foisted on him by mailing it to him without a word on what it was and a note inside that said once he opened it, he had to keep it. The letter was inside the box so he couldn't read it until he opened. It was a prototype, and Spencer was okay with trying it out. Jackson was trying to make it as fast as Spencer's reading speed.

"Ready?" Spencer asked as he stepped back into the living room area. Aaron was at the first bookcase reading over the titles that were there.

"I wasn't expecting so much in other languages."

"I learn languages so that I can read stories in their native tongue. It makes for a better reading experience."

"Has Jackson talked to you about his preservation project for historical books? Wanting to convert books that are breaking down and falling apart into digital works that anyone can read? Not just the popular things but anything and everything."

"No."

"You'll have to talk to him about it the next time he calls to get an update on your reading device."

Spencer narrowed his eyes at Aaron who just laughed.

"He told me what he did with it. He is happy though that you are using it to read on. He realized that you do it mostly when on cases or that week you had a cold."

"When I stood up I got dizzy from sinus pressure that wouldn't go away. The reader saved my body from the damage of falling. Victor made sure to keep my books on it. Right now it only connects to the Internet to update the log files so when I need something new Victor has to download it. I don't even want to know how Victor has gotten access to so many non-fiction texts that are new but I got all caught up on six months of reading that week as I couldn't do anything else."

"That's kind of adorable, you know that right?" Aaron asked as he opened up the door and stepped out. Spencer glared at him before setting the alarm and stepping out as well. Spencer locked all of his locks from the outside and turned around to glare at Aaron even more. Aaron just grinned at him.

"I'm a grown man, and I should not be adorable unless I have a child in my arms."

"Really? I think you are adorable all the time. Well, most of the time. Right now you are just dead sexy."

Spencer felt that blush coming right back up his face with that.

"The news has figured out that I moved back into my old house already so Alan talked me into hiring a driver and getting a different car, bullet resistant so please don't be shocked. Alan is in the front seat of the car, and there is a divider between him and us. So don't worry about getting looks from him. The glass is something that Jackson has been working on, inside and out. I have control switches that make it to where it can be seen through or just seen through on either side. It's high tech as hell and is like the ones that Jackson had made for dignitaries worldwide. It's probably safer than the damned cars I rode in as President, and that makes me laugh."

"I wondered how long you would get away with driving on your own."
"Have you thought about what's going to happen when the paparazzi gets your image with me?"

"I've already prepared JJ and the main spokesperson for the FBI on what exactly they are to say about anything to do with my personal life, and that's no comment. I've already called Bennington and warned them as well. Mom's on a locked down ward as it is and can't make it out after she escaped a while back. I've taken all of the precautions that I can. I gave you the code to get in because I didn't want you standing around if I wasn't near the entrance." Spencer started to walk toward the stairs that would take them down.

"And who else has it?"

"JJ and Morgan and that is it." Spencer turned to look back at Aaron when he realized the man wasn't following him. Aaron was looking at the stairs with a frown. "That's why Morgan made me stay with him after I was shot."

"I just realized that I understand why Morgan did it. I kind of did, but I was thinking about normal, you know wide stairs but these are quite narrow, and you and crutches on them are kind of a recipe for something bad."

"Yes and that's why the team made sure that I didn't go up them on crutches or for the little while right after I was put on the cane. I didn't like steps and the crutches either, and the place that Morgan was at had huge concrete steps. Henry would have to take several steps to cross them when he came to visit, so it was plenty of space for me to navigate on and not worry about falling." Spencer held out his hand and wiggled his fingers. Aaron stepped up to where he could link their fingers and let Spencer pull him along with him as he rounded the edge to start down the steps. Aaron tried to pull Spencer back to the landing when they reached it, and Spencer could tell by the look in his eyes that his intentions were not honorable, so he fought it, almost losing his go-bag in the process. Aaron gave up when his phone chimed again, which also caused Aaron to give a put-upon sigh.

"We better go, or he's going to honk the horn next."

Spencer smiled at Aaron and tugged him along. Aaron sighed again, but he was smiling as he did. The driver, or who Spencer assumed as the driver got out of the car as they exited the door to the building and opened the rear passenger door. Spencer looked at the man with a smile on his face as he ducked down into the car. The back of the car was big enough that Spencer was sure the whole team, Lynch included could fit in there. Spencer didn't slide all the way over to the other door but instead sat to the side in the middle, allowing Aaron enough room to pick where he wanted to sit but telling Aaron without using words that he didn't want to sit apart. Aaron got inside and settled down right beside Spencer. The window between front and back lowered.

"Hello, again Spencer. Since Aaron's going to be ungentlemanly, this is Terrance Walker, and he's Aaron's driver."

"Nice to meet you, Doctor Reid," Terrance said.

"Spencer is fine," Spencer said offhandedly because Aaron's hand was settling a little high up on his thigh, leaving Spencer no doubt about the sexy thing. Spencer slapped the hand when it tried to go higher, and that made Aaron laugh.

"Terrance."

"Good now that it's out of the way, I'm going to shut this window so that Aaron doesn't get the chance," Alan said as the window started to raise up. As soon as it was all the way up, Aaron
pressed something. The window was already dark, but Spencer figured that he locked it to where Alan couldn't control it.

"He's an asshole," Aaron said with a fond grin on his face.

"You like him, and you know it," Spencer said before he leaned into Aaron's body. It felt good to be able to do this. It felt so good and so right, and Spencer wasn't sure that he ever wanted it to end.

Aaron knew that Alan and Terrance would stay just far enough behind to give Aaron and Spencer time to get up the stairs but not enough time to strip Spencer as he went, which was what Aaron wanted to do. Spencer looked good enough to eat in that damned suit, and Aaron had wanted to strip him naked from the start. From the moment that Spencer opened the door and Aaron's mind registered exactly what Spencer was wearing.

"Aaron," Spencer gasped as Aaron nipped hard enough to almost draw blood on his collarbone.
"Please."

"Please, what?" Aaron asked as he licked at the spot he had just bit. Neither one of them had drunk a bit of alcohol at dinner instead sticking to a line of sparkling juices that the restaurant was known for. Aaron adored the restaurant for the mostly solitary seating. It had been a warehouse, a small one but still a warehouse, and over the years it had been many things, but in the past five years, it had been a restaurant for those who wanted to eat alone but still be out and about. There was a large regular restaurant style seating area, but there were also many alcoves that were around the edge of the room that only waiters had access to. Black curtains kept looky-loos out and allowed guests to access the restroom, but the sounds of the main seating area still passed around to give it the dining out atmosphere. Aaron had eaten there once while he was President with Victor during a night out. He had planned on going there with Spencer ever since and the night had been exactly like Aaron had imagined except for Spencer, Spencer was so much better.

"I want to feel you, skin on skin."

"We will get there, I promise. Let's get to my bedroom." Aaron dropped the tie that was tangled in his fingers before starting to unbutton the shirt the rest of the way. He heard the garage door shut with enough force for the sound to carry to him but not to alert anyone else in the house that he was back. The security force was on the outer edges of the house and not inside since there had been no overt threats in the week since Aaron had left office.

When he reached the last button, Aaron used the open shirt to pull Spencer with him toward the bedroom and up the last of the stairs. Spencer's hands were idle while Aaron walked backward toward his bedroom. Spencer just started with his pants instead of Aaron's shirt. Aaron heard his belt clatter to the floor and nipped at Spencer's lips in retaliation. Someone was going to have to pick up the clothes before Jack woke up. Aaron figured that it would be him. If for no other reason than he didn't want Spencer leaving his bed until morning.

Aaron felt his pants start to slide down his legs as he opened his bedroom door. Spencer shoved them down, and Aaron had to step out of them to be able to walk without tripping. He worked Spencer's shirt down as he kicked his pants away and shut the door. It thudded harder into the slot than he wanted it to. Aaron cringed and waited to hear if anyone came to check on him. There was no sound for close to a minute other than Spencer's panting breaths in his ear. It was like Spencer understood without Aaron saying anything that he needed quiet.

Spencer kissed a line down Aaron's neck before he nipped at the skin just above the collar of Aaron's dress shirt. Aaron had worn a very nice pair of dress pants along with a dress shirt but only
wore a blazer and not a tie, which made it easier for Spencer to strip him. Aaron though was enjoying taking each piece of clothing off of Spencer. So far all he had off of him was his suit jacket, that was draped across the chair in the living room, and his shirt and tie. Spencer had worn nothing under the dress shirt, so Aaron was able to get to skin with ease.

Aaron spun them so that he was looking at Spencer with the bed behind him. Spencer's hands were focused on Aaron's shirt, so Aaron kept pushing him backward, using a hold on Spencer's belt to do it. Spencer's eyes were downcast, watching hands work open Aaron's belt, so he was shocked when Aaron tipped him back onto the bed. Spencer looked up at Aaron with a pout on his face, but his eyes widened as Aaron finished stripping to just skin. Aaron grabbed Spencer's legs and drew him down to where the whole of his legs was off the bed before starting to work off Spencer's pants. Aaron realized that Spencer was wearing mismatching socks. Spencer helped Aaron by lifting up when Aaron had his pants all the way undone. Aaron tossed the clothing down to the floor away from the bed and looked down at Spencer. Freed from pants Aaron could tell how big Spencer was. Longer than Aaron's cock but not quite thin like his body. The cock strained against Spencer's boxer briefs, and Aaron slid to his knees in front of him.

"Aaron?" Spencer asked. He pushed up to his elbows and watched as Aaron licked his cloth covered cock. Aaron watched Spencer's eyes roll up in his head. Spence collapsed back, and Aaron saw him grit his teeth. He recognized a man who was fighting coming. Aaron raised up to press his knees to the edge of the bed and looked down at Spencer. When Spencer opened his eyes all that Aaron saw was desire. A desire for Aaron. It was something that Aaron had not seen in a long time, long before Haley. He had never realized until much later that Haley never desired him for anything more than his ability to give her the life that she so wanted.

"I want to be here like this with you for the rest of your life. I want to see you cry, laugh, orgasm, I want to see every single moment like that, with most of them here in this bed."

"Most?"

"Well, some are going to happen in the kitchen, the living room, the bathroom, possibly even on the stairs leading up here." Aaron grinned down at Spencer watching his eyes widen further and further as Aaron said each location. He dropped down to his elbows, scaring Spencer a little. Spencer inhaled and pushed up to meet Aaron for a kiss. Spencer's lips parted quickly, and Aaron tasted him, wanting to taste that for the rest of his life. He could taste the strong coffee that Spencer had drunk with dinner as well as the tartness of the cherries from the cherry crumble. It was a heady combination, and it made Aaron wanted to dive in for more. Spencer stopped him by pushing up and out of Aaron's reach, heading toward the pillows. As he moved, he slipped his underwear off. He wiggled his sock covered feet at Aaron.

Aaron laughed and grabbed Spencer's toes on one foot before plucking the sock off. The second he grabbed the top of it with his teeth and growled a little as he pulled it down. Spencer laughed as Aaron tossed it aside, letting go with his teeth like a dog would toss something. Spencer held out his hand and wagged his fingers until Aaron reached up to take it. Spencer pulled on Aaron until Aaron was splayed over top of Spencer, their lips barely touching. It was intoxicating, Spencer looking at Aaron with so much desire, so much need in his eyes.

"You are beautiful like this," Aaron whispered against Spencer's lips. He pressed a quick kiss to Spencer's lips and then one to his cheek. Spencer was blushing even harder now, and Aaron followed that blush down his body. It stopped around Spencer's upper abdomen. "I've wanted you like this since the moment that I saw you. Jackson calls me vain, but I do like my men pretty. Then I realized that you had no clue who I was, but I could see the want in your eyes."
Aaron propped his chin on Spencer's sternum and looked up at him. Spencer looked down, his eyes dark with lust. Aaron tipped his head down and sucked a bruise into Spencer's skin. Spencer reached up and grabbed the back of Aaron's head to pull him up for a kiss. No more words were traded as Spencer kept Aaron where he wanted him and kissed him. Even if all they did was this, kissing and thrusting, it would be a wonderful first time for them. Aaron just wanted this, the feel of skin on skin, the want of the other person.

A loud thunk told Aaron that something fell, but he didn't look to see what it was. Seconds later there was a snap, and Aaron knew that sound. It was the sound of the lube cap snapping open. Aaron pushed up and looked to see that the thud he had heard was the drawer hitting the floor. Spencer's hand wrapped around Aaron's cock, lubing it up.

"Eager?"

"Yes." Spencer pushed his lower body up, and Aaron watched his hand slip between his cheeks. He looked around for a second before finally letting go of Aaron's head to snag the case of the pillow and wipe his hand on it before tossing it away. "Foreplay can come later. If your fingers go into my ass, I'm going to come, and it's going to be over."

"Spencer," Aaron said. He looked down and saw that Spencer had liberally coated his cock.

"I'll be fine as long as you go easy."

Aaron trusted Spencer, Spencer knew his body, but Aaron liked the foreplay of fingering. Aaron nodded and picked up the lube where it had fallen. He set it on the nightstand after making sure the cap was secure, the fact that Spencer had done all of that with one hand was a little shocking to Aaron, but he chalked it up to the long and dexterous fingers of Spencers.

Spencer used his heels to press Aaron down a little. "Right like this."

"Okay." Aaron shifted to one hand and used his other to guide his cock into Spencer's hole. Spencer lifted his legs to where he was splayed out with his hole a lot more accessible and Aaron had to close his eyes to stop from coming. He had never thought that he was that eager for anything but damn Spencer like that, hole glistening, and very tight looking was tripping his lust. Spencer inhaled as Aaron pressed in just a little more, his slick cock going in further than Aaron expected. Spencer inhaled gently and exhaled, and Aaron felt his cock go in even more. He pulled his hand away and pushed, groaning as Spencer's heat enveloped him. Aaron watched Spencer's cock, he expected it to soften some with the method of entry, but if anything it jerked each time that Aaron pulled out a little to push back in. Aaron groaned as he bottomed out.

Spencer wrapped his legs around Aaron's waist tightly, not letting Aaron move his hips at all. "Don't go anywhere. I want to feel this forever."

"I've got to move at some point," Aaron whispered when he pulled back. Spencer grinned back at him and leaned up to bite his lip some.

"You move when I say, Mr. President, and not a second before."

"I'm not President anymore."

"You'll always be to me, Aaron." Spencer reached up to cup the sides of Aaron's face and kiss him...
again. Aaron pulled out just an inch and pushed back in. "Yes."

"Oh, so I'm allowed to move?" Aaron asked. He was rewarded with a heel to his ass. Aaron locked his eyes with Spencer, and he pulled out as far as Spencer would let him before pushing back in. Aaron wanted to go as long as he could. He wanted it to last forever, Aaron knew that it couldn't though. Nothing lasted forever, especially sex.

"I love you," Spencer whispered as his eyes fell closed. He was meeting every single one of Aaron's thrusts with one of his own. Aaron didn't look away from Spencer's face, watching it tense for just a second and then go slack as Aaron felt his muscles tighten, and then a moan escaped his lips. Aaron felt the release warm where it touched sweat cooled skin. Spencer was near silent except for that single moan as he came. Aaron vowed to change that. He didn't want Spencer so silent when enjoying sex.

Spencer curled a hand around the back of Aaron's neck again, pulling him just that little bit closer so they could kiss. Aaron finally closed his eyes and thrust inside of Spencer a final time as he came. He groaned as his body tried to tense all the way up, but he forced it to stay lax.

"Yeah, forever works," Spencer uttered as Aaron finally pulled out of the kiss. They were both panting and exhausted, but Aaron stayed above Spencer just looking down at him.

"Yes, it does." Aaron rolled off of Spencer after gently pulling out. The bed needed to be changed, and they needed to clean up, but Aaron didn't want to move. Spencer rolled to his side and laid his head on Aaron's shoulder. Aaron kind of regretted not using a condom on at least himself because it meant that Spencer would probably want to get up to clean his body up but it had felt so good. Aaron just wanted to catch his breath before he got up but the pull of sleep was getting him, especially with Spencer's body pressed into his own. This was all kind of utterly perfect.
Aaron felt warm. Too warm but not a sickly fever breaking too warm, a comfortable there is someone in my bed warm. He opened his eyes to find the room dark, like all of the curtains, were pulled closed. His left arm felt like it was asleep, and he raised his right to feel over and found warm skin that wasn't his own. There was nothing but the bare skin under his hand. Aaron followed the skin up to hair and found a tangled mess. The smell though was a very familiar one. Spencer's body wash and shampoo.

Spencer rubbed his face against Aaron's shoulder, and his hips pressed forward into Aaron's. Aaron pressed a kiss into the top of Spencer's head. Aaron knew that they had both put on underwear before slipping into bed after their very late shared shower.

"Morning," Spencer said, his voice very groggy.

"Good morning."

"Need coffee."

"I'll get some started. You stay here all snug as a bug in a rug." Aaron extricated his arm from under Spencer, rolling Spencer onto his back. Aaron waited for his arm to be able to hold himself up before he held himself over Spencer for a kiss. Spencer tried to duck away from the kiss but Aaron won in the end.

"Morning breath," Spencer grumbled.

"Its okay," Aaron whispered before giving Spencer a final kiss. He climbed off of the bed and found his robe, turning on a bedside lamp. After slipping it on, Aaron looked back at the bed to see that Spencer had covered himself up all the way with the blanket. Aaron smiled at the sight.
The house was silent as Aaron walked down to the kitchen. The coffee pot was just finishing brewing, so Aaron filled up two cups before putting creamer and sugar in Spencer's. The sun was just starting to peak out of the treeline onto Aaron's property as he looked out before heading back up. Aaron listened outside Jessica's room, but there was no noise in it. Jack would be asleep for a while yet.

Spencer was still in the same spot that he had been in before. There was a lump on Aaron's side though. Aaron set down his cup of coffee before walking around to set Spencer's down as well. Aaron looked at the lump and realized that it was Jack. Jack had jumped in bed, Aaron wondered if he knew it was Spencer in the bed and not Aaron. Aaron walked back around to his side of the bed and lifted the covers. Jack blinked up at him.

"Dad? How did you get out of the bed without me knowing?"

"Well, Jack-"

"Jack?" Spencer called out. Spencer pushed down the blankets to look at Jack and then Aaron. It took about two seconds for Spencer to realize that he was mostly naked. He pulled the blankets back up. Aaron smiled at him before grabbing the soft purple robe he had picked up for Spencer. Aaron held it open as he walked around the bed again to let Spencer slip into it.

Jack was looking at Spencer like he was dreaming. He reached out and touched Spencer before Jack tackled him back on the bed just a second after he slipped both arms into the robe. Spencer wrapped his arms around Jack and hugged him tightly.

"I'm so happy you are here," Jack said into Spencer's neck.

"I'm so happy to be here." Spencer sounded like he was about to cry.

Aaron let them have their moment, he walked around the bed and settled in against his pillows.

"Does this mean that we get to have pancakes at the yummy place?" Jack asked as he finally leaned back to sit on Spencer's thighs. Spencer sat up, pulling his body back. Jack giggled and followed him up.

"I don't know," Aaron said. He looked at Spencer who was looking at Jack. "Were you good for Jessica?"

"Aren't I always? We drew pictures, and Jessica even let me watch a little bit of TV before I went to bed. I watched that DVD about black holes that Spencer sent me. It was really cool. I even did all of my homework for the weekend and Monday as well. I wanted to be able to spend all weekend and all of Monday night with you, Dad."

"Well, we can still do that. How do you feel about Spencer spending the weekend with us? If his work allows."

"That would be cool. We could go to the museums we talked about years ago."

"Why don't you go shower and get dressed while Spencer and I discuss where we can go to eat breakfast. Spencer might have a better place to go."

Jack looked between Spencer and Aaron a few times before he nodded and slipped back off of Spencer. He scrambled off the bed and ran out of the room. Aaron sighed because nothing had been brought up about Spencer being mostly naked in Aaron's bed. Aaron would have to have that discussion, but he hoped to get Jack just used to Spencer being there at all before the bed part was
"Dad?" Jack called out as he slid to a stop on the hardwood floor in front of Aaron's open doorway. "Why was Spencer naked?"

"I had underwear on, I was not naked," Spencer protested, and a blush started to creep onto his face again.

"Mostly naked," Aaron supplied, and Spencer glared at him.

"We can discuss that at breakfast."

"Okay." Jack took off again and the sound of his bedroom door shutting told Aaron that they were safe.

"What is he doing up this early?" Spencer asked.

"I don't know; he should have been asleep a lot longer. I'll shut the door so we can get dressed."

"This is what it's like having a kid, isn't it? I really wanted morning hand jobs or frottage."

Aaron smiled at him, tugging on Spencer's arm until Spencer was straddling Aaron's lap. Aaron cupped Spencer's cheeks and drew him in for a kiss. When Aaron let him go, Spencer grabbed his coffee and took a tentative sip before he downed the rest in a few gulps. Aaron grabbed his coffee and drank some but not all of it like Spencer. Spencer's eyes tracked Aaron mug, and Aaron offered it.

"No, you drink yours black, and I'm not that desperate. Henry messes up my lie-ins, but that's it. Then I've not had a boyfriend or lover at all in years so him messing up morning sex would only be with my hand."

"Well I'm a little upset that we won't get a morning orgasm but getting out and about with you will be nice. I'll get dressed and go down to make you another cup. I know you have to tame your hair. Take your time."

"Mmmm," Spencer said closing his eyes as he leaned in for another kiss. Aaron liked Spencer like this. Pliant and easy and wholly Aaron's. He didn't want to ever miss a moment of this. It was nice, just being lazy and intimate with Spencer. He wanted more of it and thought about asking Spencer to stay for longer than just the weekend.

Spencer broke the kiss and pushed himself down the bed and off of it before Aaron could open his mouth. Aaron watched him tie the strap on the robe before digging into his bag to pick out the clothes that he wanted to wear for the day.

"Aaron?" Jessica called out at the door. Aaron forced himself out of bed and walked to the door and opened it up. Jessica looked a little nervous. "Coffee downstairs?"

"Sure let me get dressed. You might want to make another pot. Spencer and I have already had a cup each and he's going to want more."

"Sure. I'll see you down there."

Aaron rushed through getting ready, slipping into the bathroom to run a comb through his hair. Aaron was a little worried about what she wanted to talk about because she looked more nervous than she had been in a while. Aaron wondered if something had happened while he was on the
Jessica had a cup for herself when Aaron entered the kitchen a few minutes later. There was the carafe that had the pot that the machine had made while another pot was brewing. Jessica had a tablet in front of her and was scrolling through something, reading slowly. Aaron had not picked up a paper copy of newspapers in a long time. He had read all that he could online and given the state of his house security; he did not want to scare a paperboy with what he would have to do to get inside or talk to the guards at the gate to hand it over. So Aaron had bought a digital subscription his first day as a free man. He still had a few things that he would have to pop in and out for over the next year and sometimes the new man in the office might have questions but Aaron was all for not stepping foot inside the White House again.

"What's up?"

"Someone snapped a picture of you outside of Spencer's apartment last night and it seems that he sold that to a newspaper. After that, a reporter followed you to the restaurant and got pictures of you and Spencer going in there and then leaving again. They filmed you two kissing outside of the restaurant. Never got close enough to get words but it seems that you as a lovestruck man has made the papers. Jackson called me as he figured you and Spencer wore out your bed and didn't want to surprise you with it. I heard you going and getting coffee and then Jack sneaking into your room."

"Let me see," Aaron said as he sat down with his cup of coffee, Spencer's abandoned at the pot. Aaron found the online article and was glad that while other places were sharing it, only one place had the rights to it and such. There was a lot of speculation and many pictures, including as Jessica put it one of him looking like a love-struck man. Spencer looked the same, and the look that Spencer had on his face when Aaron had pulled out of the kiss told Aaron more than anything else. It wasn't like Aaron had thought that Spencer was lying when he said that he loved Aaron but there was something about seeing it so open on his face, in a picture forever that made it seem that much more real.

The comments were varied on the new site. There were many who were happy that Aaron was dating. There were those who hated that it was with a man. There were even some women who were offering to fuck him to show him that he was wrong and only a woman would fill his wants. There were death threats as well. Aaron knew that Alan would track those down and deal with them. Aaron looked at Jessica and saw that while she was worried, she didn't seem upset at all.

"You look really worried."

"Go to the other tab," Jessica said as she waved her hand at the tablet.

Before Aaron could do that, he heard Spencer's sock covered footsteps.

"Good morning, Jessica," Spencer said as he walked right to the coffee pot. Aaron looked at him to see that he had a tablet in his hand as well and Aaron frowned because it matched the one that Jessica had and while he knew that Jackson had given Spencer an E-Reader, he wasn't aware of Spencer owning a tablet. Spencer fixed his cup of coffee with a distracted hand while his other scrolled on his tablet.

Jessica looked at Aaron before standing up to look over Spencer's arm at the tablet. She made a gasping sound and looked up at Spencer. Spencer turned and looked at her before smiling and pressing a kiss to her forehead.

"I've been under death threats before after taking in UnSubs and the family wanting to get back at
me. I've had one make it all the way to DC with a gun but he was caught and taken in. This just means that I'll have to make sure that I go nowhere without someone on my team. JJ is glad to play bodyguard."

Aaron looked at the tablet in his hands before flipping to the tab like Jessica told him to and he found that it was another online news site that was covering the threats that were being made against Aaron and Spencer as well. There were many and the author of the article said that everything was going to be turned over to the FBI, including all online comments, which didn't stop many from commenting at all.

"The Secret Service and the FBI will be having a field day with this," Spencer said as he sat down in the chair beside Aaron, scooting closer and laying his tablet down to use that hand to cup Aaron's jean covered thigh. His other was sipping the coffee, and Aaron saw that his screen was scrolling. Too slow for Spencer to be reading at his fastest but faster to where Aaron couldn't read it all. That explained part of it. Auto-scrolling was a feature that Jackson was testing out but Aaron didn't like it. He liked scrolling at his own pace and not the pace that was set for him, even if he set it for himself.

"Yes," Aaron said.

"Morgan will be calling soon I am sure. I'll call him instead while we get ready for a meal out."

"Aaron?" Jessica asked, looking more and more worried as Spencer stood up, draining the cup of coffee in his hand before pouring another one. His tablet lay on the table, the scrolling stopped as it was at the end of the page. Aaron pressed the button to lock the page and looked up to see Spencer pulling his phone from his pocket. As he did, it rang and Spencer wandered out of the kitchen and into the sunroom at the back of the property. It was where Jack liked to take breakfast if they were eating at home.

"Jack wants to eat breakfast out and he's very excited that Spencer is here. I was going to get Alan and-" Aaron stopped as he heard a vehicle pull up out front. It was Jackson's big assed SUV as Victor called it. The couple had arrived back in DC after half of their trip was over because Victor had tried but he just wanted to be home. "And it looks like I'll have Jax and his security team. Since it's going to be a circus, please join us. Victor will be glad to have you I am sure."

"I'm sure that he will. Fine, it can be a family out but if for no other reason than the last time I let the both of you out of my sight you were almost assassinated and Spencer got shot."

Aaron glared at her but agreed that he did get into trouble when away from her. Aaron heard a near shout from out in the sunroom and almost went out but stopped himself. If Spencer wanted him, Spencer would let him know. He just hated not being there for him right now.

Spencer looked at Morgan's name on the phone as he stepped out into the sunroom. Aaron had told him about the room while on their date. It was where breakfast was eaten more often than not in the house. The room was nice and comfortable and Spencer could see himself reading in there for long hours after horrible cases.

"Reid," Spencer said as he held the answered phone up to his head.

"Have you seen the news?"

"Yes, Morgan I have. I'm actually safe at Aaron's right now and not at my apartment."

"Good because I am here at your apartment with Rossi."
"Why?"

"The news broke late last night and I almost texted you but didn't. I showed up about an hour ago and when I didn't get an answer, I let myself into your apartment. Your door is tagged but the inside is fine and no one broke in."

"Tagged how?"

"Defaced with spray paint. The Super has been notified. Rossi is taking pictures and the MPD is fine with us keeping the case if it turns into anything else. Probably just a kid acting out but we are doing prints just to be safe. Do you want to come and see it?"

"No. I've promised Jack a meal out and given the sound of a vehicle that I just heard we have more security here. I don't need more people watching over me. Bigots are bigots but most won't try anything in public with armed guards. I'm sure that Alan will be with us and maybe more Secret Service."

"So, you stayed the night? Get a little something-something did you?" Morgan's tone was teasing and Spencer knew it but he felt his cheeks start to warm up all the way. "Is your four almost five years of unresolved sexual tension resolved?"

"Morgan!" Spencer knew that his voice had to carry and he turned to watch the door, checking to make sure that Aaron wasn't going to come and check on him.

"I'm just playing Pretty Boy; I know that something had to get resolved because you are too calm this morning with all of this. Don't worry I won't text JJ about it. You'll have to admit to your sexual escapades all on your own there."

Spencer said nothing but turned to look outside again. He was shocked by how quick someone who knew where he lived had tagged his apartment. It had to be someone who lived there and that Spencer didn't like at all.

"Look, whatever you need, Reid, I'll do it. You need help with moving to a new place; I'm there. You need help moving into that very large house of Hotch's I'll do it as well. I also won't make any promises on not giving him the shovel talk again. You fell in love with him and I know it. You're not the one to stay away so yes I can see you moving in as soon as you can. And you know that Hotch has a savior complex a mile wide so once it's known that your apartment door was vandalized, he is going to want that one guy to either move back into the complex or you move in with him."

"I know."

"What are you going to do when it's brought up?"

"Not freak out."

Morgan laughed and it calmed Spencer down.

"I'm being serious Reid."

"So am I." Spencer listened to hear footsteps on the stairs meaning that Jack was running down them. Spencer knew that time would be limited. "Jack's ready to go and I need another cup of coffee before we leave."

"Go and I'll keep you updated on everything as it happens. Sucks it happened but I am glad that
you were not here."

"So am I. Thank god."

"Bye."

Spencer hung up and slipped his phone into his pocket. Spencer turned around to see Aaron waiting in the doorway.

"My door was defaced with slurs of some kind. MPD is letting the FBI handle it. Rossi and Morgan are there now. I don't need to go and check it out. The defacers did not go inside, Morgan checked."

"So it was someone in your building?"

"I assume. I don't want to talk about it around Jack right now. Morgan will take care of it and the FBI isn't going to like that it happened." Spencer looked up at Aaron before looking into the backyard. He could see himself happy in Aaron's house and it would probably make Jack really happy."

"Do you want to stop by and get things to stay a little longer?" Aaron asked. His voice came from right behind Spencer, so Spencer knew that Aaron had walked across the room. Aaron laid his hands on Spencer's shoulders before he slid them around to the front to wrap his whole arms around Spencer's shoulders. Spencer leaned back into him. "I-"

Aaron stopped and Spencer could feel him swallow. Spencer turned in his arms, wrapping his arms around Aaron's waist.

"Being apart for so long but being connected in my heart and my mind, I feel closer to you than I should. If you wanted to stay, stay forever, I wouldn't say no. I don't want to push you but I'm not opposed to you staying the weekend and just going from there."

"With my job, I can't promise that I'll be here as much as you want and I need space sometimes. Cases take a while to get over and if I'm silent it's not a slight on you."

"It'll be hard to get adjusted to living with someone else and I'll make sure that Jack understands you aren't being mean when you shut yourself away."

"I bet this sunroom is nice during the summer. Sitting in it and letting the sun keep the room warm and nice. I saw a chair, it was a circle but set at an angle with basically a futon in it. I would like to get one for out here, I can sit in it and read, be really comfortable while I do it."

"We can go looking at any point. I have a ten car garage mainly because I wanted the space. I had this house built using part of the money that I got out of my parent's life insurances. There will be enough room for yours. We can worry about other things later. When you do go to your apartment, I'm going to go up with you. I don't care that you are a big bad FBI agent, I want to be there for support if the door hasn't been taken care of."

"That's fine. I wasn't going to fight it even if you were coming up just to protect my ass."

Aaron laughed and his hands trailed down Spencer's arms to come to rest on his ass, Aaron pulled Spencer just that much more closer.

"It's a very nice ass and I would hate to have it harmed. Jackson and Victor are here with their full security team. That includes Dalton and Mac."
"Why are they here?"

"Safety in numbers I think. I've promised Dalton plenty of bacon if he keeps his mouth shut about anything personal."

Spencer laughed. He leaned in and kissed Aaron, enjoying being able to do it. He would hate to have to hide again and he wasn't going to let the public make him hide the relationship.

"So last night we didn't discuss public displays of affection and us being in public," Spencer breathed against Aaron's lips. Aaron groaned a little and pushed their lips together. Spencer felt Aaron start to walk him back and after few steps, he was pressed into the glass wall that separated the sunroom from the backyard.

"I'm not going to stop myself from kissing you in public Spencer," Aaron said when he pulled back. He looked at Spencer, staring into his eyes. "We had to hide before when the public opinion mattered on my personal relationships. It no longer matters."

"The FBI already has me and has had me as one of their poster people for gay and bisexual recruitment of men. Given the people that we hunt, and the victims that they go after no one in the BAU is allowed any prejudice of any kind. I didn't want to be a poster guy but I gave in when certain incentives were offered like never giving a lecture that I didn't want to give again. I can go and do pictures if I never have to stand in front of a class of college kids and stumble through a lecture on deviancy."

"How come I have never seen these pictures?"

"Because I threatened Jackson and Victor if they showed them to you. I can be scary when I want to be. I threatened and they listened. I could probably hack well enough to mess up the Grimes Tech systems, especially if I roped Lynch into helping me. We could actually do a lot of damage in that aspect. There are two main types of hackers, white hat, and black hat but even within that, there are those who only care about getting in and out with no one seeing them and those that go in with brute force and that kind of hacking can do a lot of damage. I could theoretically take out all of Grimes Tech servers for a day and watch his stock plummet because of it."

"Okay, that is a little scary. So public displays of affection are fine with you I hope."

"Yes might take some getting used to because I have never really done it but I like when you touch me, with clothes on and with clothes off. Just don't shock me with it."

"I won't. I will always touch you somewhere else before I kiss you. I don't want to scare you like that, especially where the public can see and call it something else. Jessica is going with us to breakfast and Jackson has already called ahead to the place that Jack wants to eat at. I wanted to see what you wanted but I think that a place that we are known for going to is going to be best and they had an area where we can all sit and will allow the security team in. Jackson, Victor, Jessica, Jack, Dalton, Mac, you, and I will be hard enough at many places much less an area where we can be kind of separate from everyone else. There are two sets of bathrooms, one on each side of the building so that won't be an issue."

"You have thought about this."

"Since I heard you start to yell at Morgan. What did you yell at him for?"

"He was discussing my 'unresolved sexual tension' from over the years and was asking if it was resolved."
Aaron laughed and finally let go of Spencer's ass to brush his thumbs over Spencer's cheeks.

"Not as much as I would like but I guess yes it has been."

"After we eat breakfast, we can go to my place. Are we going in the town car?"

"No, Jackson has two SUVs here for us to use as well as his drivers. One of the SUVs will stay here after they leave today for our use until the media dies down. It'll fit all four of us and security."

"Let me guess, it's going to stay here even after everything has calmed down?" Spencer knew the kind of person Jackson was when it came to Aaron and leaving the vehicle so that Aaron had no choice but to use it was right up his alley.

"For family outings yes. Jackson plays well on my fear of someone hurting Jack or Jessica, and now even you. He's damned good at that. Jackson plays it off that he's getting a different one for himself and that will just make him not have to find a buyer for it. I'm sure that he is going to buy another or Victor had told him to get rid of a car before he buys another, which is very possible."

"Those two are very interesting. More money than they need but they give so much to anyone who needs it and yet Victor keeps Jackson from his cars."

"Jackson would have enough to fill a parking garage if Victor didn't keep him on the sane side."

Aaron smiled at Spencer as Jack yelled out that he was hungry.

"Time to go face the music with Jack and with Jackson," Aaron said.

Spencer smiled and kissed Aaron's cheek before separating them. Spencer walked into the kitchen where Jackson was looking at Spencer's tablet. Spencer plucked it from the man's hands and slapped his hand. Jack started to laugh and Spencer winked at Jack.

"He's lucky that's all I am doing. He was touching something that wasn't his, not anymore. You gave it as a gift, Grimes that means you don't get to play with it unless you ask."

Aaron laughed and Jack ran to him. Aaron picked him up. Victor was laughing at what Spencer said while Jackson just looked shocked.

"See I told you, Mac, Doc here keeps Jax well in hand," Dalton said from the side of the room. Spencer looked over at him and saw that Mac was tucked into his side. He would be shocked about Mac being there but Spencer knew that more than one bomb had been found before the group that Olmstead had been a part of had been rooted out and destroyed. Spencer had looked up Jack Dalton and Angus MacGyver before he had gone home after finding out who Dalton was. Spencer trusted them a great deal and it had more to do with how much Jackson trusted them.

"You are right, Jack. Doctor Reid does have him well in hand but given the look that Reid is giving you, you might be next on his list."

Jack found that very funny and laughed so much that Spencer saw that Aaron was having trouble keeping him in his arms. Jack was getting very big and Spencer was sure that the only reason that Aaron was holding him was because it was fast becoming the time where Jack wouldn't want to be held that like.

"So I hope this place has good pancakes," Dalton said as he leaned into Mac just a little more. Mac looked up at him with a fond look on his face that spoke of the love that was between the two of
"The pancakes are awesome!" Jack said as Aaron finally set him down. Spencer realized that Jack didn't know Dalton and Mac that well. It had probably been years since he had seen them given that Jack had just turned four when the election happened. Jack probably didn't remember them at all. "Dad likes the omelets and grits that they have. Grits are disgusting."

Spencer bit his lip to stop laughing but it didn't stop Jackson and Dalton from laughing. Jack stuck his tongue out at Dalton who stuck his back out at the boy. Jack's face lit up.

"I remember you! Dad almost had you convinced that if you stuck your tongue out enough, it would freeze that way forever."

Mac started to laugh and after a few seconds of looking shocked Dalton did too. Spencer chuckled as Jack raced over to the man that he remembered a little bit about it seemed. Spencer felt Aaron step up behind him wrapping his arms around Spencer's waist. Spencer settled back into his arms and looked at the small family that Aaron had made for himself when his own family seemed to not care about him at all. Jack and Jessica had made room in their lives for Spencer, followed by Jackson, Victor, and now even Dalton and Mac. Slowly, Spencer's family would make room for Aaron, Jack, and Jessica in their lives. Henry already wanted a sleepover.

"Ready?" Aaron asked, his voice low in Spencer's ear.

"Yes." Spencer hoped that Aaron took it to mean more than ready for breakfast because Spencer was ready for it all.
Spencer heard the noise from the upstairs bedroom before he even got to the landing between floors. He pulled out his cell phone and turned on the camera application. He started recording as he got to the top of the stairs that led onto the second floor.

"But I don't wanna!" Little Miss Harlow Primrose Hotchner-Reid declared. Spencer could just see her face as she said it as well. Rose, as she was called by family, was very much a mixture of Spencer and Aaron even though she had been adopted when she was one, now three and a half years old. During a tour of a children's wing at the newest hospital in Alexandria that Aaron and Spencer had donated to, they had found her. She had been placed in the hands of the state after being found in a crack house. The only story that they had got was that the mother had been clean during her pregnancy but after had gone back to her drugs. She had pneumonia, and Spencer had fallen in love after reading her a bedtime story while she was in his arms. Aaron had used what political power he had left to make sure that they had got her. The wedding that followed had been quick but no less ostentatious as was befitting a former President of the United States.

Spencer didn't regret anything about his relationship with Aaron, not from the moment that he had flirted with Aaron at the fundraiser to the moment that he had walked away from him to protect both of their professional relationships. He didn't regret moving in with Aaron just shy of a month after Aaron had ended his job as the President.

"Now Primrose," Aaron said his voice stern but full of love. Aaron only called her that when he was trying to win whatever argument he and Rose were in the middle of. Despite her horrible first year of life, she was brilliant, and between Spencer and Jessica, she was reading at age two. She also for some bizarre reason had an accent that was close to Aaron's when he was tired, or he went home to show Jack where he had grown up. The accent was adorable on the three-year-old, and it
was why Aaron gave into her too much. Just not bedclothes it seemed.

Spencer rounded the corner in the room to see that Rose was dressed in the soft lilac-colored robe that she was dressed in after her nightly bath to move from the bathroom across the hall to her bedroom. Spencer had a matching one, both bought by Aaron when they had both come down with the flu a few months before. They had lived in the robes for a week because at least those were easy to get off if they puked all over themselves.

Rose had her hands crossed, and her bottom lip was out in a pout. Spencer could see that there was a set of light pajamas thrown over Aaron's knee, the new ones that Aaron had been trying for a month to get her to wear. They were even purple, which was Rose's favorite color of the moment. The fairies all over the cloth were very cute, but at the moment, thanks to Jackson, Rose's favorite pajamas were Iron Man, and she wore them every single night.

"I'll take em off as soon as you leave!" Rose declared.

Aaron sighed and picked up the purple pajamas and threw them over toward the dresser. He picked up the Iron Man ones that were draped over his other knee. Jackson had bought them for her as he was her favorite uncle but Spencer knew it was because he was loud and always played with her. Aaron said that it was no different than when Jack had been her age.

"One of these days you're going to wear them," Aaron stated

"Nuh-uh!" Rose said before she giggled.

Spencer stopped recording and pocketed his phone. He had plans for that video.

"PAPA!" Rose yelled and took off for Spencer.

Spencer crouched down to pick her up before wrapping his arms around her. She threw her arms around Spencer's neck and held on tight. Spencer had been working late for weeks while he trained the newest member of the team. Anderson had moved on to his own BAU team, and Spencer was glad for him. Anderson was a great guy, and he helped Spencer with paperwork as they both got settled in with the change. The new trainee was coming for dinner in a few days. Spencer had been vowed to secrecy on who it was. Spencer was sure that Aaron would be very happy when Seaver stopped by for a visit.

"How is my wonderful little girl?" Spencer asked.

"Contrary," Rose answered with a grin. It was one of the first newer words that Rose had picked up after she had come to live with them. Aaron called Spencer it all the time, and Spencer swore that he brought it upon himself that Rose was contrary as he always said it so fondly and usually before kissing the hell out of Spencer. Rose didn't see it as bad.

"As ever," Aaron said as he stood up and plucked Rose from Spencer's arms before starting to help her get changed into her bedclothes. Rose had been scared of the dark when she had come to live with them, given that she had lived in a crack house for at least two months before she had been taken in by the authorities, Spencer could understand. However, within a few months of her coming to live with them, she had got over that fear. Now bedtime was her favorite time, primarily when Spencer was home because it meant that it was story time. Spencer being home meant that it was storytime in the dark.

Aaron tucked Rose down into the bed, covers up to her chin before he pulled Spencer in for a kiss. Rose giggled as she always did before Aaron turned off the light so she couldn't see them giving
each other their standard hello.

"Now, where were we?" Spencer asked as he sat down on the edge of Rose's bed. He had kicked off his shoes on the ground floor as he had wanted to sneak up on his family and shoes on the hardwood floor were hard for him to mask. Aaron sat down on the other end of the bed, grabbing one of Spencer's feet and pulling it into his lap.

"Mary was just going into the garden for the first time."

"Oh that's right," Spencer said with a grin that no one could see. Rose did well at remembering where it was left off on her nightly reading even though she was listening to two different stories as Spencer read one and Aaron another.

Fifteen minutes later, Rose was asleep, her breathing even and Spencer pressed a kiss to her forehead before he slipped off of her bed. Aaron had got up several minutes before and was at the door, a slice of light showing that he had opened the door already. Spencer pushed him out of the door first before he followed behind, looking back at the dark bed with a smile on his face. No matter what issues they would have with her later, none of it would make Spencer regret taking her in. Between the life she had before she was one year old and her mother who had all parental rights severed but could still cause issues, Rose had a horrible life before Aaron and Spencer had taken her in. She had made him fall in love the second that she had wrapped her hand around his finger as she had laid in his arms.

"You got home early," Aaron said.

"I've got paperwork that I need to work on, but it's nothing that will upset either Jack or Rose if they see it. Just budget stuff. I figured that I could work on it some tonight and then the rest in the morning. Better to see the kids to bed for the first time in over a week."

Aaron wrapped his arms around Spencer, holding him tight. Spencer tucked his head down onto Aaron's neck, just breathing in the scent of his husband.

"Your new tablet came today, special delivery from Jackson. He wants you to try not to break this one in a week like you did the last one."

"No my fault the processor couldn't keep up with my reading speed. It's Jackson's fault for finding a screen likeness and feel that makes it so that I can read and retain on a tablet instead of paper." Spencer smiled as Aaron's hands rubbed at Spencer's lower back. Desk work for the past few days meant that he had a low backache nearly all of the time as he didn't get to move around a lot.

"Jack's in his room working on that art project for Mrs. Simmons, so he will be in there until it's bedtime. How do you feel about settling in on the couch? I have a book I'm in the middle of reading, and I think you could do with a cuddle."

"Sounds good. I'll see what damage I can do to the new tablet."

Aaron laughed and let go of Spencer. Aaron was already in a pair of sleep pants and a T-shirt his standard outfit for whenever bathtime with Rose was done. Spencer ached to be out of his suit so instead of following Aaron down to the ground floor and the private living room that they had tucked away in what used to be a front room that had been for looks more than anything else, Spencer went to change into warm clothes. It was June, but it was not a warm June, and Spencer was cold.

The private living room had become a favorite place for Spencer and Aaron as Jack had got older
and didn't want their constant attention. There was the large living room with the big TV and the
gaming systems and more than enough furniture for all of their close friends to visit and have a
place to sit. The private living room was more secluded. There were windows, but as with all of the
windows in the house, they were like a two-way mirror. Anyone inside could see out them, but no
one on the outside could see inside, even in the bright of the day or the dark of the night. The door
for the room locked and the kids knew that when the door was shut, knock before trying to open
the door. The kids also knew not to go inside at all when no one was in there. The coffee table was
usually empty, but Spencer could have case files on the table to work on. The drawer in the coffee
table held lube and condoms for when they didn't want to go and clean up after sex in their little
room. There were wipes in that drawer as well, but mainly the room was used for cuddling. There
was no TV in it and just a stereo system that Spencer had balked at the price of originally. It had
been worth it as the system had lasted longer than Spencer expected with them getting it just after
Spencer moved in.

"Where is your head at?" Aaron asked as Spencer stood in the doorway to the living room for a few
minutes, Aaron realized that he was there when he looked up. Spencer smiled at Aaron and took
the step inside to shut the door. Aaron was already on the couch and settled in just waiting for
Spencer to lay down mostly on top of him. Spencer grabbed his tablet from where Aaron had set it
on the coffee table before he settled in on his back with his upper back and head on Aaron. It was
comfortable, it was normal.

"I was just thinking about our life."

"Hmm," Aaron said before kissing the top of Spencer's head and wrapping his free arm around
Spencer's chest. Spencer wasn't shocked that Aaron didn't answer him. The hum meant that he was
engrossed in his book. Spencer turned his tablet on, waiting for the screen to load. The Grimes
Tech Logo was familiar. Every bit of tech that Spencer had that was personal was Grimes Tech.
Jackson had taken it as a personal challenge over the years to make his stuff things that Spencer
would want to purchase, and Spencer made sure that Jackson let him purchase most of it. The
tablets though were free as Spencer tried his hardest to break them.

From the first moment that Spencer's picture was taken with Aaron during their first real date, they
had both been in the spotlight for their relationship. The American people wanted to see it all,
every single bit of their life but Spencer hadn't like that so instead he had taken control of it all.
Jackson and Victor had helped him by setting up a very secure website that was hard to hack into,
and Jackson knew it because he made sure that it was encrypted the same as any government
agency and sometimes better. Spencer used it as a way to show the American people their lives to
help curb the public’s curiosity. The website helped Aaron and Spencer keep control of their
privacy. . Spencer updated it every few days, and it had been a while since Spencer had put up
anything with the two most stubborn people in Spencer's life butting horns, namely Aaron and
Rose. The blog as Victor called it had text updates as well as picture and video whenever Spencer
had time. It didn't stop the paparazzi, but it stopped reporters from invading their lives as requests
for interviews all happened on the site.

Spencer fiddled with his phone, adding the newly recorded video to the shared folder that allowed
him to access what was inside it on his phone, tablet, laptop, and desktop computer that the family
shared in the den. It took but a minute for the video to pop up in the shared folder on his tablet. He
laid his phone down on the coffee table and settled back again on Aaron. Aaron's hand moved
from where it was laying on Spencer's chest to nestle in Spencer's hair. Spencer closed his eyes to
enjoy the feeling for a minute before he set about making his husband a little upset with him.

Aaron didn't like videos of him on the blog, but he agreed that things needed to be shared to keep
the public out of their life as much as possible and he had set down his rules long ago. Spencer
wasn't violating them at all, and since Aaron was fully dressed and so was Rose, there was nothing Spencer needed to worry about except not warning Aaron first.

Spencer titled the video Contrary VS Stubborn and hit post. He put the tablet to sleep and laid it on his chest, closing his eyes to enjoy the hand in his hair. Aaron would get a notification that the video had posted, and all follow-up comments, even if he didn't put anything on the blog unless Spencer was sick or that time that Spencer was on a case and couldn't do anything. That had been a sad update as the kids had been missing Spencer a lot so it was mainly a video of the kids and then Aaron saying hi to Spencer. It had been one of the posts with the most hits outside of the wedding and the video introducing the world to Rose.

The chime on Aaron's phone had Aaron shifting to pick it up. Aaron had no change in the sound whether it was a new post or a new comment, so he had no clue what he was going to see when he unlocked his phone. Aaron laid his E-Reader on Spencer's chest beside his tablet as he unlocked his phone. It was second later that the sound of Aaron's voice filled the room.

"You little shit," Aaron said, but Spencer could hear the smile in his voice as he said it. "She's going to want to watch this for days; you know that right?"

"I know, but our fans are going to love it."

"Well, I'm silencing all notifications because I don't want to have to worry that it's a comment or a legitimate email from someone important." Aaron's phone was set aside seconds later, and just a second after he set it down, both phones chimed with the notification sound that meant it was from either Jackson or Victor. "I'm ignoring that."

Spencer laughed and tipped his head up to where he could look at Aaron. Aaron was smiling down at him. Spencer stuck his tongue out and sucked it back in as Aaron's hand dove for it. Spencer grabbed the reader and the tablet and tossed them onto the coffee table as Aaron's hands started to go for Spencer's sides. Spencer wasn't quick enough to escape, and Aaron started to tickle him. Spencer tried to get away, but all he could do was flip around to where he was straddling Aaron's lap. Spencer had his own tricks and as soon as Aaron let him try and tickle him back, Spencer dove in for a kiss.

Aaron's hands turned from tickling to holding and pulling Spencer close as soon as Spencer licked across Aaron's lips.

"Minx," Aaron muttered before holding Spencer's head right where he wanted it for a proper make-out session on the couch.

"Your minx," Spencer uttered nearly twenty minutes later when they finally came up for breath. "Always your minx."

Aaron smiled, and there was such happiness there, and Spencer knew that his face held the same smile.

Aaron had ignored the comments for two days, working on finishing up the latest of his fiction books to send off to the publisher. Spencer handled most of the comments, but sometimes people asked him things on the Hotchner-Reid Family Blog. Aaron had disliked it in the beginning, but as time went on and less and less people showed up outside their house or at dates for quotes or interviews, Aaron saw the need of it. It allowed them to control what was shared and the press stopped looking for shit to dig up on them.
The blog was always in the back of Aaron's mind when he had a few minutes of downtime, and today he had back to back meetings with various people about his newest book that was coming out later in the month. Aaron was looking forward to it because it was his autobiography. Aaron clicked the app for the blog and waited for it to load before he clicked on the comments section.

"Aaron?" Victor asked as he opened the door to the room that Aaron was in.

"Victor, what are you doing here?"

"Jackson is in New York today for a meeting that popped up about the New York division, and then he was called out to work on a piece of technology that he had given to the NYPD SWAT to try out, and it was the first chance for them to do it." Victor wasn't telling Aaron anything that Aaron didn't know because Spencer talked to Jackson already. Spencer had been called out for a case. It was a hostage case. Aaron knew that Spencer had been called in specifically, but the whole team had gone, and the identity of the hostage taker was unknown. Jackson had been on site for it as a new bit of technology was being tried of his with the New York SWAT team.

Aaron glared at Victor because Aaron knew that he was upset but not upset like someone in the family had been hurt but upset because of something that he was afraid of hurting Aaron with. Aaron looked and saw that his publicist wasn't outside on a phone call anymore. Nor was Aaron's agent in sight anymore. In fact, the floor was pretty much empty.

"You've never been scared of me in your life, Victor."

"No, I haven't, and I'm not now. I'm just scared of hurting you, but given that I was with you in New York that time, Spencer and Jackson agree that maybe I'll be better as the one to tell you, since I am here."

Aaron waved for Victor to sit down but Victor moved to the window that looked out on the downtown DC skyline.

"There was a near riot in New York earlier this morning. In Grand Central Park. There was a group of high school kids that were practicing a play that they were going to be putting on in the school at the beginning of the new school year and they were sick of being inside, so they did it in the park. Officers responded after other park goers and many of the students called in to report an attack on them. A man attacked and killed two of the teens. It was Romeo and Juliet except for two girls as the lead roles. The man ran after he killed the two leads and wounded three others after they tried to subdue him. One of them followed the man until the cops arrived and he stayed on the phone to give directions to the 911 operator." Victor turned around and looked Aaron in the eye.

"What happened?"

"The man ran into a daycare and took the eighteen kids in there hostage after killing the two workers that were on site."

"Damn. No wonder Spencer told me that he would be unable to take any calls."

"SWAT took the man out with a well-placed shot using the new technology from Jackson."

"Are you telling me that Spencer was injured because it sounds to me like he didn't go inside at all."

"No, Spencer is uninjured, but he was the one who had to make the identification of the body."

"Why him? Was it a former member of the FBI or a friend from CalTech?"
"No. Spencer will stay in New York for longer than the team and will come home with the body so that Sean can be buried beside your mother and father."

Aaron was insanely glad that he was sitting down already. He looked at Victor for a few seconds before picking up his phone. In the back of his mind, he thought about Sean on occasion. He had been released from jail about a year before. Aaron had tried to contact him, but Sean had wanted nothing to do with him. The press asked Aaron on occasion about Sean, but Aaron had nothing to say about him as he knew nothing. The press was going to have a field day about the identification about the man who had reeked such havoc in New York City.

"Spencer and Jackson are already setting up everything to have the funerals for all of the deceased taken care of while also making sure that nothing can fall back on you at all. The press is going to have a field day, but the identity of Sean is going to be kept a secret for as long as possible. Jackson also wants you to know that while we know that you want to go up there to help Spencer if nothing else, right now you staying out of New York will be the best at keeping things a secret about what Sean did."

"I didn't...I didn't realize that he was that bad off as far as his hatred of those who are not straight."

"Spencer was given his therapist reports as it was mandatory as part of his parole and there were no secrets. He was about to be remanded back to prison as they were afraid that he was a danger to those around him. It seems that during his incarceration on the drug charge he was instrumental in the near stabbing to death of another inmate who was willing stress relief for other inmates. The building that he lived in, the halfway house, had a man who was very free and Sean had been threatening him. That's why he was about to be put back in. It was days away at this point, so Spencer thinks that he got wind of that and snapped." Victor stepped up to Aaron and wrapped his arms around him. Aaron laid his head down on Victor's chest and took a deep breath. There were no tears for the loss of his brother. Aaron had said his goodbyes to the young boy that he had loved so much when he was born a long time ago.

"Jack never asks about him. Not to me, not to Jessica. I didn't push talking about him because he hurt me a lot, has since he started to follow father's shit. You know it was half of the reason that I ran for President. To show Sean that it didn't matter if I was bisexual that what father thought was wrong. And to prove to my father if he was watching somewhere that I could amount to something. I didn't want this for him."

"I know. Jackson's told me some of what it was like before Sean got into drugs and the wrong crowd. How he wanted to be a chef, and you had tried to get him into a good school for it. Everything just got worse you tried to help."

"And it didn't get better when I backed off either. I was the villain in his life, and he made sure that everyone knew it. I knew that he still tried to give interviews about me in prison only the rag press took him up on it, but he started to contradict himself in every other one, so people stopped."

"I remember. So Spencer is flying back on Jackson's jet with him whenever the body is released. The team is coming back later today. Spencer doesn't know what you want to tell Jack."

"I don't know. I really don't know. Fuck."

Aaron didn't let go of Victor and Victor didn't try and get away either. Aaron just sat there and breathed and tried to think about what needed to be done. He had no clue if Sean had a will of any kind and Aaron was pretty sure that Sean had no money left from the Hotchner trust that had gone to him when their parents died. He was sure that Spencer was thinking about all of it, but Aaron didn't want Spencer to do it all.
"I loved him when we were younger but he followed our father, and I just... I'm actually relieved that he's dead. I'm just so very relieved that he's not going to be able to pop up and just try and ruin my life. It's my life, and I've spent many years of fighting to get where I am truly happy. I've fought for it, and he's can't ruin it anymore."

Victor stayed silent, but his arms tightened around Aaron. They stayed like that for an unmeasurable amount of time to Aaron, but it was what Aaron needed. Aaron only pulled back from Victor when he heard the door open. It was Aaron's agent and publicist. There was a lot that needed to be done before he could or even would take off for the day.

Seven hours later, Aaron was letting himself into the house. Jessica had the kids out for the evening at a children's play event that was happening all day long at one of the malls. Rose was going to be be late but given that she didn't have school the next day, like Jack it was fine. Jack would be getting back just in time for his bedtime and Aaron was looking forward to putting him to bed tonight.

Aaron shut the door to the personal living room and even locked it before he fell onto the couch still dressed in his suit. Spencer would mutter about him wrinkling it if he was there but Aaron didn't care about that. Aaron grabbed his tablet from the coffee table, and he turned it on, wanting the distraction of reading comments on the blog before the condolences would start to arrive on there from people that he didn't know. Aaron would let Spencer handle all of them.

The video had almost a billion hits in just days, and that made Aaron smile. Aaron played it smiling as he heard the video start before Spencer even got into the room. He watched himself fight with Rose on what she wanted to wear. There was such a look of love on his face though even when he was frowning because she wouldn't dress in the pajamas that he thought that she would love. Aaron knew that it was a phase and she would get tired of Iron Man at some point.

The comments were mostly from parents who had the same issue with their kids commiserating over it all. There were a few comments that Aaron could tell were from parents who found their form of parenting horrible that Aaron should have just forced her into the fairy set. Usually, it was other parents that commented on that before Spencer could, or sometimes even Jessica.

The blog had covered their wedding, all of the steps from the moment that Spencer had proposed to Aaron after sex, which no one knew outside of Jessica. That was not a story that Aaron wanted to tell, so he and Spencer had agreed on a spontaneous asking during breakfast instead. Aaron still blushed a little when anyone asked questions about it. He remembered very well the moment that Spencer asked. They had just finished making love early one morning, and Spencer was still wrapped around Aaron, leaving him with only a single option on where to move, and that was on top of Spencer. The utterance had been unintended but no less heartfelt. Spencer even had the wedding rings that he wanted them to exchange. Spencer's hand had shot out to get the rings after he had uttered it and Aaron had made himself move up to where he could look Spencer in the face.

Jessica had helped plan the wedding and kept the blog updated as much as possible including using Jackson's people to get the footage from the wedding uploaded while Spencer and Aaron had gone on their honeymoon. The wedding had been just close friends and family, and that was it, no reporters, and since it had happened on Aaron and Spencer's property, the press had not been able to crash it. A few had tried, but between Aaron's security force and Jackson's that had come to help, they were not successful.

Aaron watched the video from the wedding whenever he thought about it. The looks of happiness on both of their faces still stopped Aaron's heart when he watched. Jack, Henry, and Michael had shared the ring bearer duties as they could not pick one of them to do it. Rose and Hank had been
the flower bearers and the day could not have been more perfect in Aaron's mind. Morgan had balked a little at his son being a flower bearer, but Hank wanted to walk down the aisle with Rose, even though she was a baby. Instead of having one of them escorted down the aisle, Spencer and Aaron had come out of the doors together and walked each other down the aisle. Aaron had Jessica, Victor, and Jackson as his people of honor and Spencer had JJ, Ethan, and Morgan. There was a large painted picture above the fireplace in the personal living room that was a gift from Victor that came two months after the wedding. It was all of them standing there in front of the justice of the peace that had wed them. Morgan was holding Hank, JJ was holding Michael, Henry was standing just at Spencer's side with Jack in the same place with Aaron, and Rose was being held by Jackson. The painting was utterly perfect, and it was in a place of honor where it meant the most to Spencer and Aaron.

The sound of the front door opening told Aaron that Jessica was home with the kids, so Aaron put his tablet to sleep and forced himself up. Aaron exited the living room as Jessica entered the house with Rose in her arms, almost fully asleep. Rose's eyes popped open for a second when the door shut and she looked at Aaron, her eyes widening.

"Daddy!" Rose started to wiggle. Aaron stepped up to take her from Jessica. Aaron bussed a kiss on her head and breathed in the scent of her as he pulled her close. Jessica caught the movement and raised an eyebrow in question, but Aaron shook his head. Aaron would tell her later, when the kids were asleep, and Aaron could get a stiff drink while doing it.

Rose took nearly an hour to wind down again, and by then Jack was asleep. He was eating more and sleeping more so Spencer figured that he was about to have a growth spurt which Aaron was not looking forward to as he was picky about his clothes and shopping for new pants would take forever. He wondered if he could just have Spencer take him.

Jack had never resented Spencer; there was never a single moment of Jack screaming that Spencer wasn't his father. It had been Jack that had brought up the subject on what Spencer wanted Rose to call him and that Jack would call him that so that Rose wouldn't end up calling him Spencer. Spencer had been overwhelmed with that and had ended up just hugging the shit out of Jack. Jack had been unsure of what he had done to break Spencer.

Jessica came into the kitchen where Aaron had a single glass with a single shot of bourbon in it. Aaron didn't like drinking that often but his nerves were shot from the day.

"Things are going to be a little hectic for a while. Today, a man killed two teenagers and injured several in New York before taking a daycare hostage. SWAT took him out after he used a child as a shield. It was the case that Spencer was called in for but he was uninjured. He is staying in New York to handle the body."

"Why is he staying and taking care of it?"

"Because Sean doesn't deserve to go to Potter's field in New York. He'll be buried beside mom and Dad. There were plots purchased for Sean and I as well as our spouses, but I've already sold the one that was for me. Spencer took care of that two years ago. Our funerals are paid for, and everything is laid out. Spencer did text me and tell me that when the tox screen was done, he was on meth and heroin at the same time. His name is being kept from the press for now but be prepared for a siege on the house."

"Do you need me to stay with the kids while you go up?"

"No. Jackson and Spencer are taking care of things as far as paying for the funerals of the people that Sean killed. Four total. Two teenagers and two daycare workers. I'm just glad that he didn't kill
one of the kids. Spencer wants me to stay here because me going there is going to get word out who did it before the FBI and NYPD make a statement."

"That's going to bring up that interview again."

"Yes. It's going to bring up a lot of things, and I hope that we can keep most of it from Rose, but Jack won't be so easy. He reads a lot of news sites all over the Internet. Don't lie to him but if he asks a question that you are unsure how to answer just push him to me. I start my book tour next week, and Jack was supposed to go with me, but I think that maybe it's best he does the intern thing at Grimes Tech that he wanted. The tour is going to be less about my book and more about Sean, and I don't want him constantly exposed to that shit." Aaron picked up his tumbler and downed what was inside before getting up and washing it out.

"This is...I'll keep Jack off the blog after the news hits. He likes to watch the videos that Spencer posts."

"I know. I'll let Spencer, and you handle that. I have no clue when Spencer is going to come home as it depends on the body being released. Spencer asked me if he could handle all of the arrangements and I agreed. I didn't want this for Sean, Jessica. I wanted him to get his head on straight and make something of himself, even late in life. He had so much potential and such a passion for cooking," Aaron sighed and looked at Jessica. "I'm going to go settle in bed and read for a while. Spencer is supposed to call in a little bit."

"Goodnight, Aaron."

The funeral was small because there was no family to go to it and there was not a lot of friends from Sean's high school that he kept in contact with. Really no one wanted to be associated with him, but Aaron held a full funeral for Sean at the same funeral home that he had used for both of his parents. Mostly it was friends of Aaron's through all of his years in politics that showed up as well as Spencer's team, support for Aaron more than anything for Sean. The graveside service was short, and afterward, Aaron just wanted to go home, so that was what they did.

Rose wanted to cuddle with Aaron, so they were ensconced on the couch with Spencer making tea for them all. Henry was there to hang out with Jack and Aaron was kind of glad of that. Jack didn't know what to feel for a man that he thought he should mourn. Aaron couldn't help him with it, and Spencer had found a therapist for Jack to talk to. Someone that Spencer used in his work life a lot for local cases.

Rose had no knowledge or basis of feelings to grieve a man that she had never met, never heard about and given her age wouldn't remember in a few years but Aaron was listless, and she wanted to comfort him. Even now Rose barely remembered her mother and Spencer called that her mind knowing that the mother wasn't good and forgetting was better than holding on. All of them being together was more than enough for Aaron, and it was really all that he needed.

Aaron woke up late in the night, having fallen asleep on the couch. Spencer was asleep on a pile of blankets on the floor in front of the couch with Rose tucked into Aaron's side on the couch. Jack was snoring from the couch opposite. Aaron shifted to where he was laying down more so that his neck would relax. He pulled the blanket draped over him and Rose up to where it covered them both better. It was full dark outside, and Aaron just watched the sky that he could see through the windows as time passed. He didn't feel tired at all so after a minute of watching, Aaron grabbed his phone. It had enough of a charge as it had been pulled off the charger before they had all settled in the living room after eating.
There were videos on the blog that Aaron liked to watch when he was sad or just listless and now was one of those times. The first was one of the first videos that Spencer had ever put up on the blog. Spencer was seated in the sunroom of the house with a cup of coffee in his hand and a stack of books beside him. Aaron had never asked what he used to record it but probably the phone that Jackson had given him to try and fry. Spencer had, within three days by overclocking the processor by trying to read on it. "Family to me is the family that I made for myself. I don't have anyone that's blood-related that I am close to except for my mom, so all of my family has been made by me through friendship. Jennifer Jareau, JJ was the first to slip through, and she's called herself the sister of my heart for years. I didn't know how much she cared for me until she asked me to be the godfather to her firstborn child. I was so stunned when she did it, and I admit that I cried. It was one of the best days of my life at that time and for a while after. Derek Morgan was next, he calls me his brother from another mother even though I think at this point his mother has adopted me as well. She yells at me enough for being too skinny that I'm sure I could get away with calling her mom. Derek has stood by me through thick and thin and even when I have tried to push him away; he's never left.

"Because of those two, I have three Godsons. I love Henry, Michael, and Hank more than just about anyone in the world and I would die for them. It was a feeling the first time that I held Henry that I never understood when working on cases. I had seen the depth of love that fathers and mothers had for their children. I had seen depth of devotion that my own mother had for me, but I had never felt that. I had no siblings that my mom laid in my arms, and I knew that I had to protect them. Aaron's talked to me about that and how he felt when Sean was put into his arms, but there was such an age difference that it was hard not to feel anything but the fact that he had to protect him.

"The first time that I met Aaron, he hit on me. I was at a fundraiser for him, and I didn't know that it was him. I read transcripts of everything because I retain things that I read better and when you can read twenty thousand words a minute, it's easier to read something that takes a minute than to watch something that takes an hour. So here I was at a fundraiser that my best friend convinced me to say yes to going to while I was drunk and I was people watching. It was the first time I had been around people like that when it wasn't work-related. I could understand their motives for things better when I see their body language when I'm not trying to figure out if they killed their spouse or not." Spencer paused to take a sip of his coffee. He gave the little smile that he always did, and Aaron knew then, and he knew now that it was because it was the coffee that Spencer had come to like that Victor bought for himself. It was more expensive than Spencer liked to pay for coffee, but Aaron liked to indulge him with it when he could.

"I wanted nothing more than to kiss him but I knew from the conversation that he was working and kissing while working is not good. Then Aaron started to give his speech. I turned to look at him, and I felt so horrible. I was there at his fundraiser, and I didn't know that Aaron was Aaron. He forgave me that, he forgives me for a lot of weird habits that I have that only make sense to me. It was months before I saw him again but I did, and it was in the White House. I know that he's written about it in his memoirs of his time in office, but he never ventured on my part of it all. I felt like I was distracting him and that it wasn't worth it but I couldn't stay away. I hated leaving him after I got shot, but I knew that if there was any whiff of our relationship that it would make the attacks worse. He was in his first few months of his Presidency, and things would calm down but not if the press started to run stories about the President of the United States of American and his Gay FBI Agent Boyfriend. "I fell in love with Aaron in small steps. It was the way that he tried to take care of me after I was attacked inside of the White House by one of the Secret Service agents that were supposed to be there to protect. It was the way that he acted when he was around me and then after when he and I
would sort of write to each other using Jack's letters as a method that would garner little attention.

"Aaron showed me that love means nothing more than wanting to make someone else happy for the rest of their lives by just being in their lives. I don't have to be anything other than what I am. I can be Spencer Reid for the first time in my life, and he only loves me more for it. He adopted me into his family that he made for himself without asking me. He pushed his friends into my life to protect me when he couldn't. His son came to love me as a friend and then later as a father figure. His ex-sister-in-law calls me her brother-in-law just like she does Aaron." Spencer drained his cup of coffee then and settled it onto the stand beside him as he leaned back in his chair. He looked away from the camera and out into the backyard.

"I wouldn't trade a single second of this life for anything else. I'll take the press hounding us for interviews about our lifestyle to show that there is nothing wrong with it. We are just two people who love each other and share that love with as many people as we can. Our family is made up of those that we love and who love us for who we are not a connection of blood that never stays.

"I say to everyone who is listening, find the family that you love because they love you. They will stand by you through the hard times and the good."

Aaron closed the blog on his phone and put it to sleep before reaching over Spencer to set it down. When he was pulling back, he looked down to see Spencer staring up at him with a smile on his face.

"Can't sleep?" Spencer asked, his voice rough with sleep.

"I'm almost there," Aaron answered, and he did feel like it. He felt like if he could get his mind to stop racing for a few seconds he could fall asleep and not wake up again for hours. Aaron shifted all the way onto his side and brushed some of the hair from Spencer's forehead before rubbing his thumb over Spencer's lips. Spencer smiled before he nipped at Aaron's thumb.

"You keep dodging me Aaron on how you are feeling."

"I don't know what I am feeling. I really don't. When I do, you will be the first to know."

"Okay." Spencer rolled onto his back and reached up to rub at Rose's side as she cuddled into Aaron more. "Want me to read to you?"

"Yes. I don't know what though." Aaron closed his eyes to think.

"I know something that you like, and I think will help your mood."

Aaron felt the couch move, but he didn't open his eyes. He felt Spencer start to card his fingers through Aaron's hair, ruffling it just enough that Aaron was going to have serious bed head even with his short locks.

"Chapter One, The River Bank. The Mole had been working very hard all the morning, spring-cleaning his little home. First with brooms, then with dusters; then on ladders and steps and chairs, with a brush and a pail of whitewash; till he had dust in his throat and eyes, and splashes of whitewash all over his black fur, and an aching back and weary arms..."

Aaron smiled because it was Sean's favorite book when he had been younger but only when Aaron read it to him. Aaron could remember the simpler times when Sean loved Aaron with all of his heart. It didn't hurt to think about that time, and that was a first because it used to ache so much. That was the solace that Spencer had given him. The strength of Spencer's love and his love of every aspect of Aaron.
The End

End Notes

This story is part of the LLF Comment Project, which was created to improve communication between readers and authors. This author invites and appreciates feedback, including:

- Short comments
- Long comments
- “<3” as extra kudos
- Reader-reader interaction

This author sees and appreciates all comments, but may not reply.

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!