An Unforeseen Union

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Summary

Gavin and Nines are sent undercover to investigate a slew of brutal murders at a gay counselling and therapy resort for androids and humans. They're forced to pose as a couple, but soon feel their relationship becoming more than an act as real feelings develop.

Notes

The meaning behind the gay counselling center's name is inspired by a 'Marine Salvage', which is the process of recovering a ship and its cargo after a shipwreck or other maritime disasters. It reflects on the healing process and nurturing of the re-creation of relationships after 'harm' or 'damage' occurs, as the couples all go to this counselling center to take refuge in times of pain.
Gavin hadn’t heard the loud commotion in Captain Fowler’s office; he’d had his headphones over his ears, his legs firmly planted on top of his desk, and his eyes were closed as he lost himself in the heavy metal, loud sound of *Knights of the Black Death* blaring on his iPod.

He turned his head, swaying it from side-to-side as he conducted in time with the beat of the music using his fingers. He turned them dramatically in the air while a few other Detectives and Officers watched, giggling and snickering until Fowler began really throwing a fit in his office…

The doors were closed, but everyone was able to see through the transparent walls that the angry DPD Captain was having a terrible day.

Connor was the only one who was brave enough to approach Gavin while he was lost in his music. Usually, it was common knowledge in the DPD not to ever disturb Gavin when he was listening to his music, as he claimed it helped him solve cases. But this moment called for it, especially when Connor received instructions from Captain Fowler telling him to bring himself, Hank, Gavin, as well as Nines into the Captain’s office for a meeting of some sort…

Hank and Connor were consistently partnered up since the peaceful android demonstration in Detroit. The entire Detroit Police Department had welcomed him with open, happy arms, as he’d been a personal favorite due to his kind nature, and he’d made Hank Anderson smile a lot lately, which a lot of people thought would never happen in the older Lieutenant’s life ever again.
Hank Anderson even looked a little younger as of late; his hair seemed brighter, his eyes were absent of their dark, tired circles, and he was smiling a lot of the time, full of energy as he practically bustled about the DPD, eager to help anyone who asked. Everyone was certain Connor had something to do with the new adjustment in Hank’s personality, and they were even more convinced of it after Connor had moved in to live with Hank.

Though the nature of their relationship was undisclosed and not entirely clear, Gavin Reed felt it was appropriate to tease them about it, claiming he knew they were going to get married and have what he called: A Big, Gay Android Wedding.

There was a reason he’d stated it, for Connor barely even resembled an android as the year 2038 ended and 2039 bled into early Summer. Connor never wore his android uniform anymore, and he behaved, spoke, and joked like anyone else in the DPD. He knew how to get along with everyone, and he knew how to laugh and take a part in social conversations and circles better than Gavin ever did.

Still, Gavin enjoyed his reclusive behavior, and he kept to himself despite personally feeling Connor was a breath of fresh air for the entire DPD, and a good one at that.

Majority of the other office android models even began acting more human, and they resembled their human counterparts more and more by the day, all except Nines, also known as RK900…

The RK900 remained taciturn and unsociable, even though it was friendly, helpful, and deviant when it absolutely had to be. The moment it’d arrived in the DPD, Gavin felt uncomfortable by its presence immediately. It wasn’t due to the fact that it looked like Connor, for it only did if one wasn’t really looking closely enough…

The RK900 had a wider, thicker jaw, and it was made even more prominent by his black-high-propped up uniform collar. His eyes were blue, which was a strange contrast with Connor’s brown ones, and they always appeared…serious and cold, the irises appearing to be small even though they weren’t. His features seemed more masculine, raw, and dominant, and it was rare that he smiled. Gavin supposed it was because his brow ridge was set lower on his forehead, and it just gave off the appearance that he was frowning when he usually didn’t.

Either way, Gavin didn’t like the RK900, and it seemed like no one else had either, until they all gave him that silly, goofy nickname meant to make him more relatable, friendly, and sociable. He’d been dubbed ‘Nines’ since early Spring, simply because his uniform and model number bore the RK900 number on it. Very clever, and Gavin found it difficult to refer to him as ‘Nines’, but he got used to it after a few weeks, especially given the fact that they mostly avoided each other.

It was an unfortunate (and sometimes hilarious) fact that Gavin and Nines didn’t like each other at all. The very moment they’d been introduced, they’d both snarled at each other, practically, their hatred for each other glowing in their eyes. It was due to the major differences in their personalities, and they both knew it.

Gavin was still the ‘rebel’ in the DPD; coming into work late, showing attitude whenever he spoke to authorities or Fowler, and he only seemed to ‘tolerate’ Connor and other androids (even though he secretly liked Connor as a friend). Gavin just liked holding onto some minor grudges, and he wouldn’t let it go that Connor had kicked his ass and knocked him out cold in the DPD Evidence and Archive Room months after the event even occurred. It was for that reason that Nines didn’t even bother getting too close to Gavin, unable to tolerate him now that he was particularly close with Connor himself.

Nines however remained mostly ‘machine-like’ in appearance and some forms of his behavior, and
that got under Gavin’s skin. While every other android in the DPD as well as Detroit itself acted and looked as humanly as possible, Nines seemed to be against it. He constantly wandered around dressed in the CyberLife uniform he came to the Precinct in, and he stiffly moved around coldly, as if he were still following ‘orders’ instead of acting on his own free will. He was more of the ‘goody-two-shoes’ of the DPD; constantly trying to please everyone and fulfill all their missions and tasks without questioning anything, and he was pristine and poised whenever he was in the middle of the most complicated, strenuous task. He just pissed Gavin right the fuck off constantly, no matter what he said or did and Gavin knew it was never going to change. And he was somehow more of a ‘best friend’ to Connor than Gavin even was…

The two androids stuck together for the most part, but since Gavin warmed up more and more to Connor, Nines eventually drifted out of the picture, retreating to himself and the odd cases he was given by Fowler. Nines mostly stuck around the DPD, training new recruits—both androids and humans—giving lectures, sometimes taking a part in new IT training sessions and meetings, and was more of an observer in general all around.

Whatever he did, Gavin found he didn’t give a shit as long as they stayed as far away from each other as possible. They hadn’t resorted to the fist-fighting he’d gotten into with Connor, and wisely so. Nines was a little bit taller than Connor, and a lot more well-built. Gavin knew not to ever mess with the android, and he just stuck to joking around with Hank and Connor whenever the situation was appropriate to do so. He would always run off and hide anytime Nines decided to try to join them, however, though that was rare and only happened if Nines wanted to exchange information with Connor for cases and their work.

Connor began worrying however as his LED light flickered to red the longer he stared down at Gavin as he continuously conducted the music that only he could hear. Hank stood behind Connor, sighing as he took one look at Gavin conducting the heavy metal he was drowning himself in while their Captain raged and fumed as he was on the phone in his office.

Hank placed a hand on Connor’s shoulder in a gesture of comfort, “Are you sure you wanna tell him?”

Connor smiled, “I’ll be fine, Hank, why don’t you make sure Nines is going to join us too?”

Hank nodded, turning as he stalked off to go find the other android.

Once they were alone, Connor gently approached Gavin’s desk, pushing away some magazines and papers that had round coffee mug stains on them, as well as an ashtray that hadn’t been used in months. He propped himself on the desk slowly and carefully as he watched Gavin slowly open his eyes when he sensed he wasn’t all alone.

Gavin frowned, yanking his headphones off as his dark blue-grey eyes looked up at Connor. “Hey?” He offered awkwardly, and Connor resisted the urge to sigh as Hank had previously. There was no way to make this medicine go down easier.

“Captain Fowler wants to see us right now, Gavin,” he looked at the iPod still in his lap, “…and I apologize for interrupting you.”

Sensing the genuine emotions radiating from Connor, Gavin merely shrugged as he turned off the music and threw the iPod onto his desk. It clattered a bit loudly, and a few people shivered in fear for what was to come when Gavin entered the office.

Connor didn’t, however; he kept his smile large and wide as he crossed his arms over his chest.
Gavin rose from the desk, straightening his black jeans and black sweater as he cracked his knuckles and turned his head from side-to-side, cracking the crinks in it as well. “Alright, let’s go.”

It was a good start, and they were halfway up the steps leading to Fowler’s office when Hank and Nines showed up directly behind them both. Unfortunately, Gavin caught Nines’s pure white and black uniform behind him, and he spun around as he glared at the android.

“The fuck you doin’ here, Nines?”

Oh boy.

Hank and Connor exchanged pained, knowing looks, and they both spoke at the same time.

“Nines has to join us too,” Connor said loudly, while Hank simply said: “He’s also supposed to be here, dipshit.”

One was classier and more welcome than the other, and Gavin glared at Hank after rolling his eyes at Connor.

“Oh for cryin’ out loud…”

Nines stood silently, appearing taller than ever as he straightened himself, holding his hands clasped firmly behind his back. His LED light was yellow, which often was indicative of a change in thoughts, information, or emotions…Gavin figured it had to be the latter just from their close proximity alone, and he repressed a shiver the longer the tall android studied him.

He wanted its creepy eyes off him, so he growled out: “The fuck do you want, Nines? A photo? It’ll sure as shit last longer, baby.” He winked dramatically to add flair into the insult, and it rolled off Nines’ broad shoulders as his LED light turned red. He still kept silent though, to Connor and Hank’s relief.

Hank roughly grabbed Gavin’s shoulders in both his hands, spinning him around to face Fowler’s office. At the same time, the angry Captain flung open his office door and glowered down at the four of them.

“GET IN HERE! NOW!”

Thankful for the interruption, Hank and Connor raced inside the office first, eager to break away from the mounting tension between Nines and Gavin. They shoved past the two of them, ascending the steps leading to the office, taking the first two seats directly across Fowler’s dark desk.

Nines and Gavin exchanged more heated, death glares, but silently followed as Fowler plopped himself behind his desk, wringing his tie in his hands nervously.

Fowler nodded at the wide-open door, “Close the door.”

Gavin tried to beat Nines to that, but Nines grabbed the door quickly, and their hands touched for a split second when Gavin went to grab it, too. Gavin hissed as if he’d been electrocuted or burned, and he snatched his hand away as he stood beside Hank, placing a hand on the back of the chair as he crossed a leg over the other, perching slightly behind Hank as his hips stuck to the side.

Nines stood next to Connor, his hands clasped behind his back once again as he stared intently and patiently waited for Fowler to speak.

Captain Fowler snorted as he looked left to right at all of them slowly. He shook his head as he took
off his tie and flung it on his lap, brushing it off irritably. “Fuck knows why I’m gonna send you
idiots on this task, but I have no one as ‘skilled’ anymore.”

Gavin pointed at himself, “I’m the best outta the bunch, thanks Cap.”

Fowler threw him a dirty look but didn’t retort back, “Heaven’s Salvage; what do you know of it?”

The name was foreign and odd to Gavin’s ears, and he dumbly mumbled out: “Wah?”

Connor stood straight in his seat, his LED flashing bright blue as his brown eyes lit up, “It’s a
healing and therapeutic center for android and human couples, built and opened in 2029, and houses
approximately a maximum of fifteen couples every season.”

Fowler nodded, an impressed expression crossing his face, “Very good, Connor.”

Connor continued, looking proud of himself. “Every season runs from early May until late August,
the programs highly popular and in demand for the tourist attraction and advertisement drawn to the
warm springs and waterfalls surrounding the resort.”

Captain Fowler held up a hand, “Alright Connor, no need to get excited.”

Gavin snorted, “So what’s your point then? We decoratin’ this place now? Are we that badly outta
work?”

Fowler snapped at him, “Would you shut the hell up, son?”

Nines turned and beamed at Gavin, relishing in the fact that he’d been scolded as if he were a child
by their Captain. Gavin avoided the look, even though he felt Nines’s eyes on him. He simply
grumbled in his chest as he folded his arms over his chest and silenced himself.

Fowler massaged his forehead, his large fingers moving in circular motions along his temples as he
closed his eyes and sighed. “There’s no other way to gently break this to you, so I’m just gonna take
the direct path.”

Everyone held their breaths as they waited for the Captain’s next words, and it seemed as if the office
was going to explode due to the high levels of stress and tension floating about.

Fowler grabbed his dark tie, wrapping it a few times around the back of his hand and over his palm
as he breathed heavily as if he’d been running for hours. He looked at Gavin directly as he ground
out: “I’m going to need you to go in undercover at this place.”

Gavin saluted him, quickly interrupting, “Will do, when should I go in?”

Fowler slammed his hand on the desk, and it made Hank and Gavin leap up in surprise, while
Connor’s and Nines’ LED lights turned yellow.

“Shut up!”

Gavin’s mouth snapped shut immediately, and his cheeks turned deep pink as he stared down at the
floor and his feet. He wondered how many times Fowler was going to mock him in front of
everyone—especially in front of Nines—but he didn’t have time to ponder it for long as Fowler spoke
up again.

“There have been horrible, violent murders within that place for a few weeks now, and the owner
fears having to shut the place down if some answers aren’t provided.”
Connor nodded, “I heard about those murders! Many couples were killed without the slightest bit of evidence being found, and it seems as if the killer won’t stop anytime soon.”

Fowler pointed a finger at him and nodded, “Correct,” he looked at Hank and then Gavin, “naturally we’re all concerned for the safety of the public, and it seems as if the killer isn’t biased against androids or humans, as whoever it is seems to be targeting them both.”

Gavin gaped as he looked at Fowler in silence.

Fowler drummed his fingers on his desk as he stared at Gavin with a raised eyebrow, as if expecting him to interrupt. When he didn’t however, he looked back at Hank and Connor.

“The only way we can begin to even learn a bit about this is if we go in completely undetected, blending in with the place.”

Gavin nodded. “Then why are we wastin’ time here talkin’ about it?” He wanted to get in on the case, his blood eagerly pumping in his veins as he desired to be out of the office and away from Nines, especially.

Fowler growled at him, “I was getting to that.” He sighed again, looking to be absolutely tired despite it barely being noon.

“There is one little detail I forgot to mention about this counselling center…” he winced as he glanced at Gavin, “…it’s a gay counselling and therapeutic center.”

It seemed as if time had stopped, and even a pin dropping in the office would’ve been Earth-shatteringly loud. No one moved, as if they were all afraid the ground was going to swallow them whole, and Gavin was the first to breathe after many long minutes stretched out in painful silence while Connor and Nines exchanged shocked looks.

Gavin rubbed the back of his neck, his entire body on fire with discomfort. “Umm, this is a joke, right?” Gavin Reed was far from close-minded, but he wasn’t going to attend any Pride events or parades anytime soon. It was now a law that androids were allowed to have gay marriages, just like humans, but they were now also given the privilege of entering into gay relationships and marriages with humans as well.

Gavin supported whatever the fuck people wanted to do, as long as they weren’t forcing their opinions or lifestyles on him and hurting anyone else. But he also wanted to be given the freedom to avoid things that definitely made him uncomfortable, and this was one of them.

He showed his disdain for this new assignment as he paced back and forth in the little space between Hank’s chair and the door of the office, hands falling up and down in the air as he waved them about. “Fuckin’ hell!”

Ignoring his protest and negative exclamation, Fowler reached inside his desk drawer, pulling out some documents as he set them flatly on the desk. “I have already made reservations for your stay at the counselling center, but part of the disguise is that you have to go in with someone to play the role of your partner…” he paused as Gavin threw him a disgruntled look, “…your romantic partner, that is.”

Gavin spat angrily, “Why’d you have to go and put it like that for?”

He was ignored again as Fowler looked at Hank and Connor, “I’m grateful for everyone’s cooperation, because this case sure as shit won’t be easy to solve.”
Gavin raced to their chairs, placing one hand on the back of Connor’s, and one on the back of Hank’s as he leaned in as closely as he could towards Captain Fowler.

“Wait, I’m goin’ in with Hank?!?”

There was a brief silence before Hank held up two hands and shook his head, eyes wide. “I’m uh…” he looked at Connor, “I’m not sure Connor would like that, plus, I’m old enough to be your dad, Reed.”

Gavin snorted, “Well I’m not goin’ with Connor posin’ as my boyfriend,” he spat coldly, “…I think of him as a friend and that’s just wrong!” His eyes and nose wrinkled in distaste.

That was precisely when Fowler smirked an almost sadistic, evil smirk. It made Gavin retreat from leaning practically onto his desk, and he recoiled as shivers went up and down his spine.

“Captain…” his voice died in his throat, and he swallowed uncomfortably.

“I was thinking that you would look particularly good next to Nines…” Captain Fowler’s eyes danced back and forth between Nines and Gavin, and he smiled widely, completely satisfied with his decision.

“NO!” Nines and Gavin both cried out in unison, standing up and glaring at each other before they cast their eyes onto Fowler.

Hank laughed as he clapped his hands together vigorously, his eyes tearing up as he wiped them with the back of a hand. “Haha!! That’s priceless, Jeffrey!”

He pointed gleefully at Nines and Gavin, doubling over in laughter even more.

“HAHA! I can’t fuckin’ believe it!”

Fowler chuckled with him before his face turned serious. “I’d stop laughing if I were you, Hank,” he glared over at Connor, who was sitting and smiling happily.

“…and you better wipe that smile off your face, Connor.”

Hank wheezed as he slapped his knees, still laughing while Gavin sputtered and stammered, and Nines looked broken, his LED light flickering numerous times rapidly.

Hank took breaths between laughing, “Why? We’re not the ones paired up together in this hell of a mess!”

Fowler laughed sarcastically before he slammed his hands down on the desk again. “Pack up, Hank, Connor,” his teeth gleamed brightly as he smirked at them, “…you two are also going.”

Hank’s laughs choked down in his throat, and Connor’s jaw fell open.

“WHAT?!?!”

Fowler turned his desk monitor over to them and pointed at his screen. “There was a job posting recently for a handyman and sanitation worker, and a groundskeeper.”

They stared at the monitor before protesting.

Fowler held up a hand, “Shut it! I don’t care who takes which role, but Gavin and Nines need backup! I can’t afford to lose more men.”
Hank glared, his cheeks turning light pink as Connor shook his head in disapproval.

“You’re a bastard, Jeffrey.” Hank scoffed and glared continuously at their Captain.

Fowler smiled happily, his cheeks full as they rose up before he glared darkly at Hank. “I know, my wife tells me all the time.”

Gavin felt like collapsing as he turned and swayed by the door, and Nines still was rooted on the spot, frozen stiff.

Fowler adjusted his tie onto his dress shirt, his neck stretching up as he got comfortable once again, wiggling and shifting in his chair.

“You leave on Sunday afternoon, boys.”

They stood looking in horror and fright at the large grounds of the counselling center, their mouths and jaws wide open as they exited the taxi that dropped them off.

The four of them held their bags and suitcases in their hands, dressed in their new ‘gear’.

Hank was wearing dark green shorts with brown sandals, a white golf shirt on his chest as he hid his eyes beneath a small Panama hat. Connor was wearing jeans and a grey T-shirt which contrasted with his white skin nicely in the summer sun.

Gavin wore black sports shoes, matching shiny black sports shorts, and a dark blue T-shirt. Nines had appeared not dressed in casual wear, however, shocking them all as he wore dress pants that were grey, black shiny dress shoes that were no doubt brand new, and a clean white dress shirt with the sleeves rolled up to his elbows.

“Wow.” Gavin had to agree with that statement uttered from Hank, but while Hank meant it towards Nines’ new outfit, Gavin was too busy staring at the grounds of the large counselling center.

It was indeed a rare beauty to behold. The grounds were green, lush with beautiful foliage and trees that hung down with heavy, thick leaves that created plenty of wonderful shades to nestle beneath in the hot summer sun. Fountains were placed elegantly around the outer perimeter, splashing and dancing extravagantly, and the grass had recently been cut as water sprinklers kept it lively and well-cared for.

The counselling center looked more like a mansion or a resort, its large windows shining brightly as they stared directly into them, and the lights outside and inside the large building shone brightly as people moved around inside the center.

A large sign was posted outside right by a large entrance gate, displaying in fancy black font:

*Heaven’s Salvage: A place where growing, healing, and hopes begin.*

Gavin rolled his eyes at the balloons that had been taped onto the sign, blowing and swaying in the warm summer breeze as they made their way closer to the entrance gate that loomed largely over them.

Hank pulled out sunglasses from his shorts pocket, sliding them on his nose as Connor turned to Nines.
“We should conduct a thorough search of the outer perimeters of the building, Nines,” Nines nodded at him in an understanding manner before he threw Gavin a nasty sneer.

“…let’s begin with a scan of the yards.”

“Let’s go.” He followed Connor, still walking stiffly as he carried his set of luggage in one hand, while the other hung loosely at his side.

Gavin shivered as he kicked gravel back and forth between his Nike shoes, wondering what he’d done wrong to piss off Fowler to land himself in such a messed up situation. Before Hank could pick on his growing sense of discomfort and dread, Gavin bent down and picked up the rest of his packed suitcases and luggage in large duffel bags and gym bags, carrying two per hand as he offered Hank one last look of malcontent.

Hank smirked at him before pushing the sunglasses up higher on the bridge of his nose.

“Good luck, Gavin.”

Gavin threw him a sarcastic smile that oozed unhappiness and bitterness as well.

“Gee, thanks Hank,” he snarled, “what would I do without you?”

Hank shrugged, completely unaffected by Gavin’s anger and discomfort as he brushed his clothes and picked up his ‘tools’, posing already as the recently hired sanitation and maintenance man.

“Well, gotta get to work!” He whistled on a high note, brushing past Gavin as he made his way past the entrance gates.

Gavin looked up at the clouds as the sun and wind reflected down upon his face. The scent of the freshly cut grass and water falling upon him from the sprinklers began to make him slightly happy and giddy at the thought of the increasingly warm and gracious weather that would follow in the next few months.

His mood then turned sour when he remembered he would be shacked up in this place until the end of August.

Gavin frowned darkly as he followed the path Hank had taken towards the open doors of the building.
Just so there is no confusion, due to them having to get new identities for their investigation, the new names are as follows:

Hank's new identity/name is: Don Westbrook
Connor's is: Alex Radfield
Nines is: Robert Linds
and Gavin's is: Jack Benedict

They will still refer to each other and themselves by their real names when they're alone though, don't worry!!!

The main hall was huge. Actually, to even say that was a hell of an understatement, and Gavin’s jaw hung open in stupefied delight as he gaped openly around. The ceiling was quite high, supported by large white marble pillars that matched the floors, while the hall opened up to many rooms on either sides, the doors wide open, lights fully on. Some of the rooms had outer walls cased in transparent, clean glass, much like Captain Fowler’s office, and Gavin could see inside majority of the rooms.

The rooms were each shaped differently, but most of the interiors were decorated in a similar fashion: sofas and bean-bag chairs sat around the floors, which had bright colored carpets, and Gavin noticed that in every room so far, the LGBTQ colors and flags were mounted on walls proudly.

Some rooms had photos of androids and humans posing together, partners and romantic lovers,
clearly, and they all looked so…happy and friendly…

Gavin shuddered as he took in the bright lights, the large, rectangular table filled with refreshments that consisted of cookies, pink lemonade, ice-cold water in pitchers, gingerbread, and fruit. It proudly stood in the center of the large hall, a beautiful, welcoming offer for the humans as some of them walked around in their summer clothes, talking and chattering about happily, while others paused to help themselves to the refreshments.

Hank was busy wandering around, and his eyes zoned in on a plate of peanut butter cookies, when a young man probably in his early thirties and a female android approached him.

The female android had short, wavy blonde hair that barely rested above her shoulders, and she was wearing light pink eye-shadow and dark eyeliner. Her large brown eyes welcomed Hank as she studied him carefully, her LED light a wonderful blue. She was wearing a yellow flowery-and lacy summer dress and hot pink flip flops. The human male who’d accompanied her wore a bright blue muscle shirt and white trousers. He also had flip flops on, but they were white. He had spiky, purple, pink and blue colored hair. On his fingers, he wore a small collection of fine, expensive rings, and he had his ears pierced. His large blue eyes didn’t seem that friendly, however…

Hank jumped in fright when the female android gently touched his back. He yelped and dropped his toolbox, and it clattered loudly against the marble floors.

The female android giggled, placing a hand over her mouth as her eyes lit up. “I’m sorry!”

Hank began gathering his discarded tools back into the grey box. “Nono, it’s alright, I’m just a clutz!”

The human male at her side didn’t seem amused, and he scoffed, making his judgements in his mind up about Hank from his appearance and actions already, and he sneered down at Hank.

“So you’re the new handyman, I presume?”

Hank looked up briefly at him before sticking out a hand and holding his tools in the other. “Don Westbrook, how are ya?” He’d remembered the fake identity Fowler had given him, and he smirked, clearly proud of his memory.

The man shook his hand quickly, “Don, I’m Jose.”

“Pleasure to meet you,” Hank looked over at the female android, and she giggled again.

“I’m Stephie!” She seemed too happy for Gavin’s comforts, and he cringed, feeling sorry for Hank as he tipped his hat at her.

“Lady.”

Jose didn’t waste time as he placed two hands on his hips while staring judgmentally at Hank, still. “I’ll need to see your ID, of course, and then you can begin working in the-”

“Hello!”

They were interrupted by Connor’s happy-go-lucky voice, and immediately, Stephie’s LED light beamed brightly as she nodded happily while clapping her hands at Connor’s entrance. He joined them, stretching his hand out for Jose to take, but the man peered down at Connor’s outstretched hand and rolled his eyes.
“What timing,” he stated plainly, his voice slightly beginning to get on Gavin’s nerves the more he listened to it, “…you must be the sanitation employee?”

Connor nodded, still happy even though Gavin cringed behind him, knowing what that job fully entailed. “Yes! I’m Alex Radfield!”

Gavin nearly snorted out loud at the pretentious names Fowler had assigned them. He could hardly wait to say his own: Jack Benedict.

Stephie looked back and forth between Connor and Hank, and she whispered something in Jose’s ears as her LED light turned yellow.

Connor patiently waited, smiling at them both as he held his bags in a free hand. Gavin just knew that within a day or two at the most, Connor would fit in the place like it was his second home. Hell, he’d probably make a couple of gay friends while he was at it, too. Gavin didn’t know what about that idea bothered him so much, and he felt kind of stupid for being jealous at the way Connor just knew how to grow on people and get on their good side. It’s not like he actually wanted to fit in with all these misfits wandering about anyway!

Jose sighed when Stephie had finished whispering in his ear, and his pointy chin jutted out at Hank. “Stephie thinks that you should take the lighter work and sanitation duties, and your…” his eyes flickered over to Connor, “…younger co-worker here can handle the handiwork and maintenance, after all, it is pretty intense work.”

Hank’s face fell. “Wait, what?”

Jose continued, waving around with a loose hand as he held the other at his hip. “You can start with the men’s bathrooms on this floor before going to every guest bedroom, m’kay? Thanks!”

Hank began protesting, but Connor grabbed his toolbox from beneath his feet and placed it against his own chest, while he gently turned Hank around with a free hand. “Thank you!” He called out and waved as they made their way down the long, bright hallway, and Stephie waved behind them excitedly.

Gavin snickered as he thought of Hank bending down over a toilet bowl, heaving and making a disgusted face as he sprayed it with cleaning products while he gripped a hand over his mouth.

Jose turned and glared at Gavin. “And who might you be, sir?”

Shit.

Having been caught off guard, Gavin stopped snickering like a maniac, and before he could answer, he felt a pressure against his shoulder.

Gavin looked beside him, and he reeled back a little when Nines was standing too close for comfort. He leaned as casually as he could against Gavin, and while it was meant to be an intimate stance, it looked awkward and stiff. Nines was probably imitating the gesture after observing a few of the couples as they sat around the large sofas placed around the large grand hall.

They all looked comfortable and peaceful as they looped hands with each other and relaxed, but Nines looked…awkward.

“He’s Jack Benedict, he’s my partner.” Nines answered coolly while Gavin began blushing as he looked down at the shiny floors. If there was a God, he hoped He would strike them all down right about now before he grew more embarrassed and redder than a fucking cherry.
Stephie cheered happily while Jose scoffed again, clearly unimpressed. “And your name?”

Again, Nines answered confidently: “Robert Linds.”

Jose nodded at them both as he pulled out an iPhone and looked through it, his index finger swiping along the screen. His light brown eyebrows were focused as his eyes gazed seriously at the screen, and he clicked his tongue and teeth together as he finally looked back up at Gavin and Nines.

“Yep, your names are on the guest list, so welcome.” It didn’t sound welcoming at all, but Gavin didn’t give half a shit; he had other worries.

Stephie grew closer to them, smiling from ear-to-ear as she flashed her perfect, white teeth. “We’re so happy you could join us! You guys registered a little late, but we’re so happy anyway!” Her voice slammed against Gavin’s eardrums, and he found it grating as he ground his teeth.

Nines offered her a polite smile. “Thank you very much.”

Jose examined his nails while holding his iPhone in another hand, “Yeah, and we’ll see to it that you get a copy of the therapy sessions and group session timetable shortly, but you should—” he looked up suddenly, throwing a glare to the side of the large hall as his eyes zeroed in on a couple.

“—HEY! CHRISSIE! MICHELLE! KNOCK IT OFF!” His booming voice rose above the gentle chattering around the large hall, and everyone seemed to stop as they looked at Jose in fear.

Gavin and Nines stared over to where he’d been yelling, and they gasped equally in shock when they saw a young lesbian couple sitting before an unlit fireplace against a large wall. They were heavily making out and groping each other, their colorful and thin tops nearly halfway off…

They leapt apart immediately, readjusting their clothing as their cheeks lit up red in shame and remorse.

Jose rolled his eyes and shook his head. “Those two never can keep their hands to themselves,” he looked at his iPhone once again, “…gotta keep your eyes on them at all times.”

Stephie clasped her hands against her chest as she giggled excitedly, “Just make sure you send us an email confirmation by the end of the day, and you’ll both receive an E-copy of the programs and group therapy sessions! It’ll be a lot of fun!!”


He remembered the last time he’d been an active part of ‘therapy’, and it was years ago when he’d had a nervous breakdown shortly after he’d joined the DPD. He’d brought in a suspect accused of battering his wife, and he’d been so uncooperative the entire ride to the station. He’d poured Gavin’s coffee all over his jeans, and Gavin had lost the last bits of his self-control and composure when the man said he’d fucked Gavin’s sister…in the end, Gavin had sent the man to the hospital where he had to get his jaw and nose reset, and he had to get an extra twenty stitches in his lip. Sadly, the pig’s father was a hotshot lawyer, and he threatened to sue the DPD if Gavin wasn’t punished with a month’s full without pay and court-ordered therapy.

The therapy sessions had been so bland, pretentious, and pointless. Gavin had to sit around in a fucking circle with other men much worse than himself, and they all talked loudly about their problems and issues before some of them broke down in tears, wailing like a bunch of sissies and big babies. Gavin couldn’t take it, and he’d attacked the group therapist with his own chair when the man had asked if Gavin was uptight and violent in his life and daily activities due to not having
enough sex in his life…

Fuckin’ therapists.

Always reaching for far-fetched shit that wasn’t there, didn’t exist, and was likely all in their own fucked up heads than in reality. Gavin only wondered what horrors awaited him as he nervously watched Jose look around the hall before clapping his hands loudly.

He placed his hands over his mouth, cupping them around his lips as he yelled out: “ALRIGHT PEOPLE! IT’S TIME FOR OUR FIRST INTRODUCTORY ICE-BREAKER SESSION!”

Immediately, the couples lazing about the mansion sprung up, some of them waking up from deep naps, and others more than eager to get away from their partner as they walked over to Jose.

“We’ll be in room 113, folks, let’s go!” Jose ordered them in the room in a single-filed fashion, and Gavin growled deeply in anger as he was the last to enter, hanging behind Nines’s broad back as Stephie and Jose stood by the open door, ushering them all inside.

There were no chairs or tables in this room; only yoga mats and small cushions. The cushions and mats were rainbow striped, and the couples sat around in a small circle as Jose and Stephie stood before them.

Gavin wondered if they were all going to just loop hands and sing ‘Kumbaya’ with how stupid the setting was getting to be.

“Allright people, take your shoes off! Come on!”

The couples obeyed, some groaning while others laughed and rolled their eyes, but their sneakers, sandals, flip flops, heels, and crocs all came off quickly as they sighed at the release.

This was so stupid.

Gavin stared in shock as Nines removed his dress shoes, professionally untying the laces as he neatly folded his dark socks inside the heels of the shoes and placed them to his side as he sat cross legged on the floor.

It looked so fucking weird…it was so messed up, and for a moment, Gavin was sure he was dreaming…he just had to be dreaming…

There was no fucking way the stoic, taciturn Nines was seated next to him, currently cross legged and looking up at the group counsellors with his LED light shining brightly…wow.

Jose peered down at Gavin. “Mr. Benedict? We’re waiting on you!”

Gavin rolled his eyes, trying not to punch the man as he snuck his legs out of his Nike shoes and kicked them unceremoniously to the side.

Finally, Stephie and Jose kicked off their flip flops, and they moved to the center of the circle the couples had sat and lied down in, and then rested on their kneecaps as they looked around the room as if they were in a kindergarten class rather than a group therapy session.

And with the way the room was decorated, it may as well have been one. The walls were a light rose color, and there was glitter all over the ceilings and windows that sparkled delightfully in the sunlight. A small bookshelf at the back of the room stored tons of books and magazines on sex, marriage, relationships, and parenthood for gay and lesbian couples. Some strange artistic
decorations made from glass and clay hung from hooks in the ceilings, twisting and turning about eerily.

The room’s air conditioning soon kicked on, and Gavin felt just slightly comfortable as he gathered his knees into his chest and wrapped his arms around his bony kneecaps.

Stephie smiled eagerly at the couples. “We’re going to go around the room now, and I want each of you to introduce yourselves, and your partner, and tell me one thing you really love about them.”

A few people started chattering softly, as if rehearsing for the last time what they were going to say, and Gavin threw Nines a scathing look as he hoped and prayed Nines wouldn’t say anything stupid when it got to be their turn.

Jose snorted, “Calm down everyone! We have a small group, fortunately, so this should be kid stuff!”

Stephie pointed at an android and human lesbian couple. “Let’s start with you two, please!”

The android was a thin, cheerleader type with long blonde hair that was tied back in a ponytail. She had long lashes and baby blue eyes that were pronounced with light mascara, and she wore a red skirt and casual black top. Her partner was also as good-looking; she had medium-length red hair that had been freshly dyed, her light green eyes standing out against the light freckles. She had a small nose, and she was athletically built. She wore skinny jeans and a black Flutter Sleeve lace-trim smock top that rested just above her pierced navel. She also had a tattoo on the side of her neck, and it was a red and orange baby dragon.

The blonde android pointed at herself first, “I’m Megan, and this is my partner Silvia,” she looked over at the redhead with some playful lust behind her eyes, and her partner looked away bashfully as she giggled softly in the back of her throat.

Gavin looked appreciatively at both their features.

Hell yeah, he could really get in the middle of the action that went on between the two of them—oh wait, lesbians.

“Very good! And what do you love most about Silvia, Megan?” Stephie asked, her eyes flickering happily and joyfully.

The other female android thought about it for a few seconds before she hummed, “Well, Silvia is very sacrificial, and she always takes care of me. I love that most about her.”

Stephie and the rest of the group clapped, with Gavin clapping the slowest and most exaggerated. Nines elbowed him before anyone could notice.

“Next!” Stephie pointed at two male androids next, and they were a little older than Megan and Silvia, and they didn’t appear to be as ‘close’. They both had brown hair, but one of them had slightly longer hair and brown eyes, and the other android had blue eyes. Their LED lights were red before turning yellow, and the android with the brown eyes cleared his throat awkwardly.

“I’m Peter, and this is my husband, Max.” The android with the blue eyes didn’t look at his husband, and the room grew tense.

Stephie’s smiled erased slowly as she waited for Peter to continue, but when he didn’t, she laughed awkwardly. “Err, can you tell us what you like most about Max?”
Peter sighed as if she’d asked him to clean the floors of the place. He shifted about on his mat, the material of it squishing against the white carpet.

“Well,” he began, but then Max glared at him, and his LED light flashed red. If Gavin didn’t know any better, he would’ve thought that Max had telepathically told Peter to shut up or change whatever he was going to say, fast.

Peter coughed, and he gasped, “Umm, well, I like that Max is…good in bed?”

Jose winced, “Errr, that’s a topic for another therapy session, Peter, but thank you! Next!”

The couples were thankful that they’d moved on, and they soon looked and waited on the lesbian couple Jose had scolded loudly for making out by the fireplace.

One of them was a brunette with long legs, and Gavin thought she was a supermodel at first. When he looked over at her girlfriend, however, he cringed. She was short, and more of a heavyset woman, but not too unpleasant on the eyes. The shorter woman was a human, and the brunette was an android, and they were dressed plainly, but comfortably.

“I’m Michelle,” the short, stout woman explained, her green eyes glittering with some hesitance present in her voice before she held hands with her lover, “…this is Chrissie, my fiancé.”

Stephie and the rest of the room broke out in a hoot as they all clapped. “Congratulations!!”

The women smiled at each other, and then Michelle spoke: “What I love about Chrissie is that she is so proud of me, no matter what I do.”

They continued for a while, moving on to an older gay couple, both of them humans whose names Gavin forget as he wasn’t paying attention anymore. After them, an age-gap gay couple introduced themselves, both humans, followed by a younger gay android couple who looked to be no older than their late twenties. All of them were forgotten in Gavin’s mind as he looked at his phone hiding in his shorts pocket, trying to find out what time it was without being caught.

Then, finally they let another gay couple introduce themselves, and they were by far the most interesting people in the room.

One of them was bulkier than the other, and he was an android, while the less bulky male was a human. The android had shortly styled dark blonde hair, and the human had short, but curly black hair. He had glasses that made his dark eyes look wiry and small, and they made quite the strange-looking couple.

The android was tall, but not as tall as Nines, and he wore a sleeveless basketball shirt and flexed his muscles as he stretched himself flat on the mat. He looked like a big wildcat, his shoulders flexing as he looked over at his partner.

They made eye contact briefly before looking away from each other, the man with dark hair looking out the window. They both seemed unsure of who was going to speak up, and Gavin felt time pulling at his hair strands as he impatiently began rocking on his legs and ass.

Finally, the android took the lead, and he sighed, “I’m Cameron, and this is my partner…well,” he paused and sighed again, “…ex-partner, I think…he’s William.”

Jose raised an eyebrow as he fixed his spiky hair, running his fingers through them. “Ex-partner?”

He repeated as if wanting to kick the couple out immediately.
William shook his head, “We’re just going th-through a l-lot of…issues…” he looked around the room, chuckling as his white business shirt wrinkled when he sat up from lying down on the mat, “Well, aren’t w-w-we all here because we h-h-have issues?”

The room was silent, and William pushed his glasses up his nose as he scratched his head. “And what do you love about your partner, William?” Stephie inquired once Cameron had taken an interest in looking out the window again.

William looked down at the carpet, as if the answer was buried there, and he placed a hand on his stubbly cheek as he sighed. “I guess…I g-guess I love that Cameron was the only person in m-my l-life who accepts me f-f-for who I am.”

The man had a stutter, and Gavin felt sorry for him for a while. He knew all too well how painful it was to be something of an outcast, and he started thinking about his own life and upbringing when he felt all the eyes in the room on him and Nines.

He looked up, feeling his cheeks lighting on fire. “Hello?”

Stephie waved at him, “Hi!” She was the only one who’d done it, and Jose glared at her while placing his hand down over hers to lower it back down to her side.

Gavin cleared his throat and looked over at Nines, expecting him to start talking.

Jose caught onto this, and as Nines opened his mouth to answer, he snapped two fingers at him and shook his head. “No no! Don’t! I want him to talk.” He pointed over at Gavin rudely, and Gavin frowned, already thinking of ways to tell Jose to stuff it, when Nines cast him a threatening glare.

It seemed to suggest that Gavin should stop doing and thinking about whatever it was that was currently on his mind, and just obey and follow through to please the angry man for now.

Gavin didn’t want to do this stupid shit, and he threw his hands up in the air as he looked up at the ceiling, asking for a miracle before his hands fell onto his kneecaps again.

“Fuck sakes,” he coughed and spoke clearly.

“My name is Jack Benedict, and this is my partner Robert Linds.”

A few members of the group actually waved and nodded at them. Clearly, the icebreaker exercise must’ve worked in some way and relaxed some people, but Gavin felt this was all horseshit and some weird mind-control game all therapists and psychologists were trained in before they mind-raped people.

Gavin couldn’t voice any of these out loud, however, and all he did was grip the back of his neck with a few fingers, pulling roughly on the hairs there before he exhaled and continued sharply.

“Jesus, what do I love most about Robert here?”

Fuck, this was difficult…

Gavin looked over at Nines, thinking the answer could come easily if he just thought about their interactions—oh wait…they hardly had any…

Shit...

Knowing he was stalling the group, Gavin felt screwed. His mind began racing, and he swore he felt
beads of sweat running down his spine as he gripped his mat tightly in both hands.

“Jack?” Jose’s voice was calm, but slightly impatient as he raised an eyebrow, expectant of a response.

Gavin had to come up with something fast, and his eyes landed down on the floor quickly, and he commented on the first thing he saw. Unfortunately, the first thing that Gavin saw, and the first thing his brain immediately registered, was Nines’ behind.

“I love Robert’s ass.”

The room burst out in laughter, and Stephie and Jose tried hushing everyone. It wasn’t working, and they all thought it was a fucking riot. Gavin glared at them all, shifting uncomfortably on the floor as he cradled his head, his hands over his ears. How he wanted to drown them all…maybe then they would stop laughing.

Once the room was quiet, and things were under control, Stephie smiled warmly as she extended a hand to Nines, and their hands touched briefly. “Robert, why don’t you tell us what you love about Jack, please?”

Oh great.

Gavin avoided looking at Nines, wondering how he was going to respond, already prepared for humiliation and shame. His shoulders were tight, and his back began to hurt as he waited and waited…

Finally, Nines shifted beside him before straightening more than he usually did. “I like that Jack makes an effort for those he cares about the most,” he looked back at Gavin quickly before continuing, “…he is very loyal, earnest, and he’s capable of great things.”

The group clapped and cheered, and Gavin felt someone slapping his back in pride. He felt a cold sweat running down his neck and back, but he didn’t say anything as he scratched the back of his neck. It was burning and probably as red as his face. Holy fuck, what a crazy ass day.

Stephie clapped once before whistling with her lips to silence the group. “Alright everyone! That was very good work! Let’s all enjoy the rest of the evening off now!”

Everyone began gathering their shoes and putting them on their feet as they stood and stretched their cramped muscles.

Stephie stood with Jose at her side, and he opened the door and began ushering everyone out.

“Don’t forget that this year, we have a special couples-therapy session with Stephie and myself,” Jose explained, “…and everyone is required to attend at least a minimum of three of the offered six sessions!”

Gavin perked up as he slid his feet back into his shoes. What was this now? What couples-therapy session? Wasn’t this group-campy shit enough already?!?

He waited as the rest of the couples hurried out the door, pouring into the halls as he raced over to Jose and smiled painfully.

“Umm, hehe, sorry to bug ya, but I don’t understand these couples-therapy things!”

Stephie butted in, smiling widely, “We offer six different sessions, and you have to sign up for at
least three with your partner. Each session will be about a different topic, and that’s where the freedom to pick and choose comes from.”

She pointed at herself as she explained more, “I will be with the females, and Jose will be the therapist for the men,” Gavin sighed in disappointment, but she just smiled wider, “…don’t worry! Jose has his PhD in Counselling! You’ll find him very helpful!”

Gavin wanted to deny it very much, but when Nines breezed past him, LED light yellow, it caught his attention, and he felt himself blushing madly when he recalled what Nines had said before the rest of the group.

Gavin felt it was an honest, truthful remark, but he didn’t want the overwhelming ‘therapy’ room and feelings floating about within it to brainwash him; they were here on a task, an assignment, and that was it. They were both merely playing a role, and if he looked deeper into it, he was just being a jackass.

Knowing it was a simple answer and a simple issue, he just nodded thankfully at Stephie as he began exiting the room to follow Nines.

He was grabbed in the process by a strong hand, and he whipped around to see Jose’s face close to his.

Jose leaned in close as Stephie arranged and cleaned the mats inside the room, distracted and away from them.

“I didn’t think the stunt you pulled today was cute, Jack,” he hissed thinly, eyes in little, dangerous slits at Gavin, “…be sure not to do that again during our lovely one-on-one sessions.”

Gavin swallowed thickly, trying to study Jose’s face before the lights of the room behind them turned off, and Stephie closed and locked the door behind her before turning towards them and giggling.

“Oooh that was fun! Wasn’t it, Jack?”

Gavin felt Jose let him go, and he brushed off his clothing, straightening it as he looked in the direction Nines had disappeared in.

“Yeah, fun.”

His tone of voice clearly stated the opposite, and no matter how much Gavin tried enjoying the rest of the evening, he knew he was going to have a serious talk with Nines once they settled in their guest rooms for the night…
Therapy Sessions

Gavin was amazed that the large, spacious grounds of the counselling center had plenty of new cabins built surrounding the perimeter. He’d had trouble seeing them in the dark evening sky, at first, the sun still just barely peeking above the purple-blue clouds, but the light poles around and about the huge center helped him find their cabins.

It seemed as if every guest had their own separate cabin, and most of them had been separated by plenty of trees, bushes, and land in between, which Gavin was thankful for. At the end of the day, he remembered that they were in a gay counselling center, which meant that some of the couples would no doubt be up to ‘late night’ activities he didn’t want to accidentally hear. He wanted to sleep peacefully after settling in and speaking with Hank first.

Nines and Gavin had been in the ‘middle’ most cabin, cabin number 6. It was as large as the other ones surrounding it, and there were small hedges and bushes around the cabin, the door dark and bearing the glowing number 6 on the side of it. It smelled of fresh wood as Gavin and Nines were led to the little porch steps by Stephie, and she fished out a key from her pocket and unlocked the door before turning around and handing it to Gavin with a kind, large smile.

“I’ll leave the key with you from now on,” she explained as Nines dragged their bags in and threw them on a large glossy, grey table in the kitchen.

Stephie smiled as she watched them gape around the cabin before she giggled, “An outdoor group activity is planned first thing in the morning, and it’s supposed to be a very sunny, bright morning! So bring sunscreen!” She meant it for Gavin, and he gave her a quick nod before hurrying to select one of the two large beds that were separated by a small circular night-table that held a tiny vase of red and pink roses. Fuckin’ romantic shit.

Gavin placed his gym bag onto the thick red sheets, feeling how soft and comfortable the mattress was. Memory foam, perhaps? He couldn’t wait to sink into it, but he had to at least have a chat with Hank and Connor, first. They had no doubt searched and scanned the bathrooms for hours now, and he hoped they had learned something in their discovery, at the very least.

He stuffed his hands in the pockets of his sports shorts as he smiled at Stephie. “Are we allowed to just hang out in the center until lights out, or somethin’?” He hoped there weren’t other stupid rules in place, such as all of them being grown-ass adults and having a ‘curfew’.

She nodded, “The center usually locks its doors shortly after eleven, but until then, you’re free to do anything your little heart desires!” She practically squealed in delight, and Gavin fought the urge to facepalm.

“Right, well, thanks Stephie.”

He began exiting the cabin, but then remembered that he was still undercover. He paused at the doorway, grabbing the side of it as he leaned in and forced a smile at Nines.

“I’ll be right back, babe.” The last word was spoken with a hint of sarcasm he hoped Stephie wouldn’t pick up on, and it seemed she hadn’t as she made her way across the yards and over to another cabin to let William and Cameron inside their own cabin. They were neighbors with Gavin and Nines, and Gavin felt thankful, as they hadn’t appeared to be as sexual and close as Michelle and Chrissie…
Nines wanted to return the sarcasm, it seemed, and he offered Gavin a dry look, pausing from his unpacking as he sneered, “Alright, honey.”

Jesus Christ on a bicycle…

Gavin sighed, slamming the door on his way out as he simply stood on their front porch. He looked up at the early night sky, smiling as he felt peaceful for one brief moment since they’d arrived at the counselling center. The clouds were still as the air was gradually cooling down and temperatures dropped for the night, and Gavin saw a few trees off in the distance swaying when a light breeze blew. It seemed calming and soothing for his nerves, and he looked up at the sky, searching for the first hint of the moon or stars before he forced and pushed himself to head back towards the center.

Gavin didn’t see many of the couples lingering about when he paced the large grand hall once more, and he figured most of them were either asleep, or relaxing for the night. Perfect. This meant he could ascend the large, spiral marble staircase leading to the second floor of the mansion undisturbed.

It appeared that only the grounds and outer parking lot had security cameras, and Gavin supposed it was probably due to the center being a counselling resort, which meant a lot of private things were going to happen, and privacy and confidentiality was respected.

He ascended the marble steps one-at-a-time, his feet pattering and tapping along the stairs as he pulled out his phone and texted Hank. He hoped Hank would answer quickly, and he stared at his phone.

Reed: where r u ?

The reply came within a few seconds, and Gavin knew for certain Connor had been the one texting him. There was no way Hank was that fast of a texter.

Anderson: we’re in the men’s bathroom on the second floor, close to Jose’s office.

Fantastic. The offices had nametags on little cards mounted on the doors, and that made things easier as Gavin moved down the green carpeted floors. The walls were off-white, and the ceilings had fancy indents and décor within them plastered above, and he studied and took in every feature as he finally reached the men’s washroom at the end of the hall. Adjacent to it was Jose’s office.

Gavin ran a hand through his hair as he pushed open the dark washroom swinging door, and he found Hank and Connor already whispering as they stood waiting for him by the sinks.

They had both changed into deep blue jumpers, and Gavin supposed it was their ‘cleaning’ crew gear, and he snickered as he pointed at Hank’s ponytail. “Hey good lookin’.”

Hank snorted at him, “You’re a sight for sore eyes, asshole.”

Gavin didn’t want to waste any time, in case the creepy Jose was lingering around somewhere. By now, he’d picked up on the fact that Jose didn’t like him for whatever fucking reason, and Gavin knew he had to carefully cross his ‘Ts’ and dot his ‘I’s’ around the bastard. As if they didn't have enough problems to begin with...

“So what’d you guys find?”

Connor approached, LED light yellow as he spoke, “I was assessing the ‘damages’ in the main office and reception, and a lot of case files and police reports on the murder victims were accessible
to me when no one was around…”

Gavin winked at him, “Sexy, Connor,” he saw Hank fuming angrily, “…what else?”

Connor’s eyes shifted to the right as he smiled, “It appears that three females were targeted recently, all androids, and four males; two humans, two androids.”

“So no pattern.”

Connor nodded, “No pattern.”

Gavin sighed, “What about the other season? What of the victims?”

Connor spoke softly, “ Mostly a mix of humans and androids. It appears that there is no connection between the victims other than they were all guests and temporary patients here at the center.”

Hank rubbed his chin and hummed, “Even the ages of the humans were vastly different, as were the models of the androids.”

Gavin leaned against the bathroom counter. “Have you looked into what happened to them before they were murdered?”

Connor shook his head, “There is a lack of information there,” he nodded as Gavin whispered: “very suspicious”.

“…yes, and they were all killed on different days,” he looked between Hank and Gavin, “…at first, I thought there may have been a link or a connection in the times of death, but there is nothing there; no similarity in days, no specific times or numbers, nothing.”

“Shit.” Gavin bit down on an index finger as he tapped his hand over his lips, thinking, but he had nothing.

He noticed Hank looking around at the closed bathroom stall doors and spoke to him directly. “Have you guys found anything here?”

Connor smiled lightly, “After scanning the areas I was in thoroughly, I noticed faint traces of hair and nail fibers that are rather new, but I haven’t met any of the current group members for this season, so I can’t make any conclusions yet with it being so early in the program.”

They knew he was right. They had no choice but to sit tight until the people here moved around, spreading traces of their DNA so Connor and Hank could ‘scoop’ it up and analyze it further. Otherwise, they were just following dead ends and ghosts for the time being.

He pet Connor on the back before smirking evilly at Hank, “Well, I’ll leave you to resume your toilet-scrubbing adventures, then.”

Hank growled at him, “You bastard!”

Gavin turned as he waved goodbye at them, “Never said I wasn’t one!”

The door swung shut behind him silently.

The following morning was definitely a bright, sunny one, and the sun woke Gavin up before Nines did, the bright rays smacking him in the face as he tossed and turned in his bed, kicking off the sheets
as he rubbed his face.

Nines was already half-way out the door when Gavin had stumbled away from his bed, muttering to himself that he needed his morning coffee.

Nines glared at him, “I hope you weren’t expecting me to prepare it for you.”

Gavin laughed sarcastically, “Ha-ha, we haven’t reached that stage in our relationship yet, baby.”

Nines seemed to be annoyed already, and he turned, walking backwards as he gripped the door handle tightly in a clenched fist. “Hurry up.”

The door slammed behind him, and Gavin chuckled as he yawned, stretched, and cracked his knuckles. He looked at the time, knowing he didn’t have any time left for some light exercise, he opened his gym bag as he changed into white shorts and a matching white t-shirt as he put on his black Nike shoes and grabbed his sunscreen.

Gavin heard voices right outside the cabin, and when he had exited it, he saw the group standing around in the center of the yards housing the cabins. Jose and Stephie were at the front, standing on small boulders so their heads poked out among the crowd.

Gavin stood at the very back next to Nines, crossing his arms over his chest as Jose cleared his throat. He was wearing tight skinny jeans and sandals, and an orange crop top that barely sat above his breasts and nipples. It was somewhat embarrassing, but he had toned abs and smooth, clear skin to boot. Gavin noticed that his navel was pierced as well, just like Silvia’s was.

Standing next to Jose, Stephie was also wearing jeans, but she had on a purple tank top that definitely didn’t practically show off her breasts, unlike the man standing beside her. She looked lively this morning, and her eyes smiled down at everyone as she held her hands together against her chest.

Majority of the group had been dressed in sports and athletic wear, and Gavin gazed around behind Jose and Stephie. He saw large, long metal poles in wheelbarrows resting behind them, a bucket filled with hammers and nails, as well as a few cans of paint. Oh boy. This looked great for sure…

Jose pointed to the items everyone else was looking at in curiosity by now. “As you can see, the activity we have planned for you today will be very helpful in what it means to function as a team!”

A few people muttered as they shook their heads.

Jose continued, “We’re going to split you into teams, and you’re going to work with your team to build a fence.”

People groaned, and Jose clapped his hands loudly. “Hey! This is the attitude we’re trying to work around! The teams will be even numbers, since we have a total of sixteen people!”

Stephie smiled as she nodded, “The team that finishes their fence the fastest is the winner!!”

The teams were announced, and Gavin noticed quickly that the partners had been evenly split so no couple worked on the same team as each other. Gavin was on a team with William, the younger man in the age-gap gay relationship, the young male android who appeared to be no older than twenty (Gavin thought his name was ‘Steve’ for sure), the human male who was just shy of thirty with sandy colored hair, followed by Megan, Chrissie, and the brown-haired male android named Max, who was the husband of the android called Peter.
So they were competing against the others, great.

Jose blew a small whistle once they were led over to a large field that was an extension of the yards and grounds behind the cabins and the counselling mansion. The field was practically its own large meadow; littered with many beautiful exotic flowers and shrubs. There was plenty of open space, and a little hill down below, which they stayed away from as they spaced themselves out with their building materials in their hands.

Each group member had their own hammer, and the poles of the fence rested in piles beneath them all, accompanied with a small bucket of nails.

“ALRIGHT EVERYONE! ON THE COUNT OF THREE, BEGIN!” Jose cried once everyone seemed ready.

He counted in time with Stephie: “ONE, TWO, THREE! GO!!”

The whistle was blown again, signaling they could begin.

“Make sure to communicate fully with your group members! This IS a combined activity!!” Jose reminded as Gavin began straightening up a pole, already hammering it into the little holes that had been dug into the soil beneath them.

Shit. He stopped hammering loudly, turning around and facing his group. They all stood behind him closely, William shifting awkwardly as he held his hammer in his hands, the younger man in the age-gap relationship staring off into space, Chrissie and Megan chatting as they compared their freshly painted nails, while Max tossed his hammer up and down in the air, playing catch with himself.

Christ.

He couldn’t believe he had to work with these people…

He looked over at his right, and he saw that Nines was leading his group effectively, and they were already moving onto their third pole…

They had to hurry to catch up!

Gavin grabbed another pole in his hands while he gently handed a few nails over to Max and a few to William. He pushed them towards the pole as he wedged it into the ground firmly.

“Alright guys, just watch me for now, but make sure to do the same thing with the next one, alright?” He didn’t wait for them to respond, he immediately began hammering the pole in and checking to see if it was firmly and strongly planted in the ground.

William raised a hand shyly, as if in grade school ready to ask the teacher a question, but Gavin turned his back to him as he already moved onto the second pole.

Not wanting to be ignored, Max approached carefully, glaring as he grumbled out at Gavin: “So what’re we doing then?”

Gavin turned, casting him an angry, impatient scowl as he snorted out rudely, “Build a fuckin’ fence!”

The rest of his team gave up, Max and Megan trying to get his attention to ask questions, but Gavin didn’t want to waste his time explaining things he’d already explained…they would only fall behind, and he rapidly began moving to another pole, sweating profusely as he hammered in the rest of them
He tore off his t-shirt as he worked, flinging it down onto the grass as he worked as quickly as his hands could allow him.

Nines stared at him, his jaw dropping in shock when he saw Gavin’s slightly tanned, toned upper torso naked in the sunlight before them all.

The older man in the age-gap relationship looked hungrily at Gavin’s body, earning himself a dark, scathing look from his younger partner, and a dreamy look crossed Michelle’s eyes as she too feasted her eyes on Gavin’s exposed chest…

Stephie and Jose walked around silently observing and assessing, and Jose shook his head once he saw the rest of Gavin’s team choosing to retire and abandon the task, sitting and plopping themselves down onto the grass, the humans fanning themselves with their hands while the androids sat and played with the grass and flowers…

“Five more minutes guys!!” Stephie’s reminder forced Gavin to work harder and faster, the hot sun beating down on his neck and back, and he ignored the slight burn to his skin as he grabbed the last pole. The fence he’d created was slightly crooked, the poles not really lined up properly, but it was still standing firmly, at least. He didn’t want to even bother himself by looking over at the no-doubt near-perfect fence Nines’ group had made, for he knew it would piss him right off. Gavin knew how sensitive and competitive he could be at times, and he didn’t wish to piss himself off.

As he was working on the last pole, Connor exited the back exits of the counselling center, carrying a roller paint brush in his hands, and an open can of white paint. He was about to begin working on painting the exterior of the building’s drainpipes, when he gazed over at the group. Connor did a double-take when he noticed Gavin’s shirt was off.

Connor’s jaw fell open and he gaped for a long time before Hank stepped out behind him, also carrying some paint. He looked in the direction Connor was staring in, and he frowned as he shoved Connor lightly towards the ladder he’d propped up against the wall. The two of them got to work immediately, Hank holding down the ladder while Connor climbed up to paint, and they didn’t peer back at the group or Gavin again.

Jose blew his whistle when time was up, and everyone rose to their feet, their tools and items still in the grass as they stood around awkwardly.

Gavin finally abandoned his pole, knowing it wouldn’t stand straight for some reason, and he panted as he looked down at the grass, swiping his shirt off it. He cast his eyes over to Nines’ fence, wiping the sweat gathered on his brow with the shirt before pulling it over his head.

Nines’ fence was as straight as an arrow; the poles all lining up elegantly as it stood tall and wide. Gavin’s was crooked, messy, and nails were sticking into the ground awkwardly around it in hopes it would stand still.

Gavin sighed, knowing they’d lost, and he waited patiently as Stephie and Jose walked around, looking at both team’s fences. It was an easy draw, and Stephie cheered as Jose pointed at Nines.

“Robert’s group is the winner!”

Stephie leapt in the air, “Yayyyyy!!!”

Everyone clapped, but they were all exhausted and yawning, not caring who won, while Nines beamed with pride as he puffed out his chest and stood along with his group. They all cheered and
exchanged high fives, the android’s LED lights flickering blue.

Gavin wanted to punch Nines right in the jaw, but the ache in his arms and shoulders reminded him that he wasn’t as young as he once was, unfortunately, and he rolled his eyes as he watched his team disperse.

“All right everyone!” Stephie called out to them as they scattered, “…let’s take a short break, snacks are offered inside if anyone needs them, and be sure to join us in room 220 on the second floor this afternoon for our next group activity and discussion!!”

Fucking hell, this month was sure going to suck major balls, Gavin thought.

He suddenly winced at the sound of his own thoughts.

He made a mental note to himself not to think about balls while he was in a gay resort.

They all walked back towards their cabins, with Nines chatting in the front of the line with one of the gay males whose name Gavin didn’t remember. They seemed to be engaged in a friendly discussion, and Gavin growled under his breath as he felt Stephie sidling up to him.

He looked down at her, and she flashed her teeth at him. “Hi!”

Gavin rolled his eyes but kept his tone of voice calm and polite. “I couldn’t do anything with my group today, I feel like shit.”

She shook her head, her blonde hair shaking about, “That’s alright, Jack! Not everyone will be able to do everything perfectly the first time!”

He sighed but nodded in agreement. While her comment was rather bland and empty, he knew she had a point. It was a rather basic one, at that, but a point, nevertheless.

“Guess you’re right.”

She nodded excitedly as she giggled with glee on the edge of her giggles, “You were still a pretty good leader, Jack! You did a lot of the hard work yourself and took initiative! Be proud!!”

He shrugged, not really disagreeing with her, but also not ready to agree and giggle along with her any fucking time soon. She was rather hyper as she skipped along, moving up the line and standing next to Jose.

They eventually all reached their cabins, and Gavin practically flung the door open in rage, while Nines briskly walked in behind him and closed the door softly. He crossed the room silently and gracefully, observing curiously as Gavin plopped himself onto his bed, lying flat on his back as he stared up at the cabin ceiling.

“What a total fuckin’ stupid mornin’.”

Nines didn’t seem to agree as he sat down on the edge of his bed, facing Gavin as he tilted his head. “I rather enjoyed that exercise.”

Gavin snickered, “Of course you did,” he ran a hand through his hair, pushing it back. He needed a fucking shower. “Already makin’ friends, eh Nines?” He couldn’t keep the jealousy out of his voice, and Nines blinked coolly at him.

“I wouldn’t say that.”
“Oh yeah? Well it sure as fuck seemed like it when you were whispering all closely in everyone’s ears.”

Nines frowned at the attitude thrown in his direction. “I was merely trying to cooperate with the group here.”

Gavin made a childish face, “You do know that half the guys here wanna fuck you, right?”

Silence was his answer, and Gavin looked over at Nines to see his LED light flicker red briefly before it was yellow. “I’m not interested in the sexual escapades here; I’m trying to blend in, so we can accomplish our task efficiently.”

Gavin petulantly let his anger get to him, and he also spat out: “And I bet some of the gals also wouldn’t mind a frolic in the sack with ya.”

Nines clearly had enough of the conversation, and he kicked off his sneakers as he turned and stretched his long legs on the mattress, resting his back and shoulders against the headboard of the bed as he folded his arms plainly in his lap.

Gavin sighed as he closed his eyes. “We have almost an hour to kill until the next bullshit they got planned for us, yippie…”

Nines didn’t say anything, but thunder booming off in the distance did. It was going to be one hell of an afternoon, indeed.

The rooms on the second floor were even colder than the first floor, and Gavin shivered as he wondered whether the AC in the room was on or not. He glanced around, looking out at the soaked windows while more heavy rain splattered down on them. It’d turned out to be a dreary afternoon, the storm hitting them the minute they’d left their cabins and made a running break for the mansion before they all got drenched.

Outside, the weather had drastically changed as they settled in the room, a complete contrast to how warm and sunny it had been in the morning.

Gavin had received a mild sunburn, and his neck and shoulders ached every time he pressed his back against the cool metal back of the chair he was currently seated in. Every chair in the room had been arranged in a tight circle, and all sixteen group members sat about in silence. No one spoke up as Jose had ordered them all not to sit next to someone they knew or were friendly with, and the room grew tense and everything felt so cold and awkward all around.

Nines was seated next to the dark, curly haired William, who was cleaning off his glasses by blowing steam onto them as he rubbed them over his navy blue, freshly ironed golf shirt. Gavin sat next to Cameron, William’s ex-partner, while Peter and Max sat on either side of Stephie, glaring at each other.

Even Michelle and Chrissie seemed to be irate with each other as they sat directly across from each other in the circle and threw heated, catty glances at each other.

Only the age-gap couple and Megan and Sylvia seemed to be in good spirits with each other, while the other human couple, the younger android couple, and the last android and human couple avoided each other’s stares as they looked around the room. It seemed as if the rain literally had ‘pissed’ on the happy parade that had gone on earlier that very same day.
It was all so very fucking awkward, but Gavin supposed it was the entire purpose of sitting next to someone new. He looked over at Jose, who sat cross legged while he was filing his nails, the high, orange crop top clearly not enough to keep him warm, and his nipples hardened in the cold air beneath the fabric of the clothing.

Gavin felt sick, and he immediately looked away as he sat with his head in his hands, leaning his elbows onto his thighs as he bent over in his chair midway.

Nobody said anything for minutes, the only sound in the room the constant, steady scraping and scratching of Jose’s nail file dragging along his nails, and occasionally, thunder accompanied the noise by echoing in the sky above.

Someone’s stomach grumbled, and Jose finally sighed as he set the nail file down onto his lap.

“I’m going to propose a topic for discussion, and I’d like everyone in the group to contribute something to the discussion at least.”

No one spoke up while Stephie stood and passed out clipboards with one single page of lined-paper clipped onto it, and pens.

“Write down in a small paragraph on the paper provided for you about how you feel regarding the closing of the Eden Club, and all android sex work being made illegal.” Jose looked at the group quickly before grabbing his nail file again.

Stephie looked at a timer she held in her hands, “We’ll give you ten minutes!”

How that felt so…great.

Gavin hated talking about his ‘feelings’. It was so prissy and stupid. Sure, everyone had their own set of opinions and thoughts, and he didn’t care who thought what about what, but he didn’t feel all too comfortable about ‘sharing’ or presenting his ideas…it was all so…‘open’, and while he knew they weren’t going for right or wrong answers, everyone was going to judge someone, one way or the other. It was just the nature of exercises like this, and while everything in their minds and bodies screamed at them that it was socially unacceptable and impolite to be biased towards someone based off their ideas and values, he knew the total opposite always happened, and it didn’t matter or change between androids and humans.

This was going to be a tasteless, fruitless effort, and a stupid plot at leaving the doors wide open for them all to be ‘psychoanalyzed’ or whatever the fuck therapists did when they were poking around in people’s brains and making judgements based off one or two things someone said that somehow ‘stood’ out to them based on a few books of Sigmund Freud they’d picked up while in a pretentious college.

Fuckin’ hell.

Their pens skittered and scratched along the paper hoisted on their clipboards, and their feet shuffled and scraped along the hardwood floor of the room as they worked in silence. Outside, the sky grew darker and darker, as the clouds huddled together angrily, as if taking revenge on the beautiful bright sun that he been bestowed upon them that morning. The rain slammed harder against the roof and windows, practically pelting down violently as their pens tapped along the wooden clipboards.

Their time was soon up, and Stephie clapped her hands as she cleared her throat. “Alright guys! Does anyone want to volunteer to start?”

Oh what a silly question.
Gavin was certain asking such a stupid thing was going to make people more silent and tense, but to his surprise, William raised a shaky hand as he pushed his glasses further up his nose, his clipboard high in the air above the curly, messy mop of hair on his head.

Stephie hummed happily, “Thank you William!”

He offered her a weak smile that broke down the moment Cameron gazed at him, head tilted curiously.

William cleared his throat, adjusting his black framed round glasses as he held his clipboard in a quivering hand. “S-since th-the Eden Club closed d-d-down,” he began with a whisper, and he raised his voice when Jose motioned upwards with his hands, indicating that they couldn’t hear him properly.

William coughed, “Sorry, ever since the E-Eden Club shut down, in m-my opinion and th-thoughts, it is th-the b-b-best thing that c-could happen f-f-for androids a-and humans!”

Gavin audibly exhaled once William had finished his first sentence. What a rough start.

Jose nodded, “Alright, why do you feel this way, William?”

William looked away from his paper, eyes on Cameron, who flexed his muscles immediately, and Gavin practically felt it as they were seated so close.

A blush crept across William’s stubbly cheeks, and he looked back at his page. “I f-f-feel that androids are n-n-now free and able to r-r-rej-j-ject any s-s-s-sex work that m-makes th-th-th-them feel uncomf-f-ortable…”

Jose tapped his hands on his thighs as he squinted at William, the nail file flicking on the skinny jeans as he did so. “Cool! Who’s next?”

No one responded, and he frowned, “Come on, no one here has anything to add?

Silence swept around the room, promising not to leave, and it made Jose sigh as he held out a hand at Cameron, his rings flashing in the dim lights.

“Cameron? Surely you must have something to say to what William wrote?”

Cameron shrugged, his biceps thick as his LED light spun yellow. “I guess he’s right.”

William frowned as he scratched the tip of his nose, “Y-y-you always agree with m-m-me just s-s-so I’m pleased-d-d at the end of th-the d-d-day.”

Cameron waved him off and sighed, “Well it’s what counts, right? You want someone pleasing you at the end of the day, right?”

The tension rolled off William’s shoulders as he gripped his clipboard tightly, his knuckles white while his dark brown eyes seemed to throw accusations and hurtful words at Cameron without William actually voicing them out loud.

“I d-don’t w-w-wa-want you to a-a-agree with me j-j-jus-s-s-t because we-we-we’re close.”

Cameron laughed, “Oh that’s right,” he began, looking up and thinking as he gazed momentarily at the ceiling before gazing back over at William, “you always remind me that you’re not some floating, talking head I need to just listen to all the time, after all.”
Despite them bickering, it was good progress enough for Jose, and he waved his hands at them, his expression neutral for the most part. “We will totally be getting into why conflict and disagreements arise between couples, and why it’s better to say what’s on your mind as opposed to just going along with whatever your partner says and thinks, as that’s actually not the best thing in the long-run, and you can lose your own individuality as you live under your partner’s shadow.”

Everyone seemed to ponder this advice, and Gavin groaned as he rested his feet up on the back of his heels, swinging them from side-to-side dully.

Jose ignored it, and he glared at Peter next, “Your turn.”

The brown-haired android wiped his lips and nose with the back of a hand as he looked down at his page, “Well, to me it’s better this way because I knew a lot of androids who worked at the Eden Club, and they often told me as they went deviant that they were tired of being forced to do... certain…” his voice broke down and he shook his head, collecting himself together as he forced himself to finish his thoughts, “…things against their will...it was horrible, but they deserve liberation.”

A few of the other androids clapped in agreement, and Jose hushed them as he waved the nail file in the air a few times like a flag. “Cool it, guys! We still have a discussion going on here!”

Gavin saw Nines roll his eyes, and he nearly burst out in laughter. Unfortunately, Jose caught it, and he threw a particularly resentful glare at Gavin before Stephie interrupted.

“Very good thoughts, Peter! You’re a true android advocate!” The group cheered and clapped again, and Gavin caught Nines peeking at him. He shook his head at Nines back and forth, and Nines huffed as he looked away.

Suddenly, Chrissie folded her arms, crossing her long legs over each other as she frowned angrily. “Maybe some androids should have the freedom to continue sex work if they want!”

Her fiancé Michelle seemed upset as well, and she crossed her arms over her chest also, her short, plump legs barely touching the floor beneath as she sat back in her chair.

“I disagree strongly with that.”

Her android fiancé glared ferociously, her thin dark brown eyebrows set low on her forehead. “Well of course you would believe such a thing.”

Picking up on the first sign of trouble in paradise, Jose smirked at them, “What’s going on, girls?”

Her LED light was bright red, and thunder rolled off across the sky as Chrissie pointed her finger in accusation at her short partner. “Michelle likes dick!”

Woah.

Gavin sat up in his chair, draping an arm over his stretched out right-leg as he coughed, eyebrows twisting in confusion. “I thought you chicks were lesbians?”

Michelle scoffed while Chrissie frowned at her, “Michelle thinks she’s bi lately.”

Not wanting to interrupt the change in topic and advancement in the discussion, Jose placed a finger over his lips while Stephie folded her hands in her lap, the little timer wedged between her fingers tightly as she studied the speakers in the group intently.
The accused human female gasped, clearly offended as she threw her arms up. “You’re just getting on my case because I said once that I was having cold feet about our upcoming wedding!”

The brunette android tsked, “Sure, blame me! You can’t just keep sowing your wild oats while you demand I stay loyal to you!”

“I’ve never cheated on you!” Michelle practically screamed out.

Her android partner scoffed dismissively at her, “You don’t need to! You’re practically eye-fucking every guy you see lately!”

Gavin shrugged at Chrissie’s accusation thrown at her fiancé. “So? That’s not always a bad thing, I mean,” he looked between them, and Silvia and Megan, as if encouraging them to seek men out as well, a small smile forming across his lips, “…that can always liven up your sex lives!”

A few of the male androids and male humans snickered, but the females didn’t think it was funny in the slightest. Even Silvia and Megan were shaking their heads in disapproval.

Nines appeared to be on their side as well, and he straightened his pale grey zip-up sweater as he sat up in his seat, neck stretched out to face Michelle and Chrissie.

“What matters is how content you two are in your relationship, whether or not you accept each other’s flaws and drawbacks, while promising and making an effort to work on your shortcomings together.”

Again, the group clapped, and Stephie hooted as she cheered the loudest.

Gavin mimed self-induced vomiting as he stuck a finger in his mouth and dry heaved.

Once they’d finished clapping and showing their approval for Nines’ feedback, Stephie pointed a bright blue nail polished fingernail at Nines. “Excellent comments, Robert! I swear, you’re really good at this stuff!”

Jose even looked impressed, though he wasn’t all smiles like Stephie; he simply nodded, his eyebrows raised and his eyes shining with approval. “I agree, well done, Robert.”

Gavin grumbled as he sat further in his seat, stretching his legs before himself while he did his best to shield his angry face from the prying eyes of the group and counsellors as he hid his face behind his clipboard, impatiently waiting his turn so he could be the first to leave the room once the session was over.

Outside, the sky and rain seemed to match his growing temper, as lightning flashed off and the thunder roared, and the wind howled.

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Nines was busy folding his clothes, unpacking whatever was leftover in his suitcase as he propped it open on the foot of his bed. He’d carefully made sure not to get any wrinkles or creases in his shirts and pants as he placed them on the bed, straightening them out with a firm pat, when he felt hot air blown on the back of his neck.

He didn’t turn around as he spoke: “What is it now, Detective Reed?”

Gavin fumed, steam practically rising out of his ears and head as he crossed his arms and glared dangerously at Nines.
“Real good work showin’ off what you know about relationships today in group.” It was so immature, petulant, and ridiculous, but Gavin couldn’t stop himself once he’d started. He was beginning to grow so weary of Nines doing everything he couldn’t, and showing it off to gain everyone’s favor, to boot. Whether he was doing it all intentionally or not wasn’t the point anymore for Gavin; he just was starting to hate Nines more than he ever did before they came to the center. Frankly, Gavin had no idea it was remotely possible to hate an android as much as he currently did.

Nines didn’t seem to care as he grabbed his shirts and walked over to a large dresser opposite the bedroom, and he opened the top drawer as he placed his shirts neatly inside, careful to leave perfect spacing between them. Gavin also noticed they were arranged inside the drawer by colors…Christ…

“You’re insufferable, you know that, Nines?” He grumbled as he watched Nines close the drawer before moving down to another one, opening it as he grabbed his socks and undershirts to place inside.

“If you have nothing further to add that will help us with the case, Detective Reed, I suggest you get some rest for the night.”

Nines didn’t regard Gavin at all as he made his way over to his suitcase, closing and zipping up the lid as he gently slid it under his bed and began straightening out the bedsheets, too.

Gavin didn’t know why, but he wanted to mess up Nines’ bed and sheets so badly. He wanted to tear them entirely off the bed, stomping on them with his dirty shoes, and then he wanted to throw the pillows out the window so they would get some rainwater and mud on them before he placed them back on Nines’ clean mattress. He just wanted to cause so much havoc and damage, but he had to contain and hold himself back from doing it as he watched Nines sit down on the foot of his bed, hands clasped together as he stared at a wall.

“You think you’re the smartest one here, huh?” Gavin said, petty annoyance rising in his voice as he scraped his feet along the cabin floors.

Nines threw him an ice-cold glare. “What would you have me do, Gavin?”

Nines rarely used Gavin’s first name whenever he was addressing him, and it threw Gavin off-guard as he was taken aback. He frowned as he turned around from facing the android. He somehow felt more annoyed by the way Nines had uttered his name as if it were an insult.

“Nothing,” he answered as he looked around the clean, large cabin. “Nothing.”

“I told you we have to blend in,” Nines explained as if he was talking to a little kid rather than a 36-year-old adult.

“…that means cooperating and acting as if we are one of the guests here.”

Gavin rounded on him with a snarl, “You think I’m stupid? I don’t know that?”

Nines scoffed, looking at Gavin up and down with a shake of his head. “I had my doubts, truthfully…”

Gavin felt his curiosity burning. “What’s that supposed to mean?”

Nines eyed him carefully as his LED light turned yellow for a second. “You were the one prancing around with your shirt off this morning, you should know the answer to that question more than anyone else.”
Gavin cooed sarcastically, lips drawn back in a vicious sneer, “Oooh, you jealous or somethin’ Nines?”

Nines didn’t hesitate in his response, “Not at all.”

“Sure you’re not.”

Nines held his head high with an air of pride in his eyes, “I assure you, the opposite is in fact the reality.”

Ouch.

Gavin didn’t know why that had stung him as badly as it did, but it sure as fuck hurt. It was a massive blow to his ego, and he winced as he exhaled like he’d been burned.

Trying to save the last portions of his fleeting masculinity, he tried changing the topic as he focused on the conversation he’d had with Connor and Hank earlier.

“Connor said he should have intel on the victims, along with more DNA analysis soon, and then we can compare and see what we come up with.”

Nines only offered him a nod, “Very well, then.”

“Yep.”

“Good.”

“Great.”

“Indeed.”

They sat on their beds in silence, Gavin crossing his arms as he pouted, while Nines closed his eyes and began slipping into an inactive ‘stasis’ state. It appeared as if he was sleeping, but Gavin knew he wasn’t, and he felt goosebumps along his skin as he stared at the unmoving android on the bed.

It was as if he had been frozen in time, sitting on the bed as lifelessly as a puppet or a prop. His arms hung loosely at his sides, and his head remained stiff and straight. Had it been a human, Gavin knew he wasn’t, and he would never be troubled by things conflicting with his body, if it were put under pressure.

Remembering once again why he detested androids so much, Gavin yanked his thick, plump pillows, arranging them almost like a wall or a fort around his head as he turned with his back facing Nines.

He had to force himself to close his eyes, try to find a memory or thought to relax in, and calm his nerves as he crossed his arms over his chest again, lying flatly on his side as he tried falling asleep.

It took him longer than he recalled it ever taking to fall asleep that night, and he not once heard Nines stirring or making the slightest bit of noise just a few feet away on the bed close to his own.
Entertainment Night

The next few days breezed by without much of a pain, and Gavin kept to himself during group discussions and activities, much like he had in the DPD, while Nines basked in the social life at Heaven’s Salvage.

Nines was becoming somewhat ‘popular’ as of late, constantly surrounded by William, the android Gavin was sure was named ‘Steve’, Cameron, Max, and the age-gap couple. Soon, Jose even began talking to Nines after every session, almost cracking a smile once or twice at something Nines had said…

The whole thing was utterly ridiculous to Gavin, and he figured he’d stay out of the way and try to remain ‘in character’ before someone noticed something was off about him.

Connor and Hank were also seen numerous times by Gavin, and while they were ‘working’ on things and minor tasks around the mansion and yards, they also found free time to fill Gavin in on information, either through text, phone calls, or brief in-person visits whenever Gavin found time to sneak away.

So far, they’d discovered that most of the victims had been tortured before their death, as Connor had snuck into the basement of the mansion and brought back samples of thirium and human blood that was carefully hidden behind an old wardrobe built in a wall…

Gavin had snuck back in later, snapping a few photos for evidence as he hid them away on the hard drive of his camera. So far, they couldn’t specifically determine where exactly the victims had been murdered, but it was more than obvious that all the murders had occurred in the mansion at some point.

This was at least something they could go off of, and Gavin felt a little more relaxed, even though he wasn’t making any progress in the social life of the mansion and group within it.

He’d always be the last to be picked for teams and group work, and no one would really talk to him even if he was in a group. For the most part, he lost count of the days, but he figured it was a Thursday afternoon, and he’d just finished his lunch when he’d decided to take a break and skip the social events happening in the dining hall. He’d instead decided to head off to the workout room just a floor level above the basement, and he’d been busying himself with exercising frantically, eager to work off the tension and the sense of competition that had wedged itself between himself and Nines lately.

Gavin refused to let the android overpower him in any way, and despite Nines being a machine and always having that advantage to do so, Gavin wanted to at least psychologically convince himself he was working hard and at least doing something not to fall behind…

His clenched fist dripped with sweat as it narrowly missed the punching bag the hooks within the gym ceiling held onto tightly while his barefooted toes and feet clung tightly onto the gym floor mats and pads as he held his own ground against the powerful swings and blows he delivered to the poor punching bag. Each jab made Gavin’s body shake and sway, and soon, he looked at the center of the brown punching bag, and he pictured Nines’s perfect face right in the center where his fists were clashing…

Yes…that would do perfectly.
Relishing in the fact that he’d located his perfect imagery for his ‘target’, Gavin began really letting loose on the punching bag. His arms burned from the force, but he knew it was going to do his body good. He repeatedly lost himself in punching, imagining bashing Nines’s face in, his blue blood splashing all over Gavin’s hands and face as he was brutally beaten.

Soon, he’d lost count of how many times he’d beaten Nines to a blue pulp in his mind, but this was definitely going to become a routine for him; working out, building up his stamina and endurance until his will was unbreakable as he remained in control of his combat technique.

Sure, he was also salty as fuck about Nines socially kicking him in the ass, but at least he had his sulking! No one was going to take that away from him!

He fought back against his body’s natural demands to slow down as time ticked by, but he constantly was a guy known for pushing the limits, interminably pressing himself to do what no man could do.

Feeling a bit winded, he abruptly gasped and pulled himself out of his routine for a moment, but he would soon choose to press on and continue, not matter the costs and tons of Ibuprofen he’d no doubt have to take the following morning.

Gavin knew it wasn’t his fucking fault that he wasn’t built to be an android that never ran out of strength or stamina, and he wasn’t going to start wishing he was one. He resumed punching the bag as the cool breeze the fan behind him created, immediately freezing and drying the beads of sweat that were covering his back and arms.

Sweating profusely, Gavin suddenly remembered how coldly Nines’s voice had insulted him, bringing down Gavin’s character and charisma as he had basically told Gavin that he was unappealing, unattractive, and unworthy of any attention, physically or otherwise. While Nines hadn’t flat out stated it like that or put it in those terms bluntly, the implications troubled and disturbed Gavin greatly, and he felt anger flooding his veins as he went to town on the punching bag.

Drenched in sweat now, his mind race outside his inner ramblings and he was focused on the thought of tying Nines upside down, hanging him from the ceiling, and just using his entire body as a punching bag instead of just his face…

This led to starting with a new treacherous exercise routine he’d marked out for himself. He looked down quickly at the floor, his toes finding purchase in the grooves of the red mats, and he bounced up and down a few times, jabbing at the punching bag.

Gavin was so lost in his punching, that he didn’t hear one of the large double-doors open, as Cameron walked inside the gym.

He walked and approached Gavin with a purpose, and it seemed as if he’d been looking for Gavin the entire time. His face lit up in time with his LED light going from yellow to blue, and he stood tall, his broad shoulders straightening out as he placed a hand on his hip. In the other hand, he held a cold water bottle.

Gavin hadn’t detected his presence, and he wiped some sweat off his forehead with the back of his arms as he continued punching.

“Howdy neighbor!” Cameron’s greeting went unheard, the loud ‘bangs!’ and ‘booms!’ of Gavin’s fists connecting with the punching bag overpowering Cameron’s voice.

No response was given to him, and Cameron’s happy smile soon was replaced by a look of growing concern as Gavin refused to stop punching over and over…he was panting heavily, and Cameron
quickly conducted a bio-scan before gasping and reaching forward closely.

“Jack! Stop!”

The volume of Cameron’s voice mixed with desperation finally broke through to Gavin, and he whipped around, the punching bag swinging side-to-side a few times before Gavin stuck out a hand and steadied its motions.

He offered Cameron a weak wave, panting as his chest pumped in and out, rising and falling along with his heavy shoulders. He was worn out…

Gavin clenched his teeth and ripped off his black boxing gloves violently, one of them hitting Cameron’s thigh roughly. Cameron didn’t even so much as yelp when the gloves hit his thigh, though he smirked at his companion, raising a thick light brown eyebrow, followed by an eyeroll that drove Gavin up the walls when the silence was obvious.

Gavin saw the water bottle in Cameron’s hand, and it practically sang out to him.

“Water. Now.” Gavin’s outstretched hand was enough to send Cameron stumbling back a few steps, and he held up the water bottle in a welcoming offering. He watched in awe as Gavin threw his head back and downed the entire contents in a few seconds.

Feeling comfortable enough with himself, Gavin held the empty water bottle, pushing the cap back onto it as he belched loudly. It echoed in the empty gym, and Cameron chuckled.

“Nice one.”

Gavin snorted, “Whatever.” He was about to turn back to his exercise, when he heard a sigh from Cameron.

“Jack, a break won’t kill you, mate.”

Only it would.

Gavin wiped the excess water off his lips with the back of his hand, throwing a deadly glare at Cameron. He was still panting heavily, muscles flexing and unflexing as he wore a now sweaty black sports shirt and matching black shorts. His hair was an absolute, wet, sweaty mess. Bits of hair stuck to his neck, plastered on by sweat drying off from the cool air of the fan, while other strands flew about in the air due to the air conditioning in the gym.

On any other normal day, Cameron would have laughed at the sight of Jack’s sweaty cheeks and messy hair, but he sensed that this day was not one to hold much laughter for the two of them. Cameron didn’t really know much about Jack, but he was curious enough as he stood before him, now placing both his hands on his hips.

“I couldn’t help but notice that we’re neighbors…” he smiled widely, “our cabins are right next to each other’s.”

While grunting, Gavin dropped the bottle down on the mats and looked at his gym bag, which also was resting on the mat, almost comfy.

“Guess that’s interestin’.” It wasn’t, but Gavin was kind of grateful that someone was at least talking to him.

The doors behind them opened again, and Connor was walking briskly into the gym. He stopped, a
few words dying on his lips as he caught sight of Gavin, noticing quickly that he wasn’t alone…

Cameron stared back and forth between Gavin and Connor, snorting. “You know the handyman?” He gestured with a thumb behind his back at Connor, who shook his head ‘no’ for Gavin to answer.

Gavin grumbled, “Nah, but I was gonna ask him about hookin’ me up with his sister.”

Cameron immediately frowned, and Gavin knew he’d fucked up. He was supposed to be gay. Feeling his cheeks flaring, he coughed.

“I mean, it’s…”

Cameron held up a hand, “It’s okay, I used to be engaged to a female android I worked with while I was volunteering at the Detroit City Fire Department right before I met William.”

Huh…the world was a strange place indeed…

Connor mimed the words: “Call me!”, and he turned and exited the gym as quickly as he’d entered, not wanting things to turn into a suspicious direction.

Gavin nodded at Cameron, trying to take an interest in his romantic life, but found he couldn’t. “I see…well…that’s good I guess.”

Cameron suddenly frowned, and he leaned in real close to Gavin, pointing his index finger at him while his LED light was red. “But I’m warning you: I’d never cheat on my lover, if I were you.”

Oh lovely. An android was giving him romantic advice in the middle of a cold gym while sweat literally was running down Gavin’s ass crack.

Gavin coughed and shrugged, “Yeah, of course man, I’d never do that either!”

Cameron appeared interested in asking more questions, suddenly. His face lit up as he smiled at Gavin, “So is Robert okay with you experimenting or something then? Because let me tell you,” he chuckled as he threw his hands up in the air, “William would never let me even get away with looking at another person or android ever again!”

Gavin cringed. “That’s…that’s…umm…”

Shit.

He’d never been in a situation like this, and he had no idea what to say. Luckily, Cameron seemed to be in a yapping mood, and he laughed as he slapped Gavin’s back in a friendly way.

“It’s totally fine! I’d be nervous too!” he chuckled loudly as he looked up at the ceiling of the large gym, “…but I wonder, what drew you to Robert in the first place, if you don’t mind me asking?”

Gavin did mind. “Why do you wanna know?”

Cameron shifted, still draping his arm over Gavin’s shoulders. “Forgive me for saying this, but something about you doesn’t strike me that you’re fond of androids…though I could be wrong.”

“Haha, yeah, I guess it’s just my face?” Gavin hoped, and it seemed a good enough response, for Cameron laughed.

“You’re hilarious, Jack! But tell me, what was the first thing you found attractive or sexy about Robert?”
Oh boy, now he was stuck.

Gavin hesitated, his brain on fire as he thought of what to say.

*Oh gee, Cameron, I’m afraid I can’t answer that question, seein’ as I’m missin’ that part of me that’s gay, which would enable and allow me to fully indulge in my gayness and find somethin’ sexy about Nines to begin with!*

He knew that would never suffice as an answer, and instead he just said: “Robert’s got nice long legs…”

Cameron laughed, and he pointed at Gavin’s face, “And let’s not forget: he has a great ass!”

“Hahah, yeah, I said that on the first day of therapy, hehe, yeah…” Gavin chuckled lightly as Cameron threw his head back and laughed loudly and heartily.

After a few more seconds of laughter, Cameron sighed as he removed his hand from Gavin’s shoulders. “Anyway, I just came to tell you that you should come to the dining hall.”

Gavin threw him a glare, “Why?”

“Because the signup sheet for the one-on-one sessions is almost full,” Cameron explained gently, “…and there are only a few more topics left, so you may want to hurry before you get stuck in something you don’t want to talk about with Jose…”

Gavin nearly punched himself in the face.

*God damn motherfucking ballcocks!*

Oh fuck…

He tugged at the collar of his t-shirt, making a break for the doors as he thought about showering himself off as quickly as possible. Gavin unfortunately didn’t have bleach with him, otherwise he would bleach his brain for even thinking of such disgusting shit.

He just really needed to get the fuck out of this place, it was apparently starting to screw with him, and he was hardly feeling like himself.

Gavin had barely opened the doors when Cameron called out to him.

“Yo! Jack!”

Gavin looked back hesitantly, fearing the worst.

Cameron held his gym bag tightly in his hands, and he tossed it high into the air.

“Catch!”

Gavin caught it, and it slammed against his chest. He let out a strained breath. “Thanks Cameron.”

Cameron winked at him, “See ya soon, buddy! We should get together with Robert and William for an evening supper and chat some time!”

Gavin nodded uncomfortably, “Yeah uh, sounds great, man.”

Cameron looked delighted. “Anytime you want to talk or need anything, just pop on over! We’re not
too far away, after all!”

He so wouldn’t be doing that any fucking time soon.

Gavin was livid. He was absolutely pissed. He was above and beyond angry. He was going to lose it.

By the time he’d arrived at the large dining hall, not only had most of the pizza been gone, but the sign-up sheet Jose had posted on the whiteboard against the walls had only four more sessions of the initial six left open…

As Cameron had correctly warned, the topics that the sessions would be based on were horrible.

Gavin felt he was going to have a panic attack as he stared at the timetable and session titles:

Session #8
Time: Monday at 2 PM
Counsellor: Stephie
Topic: History of relationship with partner

Session #13
Time: Monday at 4:30 PM
Counsellor: Jose
Topic: Future direction of relationship with partner and plans

Session #14
Time: Friday at 9 AM
Counsellor: Jose
Topic: Sexual problems with partner

And last but not least:

Session #17
Time: Tuesday at 11:25 AM
Counsellor: Jose
Topic: Sexual fantasies and new sexual acts to experiment and try with partner

All the other sessions already had the names of the other members of the group signed up on the sheet, and Gavin knew they were required to sign up for at least a minimum of three. He felt his hands shaking as he gripped the pencil that was in a small pencil case on a table beneath the whiteboard, ready to sign his name and Nines’s, when he was brushed aside by a presence.

Gavin gaped in anger and confusion when he saw the blonde-haired lesbian android named Megan push next to him. She had her own pen in her hands, and she ignored Gavin completely as she wrote her name and Silvia’s under Session #8.

Gavin and Nines were left without a choice, now, and he knew two out of the three of their sessions were going to be nothing but sexual talk…

Fucking phenomenal.
What the fuck was he going to do now?!

Begging himself not to panic, Gavin quickly jotted their names down, and exited the dining hall. He made his way around the corner, turning a sharp right as he leaned against the wall to catch his breath for a few seconds.

This section of the hallway was luckily empty, and he began to breathe heavily in fright and panic as he held his phone in his hands and dialed Hank’s number.

He wasn’t going to tell Connor or Hank what had recently happened, but he wanted a distraction, so he focused on praying and hoping that they’d at least a small discovery in the case so they would hopefully have to postpone attending the awkward one-on-one sessions!

“Hank! Pick up…pick up!!” He whispered over and over against the speaker of his phone, and suddenly, the call was connected, and a shuffling was heard on the other end loudly and harshly.

“Gavin?”

Fuck!

It was Connor.

Gavin slapped the brick wall behind him. “Connor, where’s Anderson?”

Connor answered quickly, “He’s talking to Jose, but I wanted to speak with you anyway, Gavin!”

Gavin rubbed his forehead as he groaned, “This better be good, Connor, my day already has turned to pure shit!”

Connor paused, “Was it that blonde android you were talking to in the gym?”

“Connor! Stay focused on the case, god damn it!”

“Sorry,” he shuffled around again, and the sound irritated Gavin to no end as he waited patiently for Connor to say something.

“…Hank and I concluded that some of the human victims had traces of drugs in their systems…”

Gavin felt his heart beating as he listened on, “Go on, Connor.”

“It seems like we’re getting closer to an M.O., and it’s a good theory to suggest that the killer kidnaps, drugs, tortures, and then murders the victims…but why? What’s the motive?”

Gavin sighed, “You tell me…”

He practically heard Connor smiling through the phone, “Don’t worry Gavin! We’ll find out what’s going on shortly, just stay in touch!”

“Roger.”

Gavin ended the call, and when he put his phone back in his pocket, he looked up and nearly fell over in fright.

Nines was standing across from him, eyes glaring down at Gavin suspiciously.

Gavin hissed at him, placing a hand over his heart. “Jeez! What’s up your ass?”
He wished he’d never said that…oh the fucking implications…hell…

Nines didn’t pick up on it, and he resumed glaring darkly, as if Gavin had hit him or something.

“Who’s Roger?”

Gavin’s jaw fell open, “Huh?!?”

Nines repeated the question again, lowering his voice to a small hiss. “Who’s Roger?”

Oh for fuck’s sakes…

Gavin rolled his eyes so far up into his eye sockets that he saw his brain practically. “It’s an expression!”

Nines raised an eyebrow, but it seemed like he wasn’t fully convinced or satisfied. He nodded, however, turning around and walking away after he said: “I see.”

Gavin followed him for a few steps, trying to catch up. It was a little difficult, considering the wide gait he walked with, and those damned long legs…

Gavin gently touched his shoulder as they walked further down the hall.

“Have you taken a look at our fuckin’ topics for the one-on-one sessions?!?”

Nines didn’t stop moving. “No, I haven’t found the time to.”

Gavin shivered. He wasn’t going to be the one to break it to Nines. No fucking way. He gave up on thinking about how to put the right words together to formulate an explanation, and he let Nines walk on ahead as he hung back and rubbed the back of his neck.

“Fuckin’ hell…”

Nines was going to be so pissed once he found out for himself…Gavin just knew it.

It was their first Friday evening at the counselling center, and with sessions ended for the day, Gavin and Nines had no idea what to do as they sat around in their cabin. They weren’t speaking with each other, and Gavin didn’t particularly care. All evening he’d been worried about the case, and he checked his phone every half hour since the sun began to set.

Unfortunately, it was getting on Nines’s nerves, and when Gavin checked his phone for the fifth time that evening, eager for any text, phone call, or news either way from Connor or Hank, he heard Nines growl at him.

Gavin stared up at Nines, who was sitting at the small kitchen table.

“What?”

Nines frowned at him, the anger practically slapping Gavin in the face the moment their eyes met.

“If you would be so kind as to enlighten me as to the progress on the case instead of burying yourself in your phone, it’d be most appreciated.”

Gavin practically was about to throw his phone at Nines. He’d had enough of the stupid dry attitude
and sneers that Nines had cast his way since they’d cooped themselves up in their cabin.

“Leave me alone, Nines, I’m waiting for info from Connor.”

Nines rested his hands on his kneecaps as he glared at Gavin. “You’re pretty comfortable around Connor lately…”

“The fuck are you talkin’ about?”

Nines looked a little peeved, and he was about to answer, when a light knock was at their door.

Gavin and Nines exchanged worried looks, and Gavin quickly whispered: “I’ll get it.”

Nines didn’t argue as Gavin unlocked the front door of the cabin and poked his head out into the evening air. He sighed in relief when he saw William standing on the porch by the door, only then realizing he’d for some reason anticipated the worst when the knock came.

“Hey Will.”

William frowned for a split second, but then smiled at the shortened version of his name used by Gavin. He was wearing grey cotton lounge wear that were practically pajama bottoms, and a navy blue t-shirt over them. His black hair was messy and curly on the top of his head, but it seemed as if he’d stepped out of the shower…he was wearing sneakers that he’d pretty much slid his feet into, and he smiled eagerly at Gavin.

“Hi Jack, how’s it g-g-going?”

Gavin offered him a genuine smile in return. He didn’t want to admit it to anyone else, but he was actually really fond of William. He didn’t strut around the place holding his head up like he was placed on a high horse or a pedestal. He never felt the need to show off, and he was broken and damaged in many ways, yet he didn’t try to manipulate his weakness or flaws to garner sympathy or special treatment from anyone else. All these qualities were decent enough for Gavin to already consider William like a friend, but he had to still remind himself of one dark, but realistic fact, unfortunately:

He was still undercover, and he was working for the Detroit Police Department investigating murders of both humans and androids in this gay resort. That would never change, and he had to consider everyone in the program a suspect until they themselves-along with the evidence-proved their innocence.

It was a sad spectacle, but Gavin knew Nines and Connor would lecture him and advise him of the same thing if he gave the impression that he was on friendly terms with William or anyone else.

Realizing that he’d left the front door open, allowing the warm evening air to flood inside the cabin as he looked behind William at the open space, Gavin collected and composed himself as Nines appeared behind him and smiled at William from over Gavin’s shoulders.

“Good evening William.”

Will smiled at Nines, “Hi.”

Still fearing the worst, Gavin looked apologetically at Will. “Is there something wrong, Will?”

The young man shook his head, his light five o’clock shadow making his skin look a little pale as it contrasted with his dark body hair.
“N-n-no, I just came o-o-over here t-t-to invite you and R-R-Robert to j-join everyone in th-the Entertainment R-Room.”

This wasn't the first time Gavin heard of such a room existing. He remembered his earlier study of the second floor of the mansion and smiled. “Oh yeah, it’s on the second floor…but what’re you guys doin’ there?”

Will smiled patiently, “Every F-Friday is ‘Entert-t-tainment N-Night’,,” he looked at Nines too, “…g- g-games and movies usually play, and p-people just hang out t-t-together.”

No doubt it was meant to be therapeutic as well.

Gavin smiled, “Cool, Robert and I will join you, can you just give us a sec?”

Will nodded, happy that they would be joining. “S-sure, you c-c-can wear someth-th-thing comfortable if y-you want,” he gestured down at his own clothing, “…m-m-most people wear their p-p-pjs, whatever w-works.”

Gavin nodded and gently closed the door as he turned back to Nines once they’d stepped away from the door.

“What do you want to wear?”

Nines ignored him, already at the dresser across their bedroom. He opened the top drawers, fishing out a blue dress shirt and black dress pants. Gavin rolled his eyes as he made his way over towards Nines and yanked the clothes right out of his hands.

“If you wanna blend in so much,” he began in a harsh whisper, “…then wear somethin’ that’s less ‘Nines’, and somethin’ that ‘Robert’ would wear!” He flung the clothes back inside the drawer before shoving it shut.

Nines scowled at him as he looked back at his suitcase under his bed. “Fine.”

“I’ll help you pick somethin’.” Nines didn’t reject Gavin’s offer to help, and going through his suitcase together, they picked a clean pair of grey and white striped jogging pants, and a white t-shirt to go with it.

Gavin wore cream-colored beach trousers, the hems rolled up to his ankles as he slipped on dark sneakers. He quickly changed into a black t-shirt as he made his way over to the door.

“Ready?” He whispered back at Nines, who nodded.

Nines looked rather…fresh in his new style, and Gavin caught himself staring for a few seconds too long before Nines widened his eyes, a little dramatic for Gavin’s tastes.

“Well?” He ushered gently, and Gavin cleared his throat, cheeks flaring up as he opened the front door of the cabin and smiled widely at Will.

Behind him, Nines stood, also flashing Will the friendliest smile he could muster up.

As soon as they stood out on the porch before him, Will adjusted his glasses and gave them both a thumbs-up. “P-perfect!”

Gavin couldn’t agree more as he stared over at Nines next to him. “Let’s go!”

Will walked slightly ahead of them as he began talking: “Cameron’s a-already in the Entert-t-
tainment Room, and h-h-he initially sent me over t-t-to get you g-g-guys to join us.”

Gavin felt something brushing against his arm as he held the left one by his side, and he looked down to see Nines’s hand loosely hanging by his own side as he walked stiffly behind Will. It looked so mechanic and cold, and Gavin rolled his eyes and shook his head. Luckily for them, Will was walking with his back facing them, otherwise Gavin knew it would look so awkward and fake, and he’d probably have to reach out and grab Nines’s hand to hold it…

What would it feel like to hold Nines’s hand in his own?

Gavin began to wonder about it, but his thoughts were interrupted by the time they’d reached the front doors of the mansion. Will held the door open for them, and he pointed with a free hand at the staircase.

“G-go on up, I’m right b-behind y-you.”

The smell of popcorn filled Gavin’s nostrils, and he felt himself salivating as he let his nose guide him up the clean stairs and towards the Entertainment Room.

By far, the Entertainment Room was Gavin’s favorite room in the entire mansion. It was quite large, with a long, rectangular desk at the far left-hand corner of the room supporting at least five brand new laptops and headsets on the desk against the wall. The back of the room next to the left-hand side of the entrance held a decent-sized kitchenette, a Samsung French Door Refrigerator and small stove within it, along with a brand-new microwave on a shelf right next to the fridge.

On the right-hand side by the entrance was a medium sized black oak kitchen table, the chairs neatly tucked in. It could seat at least eight people, the chairs perfectly shiny as they gleamed beneath the bright lights in the room.

The center of the room had one large black sofa that could seat at least four people on it, and plenty of beanbags and cushiony lounge chairs were propped around the room. The carpet began in the center of the room, and it was a dark grey-blue one. At the very front of the room mounted high on the wall was a large, HD 90-inch Smart TV, and connected to it were multiple Xbox and PS4s. Connected to those were at least four PS4 and Xbox controllers of different colors.

On the floor around the TV sat Cameron, both the age-gap couple and the married couple Peter and Max. Behind them, resting on the leather lounge chairs and beanbag chairs sat the guy Gavin thought was named Steve, and his partner (another android).

Further behind them on the sofa sat Silvia, Megan, Chrissie, and Michelle. They were huddled together as an empty bowl of popcorn sat on the large glass coffee table that separated the sofa from the beanbags.

Along with the popcorn bowl, the women had placed two makeup and hair-style kits, and Megan was currently applying makeup onto Michelle’s face with a thick brush as Silvia smiled and braided Chrissie’s long, straight brunette hair.

The guys were heavily wrapped up in some violent, multiplayer shooting/sniper game, with Cameron, Max, Peter, and the younger partner in the age-gap relationship holding the game controllers tightly in their hands.

Everyone in the room was dressed practically in nightwear and pajamas, and it fit the overall mood and atmosphere of the room. Furthermore, it made Gavin feel comfortable as he looked at his own
casual form of dress and abandoned the idea that he’d ‘underdressed’.

William settled himself on a kitchen chair he pulled away from the kitchen table and placed it beside one of the armrests of the dark sofa as he sat a few feet behind Cameron, eyes on their game.

Nines pulled up a chair for himself as well, sitting next to William as he too stared away at the game displayed on the large TV.

Cameron was shouting out instructions to Max and Peter, who were also yelling competitively back at him as their LED lights flashed yellow and red. A few times, Max leaned back and forth and side-to-side, moving his controller in his hands as he guided his character through a large battleground.

When he got in the way of Peter’s vision, Peter reached forward and swatted Max’s head angrily as he concentrated on the game.

Gavin would’ve laughed at them all, but he chose not to, noticing the frenzied looks of murder and violence painted on their faces as they were so engrossed in their game. He decided instead to take a seat on the carpet, leaning his back against one of the coffee table’s legs once he’d grabbed a discarded pillow on the floor by the sofa.

The sound of gunfire and screaming soon blasted from the large speakers on the walls next to the TV, and shook all the walls of the Entertainment Room violently. Gavin looked down at the time on his phone, noticing that it was almost 10 PM.

The screaming came from the game, as well as Cameron and Max, as both men began shouting orders at each other, claiming they didn’t know how to play the game, and that they were going to get themselves killed.

At the same time, the women sitting on the sofa behind them were trying to hold their own conversation, and a few times they paused and glared at the men before resuming their chat.

Their voices were growing louder and louder, as Cameron and Max continued screaming and shouting senselessly at each other. As it was, they looked like two rabid, overgrown children. The people and androids not involved in the game tried losing themselves in their own conversation, and they all had to raise the volume of their voices as the game blared on.

Soon, Gavin’s eyes wandered on their own to Nines, and he took a curious peek at the android.

Nines was currently smiling in amusement as Cameron and Max paused their game, turning around towards William as they tried hard to get him to join their game. The age-gap couple had chosen to retire for the night, clearly having had enough of the loud shenanigans, and they soon left, leaving one more game controller available.

Cameron and Max put on the pressure as they cried out for William to join them in front of the TV. Peter sighed, still waiting for them to continue the game as he patiently waited.

William didn’t want to join the game, pushing himself as far away from Cameron’s strong arms as he grabbed onto William’s wrists and struggled to pull him down on the floor next to him.

“Robert! Help me convince William to play!” Cameron’s voice begged at Nines, and Nines merely laughed as he tried shrugging.

“It’s not my place to say, Cameron, I’m sorry.”

Cameron tossed his lover a dark glare, “Pleeeaassee Pleaseee William?”
Will shook his head, his curly black hair swaying about. “I don’t w-w-want to!”

“Why not?” A pouty look appeared on Cameron’s face.

William glared, “Because the la-last time I p-played a game like this wi-with you, I didn’t f-f-find the exp-peri-ence altogether enj-j-joyable.”

Cameron huffed as his LED light beamed yellow, and his light brown eyes gave off an air and look of disappointment. “You’re just a sore loser.” Cameron sat back down on the floor, grabbing his game controller roughly.

William huffed, “You and m-my nephews b-b-both targeted a-and k-killed me repeatedly!”

“Well that’s the nature of war, handsome,” Cameron shrugged as he studied his hands and nails. “That’s how the game is, and you’ll never get better at it if you don’t try.”

“I w-w-was on your t-team!” William snapped, and that’s when Cameron and Peter lost it. They tried holding back their laughter, but they found it impossible given the way William was frowning so seriously at them. They hooted and hollered, causing Silvia and Chrissie to roll their eyes at them.

“Guys! Can you keep it down, please?” Chrissie asked, trying to remain polite, but the red LED light portrayed how she was really feeling, even if her face remained neutral.

The red-headed Silvia nodded as she turned back to braiding Chrissie’s long hair in a single braid at the back of her head. “Please! I can’t even hear my own voice!”

William nodded, “We-we’ll try.”

Nines finally made eye contact with Gavin in the middle of the madness floating around, and Gavin looked away. He was already staring at Nines before Nines looked over to meet his eyes, and he was annoyed that he’d been caught. It was as if the android felt his eyes upon him the entire time...

Gavin felt himself blushing, wondering why he couldn’t focus on the game as the guys resumed playing. The entire time Gavin forced himself to stare at the TV, his mind and thoughts were constantly on Nines. Once or twice when he thought no one was looking, he stared over at Nines, hoping to peek at him without being caught, but he found that Nines was already staring over at him...

He soon gave up as he pressed himself flatly on the carpet, propping the small pillow beneath his chest as he placed his hands to the sides of his head as he watched the game.

Soon, at least seven different conversations began going on in the room, and Gavin was thankful for the minor distraction as he momentarily forgot about Nines.

“I want more popcorn,” Michelle complained as she shook a nail polish bottle, opening the lid of it and allowing the stench of the nail polish to waft in the air.

Chrissie shrugged, “I’m busy getting my hair braided, make it yourself.”

Silvia put her hair up in a messy ponytail as Megan continued applying make-up to Michelle’s face. “My hands are tied!”

Michelle whined, “I want popcorn!!”
Cameron and Max cheered, winning another round in their game. The android couple with the one guy Gavin thought was named ‘Steve’ were trying to doze off as they leaned their heads against each other.

“Lower the volume of the game!”

“Don’t like it? Leave!” Max yelled at them while keeping his eyes on the TV.

William held a hand over his nose as he fanned himself, “C-can’t you gals paint y-y-your nails l-later? This s-s-stuff is g-giving me a headache!”

Michelle glared at him while Chrissie shook her head, which earned her a harsh hiss from Silvia. “Stop moving your head! I’m almost done!”

Gavin soon got involved in the yelling between the men, feeling his head pounding due to the loud noises coming from the game.

“Steve’s right, turn that shit down, Cameron!”

The young-looking male android frowned at him, “My name’s not ‘Steve’!”

Gavin didn’t even look at him. “It is now.”

“Get me popcorn!”

Chrissie stood from her seat on the sofa, her bare feet stomping while her half-done braid swung about as she made her way into the kitchen, throwing open a cupboard door as she grabbed a popcorn pack and threw it into the microwave.

Michelle smiled in glee while she adjusted her pink spaghetti strap tank top, “Love you!”

Nines crossed a long leg over the other as he folded his hands in his lap while staring at the back of Cameron’s head. “Jack’s right, Cameron,” he explained rationally, “…you should turn down the volume of the game, before we disturb Jose and Stephie.”

Max snorted, “Jose’s deaf as a fucking bat, he’d never hear us even if he was standing right outside the door.”

The screams of their characters in the game being blown to smithereens as they raced through a war zone practically shook the floors and furniture.

“How long does it take to prepare a bowl of popcorn, woman?!”

Chrissie fumed at her fiancé, “The same amount of time it takes for me to shove my foot in your ass!”

Silvia and Megan giggled.

Gavin jabbed a finger into Max’s back, “You heard Robert, turn down the volume already!”

Peter snarled at Gavin, “Don’t you touch my husband!”

Immediately, Nines jumped to Gavin’s defense, sitting up in his chair to attention. “Never speak that way to Jack!”

The tension began increasing even more in the room.
William tried his best to calm everyone down. “G-guys, you’re making a l-lot of n-n-noise!”

Ignoring him, Gavin sneered at Max and Peter, “You guys are fuckin’ stupid, just turn the fuckin’ game down or shut it off entirely, you fuckwads!”

“Jack, your language is filthy…” Nines warned, and Gavin scoffed.

“Yeah, you probably like it that way, babe.”

Before Nines could say anything, Peter growled while Max slapped a hand on his thigh as they started falling behind in the game.

“And by the way,” Gavin added with attitude as he spat at Max, “…it’s ‘blind’ as a bat; not ‘deaf’ as a bat.”

Max snorted dismissively, “Whatever.”

That earned him another glare from Gavin. “Turn it down, NOW!”

“I’m not turning the volume down!” Max hissed as he leapt up when an explosion went off in the game.

Gavin growled savagely, “You heard me, do it!!”

Max turned around, his neck and body ‘clicking’ audibly as the microwave beeped off, signaling the popcorn was ready. “Excuse me?” He glared over at Gavin, eyes angry and dangerous.

Gavin met his glare evenly, refusing to back down from the challenge, “Did I fuckin’ stutter?” he paused, “No offense, Will.”

“N-n-none t-taken, Jack.”

The strong smell of popcorn flew around the room as Chrissie sat down again. “Let’s watch a movie!” she suddenly announced, as if tired of the bickering.

The rest of the girls and William nodded, “Yeah!”

Knowing he couldn’t compete with women, (and rightfully so) Cameron turned off the game as he sat back in a beanbag chair. “Fine, what do you guys wanna watch?”

Megan smirked as her LED light spun blue, “I was thinking we should watch Imagine Me and You.”

Gavin gasped, “I think I know that one,” he scratched his back as he sat up on the floor, “…it’s about the two chicks who are in love with each other, but they’re actually already engaged to dudes, right?’

Megan nodded happily at him, “You got it.”

Chrissie suddenly turned and threw a sarcastic glare at Michelle, whose makeup was all done with now, and she held up a mirror to inspect it.

“Wow, that’s like the story of my relationship with Michelle.”

Michelle set the mirror down, “Shut up, Chrissie.”

Max and Cameron groaned, “Not a chick flick! Come on!”
Peter shrugged, “I wanna see it.”

Silvia frowned as she shook her head, “Whoever doesn’t want to watch it is free to leave,” she stood up as she snatched the TV remote out of Cameron’s hands, “…but that’s what we’re watching, and that’s final!”

The men grumbled, but once the popcorn and soda had been passed around, they shut up as the lights in the room were turned off by Chrissie.

Soon, the movie was playing on, and everyone got into a comfortable position.

Gavin looked around the room to see that Cameron and William were holding onto each other, William resting between Cameron’s legs, his back against the android’s firm, muscular chest as Cameron draped his arms over William’s waist.

Peter and Max were lying down side-by-side, holding hands as their LED lights were yellow, no doubt communicating in their own special way so no one else could hear them.

Chrissie and Michelle switched seats with Silvia and Megan, the two female couples cuddling and sitting beside each other, occasionally giving each other soft kisses on the lips and cheeks.

As the movie played on, Gavin felt a tap on his shoulder, and he looked away from the TV at Cameron.

“How come you’re not sitting with Robert?”

Oh shit…

Cameron had a right to ask, as everyone in the room was seated closely and intimately with their partner, while Gavin was sitting down on the floor, and Nines was still on one of the kitchen chairs by the empty one William once had been occupying.

Fuck! Fuck! Fuck!

“How come you’re not sitting with Robert?”

Oh shit…

He felt footsteps approaching behind him, and before Gavin noticed what had happened, two strong arms wrapped themselves around his sides, and he was pulled up to sit on his ass. His back was leaning against something firm, and he stretched his feet flatly on the carpet as Nines’s long legs rested outside both his own.

Gavin turned around shyly. He was sitting in the same way William was leaning against Cameron’s chest, their arms and fingers intertwined. Only Nines didn’t do that as he rested his hands down by his hips as he let Gavin’s weight rest upon his chest.

Gavin raised an inquisitive eyebrow at them, but when he heard William sniffling as a sad part in the film played, he turned back around to console and comfort his partner.

Gavin rolled his eyes at the sight of Cameron burying his nose in William’s hair as he placed many gentle, soft kisses there, and he soon felt an odd pressure on the top of his head, too.

He turned around slightly, noticing that Nines was leaning extra close to him…

“Nines, what the fuck are you doin?” he whispered as softly as he could, and he thanked the android for having strong audio reception as he shrugged.
“I’m doing whatever I can to blend in.”

Holy fiddlesticks…this was so ridiculous.

Gavin didn’t argue, however, remembering how he’d nearly gotten Cameron suspicious of them. All he could do was lean back and try to get as ‘comfortable’ as possible as he leaned against Nines’s chest.

He first thought it was going to be damn near impossible, but Gavin was soon drifting off into a deep slumber as the movie played on gently in the background.

Before he fell asleep, he swore he felt the warm, gentle pressure of lips on the back of his neck…

But he was sure he was dreaming.
Monday was upon them before they knew it, and for the most part during the weekend, the weather had been unfortunately quite windy, rainy, and cold. The change in weather had forced most of the couples to remain inside their cabins as the weekend passed them by rather slowly, but it had provided Gavin and Nines with the opportunity to send out emails and reports to Captain Fowler. They updated him on everything they could about the case and their discoveries so far, which though menial, was still a lot better and good progress while it came along.

Gavin dreaded waking up that Monday morning, knowing that around 4:30, he and Nines had to head into Jose’s office for their first couple’s-one-on-one therapy session…he cringed when he remembered the topic for their session: Future direction of relationship with partner and plans.

Gavin had no such plans for any future with Nines, and he had no idea what he was going to conjure up from his head when he received an email reminder about their session from Jose, as well as a little ‘homework’ assignment Jose had put together for them.

They both had to come to the session with at least two plans for the future of their relationship that would help bring them closer together as a couple and explain how they were going to achieve those plans.

It was by far the most difficult thing Gavin had to work on, and he spent half of Sunday just lying down on his bed, every so often changing positions while his laptop rested in front of him with a Word Document open. It sat blank for the entire day, and by nightfall, he’d grown so fed up and annoyed with it, that he’d made up two sentences and forwarded them off after attaching them in an email he’d sent to Jose.

It was good enough, and it was time for him to move onto more serious things about the case, for that matter.

Gavin had arranged to meet up with Connor and Hank while they still had a little bit of the afternoon to themselves before their Monday therapy session began. He stepped inside the mansion with Nines behind him. They’d shielded themselves with their sweaters, holding it above their heads as the rain practically soaked their sweaters and clothes right through.

Gavin shivered when they entered the mansion, and they found that it was very quiet for the most part. He supposed it was because therapy sessions were going on all morning and early afternoon, which no doubt meant that all the other members would be occupied for the time being.

Gavin checked his phone, reading the last text message received from Hank. Supposedly, Hank and Connor had found something new they wanted to share. Gavin agreed to meet up with them,
realizing it would be a perfect opportunity for Nines to get all caught up on the progress. He'd found it very challenging to set up even a little bit of time to speak with Nines himself, for the moment they were alone, Nines would just stare creepily at the walls of their cabin while in stasis, and whenever Gavin had previously tried approaching Nines, there'd be at least one or two other people interrupting, eager to speak with Nines. In the end, Gavin had given up on it entirely, and decided that another android would be the best communication method anyway. Thank god Connor was here.

He shivered as they made their way down the third hall away from the dining room. It would take two more left turns before they would reach the storage and utility closet where Hank and Connor were waiting for them.

Gavin paused, raising a clenched fist as he knocked on the black door twice, and then three times, which was their secret ‘code’ to let Hank and Connor know they’d arrived.

The door opened slowly, and Connor’s LED turned yellow as he stared out at them. It turned blue once he saw Nines and Gavin, and he opened the door further to let them inside.

Gavin noticed that the closet was pretty medium sized, and it held basic cleaning products such as: mops, old brooms, a few Roombas that were shut off, bottles of water, and other chemicals used for removing stains and dirt or grime.

Gavin also couldn’t help but notice that there was a rather faint blush on Hank’s cheeks, and his medium-length grey hair had been slightly out of place, as if someone had been messing it up by perhaps…running their fingers through it recently?

His eyes darted over at Connor, and he noticed that Connor’s hair was messy as well, and his blue ‘maintenance android’ jumper was slightly unzipped…

Gavin scoffed as he shook his head at Hank and Connor.

Hank wasn’t in the mood for the bullshit thrown his way, and he growled, eyebrows furrowed tightly and closely. “The fuck are you looking at us like that for, Reed?”

Gavin leaned in close as he snickered, “You and Connor need to come out of the closet.” Gavin couldn’t help himself; he just had to say that at least once while they were still at a gay counselling resort.

Connor gasped, and Hank roared as he shoved Gavin roughly in the chest. Gavin only laughed as he stumbled against the door and held a hand over it to steady himself. Hank was a lot stronger than he appeared sometimes…

“You fucking miserable brat!” Hank pointed a finger at him, and Connor hushed him as he straightened his hair.

Gavin didn’t want to waste anymore time, and he straightened his clothes out as he pointed at Nines and Connor, “Do your thing and update Nines on the shit you told me on the phone, and I’ll talk to Hank.”

Connor nodded as he walked over to the shelves of the closet with Nines, their hands linking together as they deactivated and peeled back their human skin to interface with one another.

“Alright Hank,” Gavin moved closer to the older Lieutenant, “what’d you find?”

Hank turned around, grabbing a small blue jar with ‘Windex’ written crudely onto it in black
permanent marker. He held it up in front of Gavin, ready to explain, but Gavin interrupted with a snort.

“So you called me and Nines in this dirty, cob-web-infested, shitty storage closet to show me your Windex, Hank?”

Hank opened the cap as he sneered at Gavin. “Stop being a wise-ass for a second and smell it.”

Gavin fought hard not to roll his eyes, but he leaned his face against the opened jar and took a deep whiff of whatever was in there. It sure as hell wasn’t Windex.

He recoiled, holding a hand to his nose as he frowned at the jar. “The fuck is it?”

Hank smirked at him, “It’s Aconite.”

Gavin sighed, “Hank, I flunked Chemistry.”

“Aconite is a powerful drug and is another great method for knocking a grown adult out cold and killing them,” he explained softly, as if fearful someone was already listening in on them.

“It leaves Aconitum alkaloids, but these can only be detected by a gas chromatography or mass spectrometry. Death usually results from paralysis of the respiratory system or cardiac arrest. What’s useful about this poison is it can be absorbed through the skin or consumed, and only takes 2mgs of pure aconite to kill a person.”

Gavin gaped at him, “Can it be detected? I mean, shouldn’t the autopsy reports have told us somethin’ already about this shit?”

Hank shook his head, “This method is fairly undetectable as long as there is no cause for an in-depth autopsy, and it can be ingested.”

“Fuck.”

Hank nodded in agreement, “Found at least another jar full of this shit, clearly disguised and meant to appear like an innocent cleaning product.”

Gavin motioned upwards towards the jar with a hand, eyebrows raised in confidence, “Alright, so we can easily start lookin’ into the sanitation employees who were previously employed here as potential persons of interest, right?”

Hank rolled his eyes, “I highly doubt someone cleaning here would run around spraying the guests with a jar of poison, Reed.”

Gavin felt his cheeks turning pink, and he mumbled under his breath as Connor and Nines joined them again after their information sharing session.

“I think it wouldn’t hurt to look into whoever worked here before, though,” Connor stated, clearly having focused on their conversation, while also interfacing and sharing with Nines.

Gavin smiled, “I agree.”

Hank didn’t seem happy with it, but he shrugged and sighed. “Fine, I’ll get started on that, but we gotta start thinkin’ about a motive, guys…”

“Who cares?! It’s obviously some twisted, sick fuck who goes around poisoning and drugging people!” Gavin shot it down, weaving a hand through his dark hair as he shook his head.
Nines wasn’t so quick to give up on it, and he took a step towards Hank. “We still don’t know how the perpetrator got close enough to the androids to attack and murder them,” he looked at everyone in the small closet for a brief pause before continuing, “after all, androids are incapable of being drugged…”

Connor nodded as he gently took the jar from Hank’s hands and set it down behind them. “He’s right, I could try to linger around more, see if I happen to overhear any of the guests or other employees here talking.”

Gavin snorted, “You think spyin’ on them will work?”

Connor tilted his head at him, expression neutral. “Sometimes people say interesting things when they think they’re alone, and that no one’s listening or watching them.”

“You’re one creepy shit, Connor,” Gavin snickered, “I like it!”

Connor beamed as his brown eyes practically glowed. “Hopefully we can learn a thing or two from their conversations, and it’s a good shot so far!”

Hank hummed as he crossed his arms over his chest. “Alright, let’s work with that for now.”

Gavin clapped his hands, happy that their little meeting was over before someone noticed ‘Jack’ and ‘Robert’ were unaccounted for…

“Oh, well, I’m gonna say let’s get the fuck outta here, Nines.” He’d barely touched the doorknob, when Hank placed a hand over his shoulder.

“Hey, hey, hey,” he interrupted, and Gavin spun around with a bored expression plastered on his face.

“…you didn’t tell us how your little ‘sessions’ are going so far.” Hank had an amused and playful grin on his face, while Connor seemed curious by association. He tilted his head curiously at Gavin as he smiled.

Feeling some pressure mounting, Gavin swallowed as he looked up towards Nines for some help. It’d appeared that Nines had somehow read his mind, and he turned towards Hank and Connor with a pained, forced smile that showed off his teeth strangely.

“Everything is somewhat fine,” he began, his LED light red, “however, Gavin’s finding it difficult in particular to blend in lately.”

Gavin snorted, “Fuckin’ knew you’d blame me for that shit, Nines, thanks.”

Hank threw his head back and laughed. “That’s nothing surprising, Nines! Gavin always sticks out like a sore thumb!”

Even Connor seemed to agree as he chuckled.

Gavin wanted to leave the room immediately. But before he did, he gave in to the part of himself that was petty, childish, and moronic at times. He wanted to make a fool out of Nines while he still had a chance, and he smiled as sweetly as he could at Nines.

Nines offered him a confused look, his eyes squinting down at Gavin as he puffed out his chest.

“Nines really shouldn’t be talkin’,” Gavin sighed as he smiled widely at Hank and Connor, “after all,
he’s just bitter because I refused to let him hold my hand on the way here.”

Hank and Gavin laughed even harder at that, Hank trying to silence himself once he realized he’d laughed too loudly, as Connor pressed an index finger over his lips in a mimed warning.

Nines was furious with Gavin; his eyes were practically black with anger, and his lips curled back in a low snarl as he snapped his teeth at Gavin in a bitter reply.

“Well, you were the one wanting me to kiss you in the rain,” a cruel, cold smirk crossed his face as he went on, “…you claimed it is one of your most wonderful fantasies.”

Holy shit-muffins on a monkey’s nipple…

Hank turned around, pressing his face against one of the walls of the closet, while his hands gripped a dark, metal shelf tightly. His shoulders and back were shaking as he heaved and coughed in laughter. Connor stared with a shocked expression all over his face; his eyes blown out widely, his LED light red, as if fixated on what Nines had said.

“Stop imagining that shit actually happening, Connor!” Gavin snapped at Connor as he turned around and willed himself not to punch the hard door like he had the punching bag in the gym.

Gavin felt his face on fire. He had to leave, this time for good. He didn’t look at any of them as he slapped a hand over the door. It stung his skin, but the feeling physically was no match at all for how much he stung and burned inside. He literally felt as if every part of his body was under a microscope, and he was naked and exposed for the entire world. He felt he had nowhere to hide, and nowhere to retreat to, and that fucking sucked.

Looking directly at the door, he spat out, “Kiss my ass, Nines.”

Nines retorted all too quickly, “It’d be my pleasure, Gavin.”

He was growling all the way up to the second floor as he waited for their 4:30 PM appointment. Gavin couldn’t believe he was actually looking forward to it, too.

Jose’s office was tiny and cramped. Being inside it made Gavin feel nervous, anxious, and as if he'd been under scrutiny the moment he and Nines had sat down on the chairs across from Jose’s desk. The walls in the room were painted a soft purple color that really bothered Gavin’s eyes, and he really had to make an effort not to focus on those damn walls.

Jose’s desk held a variety of weird items: Photographs of animals Gavin was certain he didn't own, a tiny bird cage in one corner of the desk, a few colorful, scented candles, plenty of stress balls, a package of tic tacs, incense that was still burning and making Gavin’s eyes water, as well as collection of jewelry Jose currently wasn’t wearing.

The pride flag was hoisted high on one wall of the room, which Gavin could have expected, but he didn’t expect the room to look more like a bedroom, with plenty of personal items and things that someone should keep hidden away from ‘guests’. These things consisted of a package of condoms that were unopened on the edge of the desk, a few magazines on the topic of homosexual sex, a copy of the karma sutra, as well as odd articles of clothing and undergarments piled in an odd messy corner slightly to the left of the desk.

Gavin couldn't understand how Jose was a counselor and registered therapist when his office was one of the most unprofessional areas and scenes Gavin had ever seen in his entire life. Sure, he
wouldn't deny that he'd seen some strange things in his time as a detective, but this office alone made him more suspicious and fed up with Jose more than anything else. Gavin just wanted to exit the office without even looking at Jose ever again.

He wondered if Nines was as troubled and disturbed by the contents of the office as he was, but it didn't seem like it as the android merely sat by him stiffly and coldly as if he were a statue or part of the furniture within the room.

Soon, Jose made himself comfortable on his chair behind his desk with a laptop placed on his lap, open with a bright blue furry and feathery cover on the lid of it. Before Gavin could make his judgments based on the laptop cover, Jose’s eyes were on him for a moment before passing over to look at Nines.

Jose didn’t seem overly pleased with Gavin especially, but he held his nose high in the air like the prideful bastard he was as he clasped his hands together in his lap, the laptop still open. The glow of the screen reflecting on Jose’s face made him seem menacing, even though his hair was messy as it stuck out in every angle possible, and the puppy dog tank top he was wearing wasn’t anything Gavin could take seriously. Again, he had to wonder how it was that this…man was skilled in psychology.

Jose wagged a finger at Gavin. “Looks like someone didn’t really do their homework.”

Gavin sighed, knowing Jose had no doubt looked through the email he’d sent him regarding two plans for his ‘future’ with Nines, and how they would achieve those goals/plans to be closer as a couple. This was already a huge fucking waste of time, but Gavin couldn’t say that as he just shrugged impatiently at Jose.

“Well I didn’t have a lot of time to really sit and think about it.”

Jose tsked with his tongue clicking against his teeth a few times while shaking his head. “You had all weekend to complete this assignment, Jack,” he stared at Nines, “there’s literally no excuse.”

You’re an excuse for a man, but you don’t hear me complaining!

Gavin’s crude thoughts were interrupted by a dramatic sigh from Jose.

“Look, I don’t know how you can expect me to help you guys when you’re not even willing to work together or listen to each other.” Jose seemed bored as he stared down at his laptop, moving his fingers along the screen, reading something else.

Gavin couldn't help but feel a little bit offended by this statement. “What’d you mean?”

Jose sighed wearily, looking jaded as he spoke in a judgmental manner. “In case you guys already didn't figure it out, you were supposed to work on this assignment together,” his blue eyes seemed to move around the room, as if he had a short attention span all of a sudden.

“I mean, that was the whole point of the topic of this session.”

Gavin frowned, his patience already gone. “Alright Point-Dexter, next time we won't repeat that mistake.”

Jose glared at him as Nines shifted in his seat.

“Jack sometimes tries to avoid certain things that make him feel uncomfortable,” he smiled at Gavin. “He really can't help his nature.”
Jose shook his head, “If I were you, Robert, I wouldn’t be making all kinds of excuses for my partner.”

Gavin blew a small raspberry, but Jose ignored it as his eyes landed back on his laptop screen.

“Now let's try to move on to what you said were your plans with Jack…”

Gavin couldn’t help the amount of curiosity flooding his body, and he was all eyes and ears as he waited to hear Jose read or discuss what Nines had written in his email about them…

“In the foreseeable future, I would like to try and communicate with Jack more openly, building up a stronger sense of trust between us, as well as not feeling held back by Jack’s opinions and judgments so I can freely disclose anything I’m feeling with him…” Jose smiled lightly before continuing on with the second plan.

“I would like to also try and work on creating more pride and admiration regarding our relationship, so we don't have to hide anything when we’re with our friends.”

Gavin could hardly believe that Nines had put the words together to write such a thing about a fake relationship going on between the two of them. It felt so...real all of a sudden, and he had to place a hand over his mouth in a tight fist, fearful of just running his mouth without thinking first. There were far too many confusing emotions running through his body and heart for him to be able to catch up with and comprehend in a proper manner. It'd be a lot easier to just avoid it all. He settled for that as he waited for Jose’s assessment.

“You want me to tell you what I'm honestly seeing right now?” Jose asked, shoving the laptop further along down his knees, but not off his lap as he stared at Gavin intensely.

*No, I really fuckin’ don’t wanna hear anythin’ you have to say.*

Jose didn’t wait for a response. “I see one partner who’s so much more invested in this relationship, while the other partner is just tagging along for the ride.”

Gavin felt his blood pounding in his veins as his head throbbed. This asshole…when did he get so fucking high and mighty??!

“Well that might be what you see, but it works for Robert and me, so there’s nothin’ I can personally add.” He couldn’t keep the bitterness out of his voice.

Jose snickered sarcastically, “Oh yeah? What makes you think that this is working?”

Gavin rolled his eyes, “Considering the fact that we're together, I'd say the relationship is working just fine, thank you very much.”

Jose disagreed immediately, hardly allowing Nines time to add something in.

“Jack, I saw no indication that you wanted to take your relationship more seriously with Robert.”

Gavin gaped at him, jaw opening and closing as he was at a loss for words. This was ridiculous. Playing Devil's Advocate, Gavin understood that Jose was merely trying to do his 'job' as a counsellor/therapist, but Gavin and Nines didn't need therapy! They weren't together, they never would be, and Gavin knew there was only so much of a 'history' he could fake until he wasn't able to play Happy-Gay-Families anymore.

Finally, he glared angrily. “Well what the hell do you want me to say? That I'm just ready to get
down on my knees and propose to Robert?”

Jose shrugged, “At least Chrissie and Michelle take their relationship more seriously than you do.”

*What a judgmental prick,* Gavin thought. This jackass was merely going off what he was hearing for a brief moment without having the whole story before him. Gavin wasn’t surprised though, he expected shit like this coming from any psychotherapist however; they all thought they knew everything about everyone on the planet, they had the most pretentious attitudes ever, and they were always trying to fix everything when there was nothing to be fixed in the first place. This was exactly the reason why Gavin thought that psychology and psychiatry was an outdated, stupid thing to participate in, and he wondered why he’d let Captain Fowler shove him in this shit as he frowned and pouted angrily.

Jose turned and smiled sympathetically at Nines. “I admire you for sticking with Jack and putting up with him, Robert,” he heard a snort coming from Gavin, but ignored it. “If I can be blunt, I wouldn’t have the patience to be involved with someone like him.”

Nines only offered him a smile of his own. “I won’t deny that Jack has a wide variety of flaws and shortcomings, but I personally feel that they add color and spice to our relationship.”

Gavin slowly turned his neck to gaze in awe and amazement at Nines while he spoke directly to Jose.

“They say that arguments and bickering are the salt and pepper of life, and I wouldn’t dream of having Jack change who he is anytime soon.”

Gavin felt his heart fluttering in his chest, and he shook his head as he closed his eyes.

*It’s part of the act, Gavin, it’s just a part of the fuckin’ act! Don’t take it seriously!!*

He hoped no one would notice how flustered he was as he felt himself blushing the longer he thought about what Nines had told Jose. Eventually, his heartbeat slowed down, and he was able to calm himself as he heard Jose typing something on his laptop quickly.

“What’re you doing?” he asked the counsellor as he felt Nines staring at him.

Jose held up an index finger for a moment, indicating that he wanted Gavin to shut up as he typed a little longer and then set his hands down to rest on the armrests of the chair.

“I was just taking some notes down.”

That made Gavin feel a little nervous and anxious, and he stared over at Nines, his eyes bearing guilt and gratitude for Nines having saved his ass back there a moment ago. Nines look back at him blankly, but a loving smile replaced the blank look when Jose studied them both.

“In order for any relationship to be successful and to progress,” he began as he explained calmly and patiently, “there has to be a mutual understanding and a willingness to move forward together as a single unit.”

He held a hand up as he spun slightly back and forth in his chair, “Think of it like an exotic dance; if your partner takes a step, you have to move along with them carefully and gracefully like you know the song and dance like the back of your hand.”

It was an interesting analogy indeed, and Gavin felt like the advice dispensed was kind of childish and immature, but he knew that there was a wisdom behind the words spoken at them. He nodded as
he took in everything Jose had to say carefully, while Nines smiled appreciatively at the therapist.

“Do you two live together?” Jose asked, looking down at his laptop and typing up some notes yet again.

Shit.

Gavin hadn’t anticipated that question, but Nines apparently must’ve. He brushed his dark jeans with both hands calmly and smoothly as he smiled warmly at Jose.

“We’re trying to buy a house together, actually.”

Jose nodded, still typing. “Oh nice,” he coughed as he typed on, “…you should hurry and pick one while the real estate market’s doing pretty well for now.”

Nines nodded back, “We’ll try.”

More serious typing sounded within the small office, and Gavin was busy studying Nines’s features intently while the android looked out of the office windows behind Jose’s head. Gavin was beginning to wonder whether or not he had misjudged or underestimated how effective and efficient Nines was when he was on a case. He had the ability to think fast on his feet, and it seemed like anything he made up really fit the bill as they posed as a romantic couple...not only had Nines been able to convince Jose of their little act, but he'd also been able to in a way 'support' Gavin...as if they were...

Jose coughed again, interrupting Gavin from his inner musing.

Gavin knew he was starting to question many things regarding Nines lately, but he pushed those questions to the back of his mind once he heard Jose cease typing.

Jose clapped his hands loudly together, the rings on his fingers clinking together roughly. “M’kay, this is a good start, and I’ll let you guys go after you both promise me one thing…”

Oh dandy.

Gavin bit down on his tongue as he nodded. Nines warmly smiled. “We promise.”

Jose scratched his nose, “I want you guys to start talking to each other a lot more from now on,” he closed the laptop lid carefully, “Stephie and I have both noticed that you two are the most distant couple we’ve ever had in the last few seasons of running the program.”

Gavin wanted to smash his head repeatedly against the desk.

“You'd be amazed at how much of a distance a lack of communication creates between couples. You can start by taking it slowly; even sitting together during group sessions whenever allowed is better than completely avoiding each other. You guys need to start getting in each other's personal space again in a positive fashion!”

Gavin resisted the urge to argue, and he knew it would be senseless as Jose rose from his chair and was already opening the door to kick them out of his office.

Nines gently stood, looking down at Gavin. His LED light flashed yellow as he smiled a small half-smile at the angry man still seated on the chair. “Let’s go, darling.”

Gavin wanted to murder someone.
He practically flew out of his chair, brushing past Nines and Jose. He didn’t look at either of them once as he made his way down the hall while trying to avoid reflecting on his ‘feelings’.

He knew very well how therapists worked, and how easy it was for them to get under someone’s skin. Gavin Reed absolutely refused to let Jose get under his skin. He knew of the games that psychology played with, and he considered himself better and stronger than any weak-minded person who felt that therapy was the best God-sent gift for them.

It was still raining heavily when he'd exited the building and made his way towards their cabin for the rest of the afternoon.

Someone had messed with the schedule and the timetable. It absolutely had to be some form of a sick prank someone was pulling on them, otherwise, there would be no other explanation for why they still had a group therapy session at 6 PM in the evening. But here they were, sitting in a small circle, uncomfortable as ever, much like they had been during their first group session.

They were on the first floor of the mansion, in room 109. The rain had stopped for the evening, but the room was still cold as the air conditioning was set at a low temperature. Jose and Stephie instructed all the couples to sit right beside each other, as the activity planned for the evening involved them communicating and being directly involved with each other…

Gavin couldn’t help but wonder if Jose had come up with that idea for an activity due to his inadequacy and closed-off attitude regarding his relationship goals with Nines earlier in the day. There would be no way to tell for certain, but he wouldn't put it past the psychotherapist with the sadistic streak to do something as lowly and childish as that. It was a petty move either way at getting revenge.

He had to leave it at that, watching as Stephie and Jose whispered back and forth at each other while sitting on top of the long, plastic desk in the front of the room. Behind them on the wall was a flowchart they’d tacked onto a blackboard, and Stephie had written on the white paper of the flowchart in green in on one side, and Jose had written on the other side in black marker.

The flowchart was divided evenly, with the words: Positive and Negative on either side.

Once everyone had quieted down, Jose tapped his black marker on the blackboard. “Alright guys, the activity today is going to hopefully channel both the positive and negative feelings and emotions everyone holds towards their partner,” he explained, watching carefully as every group member seemed more uptight and nervous as they listened.

His sadistic streak was evident as he smirked. ”But rather than focusing on the negative only, we’re going to try and draw out the positive and seek a healthy balance!”

Stephie nodded, her blonde, wavy hair held back by a large hair clip, half-up, half-down. Her legs swung in the air a few times as she excitedly waved her hands and spoke.

“Everyone is going to turn their chairs around so they’re directly facing their partner, and we’re going to just look at each other in this position for a while until Jose and I give you further instructions!”

No one moved.

Jose frowned and tapped the marker impatiently on the board. “Come on! Turn your chairs around, now!”
At once, chair legs began scraping along the tiled floor as everyone reluctantly turned and sat directly across their partner.

Stephie clapped and giggled, “Okay! Wonderful! Now, we’re just going to focus only on our partner, and we’re going to ignore the fact that we’re in this room.”

This was pointless. Gavin knew that they were trying some weird, body-mind-space-thing that was supposed to help them remove themselves from their immediate physical environment, instead focusing more on the emotional and psychological atmosphere and environment that was wrapped around each couple in the room.

It was supposed to be a form of isolation and segregation reserved only for each couple to draw and pay attention only onto themselves as they observed and analyzed each other, but also at the same time leave themselves open to analysis and observation from the creepy therapists sat at the front of the room.

What a tangled web psychologists weaved, Gavin thought.

Stephie cheered as she bounced up and down on the table. “Great! Now I want you guys to pretend you’re not in this room right now as you look at your partner…”

Gavin rolled his eyes as he took a brief glance at Nines across from him. They were seated so closely that their knees were slightly rubbing against each other, and Gavin fought the urge to move his chair back just a little, so he could create a small space between their bodies. He didn’t want to admit it, but he was still annoyed with Nines.

Nines offered him a neutral expression, not even his blue LED light giving his emotions away as he flickered his eyes over Gavin’s features. It made Gavin slightly uncomfortable, but he knew this was exactly the purpose of the activity; they were meant to be sitting here, interfering and invading in each other’s personal space, so that the worst could be drawn out of them all.

Jose placed the end of his marker between his teeth, biting down onto it as he gazed around the room at the paired off couples. “Good, don’t even focus on the sound of my voice; just feel the floors beneath your feet, and know that you and your partner are the only two people left in the world…”

Gavin stared intently at Nines, their eyes directly at level with each other. Neither of them blinked as they stared and stared and stared…

“Think only about how your partner feels sitting across from you…what thoughts they may have of you…”

Gavin didn’t want to know, frankly. He was for sure curious, he wouldn’t deny or doubt that, and he figured Nines probably thought he was some pathetic, washed-up detective past his prime as he studied him closely. The thought of it bothered Gavin, but he was shocked to find himself holding onto some hope that Nines didn’t really think he was washed-up…

Stephie cheered, “Okay guys! Now, Jose and I would like for each of you to look and speak directly to your partner, but we’re going to go around the room and give everyone a chance to tell their partner one thing they don’t like about them, and one good thing they really like about their partner.”

Gavin groaned and stuck up a hand to speak. “Do we have to do this?”

Clearly irritated by Gavin’s stubbornness, Jose sighed wildly, while Stephie flashed a bright smile at him.
“It’s okay to feel awkward about this, Jack.” Her comments as usual never seemed to do anyone any good, or help the situation.

Gavin shook his head as he dropped his hand at his side. “No, it’s not that I feel awkward about it,” he tried explaining himself, but lost concentration when Jose snickered. Gavin frowned as he continued, “I just think this is highly unproductive because it’s only gonna bring out the worst in everyone.”

Stephie stopped smiling, and her round, doe-eyes seemed troubled as she stared at Gavin in confusion. “I don’t understand why you feel that way, Jack.”

Gavin placed his hands together, palms pressing against palms as he explained it to her delicately. “We’re only gonna piss each other off if we’re nitpicking at each other’s flaws, come on!”

Jose played with the marker, tossing it back and forth from hand to hand. “That’s the point,” he looked beyond annoyed with Gavin. “Conflict isn’t always unhealthy, as it can help people reach better and higher places within themselves, and each other.”

Stephie nodded in agreement. “We have to raise the bar high, Jack, but that was a good thought to add to the group.”

Gavin waved his hands, giving up. It’d be useless to argue with both the air-headed therapists who only believed in the unadulterated bullshit they were spewing.

Jose pointed over at Chrissie and Michelle, who weren’t too far away from Gavin and Nines. “Let’s start with you lovely ladies,” he smirked at them, an eyebrow raised high, “I feel some tension still between you two, and I think it could benefit the group to hear what you have to say to each other.”

Michelle crossed her chubby arms over her chest as she glared at her android fiancé. “So one positive and one negative?”

Jose nodded, “Correct.”

“Does it have to be only one negative thing?”

A few people snickered, but Jose tapped his marker on the board angrily.

Michelle sighed, “Alright,” she looked at Chrissie, who was probably conducting a bio-scan or something, as her nose turned up and she sneered at her fiancé.

“One positive thing about you is that you have a great body…”

Chrissie shook her head in disbelief, “You’re so superficial.”

Michelle ignored her as she continued, “And one negative thing about you, is you don’t trust me.”

Chrissie gasped, “I do too!”

“You always think I’m cheating on you!” Michelle retorted back.

When there was a slight pause, Gavin held up a hand as he smirked sarcastically over at Jose. “See?”

Jose threw him a nasty glare, “Alright ladies, time to switch it up: Chrissie, tell Michelle a positive and negative, now.”
Chrissie seemed like she didn’t want to as she kicked her feet at the floor a few times before frowning up at her fiancé. “A negative-”

Michelle laughed, “Of course you’d start with a negative.”

“A NEGATIVE!” Chrissie suddenly yelled, which made everyone in the room jump a bit, “…a negative is that you seem to be unsure about commitment to me!”

Michelle wanted to argue, but Chrissie quickly spat out: “And a positive is that you make me laugh a lot, and we can joke like we’re best friends.”

That shut Michelle up, and she smiled a light smile, though a hurt expression crossed her features anyway as she ran a hand through her short blonde hair. “Thanks…”

Jose looked over at Megan and Silvia next, “That’s a good start, and I think we should now move on to the other ladies now to see what we get.”

Knowing it was their turn, Megan and Silvia smiled at each other, blushing simultaneously.

Gavin snorted, “Can’t we skip ‘em? They’re always lovey-dovey with each other!”

Stephie gasped as her LED light turned red, “Jack! You shouldn’t jump to the conclusion that any couple who gives off the impression that they’re happy with each other never experiences any problems!”

Megan nodded, her LED light also red as her long, straight strawberry blonde hair moved around her shoulders. “That’s right.”

Oh for the love of God…

Silvia scratched at her orange baby dragon tattoo, her short, dyed red hair brushing back as she ran her hands through her hair while glancing uncomfortably at her lover.

Megan offered her a comforting smile, “One positive about you-though you have many more,” that earned her another passionate smile from Silvia immediately, “…is that you look for something to love in anyone…it’s what makes you so loveable…”

A few of the group members ‘awwwwed’ at the lovely display of affection, and Megan sighed a dreamy sigh as she continued.

“And one negative is that you spend a little too much time with your sisters, but it’s okay, I don’t mind.”

Silvia blushed deeper as she spoke next. “One positive thing about you, baby, is that you know exactly how to make me feel good whenever I’m having a bad day, and one negative is that you seem a bit reluctant still to meet most of the members of my family…”

Gavin lost interest as they moved around the room, each couple speaking directly to their partner. He was able to catch some snippets here and there, and he heard Will tell Cameron how he didn’t like that Cameron always wanted to break up with him whenever they were facing an issue he couldn’t deal with, while he appreciated how Cameron easily forgave him.

‘Steve’ felt his android lover was cheating on him, while the younger of the age-gap couple stated he felt that he was too young for his older lover.
It was all basic, mopey stupid shit Gavin wasn’t interested in hearing, and he was busy looking down at his phone sticking out of his jean pockets when he felt a soft pressure at his feet… it was Nines’s foot!

Nines pressed a black flip-flopped foot against his toes, almost tickling him at first. Gavin thought it may have been his imagination getting the better of him, but then he distinctly felt the curved front of Nines’s flip flop poking at his bare foot he’d removed from the tight confines of his sneakers as he rested his bare feet on top of the shoes.

He looked up to see Nines raise a hand over his mouth and cover his lips with his thumb and index fingers, as if he were deeply focused and in thought, but upon a closer look, Gavin could see that Nines had hidden a wide grin that was forming on his face.

What the fuck was he playing at now?!?

Making sure no one was paying attention, Gavin looked down at their feet surreptitiously, a little angry that Nines was doing this now, of all times. It wasn’t as if he actually desired for this kind of attention coming from Nines, but Gavin had to admit, it sure kept his attention, and forced him to stay wide awake as he felt Nines exploring his legs with his feet.

Gavin soon felt the slightly nippy tips of five toes as they moved out of the flip-flip, poking the top of his foot over his dark sneakers, before Nines’s foot directly rested on top of his own.

Nines’s skin was smooth and clear, and Gavin hated how much he was enjoying the feeling of it against his own skin. Nines’s sole gently caressed and rubbed the top of his foot when he rested his large leg very carefully and softly over Gavin’s, but Gavin found he didn’t mind the gentle pressure at all.

Gavin’s ears registered the deep baritone voice that belonged to Max as he freely spoke to Peter. Feeling light-headed, Gavin began getting a little sneaky thrill out of the fact that he was playing footsie with Nines while the session was carrying on.

Trying to be extra cautious about it, Gavin inched his leg a bit closer to Nines’s, and felt Nines’s ankle. The bones he felt there were thick and strong, and Gavin had to admire how Nines was built.

He looked back up to catch Nines smirking and grinning even wider beneath his hand over his mouth, the corners of his lips upturning. Encouraged by this, Gavin moved his leg up along Nines’s, eager to try to find a ticklish spot, though he was certain the android didn’t have any. He was just grateful that Nines had taken him up on his offer to let him borrow his khaki shorts, which left a lot of bare skin for Gavin to explore.

He felt the long length of bone, and Nines’s soft skin more. Gavin almost breathed out loud in a soft gasp. He hadn’t expected someone like Nines to be so warm and soft…was the rest of his body this way, too?

He was so curious, and he had to find out as he let his toes and foot map out the rest of the sensual path he’d taken along the length of Nines’s leg.

Gavin’s foot traveled along the sinew and the muscle of Nines’s calves next, and he moved his foot up a bit more until he could feel Nines’s kneecap. He tried making it less obvious that he was raising his leg in the air, and he turned his hips in the chair, sitting uncomfortably on his side as he continued.

Nines widened his eyes at this, but he didn’t move his leg away from Gavin’s; he let him continue
his exploration.

Gavin felt his eyes partially closing as he imagined looking down and finding Nines’s strong thighs holding his own body up whenever he walked, jogged, and ran. He moved his leg as if it were his hands, upwards slowly and carefully to feel the inside of Nines’s left thigh.

He had no idea what the fuck he was doing, but his breath hitched in his throat when he felt how warm Nines’s thigh was, and he could have sworn he felt his pulse at a particular spot when he moved along a bit further…

Gavin looked up quickly at Nines’s face for any sign or a hint that he should stop, but Nines’s face didn’t betray a single emotion. Gavin felt it was okay to continue, so he did.

He crept his leg and toes up towards the center of Nines’s thigh and felt the heel of his foot touch something hard.

Gavin paused, wondering how Nines had a...no, he couldn’t even think about it! But he wanted to feel it anyway…

Curling his leg forward, he curiously pressed down a bit with his toes on the hardness he’d discovered, causing Nines to suddenly cough and clear his throat loudly.

At the same time, someone must have made a joke, or uttered a statement that was particularly funny or amusing, for the rest of the group members laughed, clapped, and cheered for a few seconds.

It was a good distraction, and Gavin swallowed thickly once he slowly retreated from feeling the obvious hardness between Nines’s legs, and he began feeling his own body responding when his toes burned from the memory of feeling what he had…he chanced taking a glance at Nines.

Gavin wanted to moan out loud when he saw the expression on Nines’s face. Nines now had clasped both hands over his mouth, his elbows hovering in midair, pressed tightly against each other, bone-touching-bone. He kept his eyes on Gavin’s the entire time, his nostrils flaring when his blue eyes caught what looked to be a bead of sweat fell from Gavin’s forehead and down his nose, but he made no move to wipe it off his skin. Gavin didn't move, not even when a few strands of his dark brown hair fell loose and over his forehead.

They’d both taken it too far, and Gavin slipped his foot back inside his sneaker, feeling himself growing harder and harder by the second. Was it colder than usual in the room?!!

The room…

Gavin looked away from Nines suddenly, and he noticed all eyes were on him.

Woah…

Gavin was too embarrassed to say anything, but he wondered whether anyone had actually witnessed the entire thing that had gone down between himself and Nines…

Jose placed both hands on his hips as he sighed dramatically. “Jack! It’s your turn!”

Oh yeah…the group thing…

He looked back up at Nines, barely meeting his eyes, when Nines suddenly had a very cold look upon his face. His words were even more cold as he spoke: “I'll go first.”
Jose didn’t argue; he merely stepped back and waited.

“What I find positive about you, Jack, is that you’re rather strong-willed when it comes to making a decision…you don’t let anyone or anything hold you back,” he didn’t pause as he continued, “but in the same vein, the only person that often holds you back from seeking out what you most yearn for in life, is yourself.”

Everyone froze in place immediately, all eyes widening just barely.

Someone’s watch ticked before Peter said: “Oh snap!”

Feeling his hard-on growing between his legs beneath his jeans, Gavin began shifting uncomfortably in his seat.

Jose raised an eyebrow, “Jack, we’re waiting on you.”

He felt himself growing harder and harder, the sweat running down the back of his neck as his cheeks and body heated up. He stared at Nines’s lower lip, and he caught sight of the tip of a wet, pink tongue darting out and licking the lower lip for a second…

He couldn’t be in the room for another minute. Gavin stood abruptly, his chair pushing and scraping along the fancy tiles, and it fell over loudly as he ran for the front door of the room.

Stephie gasped out at him, while the other group members began whispering and chattering as they looked at Gavin in shock.

“Jack? Where’re you going??” Stephie’s concerned voice hit his ears, but Gavin slammed the door on her as he ran out into the hall.

He didn’t stop running once he was sure he was safe inside their cabin, and he headed for the bathroom, closing and locking the door tightly behind himself.

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter will be partly written in Nines's perspective!! :)
Gavin had cooped himself in the bathroom when Nines had returned from the group session. He scanned the door, noticing that Gavin was leaning against the sink as his body temperature was slightly above normal temperature. Was he running a fever?

Nines knocked on the door to inquire, but Gavin snapped at him that he was just going to brush his teeth and get to bed earlier that night. Despite the need to try to gain more information out of him, Nines decided to respect that wish, and he too sat on his bed as he remained in stasis for the night.

All night, Nines had wondered what he’d done wrong to upset Gavin. Nines wasn’t ignorant to what he’d done in the group therapy session, but his reasoning and rationale behind his actions was that he was mainly trying to give off the impression that he was close with ‘Jack’. Jose had already thrown far too many comments their way that gave off the impression that he was clearly a little suspicious of the nature of their relationship.

Rather than having him poke around and observe them more closely, Nines had felt it would be the best thing to try and be around Gavin as often as he could, the same way he’d stated he would when he promised Jose in his office. It had been something of a difficult ordeal for Nines, which made him feel more inclined and dedicated to the task.
Nines hardly found a challenge he couldn’t meet, and now that he had for the first time in all of his existence, he refused to back down.

He’d observed a few of the male couples who were more comfortable with public displays of affection often caressing each other in unusually intimate manners for some time now. He didn’t want to imitate it at the beginning of the group session, as the thought of it was foreign to him. However, he decided to try and emulate it during the group session when he saw a few wandering eyes on Gavin’s body, where they’d lingered for too long…

Nines was fueled mostly by jealousy—as he felt he was rather close to Gavin now that they were on a case together—but also with the need to blend in more than anything else. Cameron’s words had given him a gentle reminder during the movie night that he hadn’t been as vigilant and consistent with keeping up the image that he was in a romantic relationship with Gavin. He cursed himself for his failure to portray the notion that they were together, and he’d tried to find some… ‘comfort’ and a connection to Gavin the very same night.

He hadn’t meant to embarrass Gavin, and he felt horrible after Gavin had run out of the group therapy session, seemingly angry and disturbed. Nines effectively hid his resentment towards Gavin after the man had fled the room, though he felt his irritation spiking in his system when Will and Cameron had cornered him when the session was over, asking what had happened between himself and Robert.

He’d had to create an excuse, and he told them—as well as Jose and Stephie—that Jack was feeling unwell due to the change in temperature and weather. Nines fabricated a story that Jack had recently spent a lot of time in Switzerland for his job, and his body’s immune system hadn’t had enough time to adjust to the change in temperature when he’d returned to Detroit.

It hadn’t been entirely a lie; Gavin indeed was feeling ‘hot’ and feverish when Nines had conducted a brief bio-scan of him. He’d expected it, given the intimate touching that he’d bestowed upon Gavin. However, Nines hadn’t been expecting his own body to react to it as well…

He was very well aware of human and animal sexuality, but it wasn’t ever the strongest portion of his programming and skills. He held no opinions on it, previously, and after everything that had occurred before his very eyes when he’d first seen the signs of arousal stirring within Gavin, Nines felt himself growing more curious about sexuality. He didn’t wish to ‘experiment’ or ‘explore’ it, as he hadn’t intended to feel curious about Gavin, but Nines wasn’t going to deny that he was growing more interested in learning about Gavin’s body now that he’d seen how easily and wonderfully he’d reacted to their ‘leg game’…

Despite being ‘aroused’ as much as an android could become, Nines felt his bodily reactions dying down and ebbing away when he remembered how angry Gavin seemed when he was leaving the therapy session. It wouldn’t benefit either of them for Nines to voice his burning curiosity regarding sexual exploration now, as he would have preferred it if Gavin was an active participant in that deed. Still, he wished to apologize decently to Gavin the first chance he got, but Gavin had locked himself in the bathroom, and Nines found that he only came out when the rest of the lights in their cabin had been shut off. He’d practically flown across the room and onto his bed, covering himself tightly in his bed sheets a few times, heavily burrowing and cocooning himself within them.

It was the following morning that Nines realized there were no sessions and group meetings for the morning; only a small sports competition for anyone open to join. He opted out of it, choosing to arrange a time to meet with Connor so they could go over their thoughts on the case.

Nines’s LED light was yellow as he telepathically connected to Connor.
“Connor, where are you now?”

It was only a second or two when he felt his system overflowing with a buzz and a vibration as Connor’s reply came.

“Jose was really bossy with me this morning, he told me :‘If you need something extra to do instead of standing around uselessly, you can go ahead and install a new porch for Cabin 2!’”

“So you’re not too far away.”

“No.”

Nines nodded, even though Connor couldn’t see it. “I’ll meet you by the porch while the rest of the people here are busy.”

“Okay, you should hurry, before someone comes back.”

“Let me know if someone shows up, I’m on my way now.”

They disconnected, and Nines stood from the bed. He was curious as to where Gavin had been…he had yet to see him this morning.

Nines surmised that he’d woken up earlier than usual; his bladder probably demanding that he get up before it was his time. It could have led to the detective also desiring to take a quick shower, and as Nines approached the closed bathroom door, he heard the faint sounds of Gavin showering.

Nines didn’t mean to press his hand against the door, but he had, and before he knew it, it pushed open silently. The steam of the shower hit him, and he couldn’t help but follow his curiosity as he peeked in at the cylinder-shaped standing shower.

Nines heard a faint moan, and he soon realized that it wasn’t a moan a human would let out if they were in pain…Nines walked into the bathroom slowly, his vision clearing as he adjusted it to the steam in the bathroom.

It took him a few moments to piece together that due to all the tension (especially in the last therapy session), Gavin had to seek some sort of a release. Androids weren’t necessarily burdened with the same raw, physical needs their bodies beckoned them to seek out, so there was absolutely no reason to be as shocked as he accidentally stumbled in on Gavin masturbating in the shower.

Nines couldn’t make anything out as water splashed against the glass, indicating that Gavin was moving within the stall with some force...his moans turned into soft gasps.

Feeling he wasn’t alone, Gavin stopped, and Nines took a second to notice that the man had frozen next to him behind the milky glass, standing absolutely still.

It was like ice cold water had been poured down his nape when he finally realized what was going on. What he had interrupted…

Gavin stepped away from the shower door, pressing himself into a corner as he roared out at Nines. “The fuck, Nines?!? Get the fuck out!!!”

Nines began stammering, which was something he never had done before. “I-I-I’m sorry!” He was shocked both at his reaction, and Gavin’s mounting anger.

His reaction to everything must have angered Gavin further, and he punched a clenched fist at the
shower door right where Nines’s nose was on the other side. “FUCK OFF! GET OUT, NOW!!”

His brain scrambled for a reaction and his mouth wasn’t much better. “Oh god, I’m… oh shoot, so sorry, I just… I’m going to… just leave…,” he stuttered, gestures awkward, and then fled the room, completely embarrassed and blushing hot all over.

He slammed the door on the way out, running out the back door of the cabin as he forced himself not to think about the wet, naked human body he’d just seen…

True to his word, Connor had been alone while he hammered in a long wooden board into the small landing of the porch of Cabin 2. A bucket of nails rested on the railing above his head, and every once in a while, he would reach into it as he grabbed a fresh nail. A toolbox was sitting behind him as he worked, and it held a bunch of screwdrivers and a drill that Connor would switch back to using every once in a while.

The steady sounds of the hammer repeatedly hitting the nail made Connor unable to really hear Nines as he approached him, eyes flying up and down over the motions of Connor’s arms as he hammered the nails into the wood.

He looked like he’d been working with the tools for decades; handling each of them professionally and cautiously as he could. He was wearing jean shorts that barely came up to the middle of his thighs, and the sight of his pale, bare skin initially shocked Nines as he approached Connor.

Over his chest, Connor was wearing an orange and yellow striped vest, and he had a small baseball cap on his head. His brown work boots moved along the fresh wooden planks and boards effortlessly as he slid his body back and forth along the landing of the porch.

Nines wondered if he should tell Connor about what he’d seen Gavin doing barely half an hour ago, but he abandoned the thought as he cleared his throat when Connor spread his thighs as he tried wedging a wooden plank down between them on the porch floor…

Connor looked up, and he dropped the wooden board as he brushed his gloved hands together a few times and smiled at Nines.

“I’ve got some interesting news, Nines!”

Nines hushed him, “Keep your voice down please, Connor,” he looked around suspiciously, “anyone could be listening.”

Connor whispered, “I’m sure we’re alone!”

“Have you scanned the area?”

Connor grabbed his drill, loudly drilling in a few pieces of the porch as he smiled down at his handiwork. “I have!”

Nines felt slightly irritated, though he was patient to wait while Connor continued drilling. As Nines continued observing Connor, he felt slightly disturbed by the way Connor was dressed; there was far too much of his skin showing, and the shorts were rather…tight. More uneasy feelings hit Nines hard in the chest as he watched how taken Connor was with his work…he was putting in every effort into it, crafting the wooden pieces as if he was making an artistic, complicated puzzle.

“Connor,” Nines began, smiling weakly and uncomfortably when Connor looked up at him with
innocent eyes. “Why are you…” he sighed and shook his head.

“What’s wrong, Nines?” Connor pushed the planks of wood aside with a leg as he turned off the drill.

He couldn’t help but to inquire about Connor’s odd form of dress. “Where did you get these clothes from, Connor?”

Connor chuckled as he ran his gloved fingers along the wooden planks slowly. “Jose gave them to me!”

Nines looked down in discomfort. “You don’t need to do everything they tell you, you know.”

It was a statement he’d meant for Connor to reflect on seriously, but the android only smiled gently as he placed the drill back in the toolbox and bent down, his knees bent as the wooden planks were right between his legs. “I don’t mind, Nines,” Connor picked one of the planks up as he studied it, “…if this will help create some sort of distraction for us all, then I’m willing to keep playing the part.”

He sounded too eager, and Nines had to wonder if the environment surrounding them all was starting to affect Connor as much as it had Gavin and himself…

Nines sighed, not wanting to argue. “Very well, tell me what’s going on.”

Connor sat on the edge of the landing of the porch, his head touching the bottom of the railing, while his feet hung just barely a few inches above the grass as he crossed his arms over his chest. “Hank was right about the murderer not being part of the cleaning crew.”

Nines resisted the urge to sigh again. “I see.”

Connor took off his baseball cap and shook it a few times before readjusting it onto his matted hair. “But it’s still obvious that the perpetrator is an employee at Heaven’s Salvage.”

Again, Nines had already arrived at that conclusion on his own. But he tried being polite and friendly, and he offered Connor what he hoped was a smile of pure gratitude. “Yes Connor, it’s best for us to start considering the staff here directly.”

“We can’t really interview them or search their offices; we don’t have a search warrant.”

The truth stuck out at Nines, who only hummed as he thought about it. Finally coming to a decision of sorts, he looked at the half-renovated porch around Connor. “Let’s stick closely with your initial plan of hearing what the staff and guests say.”

Connor nodded, “Okay!”

Nines shifted as he looked at the tools scattered around Connor, almost like some kind of religious ritual with the way they were practically circling him. “Have you found other clues in the basement where the old wardrobe with the traces of thirium and blood was?”

Connor shook his head, looking frustrated, “Unfortunately not, and Hank’s almost certain that it’s just a red herring more than actually where the murders took place.”

“I think the murderer held the bodies of the victims there, however…” Nines offered, and Connor seemed to agree as he nodded and grabbed a few of his tools.
“More than likely,” he rose to his feet as he gripped the railing of the porch. “I should get back to work; lunch is about to begin, and I’m sure at least a few people will be returning back to their cabins.”

Nines nodded as he already marked his route back along the cabins. He was planning to enter the cabin he shared with Gavin through the back door so he would minimize the risk and likelihood of running into the other guests at the resort when they returned back to their cabins for lunch. However, doing that meant he would have to go through the woods, first…

He really had no desire to venture too deep into the woods alone without either Hank or Connor for protection. Despite the fact that Nines was skilled in physical combat and having the ability to effectively take down multiple opponents at once skillfully, the atmosphere of the woods surrounding the back of the cabins made him worry now that the reality of the murders (especially the ones geared towards the androids) hit him.

Nines was disturbed by images of blood and thirium flowing in his mind, and he silently walked along, entering the small forest. He aimed to stay as close to the edge as possible, weaving his way between the thick trees as the summer sun above bore down on him. He carefully looked at each tree trunk, noticing oddly shaped symbols carved into the tree bark. Nines was certain they didn’t mean anything, but he scanned the environment anyway, hopeful for at least a clue, if not, the satisfaction that no one else was in the forest with him…

He was thinking deeply to himself, and his mind was occupied when a low moaning sound caught his attention.

He froze by the tree he was currently examining and listened carefully. He could barely make out a low grunting sound interspersed with gasps. It sounded like someone was in trouble, perhaps fighting or wrestling with something?

Though it was better to have someone along with him for back up, Nines decided to move forward as boldly as possible.

Nines hurried through the wood line towards the sound, being as silent as possible as he began hoping that whatever he found, he would be able to handle alone.

He stumbled around another large fir, breezing by thick berry bushes and boulders, sliding over them gracefully. When he landed on his feet facing a small clearing, he froze at the sight that met him.

The older male in the human age-gap couple was leaning sideways against a large pine tree, fondling himself over the front of his dark jeans. He grabbed at himself shamelessly for a while as he stared intently at something that was out of Nines’s sight. He was humming and groaning, his body shaking while he began wedging his hand between his legs.

Knowing he had to get out of there fast, Nines started to move back, sure that this was something private he should never have intruded upon when his foot hit a branch. The loud ‘crack!’ caused the older man to whip his head around. Wide, shocked eyes met Nines’s. The android was trying his best to come up with a suitable apology when the older man’s face broke out into a dirty smile.

“Well, well, well…Robert, right? Hope you don't mind.” He pressed a hand between his slightly spread legs as he looked at Nines from top-to-bottom.

Of course he did mind! Any normal person-or android-would!

Unsure where this interaction was headed, Nines began feeling uneasy as he nodded, “I was just…”
The older male interrupted as he pressed a hand against his forehead. “Couldn’t resist, and everyone needs a little side action after being trapped in a dull relationship for so many years…”

Nines backed away another step as he stretched his neck up over the wide, tall bushes and trees, trying to see where he could locate his fastest exit towards the back of their cabin.

The older man wheezed out a breath, “I’m Mitch, though I suppose we haven’t ever been introduced properly.”

Nines didn’t respond, he merely avoided eye contact when he felt the man’s eyes crawling up and down his body. Suddenly, before Nines could process what had happened, a loud ‘zip!’ sound hit his ears. He realized the man had unzipped his jeans. Soon, his penis was out and very erect. Nines looked away quickly, but he’d already caught sight of the older man’s hand wrapped around his front. He moved it harshly up and down, breaths coming out in harsh pants

“Well, come on, grab a seat, enjoy the show,” Mitch told him, hand resuming its movement over his penis.

Nines froze, not sure what he was supposed to do in this instance.

“What show?” he finally asked, curious as to what held the other man’s rapt attention and forced him to conduct himself in such a horrendous manner.

“I always had a fantasy about an android carpenter plowing into the wood of my hard deck…” the words danced lewdly off his tongue and into the air, “…this is pretty damn close,” Mitch told him, nodding to something that Nines still couldn’t see.

Very cautiously, Nines took a step closer and peered around the large tree that had been blocking his view. From his new vantage point, he could see the large mansion. A few androids lazed about on the deck, chatting as their human partners sipped lemonade and tea.

His eyes wandered past them all, over to the large cabin grounds. There, on the front porch of cabin 2, wielding a hammer and a few pieces of wood, was Connor. Connor was trying to finish up the work he’d started, and he was currently listening to music on Hank’s iPod. He bent down to pick up a few new tools from his toolbox as his hips swayed from side-to-side, no doubt in time with the music. As Nines watched in horror, Connor bent down to set the pieces of wood in with the rest he’d already finished assembling, his ass pert in the air, the tight jean shorts making the firm swell of his ass even more obvious.

Mitch hissed as he pleasured himself to the sight.

“Does he know you are watching him?” Nines asked incredulously on behalf of his android friend.

“Hell no. Awww... are you getting jealous?” Mitch asked with a sneer, his salt and pepper colored hair blowing back slightly in the wind.

Nines chose to ignore that absurd question.

“Does your… partner-”

Mitch rolled his eyes, “Caleb.”

Nines nodded, “Does Caleb know you’re watching Alex Radfield?” Nines couldn’t help but ask.

The older male raised an eyebrow as he sighed, “You even know his name? Wow…that’s kinda
hot…are you fucking him?”

Nines almost growled.

Mitch hissed as he slowed his motions down a little and shook, “Does it matter? I mean, Caleb was the one saying in group the other day that I’m too old for him anyway…” he looked at Connor, who was dancing away without a care in the world while he drilled in the last few pieces.

“And besides, a little voyeurism never hurt anyone,” Mitch explained, voice starting to sound wrecked as his hand sped up once more.

Nines placed his hands on the rocks and tree branches as he slowly backed away from Mitch more. “A partner should stay loyal…”

“I’m not afraid of seeking pleasure when I need it most…” he snickered as he looked at Nines with concupiscent eyes, “besides, you getting upset about this is the most ironic shit I’ve ever seen in my life.”

Nines heard more twigs and branches crunch at his feet. “What do you mean by that?” He wasn’t sure why he was asking this pervert this type of a question, but he thought that if he kept him talking, he could get away before he was attacked, or worse…

Mitch grunted, “I’ve seen the way you look at Jack…if a man looked at me in the same way, I’d fuck him so hard that there’d be nothing left but his shoelaces.” He snickered and moaned, almost as if imagining doing that to Connor.

“You're disgusting and vile,” Nines all but spit out, quickly losing his temper with the vulgar man.

Mitch turned to look at him once more. He gave the android a knowing smirk. “I think it’s great that the handyman is almost the same android model as you…that means I have two of you to go around in my mind…”

Nines glared as he spun around, searching for a way out.

“Hmmm…you're a little hellcat. Oh, wait, I get it…you’re getting all hot and bothered and now you're gonna run back to the big man to make you feel better? You're so cute.”

Unable to say anything in response, Nines quickly began making his way back the way he came. As he rounded a corner in the wood line, he heard Mitch call out an expletive, followed by a loud moan.

Nines nearly tripped over his feet as he sped through the woods, but he was grateful as he soon located their cabin.

Truthfully, he couldn’t ever recall feeling more relieved than he did currently….

Gavin was in a horrible mood as he sat on his bed, completely nude beneath the white sheets. His body was still slightly wet, as he didn’t feel he needed to dry himself off in the plus 30 degrees above Celsius weather. He simply sat angrily fuming and pondering what had happened earlier in the day.

Nines had walked in on him jerking off. He didn’t like admitting that even in the privacy of his own mind, but it was true. It had happened, and denying it or trying to forget about it seemed to make it backfire and come back to haunt him with a burning vengeance. It was probably a lot better to just confront Nines about what had happened rather than repressing it in the back of his mind and being
all awkward about it later. Gavin frowned at his own thoughts, realizing that he sounded like Jose or any other therapist out there. He didn't mean to be so demeaning towards himself, but he thought that avoiding the topic like a strong man would have helped, rather than sitting around and talking about his feelings like some silly young girl.

Gavin didn't understand who he was becoming, or what he was feeling anymore. He thought that it was definitely the resort, the entire place, the atmosphere, and the people surrounding him having some sort of strange influence on him. There was just no way on this green earth that Gavin would be having so many conflicting thoughts and characteristic flaws within himself fighting back and forth through a strange battle just randomly on their own for no given reason.

It was so unbecoming and odd, that he could hardly believe it himself as he laughed and looked at his own nude form beneath the bed sheets.

“What the fuck am I doin’?” He thought, laughing bitterly as he felt a gentle, warm breeze sweep in through a few of the open cabin windows and caress his skin, almost as if providing him with the answer he wasn’t looking for and didn’t need.

This was sheer madness, all of it was just insane madness and it was affecting him more than he'd like to admit. Gavin never had been affected by any case or situation he been put on in his entirety at the DPD.

It just had to be the fucking place itself. There was no other explanation for it, as Gavin was certain of his sexuality all 36 years of his life. Never had he doubted himself when he’d been with women in his life, and he knew for a fact that he’d never even thought of another man’s chest-let alone their entire body-as he fooled around majority of his time being single. He just shrugged it off to not having had sex in almost a year and half, and that was probably all it was. He didn’t need a psychotherapist screwing with his brain and instilling plenty of doubts he knew he didn’t have about himself. No sex therapist or psychiatrist on the planet would convince him that he was only recently questioning his sexuality…no fucking way was that happening.

Gavin was just under pressure! It was all just stress, pressure, and the frustration of not having sex while working too hard! That had to be it! It was just a case of Occam's razor here: the simplest solution was always the correct one. Just because the other people here were all ‘out and proud’ didn’t mean he had to be too!

He couldn't understand why this case in particular was getting under his skin as much as it was, but Gavin decided to momentarily forget the subject when he heard heavy footsteps approaching the back door of the cabin. Whoever was approaching sounded like they were running from something quite serious or dangerous…

Gavin scrambled up from the bed, desperately trying to cover his naked body while looking for his clothes, when the back door of the cabin burst open wildly.

In a state of panic, Gavin dropped the bed sheets that had been wrapped around his waist as he tried bending down by the floor to pick up his discarded, clean clothes he’d set out for himself after his shower.

The sheets fell to the floor, rustling softly as Nines slammed the door behind himself.

“Gavin, we have to-” he turned around to face the detective, and his words died in his throat immediately.

Nines’s jaw dropped widely, and he gaped in shock at Gavin standing completely in the buff before
them. Moments of awkward silence traveled between the two of them before Gavin screamed at the
top of his lungs while grabbing his clean clothes from the floor at the same time. Nines pressed his
hands against his eyes tightly, turning around and crying out in remorse. First Mitch, now Gavin?!!
He wasn’t sure he could take it anymore…

“...your problem, asshole? Haven’t you ever heard of knocking?!!?” Gavin shouted at him
as he dressed quickly.

“I didn’t need to see it again!!” Nines cried, still covering his eyes.

“Twice in one day Nines, that’s twice now!!” Gavin reminded him as he fumbled around, practically
tripping and falling over the legs of his jeans as he tried getting his other leg inside the pant legs.

“I KNOW!” Nines yelled in anger, still not turning around.

Gavin finally balanced himself as he placed a hand on his mattress as he picked up his jeans.
“...runnin’ around the back door of the fuckin’ cabin for anyway?”

Nines immediately snapped back at him, “What were you doing sitting around naked on your bed
for?? In broad daylight, too!”

Gavin hissed at him, body tense as he tried getting his leg inside the damn pant leg for the second
time. “It’s none of your fuckin’ business! Can’t a man get some privacy for once?!!?”

“You already had plenty of privacy in the bathroom!” Nines retorted heatedly.

“Bullshit Nines!” Gavin spat at his back, “You just came back to take another peek at my dick!”

Before Nines could toss back another rough answer at Gavin, a loud, shrill feminine scream pierced
through the air. It seemed to be coming from a few cabins away from their own. Gavin and Nines
stared at each other in a knowing manner. The killer was probably striking again!

Knowing they only had a little time window to spring into action, Nines bolted out the back door of
the cabin, leaving it wide open, while Gavin struggled with the leg of his jeans once more. Trying to
hurry so he could catch up with Nines, Gavin stumbled forward while trying to make a break for the
door. Unfortunately, he underestimated the few drops of water that had dripped from his hair and
onto the shiny wooden floors of the cabin. Gavin slipped and fell violently onto his ass while the
screams continued to float above into the air.

It didn’t take him long to catch up to Nines, who had kicked down the front door of cabin number 4,
where the bloodcurdling screams were coming from. Nines as well as a few of the other guests in the
resort had begun to crowd around the doorway of the cabin, concern and fear evident in their faces
and voices.

“What’s going on??” Gavin pushed past them eagerly, his eyes searching around the large cabin.

One more scream hit his ears before he put the pieces together.

Megan was curled in a corner of the cabin’s bedroom as she sat on the bed, hiding behind a pillow as
she pointed up at the rafters above. Standing on the bed next to her was her partner Silvia. Silvia was
holding a broom in one hand while also holding onto a spray bottle in the other.

What the fuck?

“IT’S A BAT!” Megan cried at the crowd that had managed to work their way into her and Silvia’s
bedroom.

Gavin and Nines stared up at the ceiling, and they caught sight of a little grey bat that was sticking tightly onto one of the rafters while Silvia reached as far as she could with the broom, desperately trying to poke it so it would fly out of their cabin.

Gavin felt grumpy, though majority of the reason was because he’d been let down. He’d thought that they’d landed their first break in the case for sure! Oh the disappointments of life…

He sighed as he watched Silvia push back a strand of her short red hair as she leapt up on her tippy toes and swatted at the bat.

“You guys scared the shit out of me!” Gavin grumbled at them both, “I thought someone was being brutally murdered in this fuckin’ room!”

Silvia sprayed repeatedly into the air a few times with the spray bottle. The bat barely moved its head.

“GET IT, SILVIA!!” Megan shrieked as she hid beneath her pillows.

“I’M TRYING!!” Silvia stretched upwards, her black tank top flying up along her stomach while her dark jean skirt was pushed down her waist in the process. It was revealed that she had another tattoo near the bottom of her spine; a little penguin.

Gavin rolled his eyes as he pushed Nines aside and grabbed onto the end of the broom handle in Silvia’s hand.

“I’ll get it.”

The women were happy enough to leave him with the task, and they grabbed each other’s hands as they raced outside their cabin.

Gavin tapped gently on Nines’s shoulder and pointed into the kitchen of the cabin while a few of the couples who had decided to stick around were watching on. “Get me a few dishtowels, Robert.”

Nines glared at Gavin for ordering him around, but he didn’t argue. Searching the kitchen quickly, he walked back towards Gavin as he held in his hands the thickest, longest dishcloth he could find. He stood behind Gavin, gazing up as Gavin gently poked the bat with the broom. It didn’t move at first, but when Gavin slid the broomstick beneath its wings, it suddenly flew upwards into the rafters. It must’ve hit something, for it came crashing down, its wings flailing.

It hit the soft bed, and Gavin grabbed the dishtowels before throwing them onto the bat while he gently got down on the bed with one knee bracing his weight up.

Behind him, the small crowd observing him cheered and clapped.

“G-g-good job-b-b Jack!” Will cried enthusiastically while Cameron winked at him.

Gavin rolled his eyes but did a mock bow while he wrapped the bat carefully in the towel. “Thank you, thank you,” he started off sarcastically as he held the bat gently in both hands.

“…if anyone else needs me to remove anything from their cabins, now would be the best fuckin’ time to say so.”

The android Gavin had called Steve smirked with an evil, playful look beaming in his eyes. “I have a
particularly *large* snake in my bedroom too, Jack…wanna come over and help me *handle* it?"

Gavin glared at him, reading right through the innuendo. “Fuck off, Steve.”

“My name’s still not ‘Steve’.”

Gavin pushed past them all, “Whatever.”

They soon trudged along back to their cabins, a little winded and bored now that the ‘show’ had ended. Nines hung behind Gavin as they strolled towards the same woods that Nines had caught Mitch masturbating in.

Nines felt a little shaken once they entered the woods, but he felt…safe with Gavin by his side. He looked down at the man, almost smiling when he saw Gavin peeking down at the bat in the dishtowel.

“What kind of a bat do you think it is?” Gavin asked as they walked alongside each other. Their boots made scraping sounds as they kicked up some gravel and twigs, and Nines kept his eyes on Gavin while he briefly scanned the bat he was holding.

“It’s a *myotis septentrionalis*.”

Gavin’s head snapped up at Nines, and he stared at him, dumbfounded. “In English, please?”

Nines smiled warmly, “It’s also known as the northern long-eared bat.”

Gavin mirrored Nines’s smile as he looked down at their little winged friend. “Huh, that’s pretty neat…”

“Yes, they’re common in the Northern United States and Southern Canada east of British Columbia. The geographic range includes thirty-seven States.”

Gavin pointed down at the bat, “This little guy?? Wow…”

They reached a clearing in the woods, and Gavin sighed as he set the dishtowel down on some thick grass.

“It’s time we set our little friend off for the night.”

“Indeed.”

Gavin unfolded the ends of the dishtowel carefully, trying not to overwhelm or frighten the little bat while Nines studied him carefully while standing back and folding his hands across his lap.

He was amazed and quite taken by how gentle and tender Gavin was with the bat; it was a complete contrast to how rough and stubborn he usually was whenever Nines had briefly walked past him in the DPD…it seemed almost as if Gavin had been hiding a side of himself from the world for a reason. But why? What made Gavin feel like he had to lock away the bits of himself that obviously cared deeply for things? What must he have experienced to make him grow and change into the man he was today?

Nines didn’t want to intrude on Gavin’s privacy, however, but he made a mental note to ask more about Gavin’s behavior later when they were alone. Though he wasn’t sure whether Gavin would open up about his past, he sensed he was caring enough about the detective to at least have the desire to ask.
Gavin watched as the bat crawled along the dishtowel. “We should give him a name.”

Nines quirked an eyebrow, “What did you have in mind?”

Gavin laughed, “How about ‘Batman’?”

It earned him a warm smile from Nines as his LED light glowed yellow, “I was thinking ‘Orlok’.”

Gavin gasped as he turned around and looked up at Nines with an impressed expression. “You mean like Max Schreck’s character in the movie Nosferatu?”

Nines laughed, “Of course.”

Gavin gasped and laughed in amusement as little Orlok flapped his wings a few times but didn’t fly away yet. “Dude! That’s insane that you’d know that movie!! Holy shit Nines!”

Smiling widely, Nines soon found himself forgetting the traumatic morning and afternoon experiences of the day. He looked up as the sun slowly began to set, and suddenly, Orlok took off into the sky.

Gavin and Nines watched as Orlok circled their heads for a moment, before he disappeared into some thick trees and into the evening sky.

“I’ll miss that little guy…” Gavin turned and began walking back towards their cabin.

He was far too caught up thinking about the little bat that he failed to notice how Nines held out his hands towards him, his fingers practically stretching out for Gavin to take...

Nines looked down at his hands, frowning as his LED light flickered red. What was he doing? What had he been about to do?

His hands shook, and he frowned down at his open palms before looking over at Gavin’s back.

Gavin was still walking towards their cabin, and had he looked back, he definitely would have caught the look of raw emotion that Nines was throwing in his direction as he slowly began following him.

Meanwhile, in an alternate universe: Connor the Handyman! (as the peeping perv sees him, anyway -_- )
Get Your Heart in Trouble

Chapter Notes

*WARNING: Masturbation and a LOT of sexual innuendo!!!!*

If anyone wants to know the name of the song everyone danced to, it's called : Get My Heart In Trouble, and it's performed by Frida Winsth.

I'll post a youtube link here if anyone wants to listen to it! It's catchy!! XD

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ClqDY2BiLrY

In spite of the rather ‘friendly’ moment Gavin had shared with Nines, he couldn’t help but feel that it was only a byproduct of the fact that they’d been paired together for the investigation. Actually, they’d been forced into it. It hurt to look at it through that negative lens, but it was a realistic one that Gavin didn’t want to avoid out of fear of turning into some sort of…no! He didn’t want to even think of the word.

No matter how hard he tried not to think about it, the word still echoed back and forth in his skull, rattling like the menacing, deadly rattle of a bag of bones in a graveyard.

‘Sissy’.

All his life while growing up, Gavin had done everything in his power not to be labelled a ‘sissy’. He’d first learned of the definition of the word when he’d first moved to a new town with his parents, due to his father having to relocate for work. It was Gavin’s first day at a new grade school, and he was starting school in the 5th grade…

Bobby Addams, the school bully, was two years older than him and twice as tall. The minute Gavin had walked outside the school and into the yards for recess, Bobby had targeted him. He’d viciously thrown Gavin into a garbage can, snapping a few photos as he cried. Bobby had pointed at Gavin while shouting: “Sissy! Sissy! Sissy!”

He’d never wanted to relive an experience like that, and most of his life, Gavin had started body-building, exercising, taking up Karate lessons, and choosing to become a detective as a career. He’d done everything in his power to look as masculine and strong in the eyes of anyone who’d come to know him, and Gavin thought he’d been doing a good job until…until…

Why was he even thinking about his feelings like some girl?! He was a MAN! This was beyond stupid! He had to act like a man, otherwise, no one would respect him! People weren’t going to treat him like some princess that needed saving; he only needed to get his act together and buckle up!

Gavin fumed the next day as he avoided Nines, trying to create some distance as he didn’t want to lash out at the android unfairly for issues he was currently facing within himself. The last thing he needed to do was piss off his work ‘partner’ and alienate himself from potential backup, if emergencies occurred. The scare he’d received from Megan and Silvia’s cabin the other day had reminded him how fragile time was…
Gavin knew he hadn’t been as on-guard and effective in his work as he should have been, and it really got on his nerves. He never was this clumsy, and he was always a man who was highly observant of his surroundings. He couldn’t understand how he’d grown so distracted over the last day or so by Nines, but he wasn’t going to continue to let it happen.

He’d decided that it was time for a little ‘space’, but he had to resume being ‘close’ to Nines whenever they were in group.

Fortunately, Jose had come down with a small cold, and he’d had to cancel their Tuesday session. Stephie took over for him for the following two days, and she informed Nines and Gavin that when he was feeling better, Jose would email them and reschedule their session.

Great.

Gavin wouldn’t have it any other way, and he wasn’t looking forward to discussing ‘sexual fantasies’ he’d held for ‘Robert’. No fucking way. He’d rather kill himself!

Gavin had at first assumed that he’d enjoy group with Stephie more than with Jose, as she usually appeared to be more outgoing and friendlier than he was, but the activity she’d currently planned for them on Wednesday afternoon was overkill.

Stephie had moved everyone to the large gym that Gavin had been working out in last week, but all the mats and gym equipment had been removed, except for two long rows of bleachers against one wall.

They’d taken their seats, noticing that some yellow and green tape had been placed on the floors to form ‘X’ marks.

Gavin didn’t feel good about this as Stephie did a quick attendance check before she giggled happily at everyone.

“I’m so excited to introduce our next activity!!”

No one else seemed to be excited as they shifted nervously, wondering why they’d been moved into such a big space without a reason stated or mentioned earlier.

“Has anyone ever taken dancing lessons before?” Her question made the blood run cold in Gavin’s veins. What…

No one put up their hands, and this seemed to elate Stephie. She squealed as she clapped, looking like a little kangaroo as she bounced up and down. “Perfect!! Well group, you’re about to!”

Fuck this shit…

Gavin shook his head as he crossed his arms over his chest defiantly.

Stephie caught this, and she looked down at him, her expression turning confused and hurt as her eyes widened at Gavin. “What’s wrong, Jack?”

Gavin laughed a dry laugh, “Why’re we doin’ this?”

Stephie seemed a little impatient as she blinked quickly while addressing the group before her. “I was trying to keep that a surprise for everyone, but I think it’s time to let the cat out of the bag!” She squealed again as she clapped.
Gavin looked at the far end of the same bleacher he was seated on, and Nines was staring at him. Gavin mouthed: ‘Shoot me now’. Nines only raised an eyebrow in response.

“Every year, Heaven’s Salvage hosts a dance night for one night!”

Big surprise for sure.

Gavin felt his heart sinking into his chest as he felt his mouth turn slightly dry. He’d wanted to ask a particular question about the dance, but it appeared that Cameron was also holding the same question.

He raised a hand as he looked over at William, and then at Stephie once he’d gotten her attention. “Are we going to dance with our partner only?”

Stephie gasped, as if he’d asked her the most outrageous question. “Of course we are, Cameron! It’s a couple’s dance!”

Gavin didn’t look at Nines, but he could feel Nines’s eyes on him. He squirmed uncomfortably on the bleacher as a result.

Suddenly, questions flew forward at Stephie.

“What kind of dancing?”

“Is it ballroom dancing?”

“Can’t we go clubbing instead?”

Stephie hushed them as she walked back and forth between the bleachers, looking down at the group with round eyes. Her eyes were covered in dark makeup and eyeshadow, and she was wearing a long pink dress, and it brushed Peter’s nose when she moved past him. He rubbed his nose a few times as he earned a glare from his husband.

“We won’t be doing anything fancy, my friends,” Stephie explained as she moved past Nines and back to the front of the bleachers again, “…just a small dance, but I think a few introductory lessons may help ease the tension in everyone!”

Stephie placed a hand on her hip, while she played with the long bow on the side of her dress, curling it around a manicured finger as she searched through the group. Everyone seemed to move once her eyes landed on them, and it seemed as if they were purposefully trying to avoid her line of vision from their bodies for some reason...

Gavin caught Nines doing it as well; the android turning to the side once Stephie looked down at him briefly. He met her gaze, a small frown on his face appearing suddenly, and it made Gavin curious as he studied Stephie and then Nines.

It almost seemed as if Nines was angry at Stephie…he was staring at her in an odd way, as if he’d suspected her of mistreating him or someone else, but the look was gone before Gavin could pull up reasons to why Nines would look at the female android that way.

Stephie hummed as she gazed around the group again, “I’m going to need a volunteer to be my dance partner for a few minutes.”

Michelle held up a hand all too quickly. “I’d dance with you any day, sweetpea.” She winked at Stephie, and within a second, a loud SLAP was heard in the gym.
Michelle cradled the cheek that Chrissie had slapped, her hand-print already turning pink on Michelle’s skin. Chrissie was livid, and her LED light was red for a long time as a few of the men sitting close to them snickered and pointed.

Stephie gasped but didn’t say much as she looked for a new dancing partner. Once again, her wide, chocolate brown eyes scanned the group in front of her, and she finally selected her ‘volunteer’. A large, toothy smile was forming on her lips as she clasped her hands together tightly.

Will was staring down at his knees, casually brushing off dirt, animal hairs, as well as bits of loose thread on his black pleated pants. He was busy picking a loose, dark hair strand off his white dress shirt, when Stephie practically sprinted over to him, standing eagerly before him, her hands still clasped firmly together.

Will sensed her presence, and he looked up slowly, squinting at her from behind his thick eyeglasses. “He-he-hello…”

Stephie grinned at him, “Hello!”

Cameron didn’t seem to appreciate how close she was to his partner, and he placed a protective hand on Will’s knee while glaring up at Stephie.

Stephie seemed to already have her mind made up, and she held both hands down, palms extending towards William. This earned her a more heated glare from Cameron, and she turned her eyes on him as she smiled knowingly.

“Cameron, may I please dance with your boyfriend? It’ll only be for demonstration purposes!”

Cameron was about to speak, when Will rubbed the back of Cameron’s hand with his own. He looked at his partner, warmth and empathy radiating from the other side of the thick glasses. “It’s f-f-fine, Cameron,” Will gently stroked Cameron’s skin, “it’s-s-s just f-for th-the c-c-class.”

Feeling a little comforted by his partner, Cameron agreed, removing his hand from beneath Will’s. He slid it back onto his own lap as he watched Stephie practically yank Will away from him and into her own arms.

Stephie moved backwards a few steps as she centered Will and herself in front of the entire group. Will adjusted his glasses quickly with one hand, but Stephie grabbed that same hand and brought it over to her waistline. She placed Will’s hand on her hip, and soon made a grab for his other hand.

Cameron growled possessively, “This better be strictly for the lesson!”

Stephie giggled, and it seemed like she found the idea of making Cameron jealous somehow amusing. Gavin shook his head and rolled his eyes when Stephie said: “I promise nothing else will happen, Cameron, but it’s cute seeing how much you want William by your side!”

Nines also seemed a little disgusted with her actions, and he looked over at Gavin. Their eyes met, and Gavin pointed over at Stephie as she forcefully grabbed Will’s other hand and placed it in the center of her back. Will blushed furiously, and he closed his eyes as he leaned away from Stephie. This made her only inch closer to him as she spun them slowly around.

Stephie clearly noticed Will’s eyes clenched shut, and she smiled. “Relax yourself, William.”

Will shook his head, his black curls bouncing on the top of his head. “I c-c-can’t!”

“Why not?”
“Th-there’s n-n-no m-m-music.”

Stephie giggled, “There will be at the dance, don’t worry William!”

Gavin exhaled, and it seemed pained. If he had to listen to one more giggle from that stupid, cheerful android again, he would go insane.

“The dance will be simple in most cases,” Stephie explained as she and Will turned and swayed from foot-to-foot, their shoes scraping the gym floor lightly, “…and it’s okay if you don’t have any experience with dancing! You can just move your body in time with the music, and your partner’s!”

Silvia bit a black-painted fingernail. “But there’s no music right now…”

Will sputtered suddenly as he nodded in agreement with her comment, “Y-y-yes, and it’s m-m-making me n-n-nervous!”

While sitting stiffly, Cameron nodded with sarcasm dripping from his voice, “I only wonder why you’re nervous.”

Gavin sighed, placing a hand over his cheek while the other was draped on his knee. “Maybe it’s because he’s dancing with a woman?”

A few people laughed, and Nines looked over at Gavin. A hint of a smile was on his lips, and as Gavin turned to sneak a glance at him, Nines turned his head away, expression completely gone.

“Just don’t be afraid of anyone else looking at you or judging you; this is your song and your time with the one you love…” Stephie sighed a dreamy sigh as she looked up at the ceiling while Will sniffled against her chest, practically stuck to her like they were glued together.

They danced for some time like that before Cameron stood from the bleachers. “Okay, so do the rest of us get to actually practice now too?”

Gavin sure as hell hoped not as he gazed over at Nines, who was still avoiding his stares. Nines’s shoulders seemed particularly stiff today, and Gavin wondered how he was feeling as he gazed at the back of his neck…

Stephie let Will go, and the man was all too eager to get back into the arms of his partner. He flung himself at Cameron, who draped his arms around him and held him close to his chest as he kissed the top of his head.

Looking back at the rest of the group, Stephie clapped her hands. “Let’s all try dancing with our partner, now!”

Megan placed a hand on her thigh as she rose from her seat, “But how? There’s no music!”

“Ooooh I can totally solve that issue!” Chrissie ran to where Stephie was standing, and she pulled out from the large purple gym bag she’d arrived with, an iPod and a black Wireless Bluetooth Portable Speaker. She placed it down by Stephie’s feet and turned the music on.

The music was soft and gentle, a guitar playing soothingly as Stephie smiled. She motioned upwards with both her hands. “Everyone up now!”

They all rose reluctantly, stretching as they looked around the gym, unsure of what else she wanted them to do.
Stephie pointed at the yellow and green ‘X’ s on the floor. “Stand on these marks, please, and space yourselves out with your partners!”

Everyone did so, with Will and Cameron remaining in the spot Stephie had previously danced with Will before. Nines and Gavin were last to join together, Gavin’s feet dragging as he placed his hands in his pockets and walked over to Nines. Nines was already standing on a yellow ‘X’, and he stared at Gavin’s face. Gavin turned his head to the side, hands still in his pockets as he stood a few feet away from Nines.

Apparently, Stephie didn’t like the look of it, and she snapped her fingers at them, which caused the other couples to gape at them as well. Gavin suddenly felt like he was in grade school again; entering a classroom late, and having every set of eyes in the room staring at him as if he’d murdered someone.

A woman’s voice soon sang out, the guitar accompanying the lovely notes.

*At night aligns all the shaded features,*

*In all our empty worlds…*

“Robert, Jack! Start dancing!” Stephie didn’t sound like her usual giggly, bubbly self, and she placed her hands on her hips as an impatient look crossed her face.

Gavin was slightly taken back by it, but he turned towards Nines, taking one step towards the tall android.

“Closer than that, Jack,” Stephie warned, “you promised Jose that you would start getting physically closer to Robert, and we’re holding you to that promise!”

Gavin fumed in his mind. *Tell the whole world, why don’t you…*

Gavin grumbled as he pulled his hands out of his pockets, where they simply hung loosely at his sides as he stared at Nines’s feet.

*Behind the scene,*

*They’re picking up the pieces of all broken hearts…*

Gavin thought the song was cheesy, but it soon began growing on him as he shifted his feet so they were directly in line across from Nines’s.

“Look at him, Jack…”

He didn’t want to listen, but Gavin found himself acquiescing to Stephie’s words as his body moved on its own as if being pulled towards Nines by an invisible string…

Gavin watched as his own hands flew up slowly, as if asking for permission from Nines before they rested on Nines’s strong, broad shoulders. He didn’t need permission, and Nines gently held Gavin’s hands in his own as he brought them both up to his own shoulders.

The moment Gavin felt the strong outline of Nines’s shoulders, he took a step closer as he slowly looked up at Nines’s ankles.

*But I believe in coloring the world,*

*Got a heart to be heard in time…*
As the singer’s voice rose in volume, Gavin’s eyes rose up along Nines’s legs…he had wonderful legs, and Gavin was feeling comfortable enough to voice those thoughts. The dark jeans Nines was wearing showed off a perfect thigh gap, and Gavin had to admire it appreciatively, as it was a major turn on for him in women…

Women…

Shit…

*We can fight back, ready to go right back…*

But Nines wasn’t a woman! Gavin’s mind reeled back as his head swam over and over, repeating that fact.

Nines wasn’t a woman, Nines wasn’t a woman, Nines wasn’t a fucking woman!

He didn’t know how many more times he could repeat it until his slow, stupid brain got it, but it apparently wasn’t enough for Gavin’s body and mind as he felt himself swallowing thickly as his tongue felt heavy in his mouth. He was focusing on looking up at Nines’s flat stomach, and he began to wonder what Nines looked like beneath the black, sleeveless jogging shirt he currently had on…

The chorus of the song kicked on as Gavin slowly adjusted his eyes to Nines’s thick, strong arms.

*Until the sky!*

*Till the moon!*

*Making my skyline brand new!*

His blue-grey eyes finally traced Nines’s neck, his jaw, and his chin. Gavin noticed that he was soon doing everything in his power not to focus on setting his eyes on Nines’s lips…

*You oh oh oh oh!*

*You get my heart in trouble…*

He felt Nines slide his hands along the length of his arms, and they grazed past the back of Gavin’s neck as one hand gently rested on his shoulder blade, while the other arm slid down to Gavin’s right hip.

Gavin bit down hard on the inside of his cheeks as he felt the hand at his body light up his skin when Nines touched him. Nines wasn’t actually physically giving off body heat on his own, and Gavin was thankful for that, for if he had his own temperature, Gavin was certain he’d combust right there in front of everyone.

All he could do was allow Nines to take the lead, and he did as he stepped closer to Gavin, and their chests were barely an inch apart from touching…

Gavin choked on a cry as he finally looked at Nines’s lips. They were…perfect…

Not too thick, not too thin, and they made his jaw stand out perfectly. Nines’s face was a fucking work of art. Everything was chiseled perfectly, as if God Himself had created Nines…

Gavin’s eyes traced over Nines’s nose, taking in the sight of some freckles lightly spread on his cheeks before he looked at Nines’s eyelashes.
Make a beat,
Sing a tune,

Giving my life this whole groove!

Gavin was transfixed as he saw the lashes moving up and down, Nines’s eyelids fluttering as he was blinking at Gavin.

Nines’s skin looked so smooth and clean…it was free of scars, pimples, rashes…it made Gavin want to reach out and touch it.

No one else seemed to be around them, despite Gavin’s mind registering that they were in a room full of people. All he could focus on was the android before him…no! The man before him…

Gavin felt the flush of a pressure against his chest, and his brain informed him that Nines’s hand must have slid from the back of his neck down to the center of his back as he pressed Gavin against his body. Their knees and legs clashed, but not in a rough way that Gavin always thought would happen whenever two men got close to each other.

He’d expected rough bones, brittle feelings, a tough body that would immediately repulse him, yet he’d found the complete opposite…

You oh oh oh oh!

You get my heart in trouble…

The hand moved from his waist to his chest, slightly wrinkling Gavin’s shirt as their legs intertwined and their bodies almost became one. What was this feeling?!!

Gavin closed his eyes halfway as he looked up at Nines’s eyebrows, finding that he rather enjoyed how they were set on his brow. The bottom of the loose strand of hair that was always hanging down from the rest of his pristine hair was just hovering slightly above his brow ridge. Gavin wanted to feel it…

We are behold,
How our faith are growing,

And when it would come to life!

He was sure he’d never felt this from a woman in his entire life. He was feeling dizzy and light at the same time, as he felt clearer of this than anything else before. He didn’t feel frightened or ashamed; he felt free and liberated. Gavin was sure this was real…this moment was real, and he could always rely on it as he looked back on it and fondly remembered how Nines was holding him as his warm lips were hovering over his own…

Gavin’s eyes snapped open.

And I believe in coloring the world,

Got a heart to be heard in time…

He was in the large gym of the resort, with Nines’s forehead touching his as the music played softly in the background. Everyone was staring at them, majority of the group members gasping and smiling with pride…
Nines’s upper lip brushed along his very faintly and delicately as his LED light turned yellow…

We can fight back, ready to go right back…

Nines’s lips…

Gavin roared as he took control over his own body, and he shoved Nines as hard as he could in the chest. Nines flew back a few steps, completely taken off-guard by Gavin’s violent outburst. Majority of the other couples had been as well, and they gasped and leapt apart as they watched Nines regain control over his balance while Gavin glared at him, the anger practically rolling off his shoulders.

Gavin heard Stephie storming over towards them, but he didn’t care. He pointed a finger at Nines, his hands shaking violently, “You stay the fuck away from me!”

“Jack! We don’t tolerate physical violence here at Heaven’s Salvage!” Stephie shrieked as she stood between Gavin and Nines when Gavin had tried to swing a fist at Nines’s face.

Cameron ran towards them as well, holding Gavin back by his shoulders as he tried making a dive towards Nines.

“What happened?!?” Stephie cried in shock as she watched Gavin being held back from attacking his partner, who was currently stepping away and heading towards the double-doors of the gym.

She called out after him, “You stay right there, Robert!”

Into the sky, into the moon,

Making my skyline brand new…

People began whispering, and it immediately made Gavin feel more uncomfortable than ever before. He didn’t need their judgements, he didn’t need to be in the same room as them while they talked shit about him. He wasn’t going to subject himself to this humiliation for another second!

You oh oh oh oh!

He shoved past them all, not bothering to listen to Stephie’s cries for him to remain behind as Nines had. He could stay if he wanted. Gavin didn’t give a shit what anyone had to say about him. He was done.

You get my heart in trouble…

[\\\\;\\\\]

This time, Gavin made sure the bathroom door was locked as he turned on the shower and stepped inside it eagerly. He had left the group dance class too quickly, and with all the sweat, the stench of other people in the room around him, and his own anger mounting on his shoulders, he’d decided that a warm shower would help calm his nerves.

Gavin closed his eyes and sighed happily and peacefully when the first spray of the warm water of the standing shower in the bathroom hit his aching body, soothing out any tension he had left over from the last few days. He had no idea why he’d allowed all the frustration within him to get to such a high boiling point, but he was going to take care of himself before even moving on to the rest of the case.

As selfish as it was, Gavin’s mother had always told him to ‘look out for number one’, and it was
good advice he’d meant to follow. Fuck the case, fuck Fowler, fuck the killer, fuck the future.

He opened his eyes and moved his thick brown hair out of them, gathering it behind his ears, his fingertips massaging his scalp and causing some relief for him. If he could, he’d stay in the shower all damn day.

Gavin grabbed the bar of soap resting on the stainless-steel shower shelf and sat down on the shower bench built within in the stall. He carefully lathered his body up and down, watching the water wash the dirt and grime off his body and push it down into the drain below. Gavin wished his misery could also be washed away this easily, too…

More wet hair hung loosely in his face, and he pushed it back. The water was raining down over his nose and cheeks, and some of it pressed over the opening of his nostrils. Breathing with his mouth open, he paused, running a hand over his nose as he gathered the water from around his mouth and nose. He frowned when his fingers slid across the rough scar on his nose he’d had since his early childhood…

He withdrew his hand as if he’d been burned, and he resisted the urge to fling the soap at the walls and break the glass doors of the shower.

He didn’t need the fucking reminder, but it went with him wherever he went. He’d long since buried the memory of how it came to be that the scar got on his nose, but it was still there, like a faint fog in the distance…

Gavin sat for the longest time on the bench before he got up and resumed his showering. He grabbed a bottle of Head and Shoulders for Men but didn’t squeeze any onto his hand.

Maybe it was the decline in action over the years, maybe it was the fact that he hadn’t been in a bar, strip club, or around a woman in a long time, maybe it was because he hadn’t paid the cable and internet bill and wasn’t able to watch his favourite porn channel, but whatever the reason exactly, Gavin looked down to see his thick cock; tumescent, heavy with need and arousal, the tip pressed against his firm abdomen.

Gavin suddenly wished he’d taken Officer Tina Chen up on her offer of starting a fuck buddies relationship with him a few months ago before he was put on this stupid case. She’d been a good, loyal colleague to him for years, and he’d felt that he was starting to develop a crush on her before she started having casual sex with Officer Chris Miller. Gavin didn’t like getting involved in other people’s ‘relationships’, and he tried staying out of the picture when she was around Miller.

Apparently though, he wasn’t nearly enough to satisfy her, and she’d approached Gavin one morning in the Break Room as he was helping himself to some coffee. She’d propositioned him by whispering her desires in his ears seductively…

He’d looked at her with lust, strongly considering taking her up on her offer, but before he could confirm it with her, Miller had walked in the Break Room. The way he’d looked at Tina made Gavin’s stomach turn, and there was something about sharing a woman with another man that completely turned him off. He wouldn’t ever be able to pursue anything with Tina, and he declined her offer as politely as he could within a few minutes.

Disgusted with the notion that Tina and Chris were likely off having multiple amazing orgasms together, Gavin closed his eyes as he tried to urge his needy cock down with the palm of his hand. When that didn’t work, Gavin tried picturing what a younger version of himself would have used to get off.
Two sexy blondes with large tits and dark pink nipples usually did the trick. They would start off rubbing him down and kissing and sucking at his neck and ears before turning their attention on each other, touching and kissing in front of him. He’d always had the fantasy of having a threesome with two hot women while they practically worshipped his body as they writhed beneath him.

Gavin would listen to their slutty little moans and his cock would grow harder by the second as they slid their bodies over his…

Holding onto that thought, Gavin opened the lid of shower gel, slid it generously over his cock, and began a slow and steady pace, hearing the moans and coos in his head and ears.

He wondered if Nines made noises like that when he was in the throes of passion and in a heated moment. No, Nines had a deep voice in comparison to Connor, and he would likely groan lowly as he was stripped naked, one article of clothing at-a-time.

Gavin imagined those dark blue eyes half open, rolled back, head tilted, that long pale neck offered in supplication ready for nibbling, biting, kissing and sucking. Although he was often quiet, Nines would probably be one crazy screamer, and a damn good one, his muscles growing taut as he shivered in pleasure as his nipples would turn hard and a bit red from being bitten and sucked lightly upon.

His voice would soon turn from low, soft moans to higher pitched whines and screams as his body moved up and down on top of a hard cock, his little tight hole taking the entire length in and out, and in and out again and again, until he was a small, shaking, quivering mess of sweat and cum.

But he would also be a major fucking beauty as the dominant one in bed, his powerful thighs and strong hips holding down his lover as he slammed into them repeatedly, never showing signs of exhaustion as he took turns fucking brutally and gently making love…

Gavin wondered what kind of face Nines would make when he came. Would his eyebrows be raised high upon his forehead displaying absolute bliss? Would he clench his eyes shut together, his mouth and lips forming the perfect shape of the word “Oh” as he moaned that word out over and over as he was pounded into?

Would Nines dip his head low and stick his ass up, arching in the air like a dancer on display? Or would he dig his fingernails in the back and hips of his lover as he thrusted one last time inside them?

Would that brown, loose strand be messily thrown over his forehead, covering the top of his eye as he was pulled back up on his knees, having his earlobe nibbled on and his thick cock stroked until he came, sobbing and moaning in Gavin’s strong warm hands?

As soon as he had pictured this final thought, Gavin slammed his left hand on the tiled wall of the shower, and he groaned as he came strong and fast, spurt after spurt, thickly all over the wall and onto the top of his thighs. He didn’t remember having an orgasm this hard and this mind-blowing in years, not even with women…

Gavin caught his breath, and after he had recovered, he felt his heart clenching and beating wildly as if he’d run a fucking marathon and a half.

He felt his heart skip a few beats as reality slammed into his brain at full speed.

He’d just orgasmed to his first-ever-fantasy involving a man…

And he fucking liked it…
Gavin was drying the roots of his hair with a rough white towel when he heard the back door of the cabin open and then close roughly. Thinking it had to have been Nines, Gavin hurriedly dressed in a clean pair of red shorts and threw on a white muscle shirt as he quickly exited the bathroom.

He walked out into the sitting room of the cabin and frowned when he saw Hank Anderson making his way towards the kitchen. He flung open the fridge door and fished out a cold pitcher of water.

Gavin frowned impatiently as he crossed his arms over his chest. “The hell do you think you’re doin’, Hank?”

Hank grabbed a clean mug from an overhead cupboard, and he poured the cold water practically up to the rim of the glass. He didn’t answer Gavin as he threw his head back and gulped down the water like a starving man. Gavin watched and sighed impatiently as Hank finished his drink and set the pitcher down on the counter.

“What does it look like, jackass?” he wiped his lips with the back of a hand, “I’m fucking thirsty!”

“Go get water from Stephie or Jose then!” Gavin hissed with venom as he grabbed the pitcher roughly in both hands and threw it into the fridge.

Hank cocked an eyebrow at him, “Well, I’m here now, and I needed to tell you and Nines something, but I’ll just tell you now and you can pass on the information whenever he gets here.”

Gavin hoped that would never happen, and that Nines had somehow either gotten lost magically, or kidnapped. He didn’t want to see or talk to Nines for a long, long time.

He just nodded at Hank while he waited for him to speak.

Hank turned and pointed at the back door of the cabin, “Is it alright if I come in your back door from now on?”

The implications of that sentence were absolutely horrible. Gavin knew Hank didn’t mean it to sound sexual or perverted, but given the intense orgasm he’d just had not even fifteen minutes ago in the bathroom to a fantasy involving Nines, Gavin couldn’t help but think of more sexually charged thoughts.

He frowned, placing a hand on his forehead as he closed his eyes and forced the images to go away before his body did something embarrassing in front of Hank. He bit his tongue before he tried gathering his words carefully. “Hank, just tell me what the fuck’s goin’ on; I’m tired, and would like to get some rest before Jose gets well and drags me into his office for ‘therapy’.”

Hank nodded, eyebrows set seriously on his forehead, “Okay, but I’ll also tell Connor to enter through the back from now on, too.”

“Anderson, just tell me what the fuck it is you want to say.” Gavin felt his throat tightening as he coughed out the words.

Hank looked at him with mild concern, “What’s wrong with you, Reed? You look kinda out of it…”
“I’m fine! Just…just tell me what you’ve found!”

Hank nodded, “Right, well, you see-”

The back door flew open again, and Nines stumbled in the cabin, slamming the door behind him as he looked back and forth between Hank and Gavin, pausing for a moment before he nodded at Hank. “Lieutenant.”

Hank smiled, while Gavin turned around and placed both his hands on the fridge door to close it, remembering it was still open…

“Hey Nines, I’m glad you’re slipping in and out the back too now!”

Nines practically beamed at him as he said: “Thank you, Lieutenant, I think entering in from behind is always the best.”

Gavin punched the fridge door as he spun around and spat angrily at Hank and Nines.

“Anderson! Nines! Shut the fuck up with that already!!”

Holy fuck…didn’t they understand that they were in a gay resort already?!?! It’s like they were purposefully going out of their way to make this situation more unbearable and more terrifying than it already was!

Or perhaps…perhaps he really was a huge fucking pervert, and he was reading between the lines more than he should’ve been…

Gavin stared at them both remorsefully as he felt himself starting to blush, when the door behind them opened one more time.

“Oh for the love of everything that’s good and holy in this world…”

A drenched Connor nearly slammed into Nines’s back as he ran inside the cabin.

Gavin threw both his hands up in the air. “Doesn’t anyone know how to fuckin’ knock anymore?!?”

Connor gasped as he looked at Gavin with apologetic, wide eyes. “I’m sorry Gavin,” he breathed out remorsefully, “Nines told me to come quickly, and on the way here, I tripped and fell into a small pond, and I’m hot, wet, and sticky from sweating all over!”

Gavin took one look at the soaked, tight clothes Connor was wearing, and he turned and walked back towards the front door of the cabin. “Fuck this, you guys can chat all you want, but I need to go for a long walk off a fuckin’ short pier.” The door slammed behind him, shaking bits of the furniture placed around the small hallway of the cabin.

Hank scoffed as he heard Gavin’s footsteps stomping their way down the front porch of the cabin.

He looked at Nines and Connor with confusion written all over his face. “The fuck’s his problem?”

He’d been walking around the small hilly, grassy areas down below where they’d built their fences last week when Gavin noticed that in his haste to get out of the cabin, he’d forgot to bring his shoes with him. He felt even more pissed off with himself as he tried avoiding sticks, stones, and other items down in the grass that would cut open his feet, or at the very least, give him some sort of an infection if he walked on them.
Still, despite not having shoes, Gavin was relieved to have a break from all the madness he was in the center of. It was a warm evening in comparison to the days of cold rain they’d had, and Gavin wanted to enjoy the weather before it turned on him again.

He was sure he’d seen a wild rabbit as it leapt through the tall blades of grass, and he admired the wild flowers around the field as he walked onward. He eventually found it ended, turning into a small path that wove down towards the side of the mansion. A few cars were parking in the large parking lot, and Gavin sighed as he thought about getting in one of them and driving away.

He didn’t want to just abandon everyone and the case, but the pressure was getting to be far too much for him to handle. He was constantly in strange situations, and he didn’t know how to react to them or handle himself lately. Nothing seemed as crystal clear as it once had been, and Gavin wasn’t ready to face more of the consequences of remaining in the resort any longer.

He’d been weighing the pros and cons of leaving everyone here while a murderer was still on the loose, when he felt a warm tap on his shoulder.

Gavin turned around quickly, his heart beating wildly in his chest. He gave a small sigh of relief when he saw Cameron’s blue LED light and his warm brown eyes facing him.

“Jack? What’re you doing here walking around without your shoes?”

Gavin laughed as he ran a hand through his hair. “I was just trying to feel closer to nature.”

It wasn’t entirely a lie; the grass and flowers actually felt a lot softer on his legs and calves as he brushed past them. The grass blades tickled his ankles as he wove through them, and there was something slightly ‘adventurous’ about carefully looking down and anticipating a little hidden rock or pebble within the thick, green grass…

Gavin didn’t know how to voice his thoughts further, and he just watched as Cameron laughed, though it was a friendly laugh.

“Sorry, I just thought for a second-nah, never mind.”

“What? You can tell me.” Gavin’s voice was low and sincere, and Cameron looked at him as he held a bag in his hands.

“I just…forgive me for intruding, Jack,” he rustled the bag softly as he cradled it beneath one arm, “…but the last time I had to run out of my house without my shoes on was when I told William I was leaving him…”

Ah.

Gavin shook his head as he walked a little closer to Cameron, hoping that he looked calm, despite the mess of emotions he was inside. “No no, it’s nothing like that, I just…I’m sometimes a little absent-minded.”

Cameron nodded, “I guess that’s why you’re lucky you got Robert with you,” he paused when he caught the confused look on Gavin’s face.

“Robert’s your root, right?”

“My what?”

Cameron turned as he began heading towards the direction the cabins were in again. “A root, Stephie
Gavin sighed as he followed Cameron. “It could also be that Stephie’s full of shit.”

Cameron laughed, “Well, most days I think so, but I noticed that most couples tend to balance each other out…”

Gavin felt both his eyebrows quirking up as he considered this. “How so?”

“Look around at any of the couples here. Sure, we may all have our problems with each other, but we all support and balance each other out.” Cameron explained as they let the fireflies and lights of the stars above brighten their way.

“I mean, Chrissie may be paranoid about Michelle always cheating on her, but Michelle is patient, and she constantly reassures her that she’s loyal to her…” he looked down at his feet as he climbed a little rock and jumped off it, “…and then there’s me and William…” he laughed again, as if thinking of a little joke or quip.

“I may seem like I have a harsh exterior, but deep down, I know I have to be both strong and sensitive at the same time, so I can be the best person for William.”

Gavin knew he was right as he thought about and reflected on all the partners. It was true; they all seemed to be total opposites of one another, yet they fit together so well like the Yin and Yang black and white symbol…

Looking at the moon above, Gavin sighed, “Yeah, you’re probably right, Cameron.”

Cameron laughed a little loudly and energetically at this. “See? Now you’re ready for real commitment right there, Jack!”

He didn’t get it, and Cameron laughed even harder.

“When you’re able to say to someone else that they’re right—even though you may not fully think they are—that’s a sign that you’ll do well in a relationship.”

Gavin finally caught the humor behind it, and he laughed as he slapped a hand on Cameron’s back. “You smartass.”

Cameron chuckled a bit more before his expression turned a little serious. “Robert said you were kind of ill after returning from Switzerland…do you feel better now?”

“How?” Gavin was unable to understand the fact that Nines had somehow lied for him, and he felt his heart growing heavy as he studied Cameron’s eyes.

Cameron smiled, “I’ll take that as a ‘no’.”

“I’m fine, Cameron.”

Cameron held up a hand, “Jack, you were about to rip Robert’s head off when we were all dancing…”

Gavin ground his teeth as he remembered the moment as if it had happened a few minutes ago. “I know.”

“I get it.” Cameron didn’t say anything else or ask any further questions as they walked along side-by-side in silence.
Gavin was unable to take it after some time, and he stuck his hands in his short pockets as he stayed in the thicker part of the grass. He hoped bugs and mosquitos wouldn’t feast on his legs as the night began advancing on them.

“So what’re you holdin’ there?” He motioned over with a few fingers at the bag Cameron was carrying.

Cameron looked down at it before smiling up at Gavin. “William sent me back to the car because we forgot to bring the frozen pizza when we were setting up in the cabin.”

Gavin snickered as he peeked at the bag. “I doubt it’s edible now.”

Cameron shrugged, a half-smile on his face. “We’ll make do with something.”

As they walked on, Gavin found himself slightly upset when he saw the lights coming from inside both their cabins not too far away from them. Their walk had ended already? Gavin couldn’t remember the last time he’d really enjoyed conversing with someone this much…

He walked closely behind Cameron as he saw Will’s curly black hair from one of the cabin windows. He was sitting on a futon with his back facing them as he buried his nose in a book.

Cameron walked up the wooden ramp that was connected to the porch of the cabin, and he turned and smiled at Gavin. “Thanks for keeping me company, Jack, I really enjoyed talking to you.”

Gavin smiled and hummed, but as Cameron made his way towards the front door of the cabin, he reached out and gently grabbed the back of one of Cameron’s arms.

“Hey, Cameron! Just a sec, please!”

Cameron turned around, smiling widely as he waited patiently for Gavin to speak.

Gavin wanted to kick himself in the ass. What the fuck was he doing? Twice in less than half a day, he was acting purely out of character, entirely guided by wild impulsivity…this was so unlike him, but he couldn’t keep the burning question out of his mouth for long before the words were already forming themselves.

He looked down bashfully at his dirty feet. “H-how did you know you were…” his voice died down on the last word, but Cameron knew fully well what he’d wanted to ask.

He chuckled deeply. “How’d I know I was gay?”

Gavin nodded quickly as he looked back at the cabin he shared with Nines. He almost expected the android to be standing by the front door, glaring over at him and Cameron.

He heard Cameron shifting the bag of frozen pizza to his opposite hand as he placed a warm hand on Gavin’s left shoulder. “I was able to tell with full confidence when I was out one day with the guys, and we saw a heterosexual couple walking past us,” he eyes fluttered over Gavin’s face as he smiled wider.

“As the guys looked at the woman, they asked me if I thought she was hot,” he firmly pet Gavin’s shoulder a few times.

“W-what did you tell them?” Gavin asked, unable to stop himself from wanting to hear the rest of the story.
He didn’t hear an answer from Cameron, and he looked up, wondering if the question was making Cameron feel uncomfortable. It hadn’t, and Cameron looked at Gavin with sympathy shining in the depths of his eyes.

“I told them while looking at her boyfriend: ‘No, she’s not, but he is.’”

Gavin felt his jaw slightly fall open as his eyes widened, and Cameron removed his hand from his shoulder. He took a few steps backwards, hand on the doorknob of the front door. “We should all definitely have supper together this week. Just let me know what day works best for you, okay?”

He didn’t wait for Gavin to respond. “Goodnight, Jack!”

The door closed softly behind him, and Gavin stood for many minutes, simply staring into their window. He was able to see Will standing up once his lover had returned, and he gently hugged Cameron close as Cameron pressed a soft kiss on Will’s cheek…

Shaking his head, Gavin turned around slowly as he made his way back towards his own cabin.

He didn’t realize it, but he’d held a small smile on his face the entire time as he walked inside.
The moment Stephie had announced they would be having a dancing class, Nines knew he was panicking. Even before the other female android had announced that they would be dancing with their partners, Nines felt his eyes and his entire body being drawn towards Gavin. It was as if an invisible string had tied them together somehow, and someone was pulling Nines closer and closer towards Gavin.

As Stephie had danced awkwardly with William, Nines had taken small, quick glances at Gavin. He saw how uncomfortable Gavin looked while he watched the pair dancing off, and Nines could only hope that Gavin wasn't going to feel as uncomfortable dancing with him as he had been while he watched the couple displaying their dance in front of group.

Nines felt really eager to start dancing with Gavin, though he hid it well the moment Stephie had allowed everyone to stand up and practice their dance while music played on. The moment the music hit his audio receptors, Nines knew it was his undoing. While he had heard music playing in the DPD in the past, it had never affected him as much as it had in the gym. Perhaps it was due to the setting, or the fact that Nines's body was within a close proximity to Gavin’s. Whatever the reason was, Nines could hardly hold back his excitement to hold Gavin to his chest the moment he saw the other couples doing the same thing as they wrapped their limbs around each other in an intimate embrace.

If they were to mimic and emulate the same thing, not only would it help boost their image of playing a romantic couple in the resort, but it would also satiate Nine’s wild curiosity that he felt towards Gavin. It would kill two birds with one stone for the android, and the moment his hands wrapped...
around Gavin's arms, he knew he wanted more. They just fit so well together, like the most perfect puzzle…

They started studying each other strangely as they stood directly across from one another. Nines knew that his curiosity for holding and touching Gavin was extending far beyond professionalism, and to merely go along with the image of being a romantic couple. There was no sense left in denying it, and Nines could only hope that Gavin felt even a little bit of the same feelings towards him as he did towards Gavin.

The music was practically charming and fooling Nines into studying Gavin’s facial features more closely than he’d normally do. Still, Nines did it, and he noticed small signs of attraction and possibly arousal on Gavin’s face? Encouraged by this enormously, Nines felt the need to do what he’d seen Cameron and William doing many, many times….

Kiss him, kiss him. That was the only thought that repeated numerous times throughout Nines’s head. He tried rejecting it at first, but when he thought he could feel the heat practically rising off Gavin’s cheeks and into the air against his own face, he was absolutely certain that Gavin actually wanted a kiss from him.

He'd only done what he was sure Gavin needed him and wanted him to do, but apparently, Nines had been absolutely incorrect at reading Gavin. The moment Nines had brushed his upper lip against Gavin’s in a small, feathery touch, Gavin had reacted in the most unexpected, violent manner.

Nines had foreseen physical violence thrown his way, and as Stephie tried providing him with a shield as she wedged her body between his own and Gavin’s, Nines saw Cameron approaching Gavin from behind. In a strong grip, he’d held on to Gavin’s arms and shoulders tightly as he held him back from beating Nines savagely.

There was nothing else left to say, and Nines only wanted to retreat into their cabin, so he could be alone. He sensed numerous questions bubbling in the minds of the couples surrounding them in the gym. He had no energy for their inquiries, but Stephie had forced him to stay behind.

Gavin however, had stormed off. While Nines was held back in the gym, Stephie had given him quite the intense lecture about consensual touching and kissing between couples. She had explained to him that sometimes, personal space was an absolute must, as it only set up and provided each couple with space and time to recollect their thoughts after troubles or issues were already present in the relationship.

He didn't need the awkward explanation, but Nines tried his best to listen to her as patiently as possible. When he returned to their cabin, Nines wasn't surprised to find that Gavin was still in the same heated, frustrated manner in which he'd left the gym in.

As Connor and Hank had arrived to talk about the case, Nines thought it would only help ease the tension between himself and Gavin. Unfortunately, he'd been incorrect yet again. Gavin had stormed off, and as Connor and Hank updated Nines on the case, the android’s mind was constantly set on Gavin.

Nines felt he was obsessing too much over his partner, and he tried to set it aside and ignore it at first. He assumed his odd behavior was likely due to an odd error suddenly appearing in his program and protocols. Nines ran numerous self-scans and virus checks to see what the flaws and problems were in his system and software. Strangely, he’d been unable to locate any virus or malware in his system, no matter how many times he conducted the self-scans. He was still certain that there had to be some kind of malfunction present, and he’d merely missed it.
That had to have been the real issue, and it was a simple matter of a new error flooding his system with information at an incredible speed. Much the same happened to new deviants, at first, which was what he suspected was going on. He merely had to define it as ‘feeling’ something, but after close to two hours alone thinking and processing everything, Nines felt something was…off about his initial estimate.

He didn’t have some sort of ‘error’, because his feelings and thoughts were only about Gavin specifically…

What was going on???

For once in his existence, Nines was absolutely confused.

This wasn’t a case of arithmetic he could easily draw up a formula for and solve. This wasn’t a puzzle, this wasn’t a case he was dissecting, nor was this a simple task he could analyze. This was the complication of real feelings hitting him all at once. Not a single part of him knew how to solve the algorithms he thought he was feeling. All he could do was feel.

It felt good not to overthink things and just feel them…

As Nines succumbed to the feelings he had, he realized that at the center of them all was still Gavin Reed.

There was no more confusion; Nines was feeling something for Gavin Reed.

He didn’t know how to exactly voice this, but he knew he couldn’t until he was absolutely certain these feelings were because of Gavin and reserved for him. Anything else would be a distraction, especially for the human with a fickle mind.

Nines already knew and sensed that Gavin was ‘confused’ and stressed over a lot of things since early in their second week at Heaven’s Salvage. He didn’t wish to overwhelm the detective, for Nines was already certain of where his own feelings and thoughts were.

As an android, he knew very well that he wasn’t going to be ‘judged’ or socially cast out for holding one set of judgements over another, and he was impartial to sexual orientation anyway. It was only humans who had to label things as: ‘lesbian’, ‘gay’, ‘bisexual’…

For Nines, feelings were feelings, and while he was still relatively new to how they worked their way in his system, he felt more like himself as an individual for the first time since he’d been welcomed as a part of the DPD.

Nines had been onto his seventh scan for the night when Gavin had returned to their cabin. Nines tried to speak to him, but Gavin held up an index finger in a silent warning as he avoided eye contact.

Feeling he didn’t have the energy or the patience to talk right now, Nines could only sit back and resume his self-scan while Gavin tried falling asleep in his own bed.

The last thing Nines was able to see flashing in his eyes before he completed his final scan for the night read: \textcolor{red}{ERROR-Scan unable to be complete}

For once in his entire creation, Nines gave up on a task.

He instead chose to watch Gavin sleeping the entire night, and every time Gavin tossed or turned in his sleep, Nines hoped he wouldn’t wake up and catch him silently staring at his body and face while
Gavin could hardly believe it when they’d received an email from Jose stating two things. Number one was that from now on, Jack and Robert had to keep a journal/diary of their thoughts, interactions, and feelings and bring it to each session they’d had with Jose. Number two was that they were to have the session based on sexual problems they’d experienced as a couple…

Christ.

He’d rather join the rest of the victims snatched away within the resort and buried somewhere beneath the ground than subject himself to this kind of misery and torture.

Unfortunately, things seemed to have taken a dry turn in the investigation, and Hank and Connor had kept to themselves as they tried finding more evidence. It soon began frustrating them all that they’d hit a brick wall, but there wasn’t much they could do as they all tried playing their parts and ‘roles’ within Heaven’s Salvage.

To do anything else to the contrary would only succeed in drawing more attention unto themselves, and Gavin felt himself more on edge as he prepared himself for the ‘sex therapy’ session with Jose.

It was to be conducted on a Wednesday morning as opposed to the previous time they’d signed up for it, but Gavin didn’t care as he sipped his morning coffee around eight A.M. In his impatience, he’d sipped the coffee when it was barely a few minutes in his mug. He’d burnt his tongue, and he cursed and muttered out every expletive under the sun as Nines started getting himself ready for the session.

Gavin felt irritation seep into his bones and skin as he observed the meticulous android setting out the casual clothes he’d selected for the day. They consisted of dark jeans and a black jogging sweater, as the cold weather had decided to pay them all yet another unannounced visit.

Gavin also wore a grey hoodie sweater and dark jeans, hoping it would be enough to keep him warm. He made a mental note to ask Stephie how to turn on the heat inside their cabin, as it seemed to be permanently shut off when he’d tried raising the temperature a little. They weren’t allowed to use the fireplace either, as it was merely for décor and wasn’t a real fireplace to begin with.

It just packed on Gavin’s already-mounting anger, and he knew it would only be a matter of time before he senselessly displaced his frustrations on someone who didn’t have much to do with the reasons for why he was pissed in the first place. Secretly, he’d wanted that person to be Nines, but the android barely gave him anything to work with.

It was as if Nines somehow was aware that Gavin was silently targeting him to lash out at him later, and he purposefully went out of his way to avoid any communication with Gavin because of it.

They hadn’t exchanged many words after their ‘almost-kiss’, and for good reasons, too. When Gavin had returned to their cabin with dirty, mud-covered feet, Nines took one look down at his toes and took in the sight of the few grass blades wedged between Gavin’s digits. It explained volumes, and he didn’t need to pry further, especially when Gavin tossed him a scathingly dark glare and growled: “The fuck you lookin’ at, Nines?”

Choosing to ignore the question that was more of an insult, Nines merely avoided Gavin for the rest of the night.

It suited Gavin just fine as he sat at the kitchen table, his tongue on fire as he finished the rest of his
coffee with a grudge. It seemed as if all the elements were turning against him slowly, and he began to resent everything and everyone around him more.

It was ten to nine in the morning, and Gavin knew they were going to be late when he followed Nines out of their cabin only to see Cameron already approaching their cabin.

The android seemed mildly shocked that Nines and Gavin were out and about so early, but Gavin had to also wonder why Cameron was approaching their cabin at this time in the morning also.

Cameron smiled politely as he greeted them both. “Jack, Robert! Good morning!”

The fog surrounding the cabin made the mood and setting seem anything except a ‘good morning’. Gavin grumbled as he stuffed his hands deep in his pockets as he studied the cabins and open fields behind. The fog was thick and heavy, and it was creeping closer towards them, curling beneath their feet. It seemed like they were near some kind of a witch’s cauldron that was bubbling as it held a deadly brew within it…

Gavin could hardly make out the other cabins as they walked closer towards Cameron. The android’s LED light was a soft blue as his warm brown eyes moved between Nines and Gavin.

“Are you two taking a morning stroll?”

Gavin sighed, “Not exactly, Jose rescheduled our therapy session…”

Nines took over as the trio walked towards the counselling center’s mansion. “It isn’t a session either of us are looking forward to.”

Cameron snickered, “I’ll say! You two have the most uncomfortable topics!”

Gavin felt his stomach flip-flop. “Oh god, you saw the schedule??!”

Cameron didn’t seem too embarrassed about it as he nodded in confirmation. “It’s not the end of the world, Jack,” he kicked around some rocks and gravel, “it’s just therapy!”

Nines hummed, “Patient-therapist confidentiality, I suppose.”

Gavin shook his head, “No! It’s only the fact that it’s sex therapy!” No fucking big deal at all…

“I was thinking about tonight around seven-thirty for supper?”

Gavin did a double-take when he remembered Cameron’s suggestion that they all get together for supper and a chat. Nines didn’t follow, and he gaped over at Gavin almost nervously.

Rolling his eyes, Gavin sighed out: “Don’t worry, honey,” he started sarcastically and drily, “I promised and arranged a get-together with Cameron and Will, it’s nothing to get that excited or flustered over.”

Before Nines could say something in response, Cameron threw his head back and emitted a little laugh. “You two are kinda cute sometimes, you know that?”

They weren’t. They fucking weren’t.

Still, he couldn’t stop the words that spilled out of his mouth like the garble of a young baby trying to imitate the words its parents cooed down at it. “Yeah, I know.”

That’s when Gavin saw Nines’s cheeks turn red, and the android looked down at his feet as his LED
light turned red. Was he uncomfortable, suddenly? If so, good. Fucking phenomenal. It was apt revenge for all the bickering and teasing he’d bestowed upon Gavin. Now, it was his turn to watch Nines squirm. It was a sight he could definitely get used to.

“Seven-thirty’s good, Cameron,” he stated with a little more joy running through his veins as he saw the rooftop of the mansion.

“I’ll set out the barbeque, and I think burgers should be good, right?”

Before Cameron could voice anything, Nines stepped closer to Gavin, a cruel, evil smile upon his lips as his eyes twinkled darkly. “Actually,” he began as he placed a hand over Gavin’s shoulders, “I think Jack really wants a hotdog.” He turned and smirked coldly at Gavin.

Within seconds, Cameron sputtered and doubled over in laughter. Gavin didn’t think it was funny at all, and he glared at Nines while turning around and grabbing his wrist in his hand. He flung Nines’s hand away from his shoulders, as if it were a hot piece of iron that burned through layers of his clothing and skin…and it was as if it had the moment Nines had touched Gavin…

Cameron was practically in tears as he nearly burst apart from the seams while he laughed harder and harder. He was able to calm down once he caught a glance at how angry and livid Gavin was, however, and he cleared his throat as he pounded a clenched fist over his sternum a few times.

“Sorry.”

Gavin was as silent as Nines as they avoided each other’s eyes.

Once they were at the large glass doors leading inside the mansion, Cameron held open the door for them as he saluted them. “Good luck!!”

They’d need it for sure.

Once again, they found themselves at the mercy of the creepy Jose as they sat in the same seats they once were in the first time they were forced inside the man’s office. Much of the items that Gavin had previously seen lying about the desk top were still in the same position, however, things inside the office seemed more unkempt, dirty, and more disorganized than before.

A small pack of cigarettes that were open with two cigarettes lying halfway outside the package sat closer to the edge right beneath Gavin’s nose. Some almonds were scattered across the desk close to the cigarettes, and a few tissues were placed awkwardly near Jose’s lap…

Jose blew his nose with one of them as he tossed the crumpled-up tissue into a waste-bin behind Gavin’s head. The crumpled white tissue ball flew above his head, and he slightly ducked, fearful for the germs and snot touching even the smallest hair strand on his head.

Jose sniffled as he opened up his laptop and stared at the screen. Many uncomfortable minutes ticked by on the clock hanging above their heads on the wall, and just when Gavin was starting to feel a little more at ease inside the tiny, cramped office, the therapist looked up at him as he cleared his throat.

“Sex.”

The word made Gavin shiver as he avoided looking over at Nines beside him. This seemed to provoke something in Jose, and he smirked as he repeated the word again: “Sex.”
Gavin frowned as he held up a hand, “How many more times are you gonna repeat the fuckin’ word??”

Jose raised a pierced eyebrow, “Fucking.”

“Stop!” He felt so disgusted, ashamed, invaded, and wide open before the therapist in the room. His reaction seemed to encourage Jose, and he chuckled lightly as he folded his hands in his lap and sat comfortably back in his chair.

“I want you to think about why these words make you feel uncomfortable, Jack.”

Gavin practically roared, “Oh, I don't know, maybe it's because they're vulgar, rude, and very private!”

Jose held up both hands. “But we are in a private setting, Jack…what's there to be ashamed of?”

Nines seemed particularly rigid as he didn't even stir beside Gavin. Gavin had to admire the android for not even showing so much as a little reaction, the least bit of an emotional stir to let the therapist know that his words indeed had an effect on him. Gavin was almost certain that Nines was feeling just as uncomfortable and distressed as he was, but he still kept up with his calm and collected demeanor and didn't even so much as utter a single word as he patiently waited for the therapist before them to speak.

Jose brushed a few of his ringed-fingers through his brightly multi-colored hair as he appeared proud of himself. “The actions and the definitions of the words I've just used before you depict behaviors that go on and occur between close and intimate couples on a daily basis. And yet, here you two are, feeling so uncomfortable and frightened of the meaning behind these words, as if you've never heard them in your entire lives.”

Gavin glared at him, “Well, I don't exactly have many men repeating the words over and over before my fuckin’ ears on a daily basis either, so a thousand pardons for not getting rock hard upon hearin’ them!”

Jose chose to ignore that comment, and he turned to Nines. “Robert, I want you to think very carefully about why these words may affect you and your partner. Please feel free to tell me the first few thoughts that come to your mind when I say these words. Anything that's freely associated with the words, I want you to describe them to me.”

Gavin sighed as he rolled his eyes and placed the palm of his hand against his forehead. Here was more psychobabble and mumbo-jumbo spoken out loud in less than a few days. ‘Free association’? Please. Was Jose really that stupid to think that his basic Psych 101 courses were going to-

“I feel held back…” Nines spoke softly. It caught Gavin completely by surprise, and he gaped at the android, his words dying down on his own tongue as he shut his mouth, sealing his lips tightly together.

Jose sat up in his chair, taking a sudden interest in what Nines had said. “Go on, Robert, what were you going to say to me about how you are held back?”

Almost nervously and reluctantly, Nines gazed back briefly at Gavin before he faced the therapist and continued. “I…I sometimes feel that Jack is…pushing me away?”

“Go on.”

What the actual hell was happening??!
Gavin’s jaw was frozen shut, and he could only observe and listen as Nines sat closer towards the edge of his seat.

“As much as I care for Jack, and as much as Jack cares for me, I can't help but feel that he isn't as proud as I am of our relationship and its progression.” Nines looked down at his clasped hands resting in his lap while Gavin shook his head judgmentally at Nines. A deep scowl was on his face.

Jose held a hand over his chest as a pitiful expression crossed his face. He looked genuinely sorry and troubled for Nines, and he gasped as he looked remorsefully at the android. “Oh sweetie…”

Nines nodded, “I feel like Jack’s always trying to push me away…”

Jose glared over at Jack, as if Nines had accused him of spousal or domestic abuse. “That's a given! Jack, I heard from Stephie about how you pushed Robert away during the group’s dance lessons a few days ago!”

Oh for cryin’ out loud…

Gavin finally mustered up the energy and courage to speak. “Why's everyone so stuck on that shit?”

Jose gasped, horrified, “Jack! You must set a good example during times of group healing!” he pressed an open palm against his clean-shaven tanned skin as he shook his head. “Majority of the couples here think that there’s already something wrong with them! They don’t need to see violent behavior on full display, else they’ll think even worse about themselves, and they may run the risk of thinking that that’s acceptable behavior in all intimate relationships!!”

Gavin face-palmed. This certainly has turned into quite the shit show he'd never expected, but now that Jose was on Nines’s side, Gavin could only sit back and allow the two men to completely overrun the rest of the therapy session.

Jose hurriedly begin typing up notes on his laptop, probably about their tumultuous and dangerous relationship. Gavin didn’t give a shit; he let the man do as he pleased, shutting his own mouth as he cast a most heated glare at Nines. It promised that he wouldn't forget this session and that he would definitely be questioning Nines about his behavior for it later.


WHAT?!?

Surely he’d Jose incorrectly, right? Gavin wasn't sure what exactly he heard, and he'd merely tossed it off to his tired mind and body not nearly having enough caffeine in his system while the morning was still early. Strangely, he couldn't help but feel absolutely ashamed and partly curious as he thought about mild forms of BDSM, and what he considered rough sex consisted of…

There was something definitely wrong with him. There just had to be if he was having these thoughts.

It wasn't a matter of Gavin not being experimental in bed; it was the simple fact that his mind was thinking of these sexual encounters involving Nines that troubled him the most. He kept his perverted, lustful thoughts to himself, hoping that Jose's eerily accurate sense of perception wouldn't pick up on the fact that he was currently obsessing and thinking about overtly sexual performances with Nines.
Suddenly, a small white printer in the far right-hand corner of the office blinked a small green light. A small beeping sound was heard next, and Gavin and Nines watched carefully as a small piece of blank paper was printed out of the machine. Jose stood to his feet while coughing, and he walked over to the printer. He brought back to his desk with him the piece of paper he printed out and he placed it in the center of the desk with the writing facing both Nines and Gavin. He tapped a blue fingernail polished finger at what was printed on the page.

“Read it out loud.”

Gavin rolled his eyes, “Me, or Robert?”

Jose frowned viciously at him, “Just you.”

So fuckin’ be it.

Staring down at the page, Gavin’s expression turned dark as he read out loud what was printed on it. “From this day on, I won’t ever lay a finger on my partner. The only time I will ever physically touch him is whenever I’m holding him close to me or making love—” he practically choked again as his eyes caught the word.

Jose glared at him, “Finish it, Jack.”

No. No fucking way.

He couldn’t.

He shook his head. “No!”

“DO IT!!” Jose’s loud scream made him practically bury his nose into the paper as he finished reading out the sentence in a big hurry, meshing the words all together like scrambled eggs as it sounded like garbled gibberish.

“There! THERE! I’ve said it! You fucking fruit!!

Jose nodded as he shoved the paper into Nines’s open hands. “Very good. The next time you even think about laying a finger on Robert here, I want you to pull up this page and read out the sentence to yourself at least 10 times before you think about doing anything else. Am I clear?

Gavin grumbled as he felt sweat running down his neck and back. He wished the Earth would explode right about now and eliminate the entire human race.

Jose drummed his fingers along the wooden desk. “I said: Am I clear, Jack?”

Gavin hissed lowly, “Fuckin’ clear! I got it!!” Was the session over now? Could they fucking leave already?

Beaming proudly at himself, Jose seemed to almost be able to read Gavin’s mind as he looked over at Nines with a predatory expression on his face. “I haven’t finished with the two of you yet, so you better get comfortable while you still can.”

Balls.

*FUCK! STOP THINKIN’ ABOUT BALLS ALREADY, GAVIN!!!* He scolded himself as he shook his head and clenched his thighs tightly together.
Jose seemed even more thrilled as he noticed the state of discomfort Gavin was in. He tapped a finger on his chin as he tilted his head at him. “Jack, why don’t you help de-stress yourself from the obvious levels of anxiety and discomfort you have surrounding this issue?”

Gavin ignored him. He didn’t want to do anything anymore, but the more he refused and rejected, the angrier Jose got. He clenched his fists tightly, resting one beneath his chin as he propped his elbow on the armrest of his chair. “Kiss and make up, now.”

What…

He frowned up at Jose, “Excuse me?”

Jose’s eyes held an eerily sadistic shine in them. “You heard me. Kiss each other, now.”

What the fuck was this…

Was he getting off on this or something?

Gavin shivered as he looked over at Nines. Nines turned towards him, and he wet his lips with a gentle flick of his tongue. It made Gavin break away from gazing at Nines as he shook his head vehemently. “No!”

Jose’s eyes twitched, “You and Robert are the only couple I have yet to see even hold each other, Jack! Are you that much in love with your own ego than your own partner?”

Not wanting to argue any longer, Gavin turned towards Nines completely, and he threw himself off the edge of his chair, grabbing tightly onto Nines’s chin with one hand. As Jose watched, Gavin pressed a small peck on Nines’s left cheek. Just as quickly as he did it, he sat back down on his chair.

Gavin was breathing like he’d been running, and he took a peek at Nines. He noticed that his chin was stretched out towards him, and his eyes were half-closed…almost as if he’d been waiting for a much more intimate kiss than the one he’d been given.

Gavin brushed his hair back as he glared at Jose, “Happy now?”

Jose gaped at him and he scoffed, “What was that??”

Gavin raised an eyebrow at him, “Umm, a ‘kiss’?!” He omitted the word ‘dumbass’ from his response, though the implication of it hung heavily in the air.

Jose clenched a few fingers on the bridge of his nose as he pinched back a sniffle. “That’s how I kiss my straight friends, Jack!”

I can only wonder how you kiss the gay ones, then…

He shivered as he shook those thoughts from his brain. The last thing he needed to be doing was imagining the therapist kissing other men…

Trying to be helpful and ameliorate the situation before Jose could attack Gavin further, Nines spoke up eagerly, “Jack is a very private person! He’s not like that when we’re…alone…”

“Somehow, I find that hard to believe.” Jose kept his eyes on Gavin as he swiped a finger across his laptop screen.

“No, he really is!” Nines argued back, but Jose didn’t want to hear it.
He held up a hand, head shaking as his eyes held more attitude than his voice did. “Please, I bet the man can’t even use his tongue to save his life.”

The room was silent before Nines smiled politely at Jose, though it seemed like a weak, forced smile to Gavin. “That’s not true! He uses his tongue everywhere on me!”

Gavin’s hand slumped downwards, and it thudded roughly against the ledge of the desk. The pain didn’t even register in his mind as his jaw fell and he gaped in horror at what Nines had just stated out loud.

Jose’s cheeks and ears burned, and he swallowed as he turned over to Gavin, “Moving on…please share one sexual problem you think you and Robert have, and I’ll ask Robert what he thinks his version of the story is, m’kay?”

Shit…

While Nines looked like he was about to go into a panic-overdrive, Gavin was still slick on his feet. Even though he was beyond disturbed, he suddenly remembered way back in college when he was more the renowned ‘ladies’ man’…

He’d just turned nineteen, and his then-best-friend Brock McCormick had pulled him out of their last class an hour earlier. Brock had eagerly claimed that a girl on residence close to their shared room wanted to hook up with Gavin for the night and being the hormonally-driven teenager he’d been at that time, Gavin had happily accepted.

The experience hadn’t been his first time with a woman, but it’d been by far one of the more exciting ones. They’d had to borrow Brock’s car, and they’d had sex at least four times in the backseat.

Finally using the memory to his advantage, Gavin pretended to think for a moment before he looked at Jose, ready to answer. “Well,” he began coyly as he snuck a glance over at Nines, “I’m the one in the relationship who constantly wants to try new things, like having sex in the back of my car…”

Nines’s head snapped over to Gavin and he trembled as he studied Gavin from head-to-toe.

Gavin continued, noticing fully well that Nines was uncomfortable and uneasy. Good. He was burning at the chance to get petty revenge now, especially after what Nines had stated to Cameron that same morning.

If Nines wanted to make Gavin feel uncomfortable, so fuckin’ be it. He just was going to be in for a real surprise. If he wanted to say dirty, stupid shit full of crude innuendo, then he didn’t stand a chance against Gavin’s dirty mind.

Settling comfortably in his chair, Gavin looked intensely at Jose. “I don’t wanna pressure Robert, but he should know that I need constant stimulation—both outside and inside the bedroom.”

The office was cold and silent. No one seemed to move for the longest time, and it made Gavin feel so justified. He’d finally had not only Nines in an uncomfortable grasp, but he’d also gone ahead and made Jose look slightly unnerved as he bit down on a pinky finger while staring at something on his messy desk.

The clock on the wall ticked loudly given their dead silence, and Gavin had thought about cheering for joy, when Jose spoke after removing his pinky from between his teeth.

“Umm…so…are you suggesting that you face problems surrounding leaving or possibly cheating on Robert if he doesn’t please you sexually?”
Gavin shook his head, though he’d expected Jose to manipulate and flip his words around to wield what he’d presented like a weapon and hold it against him. It was just the right fit with his vindictive nature.

“No,” Gavin stated plainly as he stared at Nines, “I wouldn’t ever cheat on my partner.” He remembered Cameron’s words when he’d been in the gym with him a few days ago, and he smiled in a ‘honest’ way over at Nines. “Robert’s good to me, and I wouldn’t ever dream of lettin’ him down like that.”

Nines knew he was full of shit. He glared at Gavin, who turned his head around to the side and almost snickered evilly.

Jose coughed as he held tightly onto his throat. “I’m a bit dizzy,” he grabbed a bottle of water and reached inside his desk drawer. He pulled out a pill bottle with his name written on the prescription woven around the little orange bottle. As Gavin and Nines watched in awkward silence, Jose took two of the pills within the bottle and chugged down a large gulp of water.

He wiped his mouth quickly. “I’ll need to rest soon for these babies to work, but before that, I want to comment quickly on what you said, Jack…”

Gavin turned his attention to Jose, smiling patiently as the therapist pointed a finger at him like it was a gun. He coughed and his eyes seemed a little…pink…

Still pointing at him, Jose’s eyes flickered over to Nines, “You need to communicate what these problems are with Robert, because even though he’s an android, I highly doubt he’s a mind reader.”

“Uh…” Gavin began, but Jose shook his head.

“Shh! As I was saying, he can’t expect to know what you want if you don’t explain it to him! Communication! Learn it!”

Gavin nodded, eyes slightly wide. “Right…got it…”

Jose pointed a rude finger at Nines, next. “Robert!”

Nines leapt in his chair and shook. Gavin wanted to laugh at it, but Jose was talking a mile-a-minute, suddenly.

“What sort of sexual problems do you think you are facing with Jack? And be brutally honest with me!”

Gavin was slightly offended. Had he given off any inclination or clue that he was dishonest? Well, truth be told, he kind of was dishonest. Sex in a car was actually a lot more painful and not as sexy as the movies made it out to be…

“Robert?”

Gavin stared at the frozen Nines. It seemed far too frightening that he was deadly still without offering a single word. The sight of it drove Gavin mad, and he knew it wouldn’t take too much longer before Jose had to make a comment about the oddity of the entire scene, so he pressed the heel of his right leg down hard on Nines’s toes.

Nines didn’t move, still.

Gavin pressed down harder, practically squashing Nines’s toes, when he felt Nines slide his foot out
from beneath his. Gavin stared at Nines’s face, noting quickly how flushed the android’s cheeks were…

Nines took a pained breath, “One sexual problem I’m facing with Jack,” he didn’t even make an effort to look at Gavin, which upset the other man, but he bit down on his tongue as his heart began fluttering in nervous anticipation in his chest. What would Nines make up about him? How did his mind work when it came to sex and relationships? Could he think of something that would make sense, and yet was fluent regarding the history of their supposed relationship?

Placing a nervous, clenched fist on his thigh, Nines stared down at his feet beneath the desk. “…is th-that…we…” his blue eyes skittered nervously over at Gavin before he looked back down at his feet.

“‘Yes?’ Jose prompted with a raised hand and a raised eyebrow, the piercing in it seeming like it was almost listening in as it glowed lightly beneath the lights in the ceiling.

Nines stammered for a while, but he was somehow able to complete his sentence, surprisingly. Gavin definitely wished he hadn’t the moment he heard what Nines had to say about ‘Jack’.

“W-we don’t seem to really make eye contact and scream out each other’s names in the middle of s-sex.”

Holy.

Mother.

Of.

Moses.

And.

Judas.

Fuck…Liberace’s nipples…

Was he fucking serious with this?!?!

Gavin felt his stomach turn upside down, and he realized his lungs were about to burst. He’d been holding his breath for over a minute at least. Jose wasn’t in a better condition across the desk: his eyes were blown wide open, his hands hovered above the keyboard of the laptop, and his jaw fell open slightly. It all took a matter of a few seconds before he collected and composed himself.

“S-so you-”

Nines nodded, already taking the lead of whatever it was Jose was trying to say. “I just would like for Jack to only see me when we’re making love…I want him to say my name and feel my body only.”

Jose’s chin and neck stuck out forward, and he suddenly resembled a small, curious ostrich. After studying Nines in that manner for a moment, he cleared his throat as he resumed typing. He scratched his head a few times while Gavin gaped at Nines.

‘What the fuck, man?!?’ Gavin mouthed at Nines quickly while Jose’s head was down, but Nines refused to acknowledge Gavin in any way.
This had to be some petty form of revenge or something...there was no way Nines would just say something that blatantly stupid out of thin air! No way! No way!!

When Jose ceased typing, he bit down on his lower lip as he looked at Gavin. “Right, I actually have nothing to say about that one, Jack,” he shook as if imagining what Nines had admitted minutes ago. “But the most I can say is that the only homework I’d assign you and Robert is a lot of sex this upcoming weekend.”

As Gavin watched in pure terror, Jose swiped two unopened condoms from beneath a few piles of sheets and folders. He held them up towards Gavin as he smirked awkwardly.

When Gavin was unable to take them, Jose tossed them rudely over to Nines. "Play safe." The condoms hit Nines in the chest and they fell back down to the floor of the office in a soft ‘plip’.

Gavin wasn’t focusing much on his words; he was far too busy thinking of ways to yell and throw everything in their cabin at Nines’s stupid, thick skull the moment their session was over.

Jose slammed his laptop lid shut as he gestured over with a hand at the door. “Please take the time you now have with each other,” he looked very uneasy as he cleared his throat, “…you two clearly need a lot of time to get over the obvious sexual repression you’re both facing.”

He stood without adding to that as he held the door open for them both.

“See you next session, guys.”

[\\\\;::\\\\]

Gavin practically shoved Nines in the door of their cabin before the android had completely opened the door fully to allow them both inside. Nines stumbled a few steps, but Gavin was quick in his rage to hook his fingers into the back of Nines’s sweater. He spun the android around with a strained growl.

“Do you think you’re fuckin’ funny?”

Nines’s back slammed against one of the walls in the bedroom. He kept his eyes and demeanor calm as he stared down at Gavin.

Gavin sneered up at Nines, and despite the obvious height difference between them, he roughly jabbed his elbow and arm beneath the android’s neck and chin as he shoved Nines’s skull roughly against the wall.

“Did you get a real kick outta makin’ me uncomfortable in front of that fuckin’ weasel? Hmm?!”

Nines didn’t answer as he studied Gavin’s angry features so close to him. “I did whatever I could to move the session along, Gavin…”

Gavin’s arm practically drove itself upwards more against Nines’s neck as Gavin snickered drily a few times before his expression turned deadly. “No, you are purposefully goin’ out your way to make me look like a fool.”

Nines shook his head, but Gavin tightened his grip on his sweater. “You are, you fuckin’ always are...even at the DPD!"

“It’s not my fault if you’re falsifying and fabricating only small portions of your dull reality in order to displace the problems that are your own onto me!” Nines argued in a whisper, and Gavin held
himself back from punching his face in repeatedly. He knew it would probably break his fist, but he was minutes away from exploding in a fully blown state of ‘I Don’t Give A Fuck.’

He leaned in closer until he could practically rub his own nose against the android’s. “Listen here, you fuckin’ plastic jackass,” he threatened lowly and darkly, hoping that the intense anger he was feeling would be enough to finally break through to the stupid android for once. “…I won’t warn you ever again about making a fool out of me. If you ever put me in this kind of a position again, it’ll be your last day standin’, I swear!!”

He should’ve known better than to threaten an android; the insult completely bounced off Nines. The fact that Gavin had spent his frustration and rage towards making the android feel fear was as useless as farting in a deep-sea diving suit.

“You’re the one who’s makin’ shit up about shit you don’t even have experience in; not me!”

Nines frowned at him as he pushed himself back against the wall harder. “I did not!”

Gavin raised a stubborn eyebrow at him, “Oh really? Remember: ‘Jack sometimes tries to avoid certain things that make him feel uncomfortable’?” Nines avoided his gaze, and Gavin laughed, knowing he was on the right path.

“See?” he violently rubbed his elbow up into Nines’s chin, “Oh, and let’s not forget: you want me to say your stupid name whenever we’re having sex…to think of only you!”

“You wanted to have sex in the car!” Nines argued back before he could hold himself from it. He knew that he was only encouraging the detective’s immature and recalcitrant behavior, but he was starting to feel really embarrassed as he thought about the things they’d both said in Jose’s office earlier. Soon, they began throwing insults at each other back and forth like two overgrown children arguing on a playground.

“You’re the one who kissed me on the cheek!”

“You wanted to kiss me back at the dance!”

“You said you wanted constant stimulation inside and outside the bedroom!”

“You told Jose I use my tongue on you everywhere when we’re alone!”

“THAT’S BECAUSE YOU DIDN’T KISS ME ON THE LIPS WITH ANY TONGUE!!”

Gavin stiffened momentarily, and Nines saw that his pupils were slightly dilated…a first sign of sexual arousal…

“Pfft,” Gavin scoffed as he snorted, “like I’d ever even think about kissing you, or your disgusting, hairless, plastic body like that!” The heat firing up in between his legs told him that he was so full of shit.

Nines felt offended, and he fired back a retort immediately as he frowned down at Gavin, “You absolutely do think of me in that way!!”

The denial came all-too-quickly from Gavin, “No, I fuckin’ don’t.”

Nines’s frown deepened, and he pushed against Gavin’s body resting closely against his own, struggling slightly in the shorter man’s grasp. “How about: ‘I love Robert’s ass’?”
Gavin scoffed, “Fuck off.”

“We’re both capable of this! So why are you attacking me?!”

Gavin gaped at him for a moment, mind searching for an answer rapidly before he looked at Nines’s flushed cheeks. Truth be told, he didn’t have an answer, so he did what Gavin Reed always did when he had no intellectual, logical answer: he insulted.

“Your answers were a fuckin’ pathetic bunch of bullshit, Nines!”

Nines raised an eyebrow, next, “What do you mean?”

“What you said was fake and garbage!”

Nines felt mildly hurt, but he pushed down the emotion in case Gavin could somehow sense it. He wasn’t entirely too sure how strong the detective’s perception to detail was regarding androids, but he didn’t want to take any risks. “I just created whatever ‘problem’ I could in the short amount of reaction time I was given!”

Gavin shook his head dismissively. “It was all bullshit, and you know it.”

“I didn’t say it wasn’t. But you have experiences you can twist and use and... make it work! I don’t! I can only make up so many things!” Nines ranted, growing angry again. “How am I supposed to make something up when I don’t have the first inkling where to begin? No one has ever touched me in any pleasurable way! I don’t even know where to start!!!” he spat out, his face a mixture between anger and embarrassment.

He knew he had acted irrationally, and all kinds of strange instructions on how to react and what to offer in a statement next began overriding his system. Many odd words and phrases flashed before his eyes, and he shook his head as he held his head down, defeated.

Gavin had no idea what possessed him to do what he did next, but he found his hands releasing their hold on Nines’s neck. Soon, they were moving upwards from Nines’s neck to his cheeks as he took both of them in his hands strongly. He then found himself leaning in and roughly smashing his lips against the android’s, swallowing the surprised grunt that came out of Nines’s mouth upon impact. His Nines had never had someone touch him for the sake of pleasure? Well, that was something Gavin could certainly do, something he could offer, and he would.

He raised one hand to grasp the back of Nines’s neck and laid his other hand on the android’s hip, pulling him away from the wall and flush against his body. Nines was tense in his arms for only a second or two before he hesitantly brought his own hands up to rest on Gavin’s hips. The detective flicked out his tongue, running it along the seal of the android’s lips, coaxing the other man to open up to him.

When Nines finally gave in and opened up to Gavin, the shorter man nearly groaned, coming undone. Quickly, he delved into the hot depths of the mouth attached to his. He let his tongue tangle with Nines’s.

*Now how’s that for some fuckin’ tongue, Nines?*

Though lacking experience, the android wasn’t passive for long. He pushed hard against the detective, slamming the man’s body into the opposite bedroom wall of the cabin. Nines’s tongue was battling his own for dominance as the android tried to take control of the kiss.

Gavin’s mind and heart were assaulted with memories of the kisses he’d shared with a few women
that barley even paled in comparison to the power and feelings that fueled this kiss…and he was Nines’s first and only kiss!

Feeling overrun with possessiveness, he growled as hot dominance and feelings of power seeped through his blood. He rolled his hips against the android’s, pleased to feel the hard line of Nines’s cock straining against the jeans he wore.

Nines was hard because of him!

Nines responded in kind, pressing his hips against Gavin’s so that their erections were pressed together.

Before Gavin’s hands could begin wandering down Nines’s body, a loud knock at the door sounded through the cabin…
Posting this early because I feel bad after that last cliff hanger, you guys :(  
Nines's POV later in the chapter :)

The knock sounding from the back door of the cabin began pulling Gavin back to reality. He pulled his head back from his android's, taking in the blown pupils, flushed skin and swollen lips. Nines looked downright fuckable all debauched like this…

The knock came again, this time more urgently. It effectively snapped Gavin out of his lust-induced daze. He rested his forehead against Nines’s, both of them breathing harshly into the silence between the knocks.

Gavin looked over at the locked back door, mentally congratulating himself on having the brains to pull down the little blinds that had always been attached to the top of the glass insert. It’d save them from more embarrassing things, and also saved them from the possibility of being spied on by any creeps and weirdos. However, it also meant that Hank and Connor wouldn’t be able to enter their cabin as they pleased, which Gavin actually preferred given the huge awkwardness it’d caused the last time…

The knocking was growing louder and more impatient. Gavin feared a foot would soon kick against the door if they didn’t check who it was, quickly.

“Fuck. That’s gotta be either Hank or Connor. I told Connor to meet us back here after our session because they think they finally have more clues,” Gavin finally spoke up. Nines let out a shaky breath.

“And how are we going to explain this?” the taller man asked, voice completely wrecked as his hair stood out messily.

Nines was a complete mess. His cheeks were still pink, as were his freshly swollen-kissed lips, but not as much as Gavin’s were. His erection wasn’t as thick and prominent as Gavin’s was anymore, though Gavin surmised it was because the more advanced features of the android more than likely gave him greater control over his system.

Gavin didn’t want to admit it, but the look of a messy, roughed-up, sexually-frustrated and sexually-tussled Nines was making him rock hard by each passing second.

Nines seemed to sense it, and he gently grabbed one of Gavin’s hands in his own.

“What’re you doin’?” With lust still clouding majority of his brain, Gavin was rather slow on the uptake as he observed Nines reach into his suitcase beneath his bed and grab a fresh towel. He placed it gently over Gavin’s shoulder while grabbing clean clothes for him as well.

“Head into the shower,” he opened the bathroom door and turned on the water while Gavin took a quick peek at Nines’s firm ass in his jeans.
“…I’ll keep Hank and Connor busy until you…” Nines’s eyes darted down to Gavin’s very prominent erection jutting thickly against the zipper of his pants, “…until you…um…take care of this…”

Gavin couldn’t help himself; he reached forward, wrapping a strong, large hand around the back of Nines’s skull. As the knocking at the back door of the cabin grew louder, Gavin gently pressed another firm kiss to Nines’s lips. It had meant to be a small, chaste kiss, but the moment Nines’s lips were pressed against his own, Gavin lost it. He tried biting Nines’s lower lip in hopes he would part his lips and provide him access to his warm, wet mouth, but the android gently pushed back against Gavin’s chest as he broke the kiss and tore out of the bathroom.

“Fuckin’ adorable,” Gavin whispered to himself as he shut the bathroom door silently.

Nines breathed heavily as he pressed his back against the now-closed bathroom door. He straightened his hair back to the way it always looked when he saw how messy and roughed-up it looked when he walked past the bedroom dresser mirror.

Making sure his clothes were straightened out, Nines opened the back door of the cabin slowly after unlocking it. On the back porch stood Lieutenant Hank Anderson. He was wearing black wellington boots, black track pants, and a thick black jacket on. Behind and above him, the thunder gently rumbled in the sky.

Hank raised an eyebrow but didn’t say much as he brushed past Nines and inside the cabin. He wiped his boots on the little doormat as he stood around a few inches away from the door. “Where’s Reed?”

Nines looked to the left with his eyes only, “He’s in the shower.”

Hank paused, and he seemed to be listening carefully for sounds of water running in the bathroom at least twenty feet away. The fact that he seemed a little hesitant to just trust Nines immediately slightly offended Nines, but he knew the Lieutenant was always naturally suspicious of everyone anyway; it came with the territory and the job, after all.

It was now Nines’s turn to question Hank, “Where’s Connor?” The other android should have been by Hank’s side, no?

Hank smiled politely, though a quick bio-scan informed Nines that Hank was slightly exhausted and nervous.

“Connor’s actually in one of the female washrooms in the mansion.”

“Why?”

Hank rubbed his beard, his thick fingers scratching at the short hairs there. “Uh…well,” he made a face of disgust. “One of the human females had her…umm…how do I put this politely?”

Nines sighed and rolled his eyes, “I know what you mean.”

Hank nodded, “Thank god, because I am not in the mood to describe to you how a grown woman managed to back a toilet up with a single tampon.”

Nines soon mimicked the disgusted expression Hank had on moments ago. “Connor has to clean the mess?!” He felt so sorry for his android friend, and he shook his head.

Hank nodded in agreement as he too was beyond angry. ‘Fuckin’ Jose, I’m telling you, Nines. That
They were interrupted by Gavin stepping out of the bathroom, his hair slightly wet as he wore fresh, clean clothes and carried a towel in both his hands.

Hank gave him a stern look, “Reed, you don’t have any evening plans with Nines, do you?”

Gavin paused in thought, before he gasped, “Shit,” he remembered the evening supper he’d planned with Cameron and Will, and he looked at Hank with guilt. “Hank, it’s nothin’ personal, but I promised our cabin neighbors that we’d have supper with them tonight.”

Hank rolled his eyes, “What time?”

“Seven-thirty.”

Hank looked a little encouraged and he gave a half-smile. “That’s not too bad then, I can come by later and collect Nines.”

Gavin felt a little agitated, suddenly. He wouldn’t ever voice this aloud to Hank (or Nines), but he’d been trying to reserve time later that same night after supper with Cameron and Will to… ‘sexplore’ with Nines. He couldn’t help but think back on their heated kiss before Hank had interrupted, and Gavin decided that it was definitely something he wanted more of. Still, he had to remember that life was full of disappointments, and throwing away the licentious, concupiscent beckoning emanating from his dick, he had no choice but to force a smile as he crossed his arms over his chest and nodded at Hank.

“Fine, Anderson, but I gotta ask, where’s Connor in the middle of all this?”

Nines sighed and offered him the most honest answer. “He’s cleaning up the unfortunate mess that a woman’s hygiene product created when it was flushed down the toilet, causing a flooding on the second floor of the mansion.”

Gavin turned pale while Hank reeled back. “God’s balls, Nines!” he gaped as he pressed a hand against his stomach, “you didn’t need to explain it to Gavin like that!”

Gavin placed both hands on his head, massaging his temples in slow-but-firm circles. “Can you both please just stop?” he gazed over weakly at Hank, “and stop talkin’ about ‘balls’ and ‘coming’, Anderson! It’s makin’ me sick!”

Nines offered Gavin a playful smirk, “Yes, he does need to save his appetite, after all…”

Gavin looked over at him, noticing the almost evil smirk Nines wore.

“He has quite the appetite…” Gavin knew exactly what Nines was referring to, while Hank looked at something on the floor and began poking it with the tip of his wellingtons.

Gavin’s cock stirred.

God damn it.

On second thought, maybe he could just lie to Will and Cameron, and tell them that Robert had to attend to something else?

Voices and footsteps outside the front door of the cabin told them that this wasn’t an option, and that
they’d run out of time. Gavin and Nines gasped as they saw the shadow silhouettes of Will’s curly hair and Cameron’s shortly cropped hair and large muscles cast behind their door…

Gavin opened the back door of the cabin, while Nines gently turned Hank around, pushing him in the center of his back to head out as soon as possible.

Hank glared at them as he stuck his head in the doorway, “You kids and being ashamed of the elderly, I swear.”

The door slammed on his face at the same time that Cameron knocked on the front door. They both bolted towards the door, and as Nines held his hand over the door handle, Gavin gently tugged on his elbow.

Nines turned at him, gazing down with confused eyes. “What’s wrong?”

Gavin studied his features for a moment, before he sighed and shrugged. “Nothin’.”

He knew Nines wasn’t convinced, and he wasn’t himself, either. He had no idea what he’d wanted to communicate to Nines, but he thought it best to forget about it and just play Happy-Gay-Family for the time being.

Nines turned the handle, and he whispered down in Gavin’s ear, “Remember to smile.”

They both wore happy, wide smiles with teeth shining as they opened the door.

Gavin watched as Nines and Will stood in the kitchen of the cabin, chopping ingredients for a small salad while Cameron helped set up the large barbeque that had been hidden and parked on the side of the cabin between two heavy bushes.

Cameron and Will had brought along the meat for their hotdogs and burgers, while Gavin had provided the ingredients for the salad and appetizers from his own lunchbox he’d brought along and stored in their cabin fridge. He didn’t mind sharing as he watched Will’s and Nines’s backs turned towards him as they stood side-by-side, chatting softly as they cut the ingredients together.

It was a rather cute and domestic thing to see, and Gavin felt he could really take a break from the damn case and get used to this as he watched Cameron turn on the grill and pull out the frozen meat.

Gavin sat down on a small picnic bench near the side of the porch, and he gazed at the evening sky above. He took in a deep breath and closed his eyes. The cooling air was amazing as the smoke of the barbeque filled the air and mixed with it. Gavin was suddenly reminded of all the times he’d gone camping with his family when he was younger…

“So how long’s it been since you had a proper vacation, Jack?”

He was brought down to the ground at his feet when Cameron asked the question.

Gavin smiled as he shrugged, “Too fuckin’ long, man, too fuckin’ long.”

“That’s the answer I was thinking of.” Cameron placed the hotdogs on the grill first. He was wearing a light blue Hawaiian shirt that had one large, phallically erect palm tree and two round coconuts hanging down side-by-side. The words on the bottom of the shirt read: My Face Isn’t Down Here!

He simply wore white shorts and creamy sandals as the meat began hissing and steaming over the
grill every time he moved it or poked at it with the prongs and skewer. “So what exactly do you do for a living, Jack?”

Feeling his stomach grumbling, Gavin placed a hand down over it as he hummed while thinking back to the fake character ‘case file’ Captain Fowler had handed him.

He recited everything he remembered verbatim. “I used to actually be a car salesman a while ago, but you know; ‘androids took my job and all that’,” he paused, allowing Cameron to laugh warmly as he knew Gavin hadn’t meant for it to be taken offensively or seriously.

“…after I lost my job, I moved to Switzerland for some time, and I trained hard to learn everything I could about advertising. After I took a few courses, I started a new career as an advertising sales agent.” It was the complete opposite of who Gavin truly was, but he supposed that was the entire point in order to ‘blend in’ and go undetected.

Cameron nodded, giving him a thumbs-up, “Cool, that sounds neat,” he turned the hotdogs around swiftly before they could burn. “I mean, it wouldn’t be something William would ever do, but hey, to each their own, right?”

Gavin chuckled, “What does Will do?”

“Oh, he’s a civil engineer.”

Somehow, that hadn’t been much of a surprise to Gavin. “Right on!”

Cameron shrugged, “Well, it’s not the best all the time.”

“Why not? I bet the money’s good!”

Cameron seemed slightly apathetic as he looked into the grill. “Well, not everything’s about money, Jack…”

“I know,” Gavin began as he turned and sat directly onto the surface of the bench top, “…but it sure as shit makes life a lot easier, right?”

Cameron had been in the process of formulating a response, when one of the cabin windows nearby opened.

It was cabin 3, which was a few yards away. The lights were all brightly lit on the inside and outside of the cabin, and as Cameron and Gavin watched, ‘Steve’ stuck his head out of the second story window. He searched and scanned the area beneath his cabin, his LED light a bright red that no doubt matched his temper…he soon spotted Gavin and Cameron.

“Hey! Mind keeping it down a little? My partner and I are trying to watch something on Netflix!”

Cameron cupped both hands around his lips as he called up at Steve, “Don’t you mean ‘Netflix and chill’?”

Gavin snickered.

Steve glared at them. “Keep your damn voices down!”

It was Gavin’s turn to call up at him. “Shut up, Steve!”

The android merely ignored Gavin. “And shut off the damn barbeque already! It stinks!” The window slammed shut after that last order, and Gavin and Cameron rolled their eyes simultaneously.
Gavin stretched out a hand, “So you were sayin’?”

Holding up a hand as he resumed cooking the food, Cameron chuckled, “Yes, money’s not-”

The window of cabin 3 flew open again, and Steve poked his head out once more.

“And for the last god damn time, I’m not ‘Steve’!”

Gavin scoffed as he waved him off. “Bite me, Steve!” he bellowed out at the android as he saw its LED light flicker red numerous times.

The android paused before pointing down at him, “I’m queer; not a vampire, Jack!” With that statement uttered, the window slammed shut.

Gavin waited until it was silent before he whispered over at Cameron: “What’s his fuckin’ name anyway?”

Cameron rolled his eyes as he flicked his wrist upwards at their cabin while holding a barbeque fork, “I don’t really know what his name is, to tell you the truth.”

Gavin raised an eyebrow, “I was thinkin’ of callin’ him ‘Dick’.”

The window practically slammed against the sides of the cabin as it was flung open yet again.

Both Gavin and Cameron groaned simultaneously as they shook their heads.

“Just so you know,” Steve shouted down at them, “I can hear everything you say!!”

“Sorry Dick!” Gavin responded with a wink at Cameron.

“WHAT??” Steve screamed.

Gavin smiled up at him as sweetly and innocently as he could, “I mean: sorry Richard!!”

There was a brief pause before the android muttered: “That’s not my name either, you bastard!”

They heard the window closing as loudly as it had opened.

“I hope that was the last god damn time.” Gavin hissed as he glared up at the dark window before his nose reminded him that delicious burgers and hotdogs awaited him.

As the rumbling of his stomach grew louder and more intense, the front door of the cabin opened. Cameron and Gavin were soon joined by William and Nines as they brought out the delicious salad, and a few cold drinks from the freezer. They all helped in setting the food and items around the picnic table in an organized fashion.

Finally, their burgers and dogs were done, and as they set up plates, Gavin was amazed to see Will bring out onto the porch a cooler. He’d opened it and pulled out two bottles of a blue liquid.

Gavin knew it was thirium before Will said anything, and he offered one bottle to his lover, and the other to Nines. Soon, they were all seated, and Gavin couldn’t wait to sink his teeth into his burger.

But before he did, Cameron decided to make a little toast. He held up his bottle of thirium, and soon, Nines and Will followed, and Gavin was last to raise his beer can.

Cameron beamed around the picnic table as he held Will closely next to him. Nines was seated
directly across from Gavin, but he tossed a small smile Gavin’s way.

“A toast, to our new friends!”

They all toasted and clinked their beverages together, and as Gavin set his beer can down, he caught a strange look from Nines’s eyes.

His smile was wide, yet his eyes were full and somewhat glazed over, as if he was under some kind of a spell. When his eyes met Gavin’s, he looked down bashfully at his bottle of thirium, wrapping his hands around it as he pulled it closer towards his chest.

As Gavin kept his eyes on Nines, he felt that it was a look that was borderline warmth, passion…and something else…not lust…but…

Gavin wasn’t sure.

He made a mental note to try and ask Nines about it later, but for now, hunger called his name, and he lost himself in the moment of desperately trying to satiate his desire for good food.

While Will and Nines offered to clean up and wash the dishes, Gavin quickly checked his phone. He’d received a text from Hank, and it simply read:

**Anderson: when ur dun with ur little 4some, let Nines know ill be ready for him by the back porch.**

Gavin rolled his eyes and shook his head as he quickly texted the overly-dramatic Lieutenant back a reply. Cameron had finished packing up and cleaning the barbeque grill, and the night was soon all around them.

Gavin retreated to the front porch, leaning against the handrails of the porch, his right hand resting against a small wooden pillar, while he fished out a cigarette with his left one from his shorts pocket.

The sounds of crickets and a few owls sounded in the distance, and the swaying of the branches of the trees around the woods calmed Gavin’s nerves. Paired with the stench of the cigarette he’d just currently lit, it was all heaven for him as he sighed out in a soft moan. Two lines of smoke flew out of both his nostrils as he closed his eyes and simply enjoyed nature all around them.

Behind him through the screen door, he heard Will laughing as Nines told him a few jokes while they began drying the dishes together slowly. Gavin turned and stared at the back of Will’s green and white horizontal striped shirt, and he caught the broad back of Nines as he dressed in a black dress shirt. Gavin had allowed to go crazy and dress fancily after dinner. It was a decision he was proud he’d made, as he saw the fine ripples of Nines’s back muscles every time he wiped a dish or placed one back in the overhead cupboards in the kitchen.

He had been so taken by Nines’s strong form, that he’d failed to hear Cameron come up on the porch and sit down on the small swings resting against the left-hand side of the outer walls of the cabin. He swung himself slowly back and forth as he sat a few meters away from Gavin.

Cameron studied Gavin’s face for a while, and he noticed that the man hadn’t blinked in well over a minute. He soon snickered and motioned back towards the screen door of the cabin. “If you want, Will and I can leave early, so you and your man have some private time, if you know what I mean.”

Gavin’s body seized up, and he practically choked on the smoke he’d currently been exhaling. Puffs
and clouds of the tobacco flew in the air as he coughed violently, and Cameron stood from his seat on the little swing as he pet Gavin’s back a few times firmly. “Hey, don’t die on me now, Jack! I was just starting to like you!”

Gavin looked at him with red watery eyes as he coughed, but he waved at Cameron as he wheezed and choked out: “I’m good!”

Cameron reached into the cooler sitting on the porch by the door and grabbed a bottle of water. He offered it to Gavin, and he watched as Gavin drank a few sips until he cleared his throat and his coughing ceased. He smiled at Gavin’s back as he paced slightly, trying to finish his cigarette.

“Really, Jack,” he chuckled, as if expecting Gavin to explode, and he watched the man with extra caution, “…I can tell William that you and Robert have other things to do.”

Gavin felt a little uncomfortable. “You guys can still stay,” he looked down at his feet as he exhaled the smoke, “I’m not that clingy with Robert.”

He heard Cameron chuckle again as he placed his hands in the pockets of his shorts. “Jack, I know that’s the complete opposite.”

“Have you scanned me or some shit?” Gavin couldn’t help but keep the anger out of his voice alongside his confusion when he stared over at the blue LED light on Cameron’s forehead. This accusation seemed to mildly affect the android, but he didn’t seem too upset as he gave one head shake.

“No, I didn’t need to do that.”

“Then how do you know so much about me?” Gavin asked quickly, though it was more due to his curiosity beckoning him to do so than wanting to insult or argue with Cameron.

The android smiled at him warmly, “Jack, I know that’s the complete opposite.”

Oh.

He was that transparent?

Yet again, Gavin felt a little uncomfortable, though it was more due to his own incapability of separating how ‘Gavin’ truly felt from acting how ‘Jack’ would feel. Perhaps he was confusing the two men too much now.

Not wanting Cameron to pick up on the lull in the conversation as his thoughts swam around wildly in his mind, Gavin forced a half-smile at him before turning back and studying the dark, open fields before them. He thought he heard a bullfrog somewhere.

“Robert’s a…” he heard more dishes being put away in the cabin behind them and he sighed, “…Robert’s a good guy, y’know?”

Cameron stretched out his legs as he sat back on the little swing resting against the cabin wall, and he crossed his ankles over each other as he balanced his feet on their heels. “How’d you meet Robert, if it’s okay to ask?”

Gavin flicked some of the cigarette ashes down into the grass and dirt beneath the porch. “We met because of a sister’s friend, actually.” According to the ‘character file’ Captain Fowler had provided him, ‘Jack’ had a sister who had been trying to set him up with new guys constantly after he’d had a
nasty breakup with his last boyfriend. As Jack and his sister were out partying in a gay club in town one night, that’s when Jack had run into the handsome bartender, Robert…

“It wasn’t exactly love-at-first-sight,” he explained his story to Cameron as Cameron listened intently, “…but we’re still here together, anyway.”

“I appreciate your honesty, Jack!” Gavin couldn’t help but slightly grimace when those words came out of Cameron’s mouth. If only he knew…

Shrugging the minor guilt off his shoulders, Gavin tried changing the subject by flipping the same topic onto Cameron. “So how’d you meet Will?”

Cameron sighed softly, “Well, like I said a while ago to you,” his eyes studied the night sky for a moment as he smiled to himself, “…I thought I was straight for the longest time, so I had to practically force myself to live with and get engaged to Felicity when I volunteered at the Detroit City Fire Department…”

“Oh yeah, that other android chick.”

Cameron nodded, “Yeah, but I wasn’t truly happy…” his eyes looked slightly sad as he turned them down to his hands, looping his fingers together. “I mean, I went through the motions most would do when in a relationship, but I had no future plans to be with Felicity for life.”

Gavin took another long drag from his cigarette as he remained silent, so he could hear all of Cameron’s words.

“I had to really focus on myself a lot before I could be with someone else, and before I knew it, I’d left Felicity a few months before I came out to all my friends.”

“Is that when you met Will?”

Cameron looked at his fingers, expression turning warm as he fondly thought of the memories while his LED light turned yellow. “Yeah…” he chuckled as he ran a few fingers along the sides of his temples, grazing his shortly cut hair.

“I was actually cleaning up a mess I’d accidentally made when I ran into a woman who was talking on the phone as she was exiting a coffee shop, and I didn’t see the guy behind me,” his smile grew wider, “but the coffee poured over all three of us, and the first thing I saw when I was pressing a bunch of napkins to his shirt was his thick, black curly hair, and those large, cute glasses that almost hid his eyes from me…”

Gavin couldn’t help but smile, “That’s kinda cute eh?”

Cameron smiled, “Yeah, it’s interesting where life takes us.”

A little question still tugged at Gavin’s mind, and as he finished the last of his cigarette, he only hoped and prayed he could ask Cameron the question without offending the android. He turned around, leaning his back against the porch railing, and he offered a genuine smile.

“Uhh,” he shifted his feet, and it caused Cameron to look back up at him.

“So, I hope you don’t take this the wrong way, Cameron,” Gavin began, trying to soften the ‘blow’ as delicately as he could, “…but may I ask why Will has a stutter?”

The question didn’t seem to offend Cameron. He only gave a half-smile as he leaned back and
crossed one leg over the other while folding his hands in his lap. Making sure both Will and Nines were still chatting inside and creating just enough noise as they continued cleaning up, Cameron lowered his voice as he spoke as clearly as he could.

“William’s ex used to beat him a lot.”

Fuck…

Gavin gaped at him as he felt guilt coursing through his body. He shouldn’t have been so insensitive…

“Shit, I’m sorry, Cameron…damn…”

Cameron held up a hand, cutting him off. “It’s okay, we’re both over it for the most part, but I won’t deny that it left a pretty traumatic after-effect on William.”

As it would anyone else, Gavin guessed.

He offered one last look of empathy at Cameron before he nodded, “Thanks for openin’ up to me.”

Cameron offered him a friendly smile. “Thanks for finding friendship with us, Jack.”

They both stood on the porch in silence until it was time to head back inside and join their partners.

Will and Cameron bid them both a goodnight forty-five minutes later, and Gavin found himself already missing their company as he gently closed and locked the front door of the cabin. Once again, he had to curse himself as he reminded his heart that he was here to ‘work’; not make friends. No matter how nice and sweet Will and Cameron seemed, Gavin had to constantly be cautious and remain on his guard. He knew he’d already started slipping a few times as he blurred the lines between fantasy and reality as he incorporated aspects of Jack Benedict’s life with his own.

He knew he was slipping, and Gavin decided to sit back and think things over in the time he had alone to himself while Hank and Nines stepped out the back door of the cabin into the dark night.

Nines dressed up much like Hank did; he made sure he’d had nothing but black clothes on so he could bled in the dark, and he wore dark running shoes as he heard and felt the grass and twigs crunching beneath his feet as he walked beside Hank.

“Where are we going, Lieutenant?”

Hank held a tiny flashlight as they progressed in the dark. “Connor and I mapped out the entrance to a large cemetery just over the hill once we pass the springs and waterfall behind the resort.”

Those were sights Nines had yet to see, and though he much preferred it if they could be able to visit the lovely waterfall and hot springs the counselling resort was well-renowned for during daylight, he knew this was their only chance at having a ‘closer’ look around without having to answer to anyone in authority.

He followed Hank silently for a moment before Hank tossed him a playful look. “So how was date night with Detective Reed?”

Nines felt himself blushing, and he inwardly cursed his creators for giving him such highly advanced and updated features that made him behave and resemble a human far too often for his own liking, at
times. Hank caught the rosy glow forming on his cheeks, and he snickered.

“I take it that it went well, huh?”

Nines hissed softly, “I wouldn’t put it in those terms, Lieutenant!”

Hank shrugged as he lit the gravelly path beneath their feet, “Sure, sure,” he chuckled again, “whatever you want, Nines.”

They soon heard the distant sound of the large waterfall a few feet away.

“First landmark: Check!” Hank seemed delighted as they stood to momentarily pause and gape at the wondrous waterfall before them.

They both were momentarily lost as they gazed at the beautiful sight the waterfall held. Nines began to wonder just how beautiful and glorious the waterfall would look in the daylight, considering how wonderful it looked right now as it was reflected back from the light of Hank’s flashlight pointing at it.

The clean, white waters fell heavily and steadily down into the large pool beneath the waterfall. The large ripples danced around beneath the flashlight beam, almost tempting both Nines and Hank to dip their toes into the dark depths…

Many large boulders and stones were fancily spread and decorated surrounding the outer perimeter of the large pool of the waterfall beneath. It was no doubt that they were placed there and specifically arranged there in that decorative manner, as opposed to being a natural construction of Mother Nature. Regardless, it looked beautiful, and Nines wanted to spend more time around the waterfall, but he knew time was short as Hank began already walking up ahead past the waterfall.

Nines didn’t have to struggle to keep up with him, and they soon ascended a large hill as Hank began huffing and puffing, the first signs of physical exertion and exhaustion evident not only in his voice, but also in his face as well. His eyes were almost clenched shut slightly as he gazed about the large hill while they were still climbing it, and there was a thin sheen of sweat already forming on his forehead and nose as he struggled to climb up the grassy hill.

As they continued their ascension, Nines had to wonder exactly why it was that Hank had decided to drag him halfway across the large, spacious lands surrounding the counseling resort. The old Lieutenant still had yet to provide a solid reason as to why they were out here, and what the purpose of this little night walk was.

Nines waited until they were completely on the top of the hill before he turned and faced Hank. He gave the older man some time to catch his breath before he smiled politely at him. “Forgive me for prying and pushing Lieutenant,” he hoped that Hank would be okay as he panted heavily a few times.

“…but what exactly are we looking for here?”

Hank held up an index finger as he panted a few more times and placed a hand over his chest. It seemed he was really trying to get control over his breathing, and he was barely able to wheeze out the response to Nines’s question. “While I was out here on ‘yard duty’”, he said with a little bit of sarcasm present in his voice while his eyes grew a little dark, yet exhausted, “I couldn’t help but notice the small cemetery a few yards ahead from where we're standing right now.”

They were ready to move on, and they silently walked side-by-side, with Nines clasping his hands tightly behind his back while Hank swung the flashlight back and forth along the grounds.
“I'm not suggesting we poke around in the graves here”, he said as he snorted, “but I feel somewhere deep down in my gut that we're gonna find something quite interesting if we look around a little bit longer here.”

Nines trusted the older man, and he let Hank lead him over to the cemetery he stated he initially found. The cemetery was huge; a large metallic gate was wide open as the vast majority of the old, chipped gravestones faced them. The grass was wildly unkempt and unattended to, and it seemed to weave around the gravestones as little vines another leaves practically were scattered up to the middle portion of the gravestones, effectively covering the names and the dates of the deceased people lying deeply beneath the ground below.

The moon was peeking down at them between some grey clouds up above, and it provided them with a little bit more of a light source as they wove their way inside the cemetery and looked down at the old gravestones at their feet.

Hank began pointing at a few of them, and he bent down at one in particular. As Nines looked down to study it, he noticed that this gravestone in particular had to have been recently cleaned and brushed of the dirt and dust the others surrounding it were covered in.

The Lieutenant pointed at the date in the center of the gravestone they stood before. “Notice anything, Nines?”

Looking down and studying the specific date up on the gravestone etched and stamped in dark letters and numbers, Nines did in fact notice something odd.

“There are two small scratch marks beneath the numbers ‘8’ and ‘5’.”

Hank smiled at him lightly, “Well spotted, Nines”, he almost beamed with pride. He soon led Nines to another gravestone at least two rows behind the one they were previously standing before. They were now at another gravestone which looked to be in the shape of an old gothic gargoyle, only the wings were badly chipped and broken off. The odd statue of the gravestone looked more like a strange monster rather than a gargoyle. It held between both of its hands a round plate bearing the date the deceased person was remembered to have entered the world on, and passed away on.

In the previous gravestone they’d studied, it was evident that Hank had also brushed this one off for a clear view as well.

“And what do you see on this one?” he asked as he stepped back and draped hand on the top of the head of the wild-looking gargoyle.

Nines quickly scanned the numbers on the round chalice-like object the gargoyle held between two clawed hands. “Two more scratch marks directly beneath the numbers ‘4’ and ‘8’…”

“I noticed that majority of the ones I found with marks like this either had an ‘8’ or a ‘9’ present. Do you think it’s a pattern, perhaps?” They both knew there was a pattern for sure, but Nines didn’t think it was alarming.

He smiled up at the Lieutenant, “The explanation is simple, Lieutenant,” he began explaining as he pointed at the numbers, “…the first gravestone scratch mark under the number eight was the date in which the individual passed away on,” he then looked at the gravestone beneath Hank’s hand.

“…and the eight here is in the number: 1998, which is the year the person was born in.”

“I thought the same way you are right now, but then I noticed this.” Hank slid to the right, moving past three more gravestones until he tapped the back of another white one with a leg.
Nines looked down at the dates etched on this one as he read them out loud: “2001-2038…” Again, the scratch marks were under the numbers: ‘1’, and ‘8’…

Nines started sensing the pattern then, and he frowned as he stared up at Hank. “The majority of these people didn’t pass away in the year ‘2038’, Hank…” he looked over at the gargoyle gravestone, “…the deceased date there reads: ‘2034’.”

“There’s a pattern here, and I’m absolutely sure of it!” Hank held a hand against his forehead, rubbing it with his open palm a few times back and forth along the skin of his forehead as he frowned, deep in thought. “I just wish I had some idea what it could be…”

Nines studied all the gravestones with the tiny scratch marks. “I think the clue may lie in the gender of the people deceased, actually…”

Hank gaped at him as he slowly dropped his hand away from his forehead, “What do you mean?”

Nines strolled back over to the first gravestone. “It’s an even number of males and females…”

Hank nodded, finally catching on. “These aren’t the victims, obviously, but do you think their genders match and represent the gender of the victims?”

“Correct.”

Hank clapped his hands together in excitement, “Yes!” he cheered as he reached out with a hand and hugged Nines briefly to his chest.

“Finally, a breakthrough!” Hank turned as he slapped his hand on Nines’s back a few times while they slowly made their way down the rows of gravestones.

“I’ll ask Fowler to send us info on the victims, and Connor and I will read up on them to see what the pattern is!”

Nines nodded at him, equally as pleased for the progress they’d made. “Wonderful, Lieutenant.”

Hank frowned slightly, “I just wish I knew what the numbers were for, but I guess I’ll find out soon.”

“You will,” Nines remained encouraging as they made their way towards the large gates of the cemetery.

Suddenly, they saw a few large shadows lurking around them. Both Hank and Nines stopped walking abruptly as they seized up in fear and panic. The shadowy figures didn’t exactly resemble people; some of them were crawling almost on all fours as they growled at Hank and Nines dangerously.

“The fuck are these??” Hank whispered as he pressed himself close to Nines, as if wanting the android to protect him.

Nines tried scanning them, but the creatures were too fast for him. They practically dashed around the cemetery within a few seconds, and they began circling the perimeter. They didn’t sound like canines or wildcats, and Nines began panicking as he couldn’t decipher what they were.

The growls grew closer and louder, and Hank began shaking as he tried remaining as calm and still as he could.
The trees and thick bushes around the cemetery began shaking, and a few heavy branches broke off a few trees and crashed down into the grass. The growling and snarling grew louder and louder by each passing second…

Suddenly, whispers and voices echoed all around the outer perimeter of the cemetery.

“Fuck, I think I can hear someone!” Hank’s eyes searched the dark, but Nines knew he couldn’t make anything out. Even he too was unable to scan anything directly in front of them as shadows seemed to move around the lining of the thick trees surrounding the cemetery, almost flying through the air…

“Nines, run!” Hank shouted as heavy footsteps approached them without a warning, while the shadowy creatures started swooping high above the ground near the trees and bushes.

Nines grabbed onto Hank’s arm, and he tore through the cemetery as he yanked the shorter man upright when he realized Hank was struggling to stand and keep up. Once on his feet, the older man seemed to be okay with trusting Nines to guide them both in the dark while he held his flashlight tightly in one hand. Both men took off sprinting as they made their way past the old gates of the cemetery. They ran down a different trail, one Nines thought led in the direction that they’d climbed up the hill, but apparently in his panic and haste, it was the wrong way to go.

Hank tried warning him with a pained cry, and it shocked Nines.

They could hear snarling and loud voices behind them, but when Nines chanced a glance over his shoulder, he couldn’t see whatever was following them.

“NINES! WRONG WAY!!”

Hank’s warning came a little too late.

It was while Nines was looking over his shoulder that everything happened so suddenly. He and Hank came to the top of a high ridge overlooking the bottom of a steep hill, when Hank slammed into Nines and sent them both tripping into the air. Nines tried to reach out and hold the older male when he realized what was happening, but it was too late to stop it. All he managed to do was tangle himself up with the falling Lieutenant as they collided onto the grass and began rolling down towards the bottom in a hurtling mass of tangled limbs. Rocks and branches dug painfully into Hank’s tender skin while cutting little scratches into Nines’s human skin. Elbows and knees slammed into sensitive areas as the pair rolled over each other numerous times dangerously. When they finally came to a rough stop at the foot of the hill, Hank’s breath was knocked out of his chest as his back smashed harshly on something hard and unyielding.

Hank grunted in pain as he tumbled down, rolling over one last time before landing hard onto his back. Nines came to a hurtling crash a second after him, arms jutting out so he wouldn’t crush Hank. His body landed directly on top of the older man, straddling Hank between both his long, powerful thighs.

The older Lieutenant lay still as he fought to regain both his breath and his equilibrium. He listened carefully for any sign of the creatures that had chased them through the forest, but the only sound that reached his ears was harsh breathing; breathing that was coming from above him...

He carefully raised the top half of his body to gaze down at both of Nines’s hands resting firmly on his chest. Wide blue eyes looked back into the shocked, pain-filled eyes of Hank Anderson. Nines had landed right on top of the other man. He opened his mouth to apologize but a shocked, angry voice stopped him in his tracks.
“Just what in the hell is going on here?!?” A few flashlights shone brightly on their shocked faces just a second later.

Nines’s gaze shot up to meet the dull blue eyes of Jose, and the wide-chocolate brown eyes of Stephie as her LED light blared red. Jose and Stephie stared at Hank and Nines in surprise before Jose placed his hands angrily on his hips.

“Mr. Westbrook! What do you think you are doing?” he asked angrily. It was then that it dawned on both Nines and Hank how this might look. Hank pushed Nines off his lap with an upwards strong, wild buck of his hips while trying not to appear guilty. He reached down and helped his android friend stand up. Hank noticed a small cut on his right temple close to Nines’s LED light, and a burgeoning cut on his right cheekbone where thirium began leaking down his cheek in a small, thin line. Hank wondered if he looked just as bad…

Jose wagged a finger at Hank while Stephie shook her head as she lowered her flashlight. “Mr. Westbrook, I expected more from you.” His eyes then moved to judge Nines while Hank removed a few bits of grass and leaves from his hair and clothing.

Jose looked particularly horrifying in the glow their flashlights gave off; his skin seemed slightly pale, and the few eyebrow rings he’d removed for the night left little gaping holes in his skin as he took a step towards Nines.

A ringed finger poked into Nines’s sternum roughly, causing him to look down at it in a mixture of shame and shock.

“And as for you, Mr. Linds…” Jose began, but Stephie took over for him as she turned off her flashlight and crossed her arms over her small chest.

“We thought you would be the last resident here to resort to such behavior, Robert!” She frowned, deeply disappointed as Hank and Nines exchanged embarrassed looks.

Jose motioned back down the path they’d came, “Get out of my sight, you two,” he sneered as he moved back, shining his flashlight down to guide their path. “We’ll discuss this in your next session, Robert.”

Nines didn’t argue as he simply walked along the path first, hearing Hank’s footsteps falling in line behind his as they marched along in silence.

“I can only wonder what your Mr. Benedict will say once he hears about your midnight romp, Robert.”

Nines had to wonder the same thing as he began worrying about the implications and inferences Jose’s statement held.

Chapter End Notes

Oh boy...poor Hank!!!
Chapter Summary

The statue that Hank and Gavin hide behind is loosely inspired by the following statue I've seen floating around on Google:
https://www.tate.org.uk/art/images/work/N/N01/N01754_9.jpg

(I'd post it in my fic but I don't want to get in trouble for nudity or sexual content.) That being said, enjoy the sex ;)

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Part A

Gavin sat on top of his memory-foam mattress comfortably as he stretched himself out to get some rest for the night until Nines returned. The interior of the cabin was suddenly a lot warmer than he’d have liked, and he slowly took off of his clothes, deciding he’d be sleeping in the nude that night.

As he settled himself beneath the sheets, Gavin couldn’t help but think about what was happening to his mind and heart as he thought about Nines. Regardless of the conversation he’d had with Cameron, Gavin still felt he really wasn’t gay. There was just no way it was possible by any stretch of the imagination. It wasn’t that Gavin was close-minded; he just knew who he was, how he was, and what he liked. He enjoyed the feeling of a woman bouncing on his lap wildly as she threw back her long hair while riding him. He loved grabbing a fistful of large breasts; not a cock. But still, even though these things excited him as he lay there in his bed that night, the more he tried forcing himself to think about having sex with a hot woman, the more Gavin Reed found that he wasn’t getting sexually aroused at all.

It was a simple case of what had once worked now wasn't, but he had no idea why.

Something had to be wrong with him. Perhaps the long dry-spell had really gotten to him more than he thought. Whatever it was, there was just no way his body was going to only react to naked men, now. All his life, he couldn’t remember once being attracted to a man, however, now his mind was flooded with thoughts and images of Nines only. It was all he was able to think about and focus on, and before Gavin knew it, he was palming his erect dick beneath the clean sheets.

Gavin imagined fucking Nines’ brains out, and having the android fuck his brains out too, but he realized that those feelings only existed for Nines. If Gavin had to now place his sexuality somewhere, he’d label himself as ‘Nines-sexual’.

He laughed as he thought of that, but his laughter was interrupted by the front door of the cabin bursting open as Nines stumbled in wildly in a flash of black. As he entered the small bedroom, Gavin gasped when he noticed how much of a mess Nines seemed to be, and how frightened and shaken he looked.

Nines had light scratch marks on his cheeks and dried up thirium plastered on his cheeks that ran down to his chin. His eyes were wide, and his body shook as his clothing was ripped and torn. It was
also muddy and dirty in many places…

Gavin pointed at him, “What the hell happened to you?”

Nines didn’t immediately answer as he took off his dark running shoes and began stripping himself of his dirty clothes. Gavin’s eyes widened, and his jaw dropped open as he took in the delicious sight of Nines getting fully naked before his eyes, slowly. It didn’t exactly count as a sexy striptease, but Gavin wasn’t complaining either way.

“Something chased Lieutenant Anderson and I after we were examining the cemetery!” Nines threw off his coat and shirt in one dirty, muddy bunch on the floor next to the little round night table between his bed and Gavin’s.

“Did you see what it was?”

Nines shook his head as he began struggling to take off his dark jeans. Gavin held back a whimper when he saw Nines’s heavy cock hanging limp in his dark shorts beneath the jeans.

What the fuck…why was he so needy lately?! Gavin felt like a pervert for getting off on Nines disrobing when it was clear that something had spooked him.

“No! It just looked and sounded like flying dog-cat…things!!” Nines looked down at his shorts and noticing that they too had traces of mud and grass wedged halfway down them, he growled as he pulled them completely down his thighs. “I want this stupid stuff off me!!” He began kicking away at the rest of his dirty clothes, sending them sailing across the hardwood floor and hiding somewhere beneath Gavin’s bed.

Gavin couldn’t help but gape openly at Nines’ now exposed cock as it hung heavily between his legs before his eyes.

“So, umm, were you attacked or something?” He felt lust and raw sexual desire clouding his eyes and mind, and he could barely make out the question as he felt himself hardening beneath his own sheets.

Nines sat down on the edge of his bed as he faced Gavin. “No! I was trying to make sure Hank wouldn’t hurt himself while we were running away, but we tripped, and I fell on top of Hank after we rolled down a large hill!”

Gavin nearly burst out in laughter as his mind played a version of what he thought that scene would look like. “That’s kinda funny, Nines!”

Nines huffed angrily at him, cheeks puffing out as he glared, “I don’t find it particularly amusing!” he ran a hand through his hair, “Jose and Stephie found me on top of Hank!!”

Gavin couldn’t hold back anymore. He laughed harder than he’d had in a while, and his stomach and sides soon ached and burned as he pressed a hand over his lips. Though he tried muffling his laughs while Nines threw him dark scowls across his bed, it was difficult to achieve given how angry Nines was.

“It’s not funny.”

Gavin had to disagree, and he expressed this in rounds of loud, boisterous laughter that bounced off the cabin walls. In the midst of his laughter, the bedsheets slid off his thighs, and exposed his own naked body to Nines. The android gasped as he pointed at Gavin’s cock.
“Again?!?”

This time, Gavin didn’t seem shy as he nodded over at Nines. “It’s not like you haven’t seen it before, babe.”

As Nines fumed at him, Gavin turned to his night table by the other side of his bed. He grabbed one tissue and held it out to Nines. “You should clean off your face.”

Nines tore the tissue out of his hands and wiped away the rest of the thirium on his cheeks. He noticed the way Gavin’s eyes were glancing constantly at his penis while smiling widely, and it infuriated him. After everything that he’d gone through that night, he didn’t need Gavin mocking him any further!

Nines wanted to embarrass Gavin, and without properly thinking about what he wanted to do, he threw himself on top of Gavin after discarding the blue tissue on the floor. Both nude men rolled around on Gavin’s bed, fighting for dominance, though it soon turned into a playful moment as they both chuckled and wrapped themselves in the sheets.

Gavin wasn’t fully prepared for Nines’ playful attack, and he tried getting control over the situation, but Nines was faster. He felt Gavin struggling against him, and it made him madder as he gripped Gavin’s wrists tightly in his own and tried pinning the man down onto the mattress firmly, so he wouldn’t struggle more.

Nines hoped this was ‘funny’ enough for Gavin, and he pressed himself down over Gavin’s hips when he felt the man trying to slide his legs out from beneath his own. All that did was trap their bodies closely together, causing more heat and more friction between their bodies.

As their struggles soon slowed down, Nines looked at Gavin’s lips and then slowly up to his eyes. He felt himself relaxing on top of Gavin, and very soon, he felt the prominent, obvious erection Gavin was sporting pressing against his hips as they slowed down their play fighting and just felt and saw each other.

Gavin felt Nines’ lips on his, and he soon lost himself in the kiss. Their kiss soon began turning heated as Nines wedged a leg between Gavin’s, sliding them open as he pressed his tongue deep inside Gavin’s mouth…

They were both beyond hard, and they had to break the kiss so Gavin could have some air. They stared at each other for many long minutes, the small lamps resting on the night tables lighting up their facial expressions as they blushed at each other.

Gavin pressed a kiss to the center of Nines’ smooth chest as he lay flatly beneath Nines. He sighed, “What’re we doin’, Nines?”

The android smirked at him, his LED light yellow. “I’m not sure; I’m trying to figure it out myself.”

Gavin looked at Nines’s well-defined, strong collarbone, leaning down to bite it gently as he moaned. “Do you want to stop this?”

Nines didn’t hesitate to answer while he enjoyed the little nibbles Gavin was bestowing upon his neck. “No, I don’t.”

“Good,” Gavin hissed as he licked a small line up Nines’ long neck, “…because I don’t fuckin’ want to, either.”

Their lips were at the mercy of each other’s once more, and Gavin moaned softly in response to
Nines’ pulling his lower lip with his teeth gently. He was just happy and liberated to feel throbbing heat spreading deliciously along his body and pool between his legs.

They kissed each other like that for many minutes before Nines pressed his hard penis against Gavin’s when he slid up to place his hands on either side of Gavin’s body. That resulted in them both uttering loud, passionate groans, and Gavin began panting as he thought of something he wanted to try with Nines.

“Nines,” he whispered, lust really clear in his voice as his eyes were half-lidded. “I’m gonna turn to my side, and I want you to do the same but get behind me, okay?”

Not questioning it, the deviant android did as he was instructed to do. The sheets rustled as Nines’ heavy cock dragged itself along Gavin’s hips, and Gavin felt his own cock weeping in response to the tender, wet feeling as Nines finally lay on his side behind him. Nines pressed a kiss to Gavin’s left shoulder as he looked at the back of Gavin’s head. “Now what?”

“Spread your legs.”

He did as he was told again, and soon, Gavin felt Nines’ hard cock poking the back of his legs, and he involuntarily moved back against the source of it, feeling the hot warm pressure sliding between his thighs as he inched back.

Nines gasped while Gavin wrapped a hand around the pillow they shared. He bit down hard on his tongue, his toes and fingers tingling as he felt Nines throbbing with excitement; the pulse steady-but-oh-so-present…

“G-Gavin…”

“Shhh,” Gavin sighed and cooed as he closed his eyes and began really enjoying the moment and their closeness.

Letting instincts he never knew he had take over, Nines let his body guide the rest of his movements, and he nudged open Gavin’s strong thighs. He began pushing them apart enough to slide his cock right in-between, aiming to rub the head of his cock against Gavin’s tender, wet, delicious hole.

Gavin’s head rose up to the side before it came crashing back down against their pillow, his breathing low. “Yeeeesss!!!” he pressed his ass back against Nines, almost desperately. “Like th-that, Nines, keep doin’ that!”

Wanting to help his Nines, Gavin pressed his thighs together, strongly clamping them down once Nines’ cock had slid directly between them. It was sandwiched between the insides of both his thighs perfectly, and his head was spinning 100 miles an hour. He felt his hips moving back against Nines’. He resisted the urge to bite down hard on Nines’ neck when he turned around to kiss it.

“Christ, Nines…I need this so fuckin’ much.” He spat out in a warm garble, nearly drooling when he felt a pressure against his cock, and it twitched, growing even harder.

Nines’ chest lifted with his increasing breaths, and his long fingers wrapped around Gavin’s cock once he draped a strong hand over his hip. He gave Gavin’s cock a curious-but-firm squeeze. It forced a deep growl from Gavin’s throat, and it was a sound Nines loved.

“Let me,” he said as he whispered huskily, and he moved the massive prick up between Gavin’s thighs. He had little knowledge of what exactly they were meant to do, but this was something he could do, and he seemed to adore it as he felt how soft-yet-firm Gavin felt in front of him.
Gavin squeezed the long shaft between his thighs, and then slowly, so slowly, he worked them like the bow singing on a violin. He turned his head to give Nines a peck on the cheek, and he slid his body backwards, shifting his weight. He let his balls press against his Nines’ hard cock, gasping through his open mouth.

Here, with his Nines’ breath panting in his ears, Gavin felt content. He smiled when the android’s hands began gliding up and down his chest and belly, over his nipples, his hand occasionally settling to the root of his prick… Gavin felt as if he truly had some power. The way Nines’ cock hardened from mid-way to full on erection as Gavin glided his thighs back and forth, the way it would pulse, the way he could almost see the blood pumping in that long, thick, prominent blue vein-- oh, a shiver ran through him.

When Nines angled his hips just in the right position, Gavin’s head began spinning. He felt Nines dig his fingers into his hip as he held onto him tightly, and Gavin pressed his own hand down hard over Nines’ at his hip.

“Aah—ye-yes, I—” Gavin’s mouth fell open and a moan fluttered out, his voice unable to form words for a moment. “Aah, I’ll be paying you back twice fold for this.”

“Hmm, I’ll h-hold you to that promise…” Nines gently bit on Gavin’s earlobe as he worked his hips into the man pressed against his chest and hips. All he could focus on was how hot and wet the insides of Gavin’s thighs felt, and he kept fucking his way behind him, his cock slipping almost completely out from between Gavin’s legs a few times because of how fast he was suddenly going.

Gavin clenched his thighs together when he felt a strong pressure against his balls, sliding back and forth along his perineum, each time barely missing his hole as Nines moved his hips violently behind him. Gavin grabbed Nines’ hands, bringing them back down from over his hip and onto his own hard cock pressed against the sheets.

It drew out a pleasurable gasp out of Nines that soon turned into a groan. He began thrusting faster against Gavin’s ass and hips at first, then suddenly he quickened the pace brutally. Without warning, he began slamming his hips strongly against Gavin’s frame.

“I love h-how tight it feels…Gavin…”

Nines was right; it surprisingly felt good, and Gavin moaned softly in reply, feeling his biology give way to the android who had previously terrified him to the point where he’d once detested him…

“Ahh- Ff, fnn!” Nines’ hips began to pop while Gavin’s hand guided his own to tug faster at Gavin’s cock in a frenzied mindlessness brought on by his own impending orgasm. Gavin showed no mercy. His legs moved quickly, while Nines’ hand tugged, flicking foreskin up and down. His hand slicked the dewdrops of cum oozing out up and down that sensitive head, giving just the slightest edge of his fingers into it as he firmly massaged the head of Gavin’s cock.

Nines delighted in the way Gavin whined ahead of him, his fingernails digging into the flesh of Nines’ arms-definitely leaving deep red marks, but he found that image even more sexy, and he bit down hard on the back of Gavin’s neck. His tongue swirled over Gavin’s heated, sweaty flesh and his brain gathered up analysis of the deliciously sweet salty taste that was specifically and only Gavin Reed.

Gavin doubled over, his hands falling down to find purchase on the mattress suddenly, and the temperature of his heated body in contrast to Nines’ cooler torso behind his own mixed with the smell of sex, sweat, and arousal was all it took for him to finally explode.
“Fuuuuuck!” He rode out his orgasm, spilling all over Nines’ hand and the top of his own thighs.

Nines soon followed due to the sight of Gavin falling apart before him, and as he did a quick bio-

scan, he was happy to know that Gavin’s heart was racing at 100 beats per minute, and his brain had released tons of endorphins into his system in sheer pleasure as he shook in the last bits of his powerful orgasm. This all led to Nines spilling on the back of Gavin’s legs and all over his ass. He looked down between their bodies to watch the clear liquid that resembled water shooting out of his cock slit, and it coated Gavin’s tight ass, dripping down onto the sheets and mattress beneath them.

Nines kissed all the way down the back of Gavin’s neck to the center of his back, his nose rubbing down the heated, flushed flesh. He was about to say something endearing to Gavin, when soft snores hit his audio receptors.

He peeked over at Gavin from the side, and he giggled softly when he saw Gavin sleeping like a baby.

Nines pressed a kiss to Gavin’s cheek and wrapped both his arms around Gavin’s body. He quickly cleaned off Gavin’s back and ass with one end of the sheet before he snuggled up as closely and tightly against Gavin as he could without waking the slumbering detective up.

Gavin was shocked to see that he’d actually physically worn Nines out for the entire morning and afternoon. The android woke shortly after 9 AM with him, but when they’d received emails stating their therapy sessions were canceled, they both went back to sleep for at least another hour and half.

The sessions were indeed canceled for majority of the morning and afternoon due to the fact that the owner of Heaven’s Salvage was dropping by to visit and check up on things. Philip Wesson and his wife Rosemary were an elderly couple who’d first purchased the large mansion back in 2000. After Philip’s father had passed away, he’d left his son with a large, neat sum of an inheritance, and Philip and Rosemary had worked hard on renovating and expanding the mansion. Finally, before their retirement, they’d both purchased more land around the mansion, and built a large auditorium on the other side of the mansion-turned-counselling center, followed by installing plenty of large cabins around the land they’d bought, too.

That was how the history of the place supposedly went, and it was a well-known fact that the elderly couple would drop by every season to visit the couples who were staying in the mansion as guests while they attended the programs.

Gavin didn’t really care as long as the investigation was developing. He let Nines sleep on his bed-still naked-as he stood out on the front porch smoking a cigarette.

The late morning wasn’t as hot as it had been during the first week of their stay at Heaven’s Salvage, and Gavin was grateful as he stared ahead at the large mansion up ahead of all the cabins. To the right of it was the large auditorium, though no one had been inside it yet.

Everything seemed silent, and it provided Gavin with enough peace and quiet to think about everything that had happened between him and Nines last night.

So they’d had sex…in a way.

At least the part that involved ‘admitting’ things had been easy to get over…for Gavin’s brain anyway. When he’d woken up that morning completely nude next to the masculine form of Nines right next to his own, it finally dawned on Gavin that he’d slept with a man for the first time ever in
his entire life.

He had shocked himself when he realized he hadn’t been panicking over it, regretting it, or freaking out in any way. He’d simply taken one look at the soft skin on Nines’ cheeks, and it’d beckoned him to reach out and stroke his thumb over it. He studied a few of the freckles Nines’ cheeks were peppered with, and when the sunlight beamed in through one of the cabin windows and hit Nines’s form juuuuust right…yeah…

Gavin had another hardon within a minute.

He resorted instead to having a cigarette as he asked himself the same question he’d meant to ask last night, before Nines had barged in on him and interrupted his thoughts.

Was he gay?

Again, Gavin felt himself rationalizing that it was probably just a one-time-thing that had happened due to stress and frustration, but the moment he looked at Nines’s firm, toned, naked body, his own cock told him that he was so full of shit.

But he still didn’t find other men attractive at all. That was a fact, as even the thought of Cameron’s naked chest made Gavin feel slightly sick as he tried steadying his hands while holding his cigarette.

He definitely had to be slightly gay…but it seemed it was reserved only for Nines. He didn’t know how to label it or categorize it, and it began bothering Gavin a lot more than he’d have liked. One thing was for certain though; after experiencing what he had with Nines last night, he was positive he was never going to want to fuck a woman for as long as he lived…

He was gay.

So Gavin Reed was gay.

Big deal.

He sighed as he admitted it to himself only, smiling down at the grass, as if they too now knew of his little secret.

Some time passed, and Gavin began wondering what else Jose and Stephie could have planned for group sessions, when his phone vibrated.

Nines shifted on his bed, and Gavin regretted not closing the front door of the cabin as he turned and watched Nines fling an arm over his forehead as he turned to the side for a more comfortable position.

The android looked even cuter when he was sleeping, and Gavin felt his cheeks and ears heat up with another text came in.

Sighing as he pulled out his phone, he read over the messages he’d received from Hank as he frowned in confusion. He tried studying them again closer, and he put his cigarette between his lips, holding them gently between his teeth as he used both his thumbs to scroll down the long paragraph of stretched out texts Hank had sent.

The first read:

Anderson: while the bosses r busy with showin the owners of this joint around, u should meet me’n connor for a chat…I think we got something, but it’s not good news…
And then, the second text consisted of five names arranged in a list. That was what confused Gavin the most as he went over the list of people with dates attached to their names.

**Beverley Perkins- 1999-2038**

**Andrew Morlan- 2001-2037**

**Thomas Klinehart- 2002-2038**

**Jennifer Clark- 2001-2035**

**Hailey Coleman-2003-2039**

The names didn’t mean anything to Gavin, and he had a hunch that they weren’t going to have much to do with the names of the victims either. Whoever these people were, they clearly had some relation to Heaven’s Salvage, though Gavin didn’t know what it was.

He finished his cigarette as he decided now would be the best time to meet up with Hank and Connor. He snuck back inside the cabin and hurriedly dressed in the bathroom so he wouldn’t wake Nines up. Drawing down most of the curtains of the cabin, Gavin finally left Nines to have a peaceful rest as he made his way towards the mansion.

It wasn’t exactly dead inside the mansion; it was more like a ‘free/spare period’. Majority of the other couples lingered about in the large grand hall, much like they had the first day that Gavin and Nines had shown up to the resort.

They were mostly sitting down before the large fireplace to the right of the grand hall, while others were lounging on cream-colored, soft, cushiony chaises by the windows. Stephie was about to give Rosemary and Philip a tour, and she was currently speaking to them in her office located at the end of the hall on the first floor of the mansion.

Gavin was able to see her excitedly moving her arms around as she was dressed in her absolute best: a glittery tank-top that had the words: ‘Heaven’s Salvage’ written on it, and her make-up was perfectly caked on. She looked like a doll as her lip-glossed lips muttered and chatted with the couple in her office, but Gavin decided not to spy on her as he stopped watching from the little view he got from the glass insert of the office door.

He trudged along the long halls, trying to stay out of everyone’s way as his phone vibrated. This time, however, it wasn’t a text; it was an invitation to Facetime with both Hank and Connor…

Gavin knew he needed privacy for this, and as he ran down the large halls past the big, luminous windows which poured down bright sunlight that made the chandeliers above on the ceiling gleam and shine. It was all so damn bright, and Gavin felt as if he were a tiny ant beneath an evil kid’s magnifying glass being scorched to death slowly in the heat of the sun…

He rounded a corner when his phone vibrated loudly. A few feet away, in a small room that seemed to be a library located to the left, Will and Cameron were cuddling together by a book nook against a large window. The sound of Gavin’s phone made their heads turn away from each other, and they smiled and waved at Gavin.

Gavin awkwardly waved back as he hid himself beneath another small staircase that was an alternative route to the second floor of the mansion.
Swiping his fingers along his phone screen, Gavin finally connected the video call with Hank. Soon, Connor’s image appeared on the screen as well, dividing all three of their screens in three squares as they all stared at each other awkwardly.

Connor waved first, “Hey!!”

“SHH!” Gavin hissed as he stared around the halls while he was still cramped beneath the stairs.

Connor pressed a hand over his mouth as his eyes went wide.

Hank smiled at him, “How’re you doin’, Connor?”

Connor leaned into the screen as he spoke softly into the phone: “I’m good; I’m all tampon-free now!”

Gavin sighed as he felt a headache coming already. He decided to get right down to business, before he was discovered. “Hank, what were those names about?”

He saw the older man frown as he took off his ‘cleaning crew cap’ and threw it down at his side angrily. “There was no connection between the names of the people I sent ya, and the victims.”

Of course not.

“What’d you mean?”

Hank frowned at him as he explained how at first, he was certain that the markings and numbers on the gravestones he and Nines had discovered would lead to a clue regarding the deceased people’s gravestones linking to the victims. But, as it turned out, none of the victims were even the same age as the deceased people, nor were they the same genders. That sad fact extended even beyond considering the genders of the android victims, who didn't seem to match the deceased humans, either.

Hank went on to explain that Captain Fowler had forwarded him the names of the androids, even, and it got even more complex, seeing as the androids didn’t have birthdates…

There was no real link at all. None of the victims knew each other, and they didn’t ever interact with the deceased people. The people were only guests of Heaven’s Salvage who were highly successful in the program, and they’d also donated a lot of money towards renovating the mansion throughout the years. Gavin supposed that’s how and why they came to be remembered, though.

“I still have more of a hunch that something’s off, but I don’t think we’ll find it soon.”

Gavin had to agree with that assessment Hank made, but before he could say anything, he heard the door of Stephie’s office opening…

Panicking, he cowered down as he whispered to Hank and Connor: “I have to get goin’, Stephie looks like she’s gonna turn down around this corner!”

Simultaneously, Hank gasped as he too was walking somewhere in the mansion presently. His eyes narrowed as he stared at something off-screen.

“What?” Gavin asked, eyes staring up to see a few people’s feet stepping and moving around the mansion, and soon it seemed as if the guests were clearing the way for the owners quickly.

“Hank?!? Today would be a good day!”
“I see Jose heading into the storage and utility closet!!!”

Gavin’s heart skipped a beat. “What’s he going there for?”

“He probably is going to replace the cleaning bottles and jars with more Aconite!!” Connor looked frightened, and his screen shook as he stumbled with his phone in his hands.

“Let’s track him down and see what he’s doin’!” Gavin hissed as they both nodded in agreement with his plan. “I wanna be the first to catch that asshole red-handed.” Gavin ended their call quickly. He knew where the storage closet was; it wasn’t too far from where he was right now, thankfully.

He waited until he saw Stephie’s black and pink striped flip flops move past the bottom of the staircase, and he saw the black dress shoes of Philip, followed by the tiny white-heeled shoes of Rosemary clicking beside him. He heard Stephie cry out: “Chrissie! Michelle! Stop making out!!”

When he was absolutely certain their voices were at least two halls down, Gavin moved out from beneath the protection the underside of the staircase had provided. He tore his way down the halls and made a quick right. Within seconds, he’d slammed into the back of Hank Anderson.

The man was wearing a white t-shirt that simply read: ‘cleaning crew’ on the back in grey font and white painter pants. Gavin knocked his cap off his head upon impact when he collided with the other man, but he bent down to pick it up as they both silently hid behind a large statue of a nude man wrestling with a giant cobra down by his hips where it coiled around and between his thighs. The cobra was stretching out forward to bite the face of another man kneeling before the feet of the man standing, his mouth wide open in terror…

Gavin and Hank leaned their heads to the side of the statue as they spied on Jose entering the utility closet with something they couldn’t see in his hands. He headed inside, closing the door behind him.

Gavin tapped on Hank’s shoulder, “He had something in his hands!”

“I know!” Hank waved him off as he stared at the door. They both counted down to almost a full minute before Jose walked back out. This time, his hands were completely empty…

Hank and Gavin exchanged knowing looks of suspicion. When Jose was gone, they both nodded as they crept their way along towards the door of the storage and utility closet. They reached it swiftly and deftly in no time, and Hank gently grabbed the door handle, pushing it down as he opened the door slowly.

Gavin followed him in, shutting the door the same time he turned on the lights. The room was much the same as it had been the first time they were in it, but they had to search everywhere.

Hank began quietly looking through buckets and containers stacked on the black shelves all over the walls, while Gavin searched through any cleaning product he could find. He pushed past the ones posing no obvious sign of a threat or bearing suspicion. Hank had collected the ‘Windex’ bottles storing the Aconite he’d found, which made things a little easier.

Gavin unscrewed the caps and tops of other jars and bottles, but it appeared that all the cleaning products and items were just regular ones…

Hank slammed a hand down against his thigh, “Damn it! There’s nothing here!”

Gavin nodded, “I can’t find anything.”

Hank looked confused as he scratched at his forehead, “But then why would Jose come in here for?
He’s not part of the cleaning crew…”

As if providing the answer for them, Gavin’s phone buzzed again. They both gasped, Hank telling him to shut it off before it drew attention to them.

Gavin fished it out of his jean pockets as he turned the volume of it down and finally answered it. “What?!?” he whispered in an irritated voice as he paced the small closet while Hank looked on in anger and frustration.

“You guys, did you find anything?” Connor’s excited voice was on the other end of the line, and Gavin sighed.

“No,” he looked at Hank’s worried face and said: “It’s just Connor.”

Hank suddenly frowned, “Wait, where is he? He was supposed to be behind following us…”

Gavin felt himself panicking as he relayed the same question to Connor. “Connor, where are you?”

He heard a tapping sound before Connor answered, “I’m close to the closet door.”

Gavin paused when he heard footsteps running quickly towards the door. “Connor, why’re you running like that for?”

He panted, “Because Stephie and the owners are near me.”

“SHIT!!” Gavin dropped the phone, springing into action. He opened the door quickly, his hand snaking out and grabbing the collar of Connor’s bright orange Polo shirt as he dragged him inside the closet in one hurried motion.

He slammed Connor against Hank’s chest as he pressed his ear to the door, listening carefully. On the other side of the door, he heard Stephie squeal as she giggled and spoke in her high-pitched voice to the owners.

Gavin breathed a soft sigh of relief. That was close!

He turned to address Connor, when he saw the propped-up collar of the bright Polo shirt, and the tight jean shorts Connor was wearing that barely came up to the top of his thighs…

“What the fuck?!?”

Connor shifted his blue flip-flopped feet. “What’s the matter?” He tilted a curious eyebrow at Gavin, his expression growing into a concerned one.

Gavin pointed at the tight jean shorts. “The fuck are you wearin’?!?”

Hank snickered, “Clothes, obviously.”

Gavin wore a look of absolute horror and abhorrence as he looked at Connor up and down, jaw dropping slowly the more he looked at him. “You look like a fuckin’ twink!”

Connor raised an eyebrow but didn’t press on. “Did you guys find anything?” he asked eagerly.

Gavin and Hank both answered as they cast their eyes down at the floor in disappointment.

“Oh…guess that’s a ‘no’, then.” Connor looked at the door of the closet as his eyes went a little glossy. “You should step away from the door, Gavin.”
Gavin glared up at him, “Why?”

“Because they’re gonna open it.”

FUCK!

Gavin spun around fast, and in his state of panic, he grabbed Connor’s arm in a hand as he tried helping them all to make a quick run for it before they were spotted. Unfortunately, in the haste of their previous searching, Hank had pushed one of the shelves roughly to the side, revealing a sharp hook in the wall that was supposed to help hold it up.

As Gavin slid Connor’s body along the wall to stand before his own, ready to push him out the door, the belt loop on side of Connor’s jean shorts caught on the sharp hook. His eyes went wide as he gasped, “Gavin!!”

Gavin wasn’t listening; his eyes were on the door handle that was currently being pushed down from the other side of the door.

Hank was right behind Gavin, eagerly trying to push them all out the door. He pressed both his hands against Gavin’s back, trying to usher him forward. The hook around Connor’s jean shorts unfortunately gave way due to their pushing.

The door handle was pushed down, and the door was slowly opening…

Hank lurched forward in panic, stepping down roughly on the hem of Gavin’s jeans. Gavin tried worming his way out from under Hank’s weight, but the motion caused his jeans to shimmy down his hips and thighs. Fear flooded Gavin’s mind, and he gave Connor’s back one last shove to get him unstuck.

“Stoooop!” Connor gasped with wide eyes, and a loud RIIIPPP! sounded suddenly. As Connor was shoved forward, the hook tore the side of his jean shorts clean off. The rest of it fell off in one downwards fall as it hung around his ankles.

Ahead of him, the door swung open more, and as Connor landed against it, it swung completely open. Like three dominos, Connor, Gavin, and Hank fell down on top of each other in that order, right down on the hard floor.

Hank and Gavin groaned in pain while Connor looked up directly at the three gaping mouths of Stephie, Philip, and his wife Rosemary.

His LED light spun yellow, but he offered them a small smile, “Hi…”

Rosemary screamed in terror as her husband shielded her eyes by cradling her against his chest.

Gavin soon heard gasps and snickering all around, and while trying to pull his jeans back up, he saw half the entire group members peering down at him. Some of them were shaking their heads pitifully, while others were red from holding back serious laughter.

He was so fucking embarrassed.

Stephie sighed as she wrung her hands nervously while her LED light turned red. She tossed Gavin an accusatory glare. “Well, I guess it seems like you’re a perfect match for Robert after all, Jack.”
The entire group was gathered in the entrance hall of the mansion after Philip and his wife had left. Gavin was sure they were going to look for the nearest mental hospital to check themselves into after the afternoon’s events. He hadn’t bothered to explain just what exactly had happened earlier in the afternoon to Nines, but he was certain the android picked up on it when he whispered to Gavin that he’d heard Jose tell ‘Don Westbrook’ that his days at Heaven’s Salvage were numbered.

As they all waited for Stephie and Jose to finish chatting among themselves, many people threw angry glares at Gavin.

“How could you cheat on Robert for, Jack?!?” Peter the android hissed at him as he looked over at Nines. “He’s such a man-hunk! If you don’t want him, shit, I’ll take him!”

Gavin snarled at him as Stephie and Jose turned to address the group. Jose was wearing a rainbow-colored sweater and white skinny jeans, and he was holding a Chinese fan in one hand that was closed. Stephie was still dressed in the same outfit she’d been seen in while giving the owners of Heaven’s Salvage a tour, however, her makeup had faded a little. Gavin thought she really looked a little worn-out.

He couldn’t say he blamed her, truly.

Jose opened the Chinese fan as he began fanning his face with it, despite the AC being on in the entire mansion. “Alright guys,” he let his eyes wander over everyone as he stood as tall as he could,
“since some of you seem to be finding it hard to keep it in your pants,” he glared at Gavin and Nines, emphasizing the words, “we’re going to have a change of activity.”

Stephie pointed out the doors: “To the auditorium! Now!!”

A few people groaned.

Peter raised his hand high. “Umm excuse me, Stephie?”

She sighed, “Yes Peter?”

“I don’t see why we all have to be punished just because Jack and Robert are off-the-top horny all the time.”

His husband Max leaned in and whispered in Peter’s ears: “You better hope I don’t get horny.”

Jose snapped his fan shut. “Let’s go, now!”

They didn’t argue as they made their way to the exits, and they had to cross a little patch of a wooded area as they began nearing the large auditorium. Its lights were brightly lit, and it seemed to shine brightly as they approached it.

Max broke off a small, thin, leafless branch of a tree along the way, and he kept poking it and prodding it into Peter’s back and ass as they walked on.

Nines and Gavin exchanged worried looks as they only wondered what Jose and Stephie had in store for them all…

Once they were inside the auditorium, Gavin felt himself calming down as he forgot about all the dark thoughts of Jose and Stephie torturing everyone in punishment.

The auditorium was beautiful. It was filled with at least one-hundred-and-fifty red cushion fold-up seats. A little balcony was also placed high in the air at the four corners of the auditorium, providing an extra thirty seats total. Matching red curtains were pulled back as they rested above on a large black stage with headlights beaming above.

The floor of the stage shined beneath the lights, and they all could see a large treasure chest in the center of the stage staring at them.

As they all gathered around the front of the stage, Stephie began handing out small slips of paper while Jose waited until everyone had a piece. Once they did, he flung his Chinese fan open.

“You’re all going to put on an improv dramatic play for Stephie and I,” he gestured at the slips of paper in their hands and he rested a foot on top of the closed treasure chest.

“You should all have a character now, and you can pick a few unique, decorative props to make the play more interesting.”

Gavin held up a shaky hand. “What’s the play about?” Oh, how he hated drama. It was his least favourite topic all throughout school, and he couldn’t believe that at the age of 36, he was going to have to go through with it now.

Jose smirked cruelly and viciously at him, “Temptations and carnal lust!”

A few people cheered, while others gasped as they made their way up the stage, already opening the treasure chest.
Gavin looked down at the slip of paper in his hands. His character was: **Boyfriend 2 of Couple 1**

He snuck a peek at Nines’ character. It read: **Boyfriend 1 of Couple 2**

Fuck!

He began panicking, meeting Nines’ equally-disturbed eyes for a moment before Stephie separated them. “You will have roughly fifteen minutes to put on a play of two vastly different couples!” She walked around the room as people selected their props and played with them like children.

“One couple will give into the lustful desires; one won’t.”

Jose fanned himself, “Who’s the ‘Observer’?”

He searched the crowd before one of the human males Gavin didn’t remember the name of shyly raised a hand.

Jose pointed his fan at the man as he snapped it shut. “You! Sit with us!” He walked the man down to third row of the red seats as he propped his own feet on the back of the one before himself while Stephie sat beside him.

Gavin guessed the role of the observer was easy; just fucking observe.

He soon walked around the stage to find who was going to play the role of his boyfriend, but he found that it was actually a *girlfriend*. He was paired up with Megan, and she didn’t appear so pleased as she pulled her long blonde hair back in a tight bun while looking over at her lover Silvia.

“Relax, I won’t hit on you.” Gavin saw her LED light flicker from yellow to blue, and she nodded as she held a small flowery sunhat in her hands…her chosen prop.

Gavin’s curiosity bit into him, and he looked across the stage to see Nines paired up with the older of the age-gap couple; Mitch…

His chest burned with jealousy and anger, wondering why he was paired with a woman, while Nines was paired with a male. Jose *had* said they would have two vastly different couples, but he had no idea it would be *this* fucking much of a difference...

Megan appeared to have read his mind for him, and she put on her hat as she looked up at him with her large, baby-blue eyes, “The ratio of males to females is too much.”

Gavin glared at Mitch as he plastered a fake mustache to his upper lip. “Fuckin’ hate this shit.”

Megan gently and reluctantly looped her arm around his, “I do too, but we don’t have a choice.”

Gavin learned in exactly fifteen minutes that the Seven Deadly Sins were major characters in the ‘play’. He was able to tell who played which sin, as he studied everyone.

Max played *Pride*, and he simply had an arrow which displayed the name taped onto the front of his skull and crossbones t-shirt.

Cameron was *Wrath*, and he held a toy gun in his hands as he stormed around the stage.

Caleb-Mitch’s younger partner-seemed to be *Sloth*, and he stupidly and un-creatively was walking around extra slowly while he held up his phone which had the picture of a sloth hanging from a tree
Gluttony was played by Michelle, and she tied a half-deflated lifesaver around her waist, as if to make herself appear chubbier.

Chrissie was Envy (fitting), and she had little green goggles on as she glared at Michelle.

Peter was Lust, and he had on a crudely cut-out green bush taped over his crotch and two cut-out strawberries made from cardboard pasted on his nipples as he danced and gyrated around Max.

Finally, Greed was played by one of the other human males, and all he did was keep a lot of treasure and trinkets to himself as he hauled them around stage.

There were also the characters of a demon, an angel, a witch, and cupid. Silvia played the witch, and she had on a pointy hat and a crooked nose prop she’d slid onto her nose. Steve was the cupid, and he had on a blonde, curly wig with a little white dress that had wings attached to the back of it. William was the angel, and he simply had a halo on his head. And last but not least, Steve’s lover (another android) played the demon, and he simply had little devil horns on his head.

When Jose opened his fan again, it signaled the start of the play as the ‘Observer’ played with his nails.

Silvia ran across the stage, cackling as she pretended to be casting spells everywhere.

The two main couples sat in the center of the stage, and Gavin noticed how intently Mitch was eyeing Nines…

He growled, but Megan gently elbowed him to get his attention before someone else noticed as she sat stiffly beside him.

As Silvia went off-stage, Cupid-Steve walked on next as he threw little bits of confetti down at the couples while dancing around each of them in small circles.

He threw his head back and spoke in a high-pitched British accent: “I speak of tales of love and write poems of love!!”

“Louder!” Jose ordered, fanning himself faster as he barked out the word.

“Oh, em!” Steve coughed, “I speak of tales of love, and write poems of lovee!!”

Jose sighed, “Drop the accent, Steve.”

He glared at Jose while still spreading confetti down at Nines’s and Mitch’s heads as he spoke in his regular deep voice, “My name’s not Steve, it’s-”

The angel followed, soon, and William hummed as he gently touched the couple’s heads as he walked by them. “Y-y-you lovely h-h-humans,” he seemed to be ‘blessing’ them all.

 “…I’ll sh-share the g-g-gift of l-love with you a-all!”

When he was finished, the demon walked by them, and he cackled menacingly.

Mitch forcefully suddenly grabbed Nines’s hands in his own as he sat closer to the android, “Oh no! I sense some ‘lust’ in the air!”

At that moment, Peter danced on the stage, his hips twerking as he practically humped the back of
Gavin’s neck, the cardboard cut-out bush gliding into his hair roughly. Gavin swatted at him, “Fuck off!!”

“JACK! That’s not part of the script!” Jose screamed, pointing his fan at him.

“There is no scri-”

"Shh!!!" Megan interrupted the argument as she watched Cameron and Max walk behind the lustful Peter.

Cameron waved his toy gun around as he flexed his muscles. “As a man, I often need to fight to prove how dominant and strong I am to win the breeding rights of the one I love, ergo; successfully pushing away other competing males who also want a piece of my lover’s hot ass!”

Stephie and Jose cringed, while the Observer looked up in shock.

Max still held the stick he’d found outside, and he threw it up in the air and played catch with himself as he spoke: “I’m just one proud son of a bitch, and no one can take that from me.” With that said, he poked the twerking Peter in the neck.

“Stop!” Peter hissed at him while Gavin rolled his eyes and held his head in his hands as he sat cross-legged next to Megan.

The cupid returned, and he waved his head and arms around as he spoke to the audience: “Now the real test will befall our star-crossed lovers!”

Everyone else made creepy scary ‘oooo’ noises.

Cupid Steve continued, “Will they be strong enough to pass the test??”

Envy Chrissie and Lustful Peter were at the center of the stage too, now, and Peter began dancing like he was a part of a ballet, practically, as he kicked his legs in the air and twirled around both couples.

Chrissie crossed her arms as she looked down judgmentally at them all, “Get busy.” One of her green goggle lenses fell out.

Peter pointed and laughed at it, and Max prodded him with the stick again.

Gavin felt confused, but he saw Megan ‘pretend’ to lean against him, and she kissed the air around him, as if she were kissing him. She had a frightened expression beneath her sun hat the entire time, and her LED light was flashing red on and off multiple times.…

As Gavin’s eyes wandered over towards Mitch and Nines, he saw the disgusting older man wrap a hand around the back of Nines’ neck. In an instant, he buried his nose in Nines’ neck, sniffing his way up close to his jawline…

Fear and rage fueled him, but before Gavin could get up, Megan held one of his hands down.

Soon, the human male playing the role of Greed came by, and he placed all sorts of treasures at their feet. Mitch didn’t care for them as his hands rested on both of Nines’ knees.

The play soon turned into one huge mess after that. Silvia the witch ran about, her hands and fingers waving down at each couple, as if casting a spell on them. She eventually reached the opposite end of the stage, where she pulled off her witch hat and kicked it high into the air as she flipped off the
entire ‘audience’ with an elongated, raised middle finger while she stuck her tongue out.

The demon began chasing Will the angel while making a grab for his golden halo, and Cupid Steve decided he wanted to join in on the chase as he threw confetti around. Chrissie pointed at Michelle while she mouthed: ‘I’m watching you!’

Peter twerked and spun more in the air, and Max was following him while trying to record only his ass on his cellphone. Cameron tapped his toy gun against the stage walls curiously, and it broke apart in a second.

Gavin didn’t really care for any of these as he looked over and saw Nines scrambling backwards on his hands as he tried crab walking away from Mitch. Mitch was in hot pursuit, and he wrapped his hands around Nines’ ankles and dragged him back over against his own body.

Gavin’s anger was about to explode, but Michelle waddled on stage as she looked at the couples and spoke to the audience: “Everyone is so sex-starved and hungry…”

Caleb the sloth walked over so slowly that even Stephie’s LED light turned red as she fought to keep her polite and friendly smile on her face.

Speaking one word per minute, he slowly uttered: “Whaaaaattt wiilllll happpeennnn…”

Deciding to take the lead suddenly, Chrissie practically cat-walked over to Nines and Mitch struggling, placing a hand on her hip and stretching her long legs as she curled a long, dark hair strand around a finger. “In situations like this,” she looked at the audience with a playful grin, “what does one say when they’re overpowered with desire on every side, and the sweet promise of a powerful orgasm?”

Max poked Peter with the stick one more time as he danced, and Peter suddenly stopped as he turned and shouted loudly: “IF YOU STICK THAT THING IN ME ONE MORE TIME, I’M BREAKING IT IN HALF!!”

Jose face palmed and Stephie looked frightened.

While everyone else was distracted, Gavin was able to catch Mitch dive towards Nines. He was inches away from placing a kiss on Nines’ lips.

Gavin could no longer hold back.

He flew towards them, fists raised, and he landed on top of Mitch as he began punching the man at least a good twenty times before Nines pulled him away while Cameron helped Mitch up. Caleb ran forward to protect his lover, but Mitch simply shoved him aside as he said dangerously: “Don’t! I’m too fucking old for you!!”

Jose and Stephie ran up to the stage as Mitch exited the auditorium with a sobbing Caleb after him.

Jose pointed at the couple almost out the door, “Go talk to them, Stephie,” he glared over at Gavin, who had blood all over his hands and shirt as he glared forward and shook angrily, “…I’ll take care of the rest.”

Stephie disappeared without another word.

Jose took one-step-at-a-time until he stood before Gavin, head shaking in disappointment and disgust.
He met Gavin’s eyes with a cold, dull piercing glare. “What am I going to do with you, Jack?”

Chapter End Notes

Hey, Gavin was justified -_-
Nines was furious with Gavin while they sat in the kitchen of their cabin. Nines had grabbed the First Aid kit from the bathroom and was currently washing away the minor cuts and wounds Gavin received from punching Mitch in the mouth and cutting his skin over Mitch’s crooked teeth. Apparently, Gavin had hit the man so hard, that he’d practically cut little teeth marks violently into his own skin.

Understandably, Nines thought. He knew Gavin had meant to protect him from Mitch, which the android appreciated and found a noble gesture. He shook and nearly came apart at the seams with disgust and putrid sensations when he remembered how the man had tried to grab at him any chance he got, his fingers and hands wandering relentlessly no matter how many times Nines had pushed him away aggressively…

Not wanting to be reminded of the horrific moment, Nines finished addressing Gavin’s wounds as he looked up at Gavin with remorse in his eyes. “If it hadn’t been for me,” he practically whispered, “none of this would have ever happened to you.”

Gavin clenched his teeth once the rubbing alcohol was poured over a particularly deep cut. He hissed out in pain, “Don’t fuckin’ say that, Nines,” he blew cold air over where it burned.

“…I wasn’t just gonna simply sit there like a useless dick while you were being molested by that…”

Nines hushed him as he threw out the bloodied tissues. “It may come as a shock to you, Gavin,” a
little playful smile formed on his lips, “but I’m perfectly capable of handling myself in the most dire situations.”

“Oh yeah, it sure seemed like it when you pretty much had that goon on top of you!” Gavin yanked his hand away from Nines’ when he remembered the horrible memory.

Nines didn’t understand why Gavin doubted him suddenly. It made him nervous, and he frowned as he stared down at Gavin’s red knuckles. “Well, I hope it was worth it to embarrass us both in front of everyone.”

“Oh so that’s all you fuckin’ care about?” Gavin roared, “…you care about your fuckin’ image and reputation instead of—” he interrupted himself with a laugh as he waved a hand down at Nines dismissively.

“What?”

“Fuckin’ forget it.”

Nines felt hurt. He’d been cleaning and caring for Gavin’s wounds, but Gavin seemed…furious. His face was entirely red all over, and his eyes gleamed with violence and danger. It made Nines frightened of him, though he knew Gavin wasn’t going to harm him. Still, he didn’t appreciate Gavin getting so worked up and flustered over it…it almost seemed as if Gavin didn’t fully trust him, yet.

Trying to keep his own anger down, Nines began packing up the First Aid kit. “I’m fine, Gavin,” he slammed medical tools and items inside it with attitude. “I didn’t need you running to my aid.”

Gavin snorted as he rolled his eyes, “Yeah, I saw how well you had the entire situation under control.”

“Well what did you want me to do? Rearrange every bone in his face?” Nines asked, voice laced with sarcasm.

Gavin quirked an eyebrow. “No, but a little resistance would’ve been nice to see!” The volume of his voice began increasing, and Nines couldn’t stand it. He walked over towards the bathroom, knowing Gavin was behind him.

“I guess you must have missed me practically scrambling off-stage to get away from him.”

Gavin shook his head, “I only saw his hands on your knees, and I went insane!”

Nines threw the First Aid kit into the bathroom once he’d stormed inside it. He bumped into Gavin’s chest on the way out. They stared each other for a long minute before Gavin growled out at him.

“I’m gonna take a shower.”

A glare was tossed in his direction as Nines brushed past him. “Yeah, see to it that you do.”

Immediately, Nines sensed Gavin turning slightly aggressive.

“What’s that supposed to mean?”

Gavin ignored the low growl that rumbled out of Gavin’s throat as he grabbed the doorknob of the bathroom door. “Lock the door,” he hissed at Gavin as he narrowed his eyes at him, “I don’t want to be yelled at and accused for wanting to take a perverted peek at you anymore.”

Gavin backed away into the bathroom as he grabbed a clean towel off one of the shelves mounted on
the walls. He tossed Nines a scathing glare, “Oh don’t worry,” he threw the towel on the hamper lid beside the shower stall, “I won’t even let you touch me ever again.”

Nines felt his system working on overdrive as his biocomponents shook in anger. Surely Gavin didn’t mean that! Right?? He tried not showing that Gavin’s words had a hold on him, and he threw Gavin as cold of a glare as he could. “I don’t care what you want anyway.”

Huffing as he turned on the water, Gavin avoided looking back at Nines. “Good for you,” he took off his shirt and tossed it onto the floor.

“Can I be alone, now?”

Nines wanted to yell out: NO, NEVER EVER WILL I EVEN ALLOW THAT TO HAPPEN! Sadly, he just nodded as he slammed the door, trying to forget that the sight of Gavin’s bare chest did strange things to his system as he tried to walk inside the cabin further, eager to busy himself with something so he could get his mind off Gavin.

He knew he absolutely had to, anyway. After all, the man was absolutely infuriating! He was a violent, impulsive, crude, uncouth, uncivilized person anyway! He wasn’t at all appealing in any way!

But then…why did it bother Nines so much when Gavin had said he wasn’t going to be able to touch Gavin anymore??

Nines knew he’d been a tad aggressive; fueling the fire that Gavin had already been burning within himself when Mitch had tried assaulting him, but he didn’t want Gavin thinking he was some sort of fragile creature who needing saving! He was a skilled fighter when he needed to be, and it offended him that Gavin somehow hadn’t been able to see it.

He just didn’t want Gavin to get hurt! He was doing this for his own good, and he was trying to protect him before he landed himself in trouble! If Gavin didn’t see it or appreciate it, fine!

Nines nodded to himself as he stared at his own reflection in one of the mirrors in the sitting room. His LED light was red as his thoughts spun around in his head.

It was then that he noticed his cheeks were red, and his pants were suddenly tight around the crotch area when he suddenly remembered Gavin’s body next to his own the other night…

Damn it. He was pretty sure he’d given the detective the wrong impression! He was fond of Gavin, he wouldn’t deny it, but…but maybe it was better this way…maybe they really had to stay away from each other? Maybe it was just a one-time thing? Maybe he needed to keep his hands to himself?

Nines rolled his eyes as he took one last look at himself in the mirror. Oh, who was he kidding?

He was gone into the land of sexual gratification and lust the minute Gavin took off his clothes.

Standing tall, Nines realized how hard he was, and he’d made up his mind right then. Taking a fortifying breath, he marched over to the bathroom and flung open the door. He was relieved that Gavin hadn’t locked it after all…

Barely wet, Gavin jumped in surprise and spun around from where he was leaning into the shower-head, a hand against the wall as his naked body was bare before Nines’ eyes. His eyes widened when Nines kicked the door shut behind him.

“Nines, what-” Gavin started, but Nines didn't let him finish. He walked over to the shorter man,
roughly slid the standing shower door open, and gripped his left hip. Feeling water spraying his shirt and drenching it in a matter of seconds, Nines didn’t care as his free hand pushed against Gavin’s shoulder before gently guiding him back against the shower walls. He pressed his lips against Gavin’s in a frantic kiss. Gavin responded immediately, tongue thrusting into Nines’ mouth repeatedly like his life depended on it.

They soon switched positions a few times; Gavin trying to force Nines down onto the shower bench a few times, but Nines was stronger. He sat Gavin down on the bench instead, kneeling before his spread thighs as his hands massaged the flesh there for a few moments. Nines moved his hand back to Gavin’s hip, admiring how strong the bone was…

Nines massaged the firm thigh a few times, pulling his fingers back and enjoying how the muscle and meat jiggled slightly when he let it go. The hand that he had resting on Gavin’s hip slowly made its way to the softer flesh of the insides of his thighs, but he didn’t make a move to touch Gavin’s heavy, thick cock yet…

Gavin whined impatiently as his hands came up to claw at the soaked shirt Nines was wearing. Nines growled a warning as he moved back and threw the wet shirt off himself. His hands explored lower along Gavin’s thighs, and the back of his knuckles gently stroked Gavin’s balls as Nines moved his hands near Gavin’s ass.

Gavin was a jumbled mess. He began grabbing everywhere at Nines before settling to kiss and suck on his neck while Nines began lightly kissing and biting his way up and down Gavin’s nude chest. Nines stuck out his tongue, licking away the warm water that was raining down over Gavin’s chest. He was in a world of bliss; tasting both the clean water, and the distinct taste of Gavin.

Nines finally gripped the other man’s cock and Gavin’s head moved away from Nines’s neck. His lips eagerly sought out Nines’, and he whimpered into his mouth once their lips connected. Nines felt Gavin grab one of his hands, and he was trying to wrap it more firmly around his own cock. It made Nines pull back from their heated kiss just enough to speak.

He saw Gavin trying to hide his face against his neck. “Gavin, don’t hide from me, I’m holding you,” he mumbled against Gavin’s lips. The detective’s breathing was harsh and fast; he could feel the other man shaking in his arms. It turned him on immensely, knowing what kind of power and effect he had on Gavin, and Nines was more encouraged to take the lead as he brought his hands over to his own pants and took them off. He left the boxers on for a moment as he threw the wet pile of clothes outside the shower. Within minutes, Gavin was yanking Nines’ wet boxers down, and Nines chuckled as he allowed Gavin to do that.

Once free of the undergarment, Nines pushed Gavin’s hands away from reaching between his legs. He grabbed them both in his own and pressed them down onto the shower bench. “Don’t move.”

Gavin whined but didn’t disobey.

He swiped his thumb across the head of Gavin’s cock to curiously study and gather the fluid that had already leaked out. He used that to slick up his partner’s erection with the warm water enough to easily move his hand up and down. The warm water helped; also providing a lot of ways to make the motions wonderful for them both. He set an easy rhythm; slow, smooth pumps with a gentle squeeze at the tip as he bit down on Gavin’s lips to silence the out-of-control loud noises spilling from them.

Nines felt himself turning the kiss gentle, caressing his partner’s mouth rather than attacking. He had never in his life expected things to take a turn like this between the Gavin Reed he’d grown to dislike in the DPD, but he figured he could just do what he’d briefly seen Gavin doing to himself during moments of self-pleasure. As he gently handled Gavin in his hands, he hoped it would be enough as
the water moved his hair down over his eyes.

Nines brushed Gavin’s hair back as he resumed stroking him. Judging by the way the man was trembling and moaning into the kiss, Nines had a good feeling he was doing okay. He sped up his strokes, gathering more precum on each swipe. Gavin suddenly pulled back from his lips. He was panting now, his pupils wide and black, no blue visible. Nines felt his own dick throb against the shower bench, and he hissed as he moved up just a little. There was a pressure on the tip of his cock and he froze.

At once, Gavin gasped and then moaned a deep, long moan.

Damn.

Nines and Gavin both looked down between their bodies and saw that they were accidentally pressing the tip of their erections together.

Gavin noticed that he’d frozen, and Nines didn’t want the detective to think he was changing his mind on him and what they were doing now. Though he had no idea how to proceed, Nines’s curious nature mixed in with the previous spark of pleasure that he’d felt running through him the moment his erection was pressed against Gavin’s told him that repeating the motion would provide a most wonderful sensation for them both.

“N-Nines... I... Um...” Gavin began blushing deeply, the steam of the shower clouding both their nude bodies.

Before Gavin could ask what was going on, Nines grabbed his large, thick cock, the tip almost a deep red from being hard for so long without release, and in one hand, he brought their cocks together and stroked many times in unpracticed but firm strokes.

Suddenly, Gavin was 14 again. Nines saw and felt his head falling forward, his forehead resting in the crook of his neck as he groaned out Nines’ name. It pleased Nines to no end, and he kissed the side of Gavin’s temple as he stroked them both as best he could.

“Just relax. Let it come,” Nines murmured to both of them, speeding up his strokes once more now that he knew his partner was close. He didn’t expect himself to last long, having never had many orgasms before. There was no way he was going to be able to hold back; not with the way his hips were ramming against Gavin’s at the speed they were.

Nines knew his pleasure however would rely greatly on Gavin’s, and he wanted to feel as connected to Gavin as he could. He stared into the other man’s eyes and was surprised to find fear there. “Hey, it's okay, I promise,” he whispered over and over to Gavin as he brushed the wet hair strands away from his eyes. “I’ve got you. Just let go,” he coaxed.

Nines wanted to cum at the same time Gavin was, eager to spill all over their bodies as he pressed his chest against Gavin’s, feeling the man’s abs and stomach throbbing and pulsating.

Nines saw Gavin trying to utter something, but the man couldn’t find his voice; he was too close to the edge.

Both of Gavin’s hands gripped Nines’ hips hard, and Nines felt his partner burying his face in his neck. He shook as he heard Gavin cry out as his dick started to pump load after load into the space between their bodies and over Nines’ hand. Nines felt his cock throb one last time at the sight of his partner coming undone.

He stroked the other man through his orgasm until his whimpers turned slightly painful. He pulled
back slightly to look at his partner. He knew Gavin had a little more energy left, and he raised his head from where it had rested against Nines’ neck. His blue eyes strayed down Nines’ body to where his cock was sliding against his own in a flurry of panicked motions; a sign that Nines was on the edge of his own release within seconds.

“Fuck, Gavin!” Nines hissed, and then he was coming. He could feel the wet, warm stickiness Gavin had ejaculated into his hand seconds prior, and it made the last bit of his movements frantic. His eyes fell down to catch a glimpse of Gavin’s semen dripping off his own cock before the water cleansed the evidences and traces as he pressed them impossibly closer. A part of Nines knew he should be embarrassed, but he couldn’t bring himself to care at the moment. His hips slammed against Gavin’s one last time, and soon he was on a new high as he bit down hard into Gavin’s shoulder as he uttered deep, guttural groans.

Both men panted as they came down from their orgasms. Their breaths mixed with the sound of running water echoing through the quiet bathroom for minutes before their breathing was settled back to a normal pace.

Nines placed a hand on Gavin’s chest, feeling how his heartbeat was starting to slow down as he caught his breath.

He heard his partner emit a small cry, followed by a chuckle. “I...I think I could use that shower now,” Gavin whispered.

Nines adored the way Gavin’s arms fell away from his body; only then realizing that Gavin had been gripping into his shoulders the entire time.

The android chuckled, his LED light spinning blue. “Would you like some company?” he asked, eyes looking over to Gavin’s shoulder and noticing his teeth marks already forming little red patterns in the skin.

Gavin’s reply was a large, easy smile. Nines had a feeling he would probably freak out about their sexual encounter later, but for now, he wanted to enjoy Gavin close to him in another intimate way. It seemed as if Gavin was far too strung out from his orgasm to care as well, and he held onto Nines’ arms tightly as he stood up on shaky, weak legs.

He followed his partner up on his own feet, standing tall before Gavin as he washed his face. Nines needed to clear the wet hair strands away from his eyes as he shut off his brain and current programming that was trying to currently analyze what the consequences of the action they’d taken would be. He didn’t need to be assessing and analyzing right now; he needed to be helping the other man clean the areas on his back that he was too sore and too tired to reach. They really needed to talk, but Nines wasn’t ready for that, and he had a good hunch that Gavin wasn’t either.

But Nines at least figured that in due time, Gavin deserved to hear how he was feeling about him… sooner or later…

Nines was busy cleaning their bathroom when he’d heard Cameron and Will knocking at the front door of their cabin. He let Gavin go out to speak to them while he cleaned. On and off throughout their conversation, Nines was able to raise the perception in his audio receptors, and he pieced together that Will and Cameron had invited ‘Robert’ and ‘Jack’ out for a walk along the trail leading up one of the most popular brooks relatively close to the large waterfall that Nines and Hank had visited a few nights ago.
Nines felt that his wish to see and visit the waterfall and brooks during daylight had finally come true with a gift on top; he’d be going with Gavin, too.

Gavin wasn’t sure whether or not to accept the offer to hangout, and he poked his head in the bathroom doorway as he whispered their suggestion to Nines.

Nines was more than eager to accept, and he himself told Will and Cameron they’d be out within fifteen minutes to join them.

And that’s how it came to be that Gavin and Nines walked side-by-side each other while Will and Cameron walked on up ahead to lead the way to the brook. All four of the men were wearing light t-shirts and shorts, as Cameron had suggested they all have a little dip in the brook due to the surprisingly late and very warm afternoon weather.

A few times as they walked past large thickets of trees and long bushes, Nines felt Gavin’s hand brushing against his own. He didn’t know if it was a silent invitation for him to take Gavin’s hand, but deciding not to run the risk of angering his partner, Nines folded his hands behind his back as he walked slowly. He was really enjoying the view of the sun peeking at them through the large trees that loomed over them.

A few birds chirped loudly in the canopy of the trees above, and Nines felt Gavin gently prod his shoulder with an elbow. He looked down to find his partner’s face flushed, his head hung down as he stared at his feet.

“You okay?” Gavin asked him shyly, which caused Nines to break out into a large grin.

“I think I should be asking you that.”

Gavin scratched the back of his neck a few times, as if recalling what they’d done not too long ago… his cheeks turned an even deeper shade of pink as he kept his eyes down at the gravel of the trail below.

Nines looked up, suddenly not able to hear Will’s and Cameron’s footsteps… “Where did our friends go?”

Gavin nodded as he looked around ahead a little, “I don’t see ‘em!”

Nines didn’t, either. With that frightening fact in mind, they both sped up the pace, walking purposefully down the trail marker path. They’d walked on for some time before Nines stuck out a hand to the side.

Gavin slammed his chest against it while looking up at the sky absentmindedly. He groaned in pain, but Nines hushed him as he pointed at a line of tall Willow trees. Their hanging branches and leaves draped down long, creating the perfect amount of shade for privacy…

Nines saw Gavin blush and swallow uncomfortably when he saw Cameron pressing Will gently against the tree. Cameron held both of Will’s hands up above his head in both his own tightly, and the android was roughly attacking Will’s mouth with his lips like a lust-starved creature…

Gavin cleared his throat, the sound pulling Nines’s gaze away from the show in front of them. Rather than leaping apart in embarrassment, Cameron merely pulled back and lazily glanced over at them as a confident smirk graced his features. It seemed to say to them: *I could take it further, if you’d let me…*

Will’s glasses were pushed halfway down his nose as he flushed a deep pink and pulled up his shorts
that Gavin and Nines hadn’t noticed were partly down his hips…

Nines glanced at Will surreptitiously, trying not to make it obvious that he’d caught sight of the shorter man’s swollen lips and flushed face. He suddenly felt very uncomfortable and thought about making an excuse for why they couldn’t go with the other couple forward on their little planned adventure.

“Sor-r-ry,” Will apologized, moving around the tree trunk in a circle while blushing as he got away from Cameron’s grabby hands.

“Sometimes Cameron j-j-ust can’t k-k-keep it in h-his pants,” he slapped Cameron’s hands away from grabbing at his ass, while Cameron snickered playfully.

“Hey, it appears I’m not the only one, apparently,” he winked at both Nines and Gavin, but Nines frowned over at Gavin.

“What’s he referring to, Jack?”

Oh shoot…

Gavin’s eyes widened at the same time Cameron’s did. Will merely face-palmed as he pressed himself beside his lover.

Gavin remembered how everyone had caught him with his pants down (literally), stumbling out of the storage and utility closet with Connor beneath him, and Hank on top of him…he just had forgotten to explain it to Nines, and now he was deeply regretting it.

As the android studied him suspiciously, an eyebrow raised high, Gavin caught Cameron miming a ‘cut throat’ gesture with his index finger sweeping from left-to-right across his own throat.

Nines felt even more suspicious as he glared at Gavin. “Jack?” He didn’t understand why he was so possessive over Gavin, but it was more than obvious as Cameron’s hands slid around Will’s waist as he pressed his nose in his lover’s black, bouncy curls. A playful smile was clear in his eyes, though half his face was hidden behind Will’s curly hair.

Sensing the tension, the lightbulb went on in Will’s head. He cleared his throat as he pushed his glasses back up on his nose as he grabbed Nines’ elbow in one hand. “W-we c-can go o-o-over this du-uring our s-s-swim!”

“Come on, it's not far,” Cameron told them, pulling Will along as the pair led the way into the woods.

Hearing Gavin swallowing loudly, Cameron turned around and winked playfully at him, while Gavin silently mouthed out: ‘Gonna kick your ass!’

Nines glared darkly at Gavin, his LED light soon red.

Gavin offered him a painful smile, “Keep your eyes open and stay close,” he whispered at Nines. The android didn’t nod as he walked a few steps behind Gavin, a little stomp added with each rise and fall of his feet.

It soon occurred to Nines that they weren’t heading for the brook; they were heading for the waterfall! He momentarily forgot his mild anger pointed at Gavin as he jogged up next to Will and Cameron as he smiled excitedly at them.
“You two really surprised me!” he began as he laughed, “I thought we were going to the brook!”

Cameron and Will exchanged shy looks before Cameron nudged Will gently, “It was his idea, actually.”

Nines appreciated it tremendously.

It didn’t take long at all for the trail to open up to a small pool edged in rocky outcroppings that looked even more wondrous now that Nines had finally caught them in the daylight. The boulders and rocks were neatly and decoratively spread not only outside the large pool-but also, a few of them stood just slightly peeking up at them in the center of the pool from beneath the surface of the dark green-blue water. At the front of the pool above, a decent and powerful waterfall poured down into the pool. The steam was leisurely wafting up from the surface directly at the foot of the waterfall, and they all stood on top of a few boulders as Will and Cameron began snapping photos and recorded short video clips of themselves pointing at the waterfall.

Noticing Nines and Gavin standing awkwardly behind them as they tried not getting in the way of their shot, Cameron lowered his phone as he gestured over with the wave of a hand and the nod of his head. “Hey, guys, why don’t we all take a small group photo?”

Nines looked at Gavin, whose eyes were wide as he stammered, “Umm…you sure, Cameron?”

“Yeah! Come on! It’s our first memory together as friends!”

Feeling they had no other option, Gavin and Nines stood carefully on the same three boulders Will and Cameron were. Will and Cameron draped their arms over each other as they stood side-by-side. Nines knew it would be best to imitate the pose, so he wrapped a hand carefully around Gavin’s shoulders as he leaned his head against Gavin’s. Gavin stared at him awkwardly for a split second before he too leaned his weight against Nines. It was a warm, delicious weight…

“One, two, three!” Cameron counted out slowly, and both Nines and Gavin put on their best smiles, hoping to really look like a close, romantic couple. The phone clicked lightly, indicating the photo was taken.

Cameron stood back as he looked at the photo. Gavin peeked around it to admire their image as well. “That’s a good photo, actually…”

Cameron nodded as he hummed in agreement.

Nines felt a small breeze next to him once he stepped back down on the grass. He looked over to his left and saw Will taking off a small backpack that Cameron had originally held in one hand when they all first met up.

“Here w-we are,” Will told the group, setting a few small red and green striped towels on the grass as he kicked off his sandals. Nines looked over and saw that Cameron was also doing the same thing.

Suddenly, as Gavin and Nines watched, the couple immediately started stripping off their clothing. “What the?!” Gavin’s eyes widened in worry, and he looked away quickly as Cameron and Will slid out of their underwear and boxers. They both walked over onto the rocks and stood at the edge of the pool, eyeing the waterfall far above them.

Nines gasped as he too tried averting his eyes. “What’re you two doing?!”

Cameron snickered, “Come on, it’s called ‘skinny dipping’!”
“I know!” Gavin hissed, still covering his eyes, “but why??”

Will took off his glasses, neatly folding them on top of his shirt as he began preparing for his dive. “Be-because s-sometimes, Jack, it’s b-better t-t-o just d-d-o things w-wiithout q-questioning th-them!” With that said, he dove into the pool.

Cameron shielded himself from the spray of water as he smirked at Nines and Gavin. “He’s right! Just go with the flow!” They watched in horror and fright as he did a backflip into the pool, holding his arms straight up above his head as he fell in backwards.

He soon surfaced while Will was swimming towards what appeared to be a man-made small raft that consisted of a bunch of tree branches (with some of the leaves still stuck on) tied together with bundles of rope.

Cameron shook his wet head like a dog, “You guys coming?” he asked, turning back to face them.

Gavin swallowed, “I’ll be there in a few,” he looked at Nines, who was just as frightened as he was, “think I’ll have a heart attack first!”

Cameron waved at them as he swam over to the side of the raft to join his partner.

Gavin and Nines exchanged a few awkward glances as the sun beat down hard on the top of their heads. Gavin was about to try and come up with some explanation for why he wouldn’t join the swim, when he heard rustling beside him. He turned toward Nines just as the other man was taking off his pants. Gavin froze at the sight before him. Nines neatly folded his clothes on a separate boulder and stood back up to meet Gavin’s shocked gaze. The android simply stood there, clad only in a pair of tight, black boxer briefs. He raised an eyebrow at Gavin.

“What?”

Gavin looked down at the boxers. “Are you really going to get into the water with them so freely?”

Nines rolled his eyes as he swiftly pulled down the boxers. From across the pool, Cameron turned away from whispering something in Will’s ears, staring at Nines’ body a little longer than his dark-haired lover would’ve liked. Will gently grabbed Cameron’s chin in a hand, turning his head back around towards himself as he lay flat on his chest on the raft and looked deeply into Cameron’s eyes while smiling and laughing.

Gavin watched Nines place his boxers on the clothes pile on his boulder and he climbed up on it as he stared down at the water. “When in Rome...” he took the plunge.

Gavin watched him swim over to the other couple as Cameron hung his hands over Will’s, which were resting beneath his chin while he lay on the raft.

Gavin wrung his hands nervously a few times, but when he saw Will and Cameron waving over at him, he knew he had to act quickly. He’d taken off his shirt but left his shorts on as he placed a hand down on a boulder. He didn’t know how he was going to go through with it, and he felt himself panicking more over that as Cameron stretched his neck up at him.

“Come on, man, get comfortable!”

He knew he would have to join them. Closing his eyes as he willed his hands not to shake, Gavin slid off shorts, underwear and all. Still hidden behind a boulder, he slid over it and waded into the pool quickly.
He watched Cameron swim backwards until he pressed himself against one of the rocks at the base of the small waterfall. Cameron held his head beneath the spray of the water. His LED light turned yellow as he cried out: “Wowww! It’s cold!” He ducked back out from beneath the waterfall as he joined Nines and Gavin surrounding the side of the raft that Will was still lying flatly on.

Nines glared over at Gavin as he rested a hand on the side of the raft. “So tell me again what Jack was up to the other day…”

Will snorted, eyes closed as he laid himself out flat on the raft. It appeared like he wanted to catch a nap beneath the sun, but he spoke softly: “Your Jack w-was found-d in a-n-n comprom-mising position.”

Murder could practically be seen in his eyes as Nines glanced over at Gavin. “Oh really? Do elaborate on what other shenanigans Jack got up to while I was resting…”

Gavin hid his face beneath the water as Cameron continued retelling the events of how he was caught in the storage and utility closet with the sanitation employee and the handyman. He also made a point to ask if ‘Robert’ was ever okay with ‘Jack’ having hookups with women.

Gavin felt his face boiling with embarrassment when he remembered Cameron asking him a few weeks ago in the gym if he knew Connor. He wished he’d never slipped up and muttered the weird shit about hooking up with the sister he didn’t have…oh boy, did this come back to haunt him.

Eventually, Nines had lightly joked about it, and he went about engaged in his own quiet conversation with Will. Gavin began wading over to where Cameron was hanging onto the edge of the grass as he leaned his hands backwards and stretched them out while his legs floated straight before him. Getting in the same relaxed position beside him, Gavin felt his outstretched feet lazily float up to the surface of the water as he leaned the rest of his body weight back on his arms draped on the grass.

He’d nearly closed his eyes to doze off beneath the heat of the sun, when Cameron sighed as he stared over at Nines, “You’ve got a good guy.”

His statement interrupted Gavin’s musings, and he only stared ahead in silence before he offered Cameron a small smile.

“Uh, yeah, I know. He’s pretty special,” Gavin replied, trying to think of what else a romantic partner could say. All his mind wanted to do was gush over Nines, but he kept that to himself as Cameron nodded.

“It’s not every day I see someone willing to throw themselves in the line of danger for someone else,” he paused and smiled warmly at Gavin, “…unless they’re really in love with that person.”

Gavin didn’t know what to say, so he simply coughed as he looked everywhere else except at Cameron or Nines, as if that would alone give Cameron a validation or something. Truth was, Gavin had no idea where he stood when it came to his feelings regarding Nines. Sure, he really cared about him, but he wasn’t sure if it was love…

It couldn’t be, yet!! He hardly knew a thing about Nines!

He turned and shrugged at Cameron, “Well, I don’t know if it’s like that, yet,” he cleared his throat again. “We’ve only been together for a little bit.”

Cameron snickered as he moved his toes around in the water, “And yet you know everything there is to know about him.”
Gavin’s head whipped around as he blushed, “No! I-”

Cameron held up a hand, “Look, I know what you’re going through, Jack, I really do.”

“You do?”

“I once thought I was straight for the longest time, and after I found out who I truly was, I didn’t even look at anyone for a long time.” Cameron stared at Will as a small smile formed on his face. “After spending so much time in denial and then guilt, you can imagine my surprise when the only person to make it past my brick forts was the geeky civil engineer I poured coffee all over accidentally.”

Gavin hummed as he watched Will playfully splash water at Nines.

“So, Jack, I get it; the shock and confusion that comes with trading in a woman’s body for a man’s is real and not shameful to process,” he didn’t fail to notice Gavin’s cheeks turning red, “…but let me assure you, it doesn’t make you any less of a man to want cock.”

Gavin felt his face heat up at Cameron’s blunt words. He hadn’t expected the bulky android to be so brazen and forthcoming, but he knew he was right as he spoke with confidence Gavin wished he had.

“You don’t have to be one or the other, you know. You can be ninety-nine percent straight and one percent gay, for Robert.” This seemed to really break through Gavin. It was exactly the thought he’d been thinking earlier when he looked at Nines sleeping on his bed.

It’s really just him…I only feel this way for him.

Cameron started sliding away from Gavin as he swam away from the edge of the pool bank, “Robert seems like a good guy, but let me give you some advice: no man is gifted with the patience of a god. I almost lost Will a few times because it took me so damn long to get my head out of my ass,” his voice was softer as he floated closer to the center of the pool, “…don’t wait too long.”

After moments in stretched out silence, Gavin got out of the pool carefully as he made his way to one of the towels Will had set out for them. As he dried himself off and redressed, he thought about Cameron’s advice. He knew that the android was right; sooner or later, he’d have to come to terms with how he was beginning to feel for Nines.

A shadow fell over him, drawing his attention and making him momentarily pause his thoughts. He glanced up from his seat on the grass to find Nines standing over him. He too had already put on his boxers, but due to not properly drying his dripping wet body off before dressing first, the boxers were clinging obscenely to his body. Damn… he knew exactly what his Nines was hiding under there.

Gavin whipped his eyes back up to Nines’ face as he put on his shirt. As he watched the tall android dress, it occurred to him that he’d been thinking of Nines as ‘his’ for some time now…perhaps Cameron really was right after all.

Behind them, Cameron called out: “Will and I are gonna stay in the pool a bit longer!” he told them, offering Gavin an encouraging smile before getting on the raft and lying down bare-assed beside Will as he rubbed his lover’s back tenderly.

“Enjoy yourselves, we’re gonna head back for the night!” Gavin told him, trying to get up on his own when Nines hauled him up on his feet strongly.
“Woah,” Gavin started, but broke off the rest of his statement when Nines stepped in close as he tossed him his shorts. He pressed his hands on Gavin’s thighs, moving down to the ankles as he lifted Gavin’s feet and slid on the shorts for him. His fingers soon slid up to the front of Gavin’s shorts…

“What are you doing?” he hissed at Nines while staring over at Will and Cameron, who were pressed together a little too close for his comfort.

“Helping you hurry up so we can make it back in time before it’s dark.” Nines offered simply as he knelt down by Gavin’s front and made sure his shorts were on straight.

Gavin’s dick twitched at his partner’s words. It didn’t help matters either when the other man sank down to his knees, putting his face directly in front of Gavin’s crotch as he slid into his own shorts. Gavin stared at the dark head below him. All he’d have to do was reach down and pull on the back of Nines’ head and guide it towards his crotch…

“Get a room!” Cameron called out jokingly from the middle of the pool. Gavin watched a faint flush creep up Nines’ face.

“Hey! You were the ones playing tonsil hockey earlier!” Gavin called back as Nines stood up.

Gavin heard Cameron and Will chortling in rounds of laughter, and he sighed as he turned and suddenly looked at the large, thick woods behind them. Cameron’s words had really gotten to Gavin in a positive way. He didn’t know why, but he wasn’t as freaked out over having sex and a closer relationship with Nines as he once used to. Knowing the old Gavin would have definitely freaked out at the thought of holding a man’s hand, let alone having sex with one, Gavin felt pride running through him. He had improved in some way, and he was proud of this growth.

He wanted to share that with Nines, and as he stared at Nines, it seemed as if the android also held some pride over Gavin. The men shared knowing smiles before they heard a faint giggle followed by a small moan from the pool. It was soft, but they definitely heard it even though the waterfall kept pouring down loudly over the rocks below.

Nines and Gavin glanced over at the other pair. They were no longer making out, thankfully, but definitely doing something else that required a little bit of privacy…they whispered in each other’s ears as they pressed tightly against each other in the water.

Gavin cleared his throat when he saw how the setting sun showed how flushed their bodies were. The sooner they gave them some privacy, the better.

“They seem really happy,” Nines commented.

“Yeah...they had a pretty rough start, apparently, but I’m glad they’re workin’ things out,” Gavin said, and sincerity was pure in his voice.

Nines heard it, and he smiled a real genuine smile at Gavin.

The woods were lovely in the late evening. Due to the days being longer and the sun still making the evening a little brighter in the summer, Gavin and Nines were able to enjoy the view of many beautiful flowers and shrubs. The sounds in the woods were something that Gavin would often hear his mother playing when she did yoga, and she said it was something like ‘peaceful sounds of the rainforest’ that would help her relax her mind.
Well, it certainly was relaxing for sure.

Nines fell in to step alongside him, his shoulder brushing his own every few steps. He thought the silence should have been uncomfortable, but it wasn’t. Nines felt himself enjoying the silence, even though he knew both he and Gavin were moderately aroused.

The activities they’d both caught Will and Cameron doing in the pool seemed to beckon them to try something similar out as well, and it seemed like they were both agreeing with that as they pushed past heavy, thick branches, clearing them away from their faces while they cast longing, concupiscent looks at each other.

Nines didn’t think he’d be able to make it back to their cabin in one piece; not with the way Gavin was staring wantonly at him. He decided to try and change the topic, hoping it would calm his treacherous, lust-filled cock down.

“What do you think Jose will want from us at our next session?” Nines inquired, finally breaking the silence. He glanced over at the shorter man, noticing how his pupils were wide, and his cock heavy with lust as it poked against the fabric of his shorts.

Nines saw Gavin stare at his lips, “I don’t know,” he began in a drawl when they came to rest at a small group of rocks before some raspberry bushes, “he’ll probably wanna critique or make-out technique, if I know him.”

It was a joke, but Nines didn’t take it that way as he felt his cock growing heavy with arousal at the thought. He cleared his throat as he sat down on the edge of one of the boulders, unable to take it much longer, unless they did something about it…

He quickly averted his eyes and turned his back on the other man. “Well, we could always start practicing…”

Gavin raised an eyebrow as he looked around the dark green thick forest surrounding them. There were plenty of bushes and foliage around them so they could possibly get away with kissing (and more), but he wanted to be certain that Nines was on board with it, not wanting an even bigger case of blue-balls than he currently had.

“Come to think of it,” he took a step towards Nines, already in the process of pulling his own shirt up before the android, “…we were supposed to keep some kinda diary or journal based on our sexual progress, right?”

Nines watched Gavin throw his shirt off onto the boulder beside him, and he smiled at him, his LED light yellow as his mind conjured up all the lovely things he could write about on Gavin’s skin with his own tongue, as opposed to on paper…

Standing up, Nines stripped his own shorts and boxers off. Gavin hurriedly took his own off not a moment after. It wasn’t going to be easy, what they wanted to do, but there was no way Nines was spending any more time naked around Gavin than necessary while his traitorous cock was insistent on not behaving.

Gavin didn’t seem to mind as he wrapped his arms around Nines and simply held him to his chest for a while. Nines didn’t know how much time had passed as he stood in the dirt and grass simply feeling Gavin. His heart pumped against Nines’ chest, and Nines pulled out of the embrace to kiss Gavin’s scar on his nose.

Gavin didn’t seem really interested in foreplay, however. He immediately lost himself in Nines’ lips
while Nines’ hands wandered down to his back as he pushed down on Gavin’s hips. They both rolled onto the grass for a little while before Nines felt Gavin allowing him to dominate.

Gavin was pliant beneath Nines, and he smiled up at him as he gently played with Gavin’s knee. Nines pushed Gavin’s legs apart, simply feeling how needy and hot he was between his thighs.

Once again, Gavin didn’t seem to really want that, and he leaned forward and bit hard on Nines’ earlobe as he whispered: “I’m not some princess, Nines,” he flicked his tongue over the globe of flesh.

“…you don’t have to be so gentle with me.”

That set off something in Nines he didn’t know he had, just then. Having researched the very basics of homosexual sex, he dug a strong hand in Gavin’s shoulder as he glared down at him. He bent his neck to mimic the flicker of his tongue over Gavin’s nipples, taking a little bit of time worshipping the left one, before he moved onto the right. As much as Gavin wanted roughness and daring sex, Nines didn’t want to hurt his partner.

Nines felt Gavin’s cock press against his abdomen, proud and erect, fully engorged and ready. His lust overwhelmed every other thought he had in his mind, and he grabbed Gavin, flipping him around roughly to lie face-first in the grass.

Gavin’s chest pressed against the dark green grass, and he grabbed at Nines’ arms as he firmly dug his hands and fingers into the muscles, moaning as he no doubt enjoyed how strong and dominant Nines was over him.

Encouraged by this, Nines pulled Gavin’s legs straight and then spread them eagerly. He braced his weight on both palms as he planted them in the grass on either side of Gavin’s body, and got on top of the warm man lying flat on his chest in the grass. He bent down, huffing and sniffing Gavin’s scent behind his neck, and he grabbed Gavin’s hips as he angled them perfectly against his own.

Gavin gasped and yelped instinctively when Nines bit the skin on the back of his neck as he slowly rubbed his cock between Gavin’s ass cheeks a few times. Simple motions of up and down the globes of flesh were enough to make Gavin a panting, wheezing mess in the grass.

They were taking a big risk doing this, but the fact that Gavin had wanted to do this for Nines, because of Nines was all it took to send him into a frenzy. He just knew he wanted to be inside Gavin right now.

Nines guided his own thick erection into Gavin in one brutal thrust.

Gavin immediately screamed out in pain. He’d not been prepared properly, and they had no form of lube, either. The pain Nines knew Gavin felt once he assessed and scanned him even wrecked his own body. He couldn’t believe he’d delivered this pain to his partner, himself. He felt ashamed of himself as he pressed both hands on Gavin’s back, massaging and trying to soothe him as he kissed the center of his back all the way up to his neck, moving his lips to the side of Gavin’s cheeks where he showered the heated flesh with kisses there, too.

He’d whispered that he was sorry at least a dozen times while he was still inside Gavin, trying to help him adjust to the feeling of it and hoping he hadn’t torn Gavin up.

Gavin let out many labored breaths before he clawed at the grass, uprooting it. Nines rubbed his back and sides, feeling himself overrun by remorse and guilt, when he suddenly felt Gavin raise his hips up slightly and give an experimental thrust back.
He’d wanted to ask Gavin if he’d meant to do that, or whether it had been an accident, when Gavin did it again. Nines moaned at the tight pressure wrapped around his member buried inside Gavin. He’d never been able to understand what the few Tracis at the Eden Club meant when he’d overheard them mentioning that ‘sex was great’, but now he knew exactly what they’d referred to.

Hesitant not to do anything that would hurt Gavin again, Nines carefully cradled Gavin against his chest as he pressed himself down over the man. He was careful not to crush him under his weight as he began slowly thrusting in and out. Gavin felt so warm beneath him, and it was mixing up his entire system as his vision flashed with multiple responses in the situation. He pushed all of them back as he gently moved inside Gavin. Tonight, he was going to ‘make love’ as if he were a human; not a machine.

In easy, measured glides, he filled Gavin a little more each time, softly and shakily moaning out Gavin’s name each time he sunk in just a bit more. Gavin seemed a little stiff as he pressed his arms to his sides, but Nines whispered for him to relax as he moved slowly. He let Gavin take his length at his leisure, thankful for the part of his brain that was still operating as a calculating machine, otherwise, he was certain he’d ignore everything else and just take Gavin like a wild animal there on the forest floor.

Nines leaned to the side, carefully watching Gavin’s face for any signs of discomfort or fear as he filled every inch of him, over and over. Gavin seemed to finally be enjoying it as he arched his back and hips. He reached over and grabbed Nines’ left hand in his own, intertwining their fingers as he brought it down by his head on the grass.

Nines felt his hips snapping upon reflex when Gavin kissed and then began sucking his index finger. He’d never expected sex to be filled with so many variations of things the people involved in it could do to create more new forms and methods of pleasure. He was really getting swept away in the moment of it as he thrust roughly again.

He heard Gavin groan, and he paused in worry.

“Noooo,” Gavin whined as he turned around and looked at Nines with desperation in his eyes.

“Do it again…”

Nines complied, slamming against Gavin and recognizing his groan as one of pleasure; not pain. When he did it again, Gavin bit down hard on the tip of Nines’ finger. It didn’t create any pain for the android, but he loved the sight of it as he gazed down at Gavin through half-open eyes. Gavin began tearing out grass again, but he was definitely moving in pleasure this time.

Nines sensed that the smell of the grass and earth beneath them was creating the perfect setting and mood for Gavin, and the man slowly worked himself up on his knees and hands. Nines allowed him to get up, while he grabbed Gavin’s hips for a deeper penetration.

He really began letting loose once Gavin grabbed one of his hands and wrapped it around his waist. It hung just above his cock, and after their shower together, Nines knew what to do. He let his instincts guide him, and he bit Gavin’s neck as he took him just in the way he’d wanted to.

Gavin was moving back with as much force as Nines was, meeting each of his thrusts with a counter one.

“More…I want more…” Gavin panted out, and Nines obliged him.

He pushed Gavin back down into the grass, pressing down gently on the top of his head before
weaving his fingers through his dark brown hair. Each thrust of his strong hips sent Gavin rocking forward into the grass. Nines used the hand still firmly wrapped under Gavin’s stomach to only prop his lower half up on his knees as he repeatedly slammed into him.

Everything about this position was better; the view of Gavin’s firm back muscles flexing and twitching as his body shook and writhed in pleasure, the angle at which Nines’s powerful thrusts were causing him to slide in and out of Gavin, the trees above them, the cool evening wind… everything…

Gavin was really trying to find purchase in the brown soil and thick green grass now as he panted roughly while Nines pressed himself deeper inside. He was certain he’d hit something that was at the very peak of Gavin’s sex, when Gavin came all over Nines’ strong forearm still draped across his abdomen.

Gavin’s climax made Nines bite down on his tongue as he felt his own not too far away. Feeling himself starting to be spent, Nines fell against Gavin as a strange milking and sucking sensation gathered around the base of his cock, moving all the way to the end where his hips were pressed against Gavin.

Together, they fell forward onto the ground, rolling over as they remained connected. Nines turned them to lie on their sides. Still thrusting gently a few more times inside Gavin, he felt aftershocks shake him.

When they were more calm, Nines gently disconnected from Gavin as he lay flat on his back. He stared up at the lovely purple and yellow-orange sky above, while Gavin composed his breathing as he rested a hand over his chest with the other resting in the grass weakly. His fingers ran over the grass blades in a light, slow caress.

Nines looked over at him and smirked, “So how can we put this in our journals for Jose?”

Gavin groaned as he flung his hand to the side and smacked the back of the heated flesh of his hand on Nines’s chest. “Shut up, Nines,” he sighed, tiredly.

Nines peeked at Gavin’s flaccid penis as he chuckled deeply while turning over to cuddle with Gavin.

“Still, you technically did achieve an orgasm without me even touching you there.”

“Nines, I’m warnin’ you,” Gavin growled while trying to inch away from Nines’ grab. “Don’t spoil the fuckin’ moment.”

Nines bit his neck playfully as he draped a long leg over both of Gavin’s. “I think I’ll write about this new talent of ‘Jack’s’ when we return to our cabin.”

Gavin could only toss him a glare, far too exhausted to even muster up a new argument.

Chapter End Notes

Ooooh that was hot 0.0
Wishful Thinking, Part a and b

Chapter Summary

WARNING: SMUUUUUUUUUUT!!!!

Part A

Gavin had walked with a limp for one full day after his midnight sexual encounter with Nines in the forest surrounding Heaven’s Salvage. A few of the other guests were lounging around outside their cabins and in the fields during the next morning as they talked to Jose and Stephie. It was supposed to be a ‘free day’, with not many sessions or programs planned, and Gavin appreciated it. His body had been very sore, and he needed a long break.

After what he and Nines had gotten up to the previous night, he soon found that there was no way he was able to sit down on his ass…not unless he placed a bag of frozen peas beneath himself, or something. Every time he moved even a little quickly, he winced and wheezed out in pain as he walked around the outside of his shared cabin with Nines.

Gavin wished they could remain indoors for the rest of the morning and afternoon, but as it unfortunately turned out, Stephie and Jose were making little ‘rounds’ and checking in on all the couples. Gavin supposed it was something akin to a ‘pre-session’ check-in thing, and he suddenly remembered the ‘homework’ Jose had assigned him and Nines…

They hadn’t worked on a single ‘diary’ or journal entry since having been told to, and Gavin felt himself panicking once Jose was sitting on Cameron and Will’s front porch. They were having some sort of hushed chatter as Stephie and the other females sat in the grass in the small fields near the cabins and laughed. Stephie was in the center of the small circle they’d formed around her, and Chrissie and Silvia were making her a flower-crown made out of small daises and other assortments of flowers as they smiled and spoke in whispers together.

Everyone was generally having a grand time, but Gavin wasn’t. He was facing a lot of inner turmoil and anguish as he felt the skies above clear up as the wind pushed them apart and allowed the sun to momentarily beam down at him before the wind picked up again and forced the sun to hide behind thick clouds.

The weather seemed to match his mood as he thought about why it was that whenever he tried avoiding any sexual encounter with Nines, he was almost ‘pulled’ and dragged into it like someone had tied him to the android with some invisible string or rope? No matter what he had tried doing, everything just ‘happened’ as if it was meant to…

Gavin’s mind clouded much in the same way the skies above did as he realized that he’d actually had sex with a man. Well, technically he’d already had sexual experiences with Nines for a few days already, but last night he’d actually been…

He felt himself quivering when he thought of the word.

Last night, he’d been penetrated deeply by a man.
It wasn’t a fact he could bury and hide away like his previous feelings of repression and denial. It had been raw, visceral, real, and yet…it had also been something else…

Sure, there was no denying that it hurt like a fucking bitch, but Gavin cursed his impatient nature and not having the foresight to at least prepare himself with some sort of lubrication beforehand. But still, the pain that he felt any time he walked or moved was a good reminder that he hadn’t been dreaming; everything had happened, and it felt so…

Ethereal.

His mind supplied the word automatically, and he had to agree with his thoughts for once.

As impatient as he’d been to have Nines wrapped around his naked flesh, he couldn’t help but feel no regrets as he limped his way over to the front porch of their cabin with a cold glass of water in his hands.

He wasn’t going to sit down, as he practically saw the red pain and didn’t need to actually feel it there. Whenever he had felt the throbbing and aching burn (those few times he’d accidentally sat down on a tree stump or on a small boulder as he tried appearing ‘normal’ in front of everyone else), each time he had, Gavin couldn’t help the small blush that spread over his face quickly as images and thoughts of Nines on top of his own body flooded his mind.

In a way, Gavin realized that he’d not only helped Nines lose his virginity, but Gavin had lost his own…well…in the gay way?

He didn’t know how to put it, and the more he thought of it in that crude term, the more he had to suppress a few giggles. His knees and legs swayed and gave in a little as he snickered and tried composing himself, making him knock himself against the chairs and little benches set on the front porch by the door. He crashed into the small swing set, causing a few people to stare up at him.

Jose frowned as he glanced up at Gavin, still sitting beside Will and Cameron on the front porch of cabin 2.

“Jack! You better not be drunk!!” He shook his head and tossed Gavin many disapproving glares.

Gavin waved and shook his head as he emitted a tired sigh. He wasn’t drunk; he was just in severe pain. He was trying hard not to fall down as he recollected how it felt to have Nines breathe down his back and his neck as his hands roamed down Gavin’s body before he grabbed his legs and spread them apart…

Gavin coughed when Nines sat down on the swing as he smiled up at him. Gavin wasn’t sure if Nines was thinking about their romantic encounter in the forest, but he knew he personally constantly was as he replayed the sensations of the cool grass on his chest and arms as he clutched at multiple blades and tore them up from the ground while he was on the brink of one of the most intense, powerful orgasms of his life…

“Gavin?” Nines spoke softly, and it came out almost in a whisper that did strange things to Gavin’s body.

He whipped around and glared down at Nines. “Shh!! Don’t fuckin’ whisper my name like that!”

Nines bore an inquisitive-yet-innocent look on his face. “Why?”

*Because I can’t stop thinkin’ about how you whispered my name just the same way barely a few hours ago as you sunk deeply inside my-*
“Because you never know who the fuck may be listenin’, that’s why.” He had no idea why he couldn’t be honest with Nines. After all, this was the man-android-person? Who he’d lost his back-door virginity to, and who he’d also been the first sexual experience for.

Wait…

Gavin felt himself flushing as he thought about something that had been nagging at his gut all morning.

Considering how Nines was still a machine, did he think about concepts like virginity and the loss of it? If ever? Did these concepts even matter in the grand scheme of things for androids?

Gavin personally didn’t care much about ‘virginity’ as something ‘sacred’ or that valuable, but perhaps Nines was different? Did he use it to define himself? Did he value it at all?

Gavin had to keep wondering this and mulling it over as he took another sip of his cool water. Something about aiding in Nines losing his virginity somehow seemed charming and amusing to him as he sipped his beverage. Perhaps now Nines wouldn’t ever be so uptight as he paraded around the DPD like he was some stuck-up King…

He hoped that would happen as he smiled down at his water and missed the raised eyebrow and questionable look Nines threw over at him. All Gavin could think of was that he most definitely wanted to have a second-and possibly third round-with Nines again, and possibly more…

There were so many things he wanted to try out now that he had a small taste, and he felt his heart fluttering in his chest while his stomach felt as if a dozen butterflies were flapping around within. He felt as light-headed and giddy as he had been on his first date when he was barely fifteen-years-old…

Who could’ve thought that Gavin Reed would be so excited and passionate over the obsession of a man? He couldn’t believe that the previous womanizing-playboy young man he’d once been while in his early-to-mid-twenties was gone, and now replaced by a new and ‘slightly confident’ gay Gavin Reed.

Well, he wasn’t entirely sure if he really had been gay the entire time and was just hiding it and burying it all along, only waiting for the opportune moment where he could be who he’d been meant to be all his life…or if this was a recently new development. Regardless, whichever it was, Gavin decided he was going to enjoy the moment as he finished his cold water and would every so often peek over at Nines with a deep blush forming on his cheeks.

Nines knew Gavin was growing fond of him as he was no doubt reminiscing over their sexual experience in the woods earlier than night. It was all Nines could think of as well the moment he’d helped Gavin redress and walk gently out of the woods. The pair had taken a quick shower together which had turned into a heavy, heated make-out session that practically led to Nines picking Gavin up and wrapping his legs around his waist tightly. Nines had been so close to chasing after the sweet, pleasurable feeling that he’d felt hours ago right at the center of Gavin’s body between his legs, but Nines didn’t want to overwhelm and hurt Gavin’s body when he heard the small groans of pain and discomfort Gavin emitted when Nines pressed two fingers right outside his hole.

It’d been enough to warn Nines to be a little more patient and delicate with the human, and he reluctantly ended the shower by pressing little kisses and nibbles along Gavin’s neck and shoulders as he helped clean him off and retire to his own bed with Gavin pressed closely against his chest.
The feeling of having Gavin’s arms and legs wrapped tightly around his own was sensational and perfect, but Nines couldn’t help but feel a little irritated that he couldn’t enjoy Gavin the way he’d wanted to. He began to wonder how long it would take for the human body to recover after an ‘intense’ encounter like the one they’d shared. He knew he had to be patient as he rested his head on top of Gavin’s and held him even closer, their bodies wrapped around the sheets as they fell into a deep slumber.

Now, in the morning, Nines was trying to keep a little bit of a distance from Gavin. It wasn’t due to his disappointment felt after not being able to engage in sexual intercourse with Gavin again; it was due to his inability to control himself and his own thoughts whenever he was within an inch of the man. Nines soon found he wasn’t able to hold himself back from thinking about grabbing at Gavin whenever the man walked by him, and it wasn’t long before Nines simply listened to the strange orders his system was giving him.

Within half an hour of when he first knew of their existence, Nines simply did what he thought would feel good to do: he’d walked over to Gavin in the kitchen as he was preparing his coffee, and he’d extended his hands over Gavin’s by his sides. In a second, he’d looped his own arms around Gavin’s waist and wrapped the man up close to his chest in an intimate, tight embrace. He’d rested his chin on Gavin’s shoulder while the man froze but allowed them to remain in that embrace until his coffee got cold.

Only then was he a little peeved at Nines, though he didn’t curse or try to use any form of physical violence. He’d merely grunted and growled at Nines, playfully trying to wriggle free of his grasp on him before Nines decided to try and locate Gavin’s ticklish spots.

Unfortunately for Gavin, that had turned into Nines discovering and learning where the majority of the detective’s erogenous zones were located. What started off as a minor tickling game soon spiraled out of control. Nines found himself pressing Gavin into his bed, practically ramming the man deeper and deeper against the mattress as he attacked Gavin’s mouth and neck with frantic and desperate kisses…

Nines had taken Gavin’s shirt clean off and was about to start working down his pants, when they were both separated from each other’s mouths and limbs by Jose’s loud voice echoing outside in the fields.

They had to separate reluctantly and join everyone else outside for the ‘check-in’ sessions Stephie and Jose were conducting, otherwise they knew they would have to make up time for it later.

They both didn’t want to see more of the creepy Jose more than they had to, so they dressed hurriedly and joined everyone else outside, waiting patiently until it was their turn to speak with Jose.

As Nines continued watching Gavin sipping his cold water, he knew the smile he was wearing was growing larger and wider as he watched the way Gavin’s Adam’s Apple bobbed up and down while he drank. Some of the water slipped down the sides of his lips and onto his chin and neck, where it dripped down below on the wood of the porch. Nines nearly lost himself in the sensations and views Gavin was introducing to him by the minute. Why hadn’t he taken more time to pay attention to the wonders this man displayed? He wondered if even Gavin himself was aware of the things he was doing.

All these thoughts lingered in the back of Nines’ mind as he studied the detective closely while also keeping an over-all grasp of the activities that were still going on around them. They were technically still in ‘public’, so they had to keep a low profile, which included behaving in a way that wasn’t sexually precocious.
His audio receptors were able to focus on Jose leaving Will and Cameron with his concluding thoughts as he rose up to his feet and was making his way over towards their cabin…

As Jose walked with pride, he turned as he glared over at Max and Peter sitting by a large flowerbed that was built around the circular perimeter of a large water fountain. The lovely assortment of colorful flowers ranging from deep violet, bright pink, red, white, and deep blue blew lazily in the wind while Max plucked a pink one and pressed it against the tip of his husband’s nose. Peter was resting his head in Max’s lap, eyes closed and LED light blue as he smiled in content while resting his hands on his chest as his feet were stretched out slightly and bent at the knees among the flowers and soil of the flowerbed.

Max was turning to pluck another flower when a small bumblebee flew about in his face aggressively. It buzzed low, as if angry that he had chosen to uproot one of the sweet-smelling flowers for Peter.

The bumblebee wouldn’t let them enjoy their little moment of bliss, however, and it swarmed around Max’s head viciously. Max swung at it a few times while Jose paused and sighed, placing both hands on his hips as he shook his head and watched on. Max was almost ‘fighting’ the bee; swinging a hand at it while the flower rested on Peter’s nose, still.

Soon, Max began hissing out expletives at the bumblebee that was practically making a dive-bomb for his medium-length dark brown hair.

He swung violently while Peter still rested his head in his lap, completely undisturbed and unaffected.

“You bitch!!” Max hissed as he avoided a particularly nasty sting the bee was obviously aiming for at his neck. It flew upwards and took an interest in more flowers behind Max when it clearly had enough of the irate android.

Peter frowned up at his husband, though his eyes still remained closed beneath the warm, bright sun shining down at them. “Don’t call me a ‘bitch’, you jerk!!” he huffed as he crossed his arms over his chest, LED light flickering red.

Max rolled his eyes as he scratched his nose, “I wasn’t talking to you, bitch.”

A brief pause went by before Peter smiled and got into a more relaxed position as he smiled to himself, “Okay!”

Jose sighed as he called over at Max, “Max! Why’re you fighting a bumblebee?”

Max glared as he pointed in the direction the bee had flown off in, “It attacked me!!”

Jose tilted his head as he rearranged his rings and piercings in his eyebrows and ears, “Your fault, Max!”

Max rolled his deep blue eyes. “Oh yeah,” he snorted with tons of sarcasm dripping from his voice, “my fucking fault for sitting near a flowerbed.”

Jose’s nose wrinkled as looked down at Max and Peter with distaste. “Totally.”

Max gave him a blank, neutral glare. “This is retarded.”

“Mhhmmm.” Jose snapped a few fingers as he strutted over to Nines and Gavin. The man with the tanned skin threw off his sandals as he pulled up on his green shorts, sitting down rudely on the extra
swing seat beside Nines.

Nines didn’t seem to mind as he offered Jose what seemed to be a warm, welcoming smile as they all hid beneath the shade the hanging roof of their cabin provided. Jose crossed one leg over the other as he draped his arms over his chest. He was wearing a bright pink tank top shirt that read: **GAY IS THE WAY!** in dark grey colored font.

When neither Gavin nor Nines said anything to him, Jose cleared his throat. Still, his presence was ignored, which irritated him, clearly. He stomped a foot down as he snapped his fingers at Gavin’s turned back while he was leaning on the handrails of the deck.

“Umm, hello?” Jose’s voice was whiny, and it begged for attention. “Hellooooo? Jaaaaaack???”

Gavin rolled his eyes, knowing he couldn’t listen to the annoying tone Jose’s voice had taken for another second. He turned around, offering the therapist a pained look as he leaned his back against the handrails and tried to avoid pressing his ass against it.

Jose rolled his eyes dramatically at Gavin. “Finally you hear me!”

Gavin hummed, “What do you want?”

Jose gaped, placing a hand on his chest, “Rude! I just wanted to ask how you and Robert were doing!”

“Well, we _were_ doing just fine,” Gavin snickered, “that is, until _you_ showed up.”

Nines gasped, looking between Jose and Gavin, “Jack!”

“Your partner needs a good lesson in manners,” Jose said to Nines with scorn present in his voice, “…and better make it a double lesson on keeping his violence and anger in check!!”

“He hasn’t hit anyone else recently, if that’s what you’re implying.” Nines stated this softly while Jose snorted and hissed: “Yeah…right.”

Gavin ignored it as he winced and straightened himself up. “What is it now, Jose?”

Jose looked at Gavin’s pained expression, and a knowing look was upon his face in an instant after he studied Gavin’s exact body language. He didn’t look so offended anymore as he grinned evilly at Gavin. “You know, if I didn’t know any better, I’d say that you and Robert were rather… _busy_ a night ago, am I right?”

Gavin fumed while Nines looked down shamefully.

Their silence was enough to confirm what Jose had meant, and he clapped as he smiled proudly at them as if they’d found a way to make him rich for life.

Gavin was panicking, though he knew Jose hadn’t heard or seen them screwing in the woods that previous night. Still, he didn’t like the fact that the man somehow knew about his rendezvous with Nines, and he growled down at his feet as he imagined punching Jose’s face in until it resembled messy cake batter.

“It’s none of your-”

“Finally you guys did something _positive_ for yourselves!” Jose sighed happily as he stared dreamily at the sky. “I was getting soooo tired of your constant bitching back and forth during group, and all
those annoying, catty glares you two were exchanging.”

Gavin felt an eye twitching. “You’re one perverted creep.”

Jose flashed him a smile full of white teeth. “Better get that limp taken care of though, Jack…”

Gavin looked at Jose’s hair, an insult already formed. “And you need to re dye your hair!”

This startled Jose, and he gasped as he held up a hand and ran his fingers lightly through his hair as his eyes grew round and large like he’d seen a demon right before him. “Oh my god! Really?? I do??” He began panicking as he breathed heavily.

Gavin rolled his eyes.

Jose stood as he cradled his head in his hands, “Shit! Why didn’t anyone tell me??”

Gavin thought it was kind of amusing how much Jose seemed to care about his outward appearance, but Nines frowned at him before smiling politely at Jose. “I don’t think it’s too bad, Jose.”

Jose shook his head, “No way, honey! You’re just being nice!” He began making his way off their deck, when he turned and glared at them both.

“I know you haven’t started your journal entries, but I expect you will start them today!”

Gavin sneered, “Or what?”

“Or…or I’ll make you do something embarrassing later in front of group!” Jose threatened them as he started running into the fields past the water fountain. When he was a few feet away from it, he turned and called out to Gavin: “Oh and try sitting on a bag frozen peas or beans! It actually helps, but you can also try a cold bath!!”

He ran down further until he turned back one more time and called out: “And I still want to talk about what you both have done at your next session!!”

As he ran off, all the men in the group laughed as they pointed at Gavin and shook their heads. Some of them were blushing, as if they knew exactly what had happened to Gavin…

Gavin wasn’t able to take it anymore. He spun around and opened the cabin door, quickly wanting to bury himself in his ‘journals’, where he would write nothing except ideas on how to murder Jose without being caught.

He limped all the way over until he was inside the cabin, and out of everyone’s sight.

Part B

Gavin had composed bits of bullshit and nonsense on a piece of lined paper as he rested flatly on his chest on top of his bed, trying to make up stuff about Jack and Robert. He most certainly wasn’t going to include anything about having wonderful, mind-blowing sex in the woods, however…yeah, he’d leave that part out.

Nines had tried taking a peek at what he was writing a few times as he looked over his shoulder, but every time he did, Gavin would fold up the page and smack him in the shoulder playfully until he
went to sit back on his own bed and work on his journal.

“‘You can’t perv in on this shit, Nines!’” Gavin hissed for the second time after an hour when Nines had crawled onto his bed for the fifth time, hoping to catch a small glimpse of what Gavin had written on the page. Though Gavin had snatched his paper away, Nines pouted, clearly feeling shut away and left out.

Gavin sighed, “Look, these are private thoughts and feelings, Nines,” he felt a little bad that the android seemed upset he hadn’t chosen to share.

“…you can’t expect me to open up my entire life to you right away!”

Nines gave him a sarcastic glance, “All couples need some space, is that it?”

“We’re not a cou-”

He was interrupted by Nines gasping as if he’d been wounded badly.

Gavin felt like the biggest asshole on the planet when he turned and gazed over at Nines’ expression. Nines looked really hurt and upset. His eyes fell down from Gavin’s, and onto the bed as he backed off Gavin’s and sat down on his own. He gathered his knees into his chest as he draped both arms over them and turned to stare out the cabin window instead.

Gavin rolled his eyes at the pathetic display, but internally, he’d been trying to hold himself together. Why was he always messing things up?! More importantly, why did Nines really care? Gavin was 100% sure that when they’d solved the case, things would likely return to normal once they returned to the DPD. They’d go back to ignoring each other, hating each other, avoiding each other, possibly competing with each other, too. What difference did it make?

Gavin didn’t understand why Nines valued whatever was happening here between them so much. As far as Gavin was concerned, it was just a little summer fling; nothing more. Perhaps he had been so swept up in the weird shit that Heaven’s Salvage was about, that he hadn’t found time to properly have a ‘chat’ with Nines about different forms of sexual relationships people had…

Deciding that now was the time, Gavin pushed his journal aside as he swung his legs over to the side of the bed and rest them on the floor. He tried straightening his back, but his spine really hurt. He cracked his neck as he tried getting ‘comfortable’, while Nines kept staring out the window.

From the shiny window’s reflection, Gavin saw that Nines’s LED light was bright red as he frowned darkly outside at nothing.

Damn…guess I really hurt his feelings…

Guilt was pouring into him, but Gavin had to handle this like a man. He didn’t want to be the one to…break Nines’ heart, but someone had to explain it carefully for him.

Gavin held his hands together as he tried pulling up the words without sounding more offensive than he already had. “Look, Nines,” he began weakly, and Nines didn’t even bother turning his head around to pay attention.

He chose to speak on, “Nines, sometimes, adults just…you know…”

Oh fuck, this was turning to shit really fast. Perhaps he should’ve just shut the fuck up…

Nines wasn’t regarding him, and it was starting to annoy Gavin for reasons he didn’t understand, and
in turn, that pissed him off more! Nines was always looking at him like a little puppy! Now he was going out of his way to ignore him?! What a bitch move…

Gavin growled as he got on Nines’ bed. He plopped himself down beside the android, and Nines merely scooted further on the other end of the bed, still glaring angrily out the window.

“Nines,” Gavin sighed as he held a hand against his cheek, not wanting to follow the android out of fear Nines would snap at him in anger or something.

Still no response.

Understandable. Truthfully, he wasn’t sure if he wanted to talk to himself right now.

Not that he spoke to himself…ever…

Gavin felt his frustration growing and he slammed a hand down on the bed, hoping it would get the android’s attention. “Nines! Look! Sometimes, sex is just sex, alright?! You don’t need to get so uptight about it!”

Nines didn’t look at him, but his voice was low and angry, “So you were just using me for sex?”

Oh hell…

Gavin grabbed one of the pillows on the bed and flung it at Nines’ back. It smoothly bounced off his back and onto the mattress, but Nines didn’t look at Gavin, still. Gavin didn’t understand it. He knew Nines was a deviant, but he couldn’t piece together how and why he’d felt so offended when Gavin had clearly pointed out that they weren’t in any relationship. It’s not like the android seriously felt something for him, did he?!

He couldn’t…

Gavin’s head was spinning as he tried thinking about what the fuck was happening, but he figured it was better to try and put the pieces together with Nines, as opposed to alone on his own.

Eager to get his attention, Gavin hissed, “Hey, Nines, I wasn’t doin’ that, alright?” Truthfully, Gavin hadn’t expected the android to ever see it that way, and he had never been someone to use women for sex either. He wouldn’t even bother to include the few one-night stands he’d had, for those were never classified as ‘using’ someone in that sense. It was always a mutually agreed upon thing, and both parties always left happily after their needs were met. But now…now Gavin was confused. Nines was almost behaving like some jealous…partner…

He frowned at the android’s turned back. “Can you at least look at me?”

Nines hung his head down, still frowning deeply, “Why do you care? This never meant anything to you beyond sex.” His tone was bitter and vicious, and Gavin felt his heart hammering in his chest as he bit down on his tongue.

Way to go, ass wipe, you’ve just pissed him off and made the situation even worse.

He had to agree with his thoughts as he looked down at his knees shamefully, already thinking of an apology. He’d meant it to be sincere, so he took his time as he breathed silently through his nose for a few minutes.

Gavin’s silence had gotten Nines’ curiosity, and the android spun around half-way to take a small look at Gavin, though he avoided eye contact. The clock on the wall ticked loudly, and Gavin
wanted to throw something at it to silence it. But he kept his nerves and anger in check as he
clenched his eyes shut tightly and relied on his heart strictly to help guide him through the mess he’d
created.

“Nines,” he stated his name with confidence, and a little hope as he continued on, “I’m sorry if you
feel like I used you. This is all just as new to me as it is to you.” He ran a hand through his hair as he
took another intake of breath. “I honestly have never done anything with a man before, and to tell
you the truth, I’m not so good at relationships with women either, which is why I avoided them for
the most part…” he gazed over to see if Nines was listening at all, and to his joy, Nines was now
looking at him with curiosity evident on his face. His LED light was blue, and his neck was craned
up as he placed two hands in the middle of the bed and slightly leaned in closer to Gavin.

Gavin also moved his back off the headboard of the bed as he leaned in close and sat cross-legged in
the center of the bed. “I can’t tell you that these moments we’ve shared together have been horrible
or bad, because that’d be a lie…” he paused when he heard Nines omit a surprised gasp, but he
allowed himself to continue as a small smile tugged at the corners of his lips.

“…I actually look forward to them a lot lately, y’know?” he chuckled, “god, that sounds so fuckin’
dumb, doesn’t it?”

Nines shook his head as he reached out with a hand and placed it on top of Gavin’s. Gavin looked
down at Nines’ large, masculine hand over his own. Many years ago, another person had once
placed their hand over his in a similar way, only it had been a ‘she’….

‘She’, ‘he’, it didn’t matter much anymore. Gavin looked up and smiled at Nines. The android
mirrored it back as he held Gavin’s hands and rubbed his thumbs on the back of his knuckles
tenderly.

“I’m sorry if I hurt you…”

Gavin held up a hand, “Nah, I think I was the one who-”

“No, I mean in the woods that night…”

“Oh.”

He felt himself blushing as he remembered every last detail, suddenly. It wasn’t long before Gavin
felt himself growing aroused as he was able to recall how gentle-yet-firm Nines had been with him,
and he coughed as he got on his knees and walked back over to his own bed. Surprisingly, his limp
and pain had receded a bit, and he tried changing the topic as he sat down and grabbed his page
again.

“So, do you think a bag of frozen peas actually works for shit like this?” He offered a small snicker
at Nines, who only smiled as he looked Gavin from head to toe.

“I imagine Jose would know from personal experience.”

Gavin made a face, “Eww, Nines,” he stuck out his tongue, pretending to vomit, “I haven’t even had
anything to eat yet, come on!”

Gavin grabbed his pen from beneath his pillow as he looked down at his journal. Everything was
silent for a moment before the paper was snatched out of his hands…

“Hey!”
Nines held it up as he laughed, “I want to read it!”

Gavin leapt to his feet as he cringed and reached out for the page. Nines was holding it higher and higher. Gavin found himself cursing the tall android as he hopped on a foot and tried making a leap towards the page. It was pulled up farther, practically waving down at him like a flag…

“Nines! This isn’t fuckin’ funny!!”

Nines thought it was. “Let me read it, and I’ll give it back to you.”

Gavin wasn’t going to let that happen. He wanted to trick the android in a clever way, so he hopped on his feet again and let out a loud, pained cry.

Nines looked down at him, concern flooding his face as Gavin groaned and wrapped his hands down around an ankle once he eased himself down on the floor. “Nines…”

“Gavin?! What happened?!”

Gavin didn’t say anything as he groaned in pain, and it seemed to worry the android. Within seconds, Nines bent down to the floor, and he looked down at Gavin’s feet as his LED light flashed red numerous times quickly.

“Gavin! What’s wrong?”

Gavin was having a heart attack from holding back on his laughter internally, but he bit down on his cheeks as he pretended to hang his head down in pain. “My ankle…I’ve hurt my ankle!”

“Show me where!!!”

Noticing that the page was left on the edge of Nines’ bed, Gavin leaned in closer to Nines as if he wanted to rest his weight onto the android while Nines tried helping him up. Gavin allowed Nines’ hands to be wrapped around his waist as he hissed and groaned in pain as they stood back up slowly.

“Are you feeling dizzy? Are you able to breathe?” The questions flew out of Nines’ mouth in a hurry, and Gavin pointed down at his ankle while pretending to shake and pant. Once Nines was distracted enough to look down, Gavin turned and pounced on the bed. He grabbed the page off the bed as he tried crawling towards the other side of the bed, but Nines was fast.

“GAVIN! YOU TRICKED ME!”

Gavin cackled at the way Nines looked so furious. But he wasn’t laughing for long when he felt Nines throw himself next to him on the bed, his hand already gripping Gavin’s wrist holding the page.

Gavin gasped as he really put up a struggle. “Don’t!!!”

“Give it back!!”

“NO!”

They struggled for a while, with neither of them winning when Nines draped a long leg over Gavin’s and rolled himself on top of Gavin. Their chests pressed together, and it seemed the memories of their encounter in the woods had hit them both at the same time.

Gavin’s arm hung over the other end of the bed, and he let the page drop down to the floor when Nines looked down at him. Their eyes met, and for a while, they simply stared at each other as if
mesmerized and frozen. They really seemed taken by the moment, and they weren’t able to move or speak as they felt each other so close.

Nines finally reached out a hand and ran it down the side of Gavin’s cheek as he studied the man’s face in the sunlight that was pouring through the window a few feet away from the bed.

Gavin really was…beautiful.

Nines pressed his forehead against Gavin’s as he leaned down close enough so their lips were hovering barely an inch apart from each other…

Nines saw Gavin’s eyes land on his lips, and Gavin leaned in close for a kiss, but Nines gently lifted his head slightly. Gavin’s head followed, rising up higher and higher off the mattress, ready and eager to meet Nines’ lips. Every time he did that, however, Nines would smirk and pull away playfully as he drew his head back and denied Gavin kisses.

This little game went on for another minute before Gavin grew frustrated with it and grabbed the back of Nines’ head with a hand and pulled him down for a deep kiss. Nines didn’t fight or pull away; he happily met Gavin’s lips as he snaked a hand underneath Gavin to hold him up against his chest as their lips moved against each other’s in a gentle manner.

Gavin enjoyed how gentle Nines was with him, and his head and heart were spinning as if someone had thrown them into a washing machine and turned it on. He just let Nines’s tongue slip around the seam of his lips, begging for a much more intimate kiss, similar to the one they’d shared while showering.

He didn’t refuse as he opened himself up to Nines quickly, practically moaning far too loudly the moment Nines’ tongue met his in a soft and curious way…

They pressed closer to each other, and Gavin draped a leg around Nines’ waist as their kiss grew more passionate and intense. Nines let Gavin take control of the kiss as Gavin’s tongue dipped in and out of Nines’ mouth lewdly, and Nines held back many small noises and pleasurable gasps that were slowly spilling out of his mouth.

Gavin had barely wrapped a second leg around Nines’ waist, when they heard a loud knocking on the window that was barely above their heads…

They broke apart, Gavin tilting his head back on the mattress as he looked upside-down from the angle he was resting on the bed, while Nines remained on top of him as he craned his neck upwards to gape at the window.

They’d forgotten to pull down the curtains, and they’d been giving Cameron, Max, and Peter a show…

All three androids were giggling as Cameron flashed them a thumbs-up and he playfully winked at them.

Oh for fucking crying out loud…

Not wanting to give them anymore of a show, Gavin untangled himself from Nines’ limbs as he dove for the curtains.

“Fuck off, you perverts!!!” he growled irritably at them as he yanked the curtains down. Their shadows and LED light colors were still glowing and cast behind the curtains as they giggled and finally went back to their own cabins. Gavin sighed as he heard them moving off the deck and their
footsteps finally grew faint.

He covered his lips with a hand as he wiped the embarrassment and heat off his face and moved his hands upwards to yank his hair. “Fuuuuck!!”

They’d really ruined a beautiful moment, but Nines didn’t seem as troubled by it. Gavin hissed at him as he sat back down on Nines’s bed beside the android. “What the fuck do you find so amusing about it, Nines?”

Nines smiled even wider at this, “Well, at least they won’t have any reason to doubt the validity of our relationship, anymore…”

Gavin held up an index finger, “Don’t you fuckin’ start with me, Nines,” he settled gently on the bed as he grabbed another pillow and placed it beneath his chest as he stared up at the android. “…after all, you’re not the one with blue balls, right now.”

Nines looked upwards at the ceiling, “Hmm, true.”

“Smug prick.”

Nines only grinned like a predatory large cat as he grabbed the pillow Gavin had previously thrown at him and placed it beneath his head as he lay down beside Gavin. They gazed into each other’s eyes for a long time before Nines smiled warmly as he looked at Gavin’s lips.

“I hear they’ve got another dance class going on this afternoon in the gym.”

“We’re not going.”

Nines snickered, “Why?”

Gavin rolled his eyes as he propped up an elbow and rested his weight on it as he placed his hand against his temple. “Because I’m having so much fun here, Nines, can’t you see it?”

Truthfully, he really didn’t want to walk around a gay resort with an aching erection, but he had different ways of suggesting that without being crude towards Nines.

Nines knew he was being sarcastic, but he only quirked a brown eyebrow as he pressed the tip of his index finger against Gavin’s lips. “Then perhaps we should remain in here and think of things we can write about for our next session with Jose…”

Gavin pretended to think as he hummed and gazed up at the ceiling, “Hmmm, I’ve got a better idea, though…”

Nines smirked, still gazing at Gavin’s lips as he spoke, “Then, perhaps we should enjoy the time we have here,” Nines whispered, moving his body closer to Gavin’s. The detective raised an eyebrow at that.

Nines rubbed his index finger back and forth over Gavin’s lower lip, unable to tear his blue eyes off of Gavin’s thick lips. He felt transfixed as his eyes were rooted to the center of the man’s lips, practically purring in delight as he studied them.

Gavin noticed this as he chuckled softly, “You okay there, Nines?”

“Never felt better…”
The android pressed his lips hesitantly to Gavin’s at first, as if asking for permission. Gavin kissed him back enthusiastically, slowly exploring every inch of Nines’ mouth as if it was the first time. In a way, it was. He was seeing his Nines, his friend, his lover in a whole different light. He wasn’t hiding anymore and that gave everything a different feeling. Nines pulled back first, breaking the kiss.

Gavin sat up and grabbed his partner, pulling him in roughly and pressing his lips against Nines’. He rolled them so that he was on top of Nines within a few seconds. He kissed him deeply for a few moments before playfully biting down on Nines’ lower lip.

Nines gasped and broke the kiss, and Gavin was all too happy to explore his way down Nines’ neck.

“Yeah, this is much better,” he muttered into Nines’ neck as he kissed his way down his throat. The rest was lost in a blur of hot, wet, frantic movements as clothes were shed and skin pressed together. Gavin had never undressed as quickly in his entire life, and he was certain he wasn’t completely ‘out-of-control’ horny yet. He flung his clothes to the ground as he straddled Nines’ body, quickly helping his partner remove all his clothes in a few fast motions, too. Whispered words and low moans accentuated the stillness of the room until both men gasped out in heated moans as they rutted against each other, only Gavin still wearing his boxers. He’d been too aroused in his erratic, frantic lust to undress Nines completely, that he’d forgotten the barrier that was currently rubbing and pressing over the tip of his own leaking cock.

Gavin grabbed Nines’ cheeks roughly in both his hands, pressing forceful kisses on Nines’ mouth when Nines turned his head to the side. He appeared slightly worried, and Gavin stopped, trying to gain control over his brain before his dick took over.

“What’s wrong?” he panted down at Nines and waited patiently until Nines was ready to look over at him again.

The android definitely seemed worried as he looked at Gavin’s neck and throat before gently pressing both his hands on Gavin’s chest. “This…this isn’t…” he sighed in frustration as he tried formulating what he was thinking, his LED light yellow before it turned red briefly.

Gavin ran a hand up and down the side of Nines’ forehead which bore the LED light before he pressed a soft kiss over the light. “What, baby?”

“This isn’t a one-time-thing, right?” Nines stared up at him, eyes wide and hair messy. Gavin thought it was so fucking cute, but he cleared his throat as he answered Nines honestly and seriously.

“No, this really isn’t like that, Nines.” He meant it, and Nines could tell as he calmed down and the worried expression slowly disappeared.

He kissed Gavin’s neck. “Thank you.”

Gavin grabbed Nines’s cheeks again, diving in for another passionate kiss, when Nines turned around once more.

Now what?!

“We’re going to miss our group activities,” Nines said, eyeing the clock on the wall behind Gavin.

Gavin groaned, “Fuck the group activity!”

Nines raised an eyebrow, clearly not impressed. “Gavin.”
Gavin rolled his eyes, “No one will be missing ‘Jack’ and ‘Robert’, I swear.”

Nines turned away when Gavin began pressing heated kisses on his jaw. “Gavin.”

“Fuck everyone, just forget ‘em, Nines!”

Nines gasped as he frowned darkly at Gavin. “You really need to watch your language, Gavin!”

That earned a little snicker from Gavin, and he pressed his hips down over Nines’ gently, but firmly. He saw Nines’ eyes fall shut in pleasure immediately.

Gavin smiled, knowing he’d won. “Just relax and focus on me, Nines,” he kissed the tip of Nines’ nose. “After all, our buddy Cameron saw the naughty things we were doin’, and I’m sure he’ll tell everyone what messy business Jack and Robert were getting themselves into…”

He pressed his erection right against Nines’, and the android’s eyes opened as he cast Gavin a haughty look and huffed, “You get turned on by the weirdest shit, you know that?”

Hearing Nines swear like that made Gavin swoon, practically. “I know.” He licked a long, clean swipe across Nines’ lips seductively.

“But what we will say to Jose?”

Gavin gave a half-shrug, “Forget about it. I’d much rather be here with you. We’ll make up something, or hell, tell him we spent the morning and afternoon ‘rekindling our romance’ or some shit like that. Jose’ll eat it right up.”

Nines chuckled, “I like that idea.”

“Good.”

Gavin finally captured Nines’ lips in his own, and he had barely sighed pleasurably into the kiss when Nines nipped his lower lip and they broke apart. It seemed to wake up something deep within Gavin, and the longer he stared at Nines’ swollen-freshly-kissed lips, the faster he came up with an idea of something he’d been meaning to try now, especially since he still felt too sore for the kind of sex his body screamed at him to have with Nines.

He settled himself comfortably on Nines’s lap. “Nines… there’s something I’ve been curious about, something I’ve wanted to try,” Gavin spoke hesitantly at first, but tried being courageous as he waited for Nines to speak.

The android looked beyond aroused as he blinked a few times, as if trying to get a hold of himself. “What’s that?”

“Do you trust me?”

“More than I trust myself,” Nines spoke his words with absolute sincerity as he kissed Gavin’s chin.

Gavin felt warm inside. “And you won’t judge me or grow frustrated easily with me, because I’m tellin’ you, this is a first time I’ve attempted this…”

Nines kissed Gavin’s cheek. “Honestly, Gavin,” another kiss was pressed higher up on his cheekbone, “when it comes to this,” Nines waved his hands around the room, “I don’t know what the heck I’m doing either. I haven’t exactly had sex…until last night…”

Gavin smiled, “Good, then just relax, and I’ll take care of you…”
Nines smiled as he ran a hand through Gavin’s hair. “You always take care of me, Gavin,” he kissed Gavin’s forehead sweetly, lips lingering a little on Gavin’s heated skin.

“What do you want to try?”

Instead of answering, Gavin gently pushed down on the center of Nines’ chest. He shoved the android down onto his back and moved his hands down as he gripped his hips. Enjoying how strong and powerful they felt, Gavin pressed his fingers into them firmly before moving over to barely touch Nines’ semi-hard cock. The detective smirked when he heard Nines gasping and involuntarily bucking his hips upwards against the motions. Gavin was liking where this was going.

Nines met his eyes once more and Gavin could see the slightest hesitancy in them before the android smiled at him. Gavin knew Nines trusted him, even though it was highly likely that he had no idea Gavin was going to do. Encouraged by the slight shift in power he had, Gavin slithered down the bed, stopping when his face was even with Nines’ hips. He sucked in a breath as he was facing Nines’ cock. He leaned closer to him, eyes trained on his cock where it lay against his stomach, filled with excitement. He was pretty damn sure about what was going to happen, and his brain was slowly shutting down.

Gavin carefully gripped Nines’ dick in one hand. A few images of women doing the same thing to him many years ago flashed in his mind, but Gavin forcefully removed and pushed those memories out of his mind. If he was going to do this, he wanted it to just be with Nines. Sure, he had no idea what the fuck to really do, but he didn’t want anyone else in his mind. He’d prefer learning what Nines liked, what he’d do, how he’d react all as he explored and likely made a fool of himself in the process. It was going to be a new experience for them both, and Gavin wouldn’t have it any other way.

He carefully and slowly flicked his tongue out and ran it along the tip, causing Nines to let loose a moan. It had been something entirely unexpected for both Gavin and Nines. Gavin hadn’t been expecting a man’s cock to feel this way against his tongue. The warm wetness of Nines’ cock was highly arousing, and definitely something Gavin hadn’t anticipated he’d like.

As Nines choked back on many loud moans, he absolutely relished in the way Gavin’s tongue was fleeting, applying pressure there on him, but barely enough to call a tease. He knew there was more, and he gripped the sheets with both hands tightly, not wanting to hurt or frighten Gavin. What he was doing felt so good, and if he stopped, Nines was sure he’d shutdown for sure.

Gavin leaned back in, this time taking the whole tip into his mouth and letting his tongue trace the sensitive area just under the head. He knew Nines was absolutely new to all this, and he was grateful. He knew that other men would definitely not fight against the instinct to grab the head of anyone else performing this action and shove them further down.

After an agonizing few seconds, Gavin finally sunk down on Nines’ cock. He slowly began to bob up and down, letting his tongue map out every inch of hardness. Every time he’d come up, his tongue would flick over the tip, stabbing at the slit in a way that he knew was driving Nines insane. The android was practically screaming out in pleasure, and though it embarrassed Gavin if anyone was around to hear them, he couldn’t help but feel proud that he’d been the one to bring this out of Nines without even really going too far. Oh how lovely the non-existent expectations of a practically-virgin partner were…

It was a sloppy blow job; there wasn’t much of a rhythm, Gavin didn’t use his hand enough, but at the same time, the pure innocence and wonder he showed was hot enough to have the also equally-inexperienced Nines on the edge in an embarrassingly short time. Gavin reached up and cupped his hand around the one Nines had buried in the sheets and gently guided it on his cock beneath his own
hand. Letting his hand guide Nines’, he showed the android how to pump in time with the movement of his mouth. Once the other man caught on, the pleasure surged. Gavin felt his balls draw up tightly and knew Nines was about to come.

“Gavin…uh, you might want to move!” Gavin didn’t need the warning, but it was cute that Nines was concerned and conscious enough to warn him. It made Gavin’s own excitement swell in his boxers, and he swallowed Nines’ cock as far as he could a few more times.

Nines practically was in tears as his head fell back and he let out a low moan. “Gavin! I’m about to…”

Gavin fully understood what Nines was having trouble getting out. Not wanting to tease him any further, he pulled his mouth off Nines with a ‘pop’ but continued to move his hand over the rigid flesh when Nines didn’t have the energy to do so anymore. A handful of strokes later and Nines was pumping out his release. He closed his eyes and let his head fall against one of the pillows as his body trembled in aftershocks.

His hips twitched up in awkward, jerky motions as the water-like fluid sprayed against Gavin’s throat as he moved back just in the nick of time.

Nines hid his face against the pillow, and it took him a few minutes to remember that reciprocation was the only polite thing to do. Truthfully, he was dying to see Gavin fall apart again. Only, he really wasn’t sure he was ready to offer the detective the same treatment. Did that make him a coward? Nines hoped it wouldn’t as he slowly looked over at Gavin from beneath the pillow he held against his face.

Gavin chuckled as he licked his lips clean while watching Nines carefully. “I think it’s fuckin’ adorable that you’re so shy now after you really seemed to know what you were doin’ the other night in the woods…”

Not needing the reminder, Nines pushed those thoughts away as he pulled Gavin in to capture his lips again. He pushed Gavin’s own boxers down and off, using his foot to move them somewhere near the end of the bed. He slid one muscled thigh in between the detective’s legs as he let his hands slip down to grab Gavin’s ass. He pulled their hips flush together as he devoured the other man’s mouth. He nipped at Gavin’s bottom lip with his teeth, then soothed it with laps of his tongue. Gavin only rolled his hips against his partner’s and felt the hard length of Nines’ half-erection trail across the jut of his hip, a warm wetness trailing after where it slid.

He was hard again already?!

Wow, that was some damn good recovery time…

Nines had meant to use the kiss as a distraction to keep his guilty feelings over hurting Gavin that night in the woods away, but the moment his lips had connected with Gavin’s, he’d decided to lose and let himself go to the powerfully electrifying feelings that were surging through his system.

How could one kiss like this render his entire system incapable of any further reactions or thoughts?!

The man definitely had some sort of spell over him, and Nines didn’t want to fight it; not with how damn good Gavin made him feel lately. He selfishly just wanted more of whatever Gavin had to offer.

Soon, Gavin’s breath hitched, his own hips thrusting against Nines. The tall android smiled into Gavin’s mouth. Nines let his hands move over his partner’s firmly toned ass, hips, thighs, exploring
the area he’d not had much of a chance to see yet. He thought for a moment about straying to that
forbidden place, the most intimate place. He wondered what Gavin would do. Was that something
the man wanted? Did that thought turn him on?

Curiosity won over and Nines let one hand move to the cleft of Gavin’s ass very slowly and
carefully. He wanted Gavin to know and feel where he was intending to go, and he gave the man
enough time to back out of it if he wanted to. When Gavin showed no inclination that he wanted
Nines to stop, he let one finger slide down in between Gavin’s cheeks to land on the furled hole
hidden there.

It was just like when they’d returned from the woods and showered, and Nines tried making the
moment now as enjoyable and gentle for Gavin as he could. He remembered how easily Gavin had
come undone in his arms, falling against Nines’ chest the moment two of his fingers had gently
pressed against Gavin’s oversensitive hole. Wanting to repeat the wonderful incident, Nines tenderly
rubbed two of his fingers softly back and forth over the open area.

Gavin gasped as his hips stuttered, and he tightly gripped onto Nines’ shoulders with quivering
hands. Nines put the slightest amount of pressure there, and Gavin hissed as he came within seconds.
The detective’s whole body was vibrating as he pumped his load onto his partner’s hips and lap.
Nines was drunk on the powerful feeling he got from bringing the man to that point, while he was
certain Gavin was intoxicated on feeling the more tender forms of touching. It was all a new learning
experience for Nines, as he’d previously been under the assumption that Gavin wanted more ‘rough’
forms of sex that would be felt within him for days. Or perhaps, it was that he did indeed desire both
from Nines, but only at certain times…

Nines kissed Gavin’s neck and throat, then moving along to map out his beautifully shaped
collarbone as he moved his hands up until he was embracing Gavin, holding him close as he came
down from his orgasm-induced high. Gavin had propped himself on one knee, which was resting
dangerously close to Nines’s cock.

Nines looked down at the top of Gavin’s thighs almost rubbing against the tip of his cock, and he
had to force down another impending arousal. This was getting to be too much for him, and he
wasn’t sure how much more of it he could take before he had to lock up all the doors and windows
of the cabin and keep Gavin with him all day and night just pleasing him…

“I didn’t know having sex was this crazy.”

Gavin chuckled at Nines’ comment as he pressed a few soft kisses on Nines’ cheek in a gentle
exchange of intimacy he’d tried matching to the ones Nines had bestowed upon his chest and neck.

“You okay?” he heard Nines ask, but he knew his voice was as rough and wrecked as Nines’ was
from all their moaning and boisterous cries of passion emitted.

He had to clear his throat a few times before he could speak properly.

“Yes. That was…I…” Gavin’s voice trailed off as he laid his head down on Nines’ shoulder.

He felt Nines nodding his head in agreement. “Yeah, it was,” the android agreed, pretty sure he
knew what Gavin was trying to say. He pulled the detective even closer, bringing them both down to
lie back on the mattress as they closed their eyes and let sleep take them, forgetting about the mess
between them and the wet spot on the bed.
Nines was running his hands in lazy, small circles over Gavin’s back and neck as the pair were still on their bed that evening. Gavin had been out like a snuffed candle, though Nines had carefully moved him so he was lying down properly on the bed. A pillow was resting beneath his head, but Nines didn’t need one as he lay beside Gavin and simply watched him sleep while rubbing his back softly.

He was elated to see the detective up-close again, and he smiled to himself as he moved his hand up towards the back of Gavin’s head and ruffled the hair there gently. His fingers swept through Gavin’s hair in soft, back and forth motions, the roots massaged gently as he weaved his fingers over the top of Gavin’s skull.

Nines really enjoyed how smooth and fresh Gavin’s hair felt between his fingers. This was something he could often see himself doing for Gavin, no matter what happened before. Nines knew he didn’t always expect sex from Gavin, nor did he particularly wish to force his partner to only engage in behaviors like that with him. It was slowly occurring to Nines that he wanted much more than a sexual relationship only with Gavin…

He wanted with he saw many of the other couples having; a true romantic relationship.

Nines knew he wanted that from Gavin the moment Gavin felt and said that sometimes sex just happened between two people, and he’d implied that it wasn’t wise or best to look beyond the sexual relations for something deeper and more meaningful. Nines didn’t know why, but when Gavin had said that, it felt as if someone had crushed every bio-component within him with a hammer. He didn’t want sex only; he wanted Gavin.

Nines had sensed that Gavin was uptight and perplexed about something, and if he had to wager a guess, he was going to put all his bets on the fact that Gavin was worrying about what would become of them once they’d solved the case and were sent back to the DPD. It was the very same thought and worry he himself was having as he lay beside Gavin and played with his hair softly.

He wasn’t sure what really was going to happen after the case, but Nines was absolutely certain he didn’t want things to go back to the way they were before they’d been sent out on this case. It was all a change of perspective, and now that Nines had a ‘before’ and ‘after’ comparison, he knew he didn’t want to bicker and argue with Gavin or avoid him every time they worked together in the DPD. He always wanted to be as close to Gavin as he was now, and he didn’t want others to ever see them apart.

He knew these thoughts and wishes would more than likely embarrass or frighten the detective off if he heard of them for now, so he held back on admitting everything to Gavin for the time being. Perhaps it was better to just ‘live in the moment’ as Stephie had suggested a few times in the middle of their group therapy. He hadn’t understood the implications of that sentence until recently…

Still smiling as he played with Gavin’s hair, Nines felt something in his head humming and buzzing lowly at first before it grew louder and more intense. His LED light went yellow right away, and he knew it was Connor trying to reach him and connect with him.

Cursing the RK800 for his bad sense of timing, Nines rolled over a little as he pressed his naked back against Gavin’s and tried to cover his blinking LED light so it wouldn’t disturb or rouse Gavin from his deep sleep.

He connected with Connor as his eyes went wide and the pupils dilated.

“Connor, I’m listening.”
“Nines! Hank and I finally have the full list of human victims!”

“But what about the android victims?” He fought the urge to roll his eyes. “The list is incomplete! We need their model numbers, dates of their creation, when they were found shut down…”

“Well most of the androids were actually lovers and in romantic relationships with the humans, Nines…”

“Do you think that’s a possible motive for the killings?”

“I’m not certain, but I would like to forward the names of the victims to you.”

“Permission granted, Connor.”

His head began to throb, and he gripped the mattress tightly as his LED light turned red and he was overwhelmed by an onslaught of information-sharing at once. One-by-one, the names of the human victims flashed in his mind as his bio-components were mildly buzzing from a small electrical current running through them.

**Evin Byers Kepler, born in 1997, deceased in 2038…**

**Dawn Erma Lorn, born in 2000, deceased in 2038…**

**Kamilah Thorsten, born in 1999, deceased in 2038…**

**Jere Francklin, born in 2003, deceased in 2038…**

**Michael Yolane, born in 2002, deceased in 2038…**

“So? What do you make of it?” Connor didn’t give him much time to think about it, but Nines was immediately disappointed.

“There is no connection other than the fact that they all disappeared and were found murdered in the same year, which was when the murders were first reported at Heaven’s Salvage during their previous season last year…”

“I don’t understand it either; Hank said that the names on the gravestones marked with a few of the numbers would have been a match here.”

“Yes, but these victims are all the opposite gender of the people who were buried in the cemetery here…” More disappointment hit Nines in the head and chest.

“And their dates of birth and passing don’t match at all, either.”

“No, they do not.”

Connor paused for a moment, as if reluctant to share what he was thinking with Nines. “I think Jose is the murderer…”

Nines found this interesting. “On what grounds have you formed this opinion, Connor?”

“Hank, Gavin, and I myself saw him sneaking into the storage and utility closet with a suspicious-looking jar in his hands.”

Nines frowned, remembering that occurring on the day he’d been distracted and exhausted from his sexual escapades with Gavin. He’d missed out on some important details and occurrences, and he
felt a little peeved that Connor or Hank hadn’t kept him up to speed on what had happened specifically that day. “Did you find out what he placed in the closet?”

“No, we followed him after he left the area, but we were unable to locate what exactly it was he’d placed inside the storage closet.”

“Perhaps it really was nothing of importance, then.”

Connor was a bit hesitant to agree, and it seemed like he wanted to follow through with his suspicion of Jose as he thought while still connected to Nines. “Maybe…but all the evidence is lining up against Jose…”

“Perhaps.” Nines knew they had to keep all their options open; not just the ones that seemed to have a glaring red flag only.

“What’re we going to do, now?” Connor’s question was similar to the one he’d been thinking of asking, but held back on it. Nines looked down at Gavin’s broad back and sighed.

“We shouldn’t give up, Connor,” that was easier said than done, but they had no other options aside from giving up on the case and allowing the murderer to run free.

“How’s Lieutenant Anderson doing?”

Connor sighed, “He’s not too happy about this recent discovery.”

“Yes, I imagine so.”

“Oh well, we’ll just keep looking! Perhaps this was meant to throw us off.”

Nines had to agree. “Yes, it’s never this easy, Connor.”

“True!”

“Is there anything else?” He hadn’t meant to sound so impatient, but Nines was disappointed that his initial hunch had turned out to be incorrect. He didn’t like appearing so inept and incompetent, and he felt his pride wounded.

Connor paused for a moment before he said that there wasn’t much else they could work on, and they disconnected shortly thereafter.

Nines stared down at Gavin sleeping beside him on the bed, and though he enjoyed the sight of the man’s nude form next to him, it wasn’t nearly enough to replace the dark and foul mood he was now in after chatting with Connor.

Trying to remain silent, Nines eased himself out of the bed and began making his way towards the bathroom for a long, cold shower.

He really hoped it would help him gather his thoughts together coherently, or at the very least, calm him down, though he kept his expectations around that low.

He didn’t need any further disappointments…
Jose cracked his knuckles loudly in the tiny office, and the sound of it seemed painfully loud in Gavin’s eardrums. It was as if someone was banging a drumstick over his head, and he winced as he waited for Jose to finish cracking away. Sadly, the therapist began cracking his neck, next, and then toes as he stretched them up in the air and turned his ankles and feet around in a small circle.

Gavin sighed in exhaustion, “Are you done with your preparations for some yoga class?”

Jose didn’t find the comment amusing as he glared evenly between Gavin and Nines. He was clearly very angry for obvious reasons, but Gavin couldn’t care less as he stared at the new get-up of the man.

Jose had recently re-colored his hair, and it was the same annoying colors as before. He had clearly been in the middle of applying some cream or special mask to his face, though, and when Gavin and Nines had showed up a few minutes early to their final therapy session, Jose had opened the door wearing a green-white facial mask spread all over his face.

It had frightened Nines, but Gavin smiled sarcastically as he said: “Good morning, Casper.”

Since then, Jose’s mood really took a turn for the worse as he did whatever he could to annoy Gavin especially. He was really going out of his way to make Gavin uncomfortable, and Nines was trying to ignore the antics Jose was pulling as he sat beside Gavin, though their chairs were practically rubbing each other now…

Jose noticed it as he glared at the armrests of the chairs touching. “So I take it the make-up sex went well?”

Gavin growled, “Why do you always have to be so vulgar?”

“Why did you call me ‘Casper’?” Jose shot back with extra venom in his voice as he frowned over at Gavin from across the desk.

Gavin pointed at his white face, “Because of the fuckin’ Kabuki-style shit goin’ on!”

“AT LEAST I DON’T HAVE BLACKHEADS SUFFOCATING MY BEAUTIFUL PORES!!”

Nines rolled his eyes, trying to end the little bickering. “We merely took your advice, Jose, and it worked.” He seemed to announce this rather quickly, and Gavin felt his cheeks flushing as Jose gasped and then grinned.

“Well of course it worked!” Jose brushed some of his fallen hair back, clearly worried it would mix in with the facial mask, “I’m a genius, so you better listen to me, no matter what I say!”
Gavin highly doubted it, but before he could say anything, Nines nodded quickly. “Yes, we’ll be sure to.”

Jose nodded, “M’kay, but that doesn’t excuse the both of you cheating on each other!!”

Oh shit…not this again…

Gavin sighed as he felt his face turning red, while Nines looked up at the ceiling.

Nines was the first to speak, “Jose, it’s not really like that-”

Jose interrupted as he snapped his fingers, rings clinking together loudly, “It was like that,” he sneered at Nines as he recalled the state he’d found him in with Hank at the bottom of the hill, “you looked awfully cozy bouncing on Mr. Westbrook’s lap like some thirsty little slu-”

Gavin coughed loudly, almost choking on both his own words and saliva. He couldn’t listen to what Jose had to say anymore, not unless he wanted to implode. “P-please,” Gavin coughed out painfully, his throat raw, “Robert told me he was merely looking for something he’d dropped while we were walking around the waterfall, and Mr. Westbrook was just accompanying him to help him find it because he’s familiar with the grounds, that’s all.”

Jose rolled his eyes, “Look, I may have been born at night, Jack, but I wasn’t born last night!”

Gavin bit down on his tongue as he tried composing himself.

“There’s no way even my own partner would let me wander in the night with some other man!” Jose hissed viciously as he glared at Nines with a raised eyebrow.

Nines tried speaking, but Jose pointed at him, “Do you have some sort of ‘gardener fantasy’?”

“What?!”

Gavin exploded out in boisterous laughter. His mind was going in all sorts of lewd, sexual thoughts which mostly consisted of having sex in a garden with Nines while he was dressed in a gardener outfit…

Fuck…

Jose crossed his arms as he frowned over at Gavin. “And you, Jack,” he shook his head, “do you find the notion of being caught fooling around with other men in public funny or exciting?!”

He shrugged as he held back many more rounds of laughter while Nines glared at a spot on the desk, eyes fixated on it as he tried hiding his embarrassment.

“I wasn’t foolin’ around with Westbrook and Radfield.”

Jose snorted, “And I’m clearly blind, right?”

Well, blind AND gay, but who’s keepin’ score?

Jose looked outside his office window at the exact same time Hank was walking across the lawn outside across from the office. He was wearing blue jeans and a grey shirt as he was mowing the over-grown lawn. His biceps flexed as he pushed the lawnmower back and forth while it buzzed on loudly, and Jose crossed his arms and glared out the window at him.

“We all may have interesting fantasies,” he stared all over at Hank’s body, his eyes glazing over with
lust as he shook lightly, “…god knows I do…but,” he sighed a dreamy sigh as he reached out a hand and traced the outline of Hank’s ass along the glass as he moved back and forth across the lawn, “I’d never cross the line between what I dream of, and what I actually want to do!”

“But neither of us were doin’ that…” Gavin sighed loudly, and Jose shook his head as his eyes and head followed every motion Hank made outside.

“I don’t care how you want to hide it!” the therapist grumbled out with malice and hatred thick in his voice as he grew closer to the window. Gavin saw he was fogging up the glass as he breathed heavily while he observed Hank mowing.

Jose’s voice shook as he spoke slowly, “You can’t just reach out and take whatever you want without thinking about the…” he gasped when Hank began walking backwards while pulling the lawnmower with him strongly, “…consequences…”

Gavin rolled his eyes as Jose turned around after another minute of spying on Hank. The therapist placed his hands on his hips as he glared down at Gavin and Nines. “You both agreed to register for this program because you obviously need help, and obviously want your relationship to work out…” he looked back over his shoulder out the window and quivered when he saw Hank bending down over the lawnmower.

“So then, in order for you to help each other and allow me to help you,” he gazed back at them, some of his facial mask drying and caking onto his cheeks, “you must remain faithful and resist the temptations of lust calling your names!”

Gavin held up a finger, but Jose cut him off. “What do you think the entire purpose of our play was about? Hmm?”

Nines placed a hand on his cheek as he looked out the window with a bored expression, “To resist temptation?”

Jose smiled down at him in pride, “Exactly, Robert.”

Gavin let out a sigh as he whispered to himself: “Pathetic.”

Jose took another quick peek out the window as he gripped the collar of his pride-colored tight polo shirt and tugged it while his eyes followed Hank once more, “We must be a lot stronger than our carnal instincts, and we mustn’t lose ourselves so easily…” he sighed as he looked over at Nines and Gavin, trying to appear calm, even though he was clearly hot under the collar.

“And while I think it was noble of you to protect your partner, Jack, you should never resort to physical violence!!” His eyes flashed angrily at Gavin as he shook his head judgmentally at Gavin while placing his hands on his hips again.

Gavin slammed a hand down on the desk, “You separated me and Robert on purpose!”

Jose shook his head stubbornly, “No, there are fewer women in the group, so I had to stick Megan somewhere!!”

“Uh huh…”

Gavin felt Nines gently resting a hand on his knee as he tried to clearly comfort and calm him down. Gavin’s eyes met Nines’, and he felt a smile break across his face effortlessly. It was contagious, and Nines soon smiled, too.
Jose thought it was cute, and he cooed down at them, “That’s much better! It’s good to have each other’s backs, but I won’t tolerate anymore aggression from you, Mr. Benedict!” his finger wagged in Gavin’s face like he was disciplining a puppy.

Gavin sat up in his seat as he felt mildly threatened. “Well I was just protecting my-” He didn’t know why he’d paused in his vocal ramblings, but he glanced over at Nines. The android was tilting his head at him, and he offered Gavin a warm smile. Gavin wasn’t sure he would be able to continue, suddenly feeling so aware of himself and so alert. His feelings were raw, and they were about to be voiced out loud in front of the therapist, as well as Nines himself…

Gavin cleared his throat when everything came crashing down to a real point for him. He had been about to confess how he felt without even thinking what he was doing…why was he so careless?

“Go on, Jack.”

Jose’s voice wasn’t all that encouraging, but Gavin didn’t need encouragement. He swallowed and broke eye contact with Nines as he looked down at his hands resting in his own lap. He was so nervous, and he didn’t understand why…

Stop bein’ a chickenshit, Gavin, stop bein’ a fuckin’ chickenshit!!

“Jack??”

“Umm…” he looked up at Nines, who seemed a little hurt, though he kept his smile on his face as he nodded at Gavin. The gesture seemed to say: ‘it’s okay if you can’t go through with this; I’ll understand what you mean regardless.’

Fuck…

He felt his heart burning as it practically stretched and leapt in his chest. His throat felt dry and his nerves seemed flayed. Why was this so difficult?! He could engage a suspect on a high-speed chase down any busy freeway and take them down. He could walk into a hostage negotiation situation and bring the son of a bitch down as he saved everyone they’d held up. He could even walk out of a burning building completely fine without facing any trauma, but this?! Confessing his feelings? His weakest point.

He bit down hard on his tongue as he forced himself to stop being such a coward and give Nines the decency and honesty he deserved. Nines had been one of the best partners Gavin had worked with, and he wasn’t going to be that much of a ball-less coward and hide it. Not now, not ever. Nines deserved so much more than that; he deserved to be shown just how amazing and wonderful he was, and it was about time Gavin showed him just how amazing he was.

He straightened up with confidence as he cleared his throat and looked intently at Nines while addressing him only, even though Jose was listening carefully.

“I meant to say that anyone would be justified in doin’ what they did if they saw some grabby pervert tryin’ to touch the one they really, truly care for the most.”

The office was dead silent, but Nines practically was shining as brightly as the sun outside. His eyes were slightly watery, and Gavin wasn’t sure how this was possible, as he didn’t think androids had any tear ducts. Still, Nines looked open, vulnerable, and exposed as he clasped his hands together in his lap. Gavin noticed his hands and legs were quivering as he inhaled sharply through his nose. Was he about to cry?!

Gavin really hoped not…
Had he said something wrong?!

He heard Jose sniffling, and he looked away from Nines just in time to see the therapist grabbing a tissue as he wiped his eyes and nose with it.

“J-Jack, that was…” Jose sighed and sniffled loudly, “that was the most beautiful and most real thing I’ve seen from you yet…”

Oh dear Lord…

Jose blew his nose as he cradled the tissue to his neck and wiped his eyes with an index finger. He looked over at Nines happily. “Robert, you’re such a lucky man.”

Gavin hid his face in the palm of his hand, but he felt Nines wrap a hand around it as he was pressing it against his own face. Their fingers automatically sought each other out, and they wrapped tightly around each other as they held hands and looked in one another’s eyes with genuine warmth and honesty.

Their moment was interrupted by Jose walking around the desk and wrapping his hands around the two of them as he pulled them all together in a tight group-hug.

Gavin groaned and recoiled when he smelled Jose’s fruit-scented perfume.

“You guys,” Jose cried in happiness, “I’m so proud of you!!” he practically squealed like Stephie usually did as he squeezed them all tightly in his arms.

Gavin groaned as he pushed away from Jose, “Alright, alright! Let go already!!”

Nines also struggled out of the tight hug, and Jose clasped his hands against his chest as he beamed down at them both. “I think you two deserve the rest of the day out of group sessions.”

Christmas was early this year.

Gavin cheered as he smiled a wide smile at Jose, but Jose cut him off as he jabbed an index finger in his nose.

“But this is only because of the progress you two made so far today!!”

Gavin nodded, looking down at the finger on his nose, his eyes crossed, “Okay!!! Got it!!!”

“Just have lots of kinky sex,” Jose instructed as he glanced over at Nines desperately trying to hide his embarrassment by looking in the opposite direction. “Get all the horniness out of your systems, so you won’t feel the need to cheat, m’kay?”

Gavin nodded, “Yeah yeah yeah! Okay!”

Jose nodded as he lowered the finger to prod into Gavin’s chest, now, “And if I ever catch you even looking at another man again, I’ll evict you from the premises, and you’ll be forced to leave Heaven’s Salvage!!”

Gavin nodded, hoping this was the last of the threats, “Jesus, I said that’s fine!!”

“Good!” Jose turned and looked out the window again. Hank was now climbing a tree, trying to reach up and pluck a peach off one of the various fruit trees planted about. His outstretched arm was covered in sweat, but he managed to pluck the peach off the tree. He slid down the tree trunk slowly as he bit into the peach and closed his eyes in enjoyment. The sweet juices of the peach drizzled
Jose gasped as he shook his head and cradled his skull in his hands, “This concludes our session, but I’ll definitely come around to do a few more drop in s-sessions later…” he bit back a moan when he saw Hank’s tongue darting out to lick away the peach juice on his chin.

“N-now, if you’ll excuse me,” he ran towards the office door and flung it open, “I have t-to wash this off, now,” he pointed at the facial mask as he practically rubbed the doorknob desperately while his eyes were still on Hank outside.

“But what about our journal entries?” Nines asked softly, and Jose’s hips slammed against the door in surprise.

“Huh?!”

Nines sighed, “Our journals? You said you wanted to take a look at them this session…”

Gavin paled when he remembered he hadn’t finished his due to their… ‘interruption’ last time. He wished Nines would stop being such a goody-two-shoes for once. He hadn’t written anything personally, but he knew Nines had…

Well, shit.

Jose shook as he remembered, “Oh um! Robert! Just tell me the overall scope of yours, and we’ll call it a day, m’kay?” Jose trembled as he bit down on his thumb while watching Hank walk across the lawn as he threw off his shirt and wiped his forehead with it.

Nines looked down at the page in his hands, “I would like to-”

“HURRY!!!” Jose’s pained, desperate scream made Nines leap up slightly, and he ripped his sheet in half. He held both halves of the paper up and sighed in anguish.

Jose held a hand over his mouth as he looked down at Nines remorsefully. “I’m really sorry about that…”

“It’s fine,” Nines sighed again as he looked at Gavin while grinning, “my biggest fantasy right now is to tie up and blindfold Jack as my hands roam everywhere along his body while I kiss him until he’s a wet, desperate mess…”

Gavin’s jaw dropped as he gaped openly at Nines. Could they leave so they could actually do this?! NOW?!?

Nines seemed to be thinking the same thing, and he crumpled up the sheets as he threw them in the garbage bin. He held out his hands and grabbed both of Gavin’s in his own, his LED light yellow as he playfully smirked and winked at his partner.

Gavin leaned into him and whispered in his ear: “You sly, sexy bastard.”

Nines gently pet him on the back before his hand slid down and he firmly squeezed one of Gavin’s ass cheeks in a strong hand. He playfully swatted it, causing Gavin to gasp as he nodded over at the open door.

Gavin he felt himself blushing, but for once, he was okay with it. He looked over at the clearly flustered Jose, but he luckily was focusing all his attention on Hank.
“Wanna give him some privacy?” Gavin whispered as Nines snickered.

“Sure, we could use some ourselves, too.” Nines winked at him before leaning down and gently biting Gavin’s right cheek. Gavin barely bit back a small moan as they scrambled towards the door.

They walked out of Jose’s office, and the door practically slammed behind them as Jose dashed across the office and pressed himself against the window.

Gavin could barely open the front door of the cabin before Nines forcefully turned him around and attacked his lips with his own. His assault was most wonderful and most welcome to Gavin, and he kicked the door shut while still nibbling and nipping at Nines’ lips.

They pressed each other against the door, fighting for dominance slightly before the tall android held tightly onto Gavin and ushered him inside the bedroom. They fell onto Gavin’s bed, Nines’ knees already working their way towards spreading Gavin’s thighs as he pressed open-mouthed kisses down the column of Gavin’s neck.

Gavin was so grateful that Nines wasn’t able to grow rough, stubbly facial hair. He’d lightly joked numerous times even about Connor and other androids being too ‘smooth’ and as hairless as an eel, but he was happy right now when Nines rubbed his cheeks against Gavin’s neck as his tongue slid about across his heated skin. As comfortable as Gavin was with his sexuality now, he still knew for a fact that certain things would still repulse him, and one of those things involved the idea of a man’s beard rubbing against his own skin. Gavin didn’t know why, but he just couldn’t stand even the idea of it. All he could do was enjoy the gentle, soft, smooth touches Nines was bestowing upon his body, and he forgot about the thoughts of coarse, rough hair grazing his skin as he rolled himself on top of Nines.

Nines gasped when Gavin returned the warm pressure against his neck and chest, now, and as much as he was delighting in the feeling of Gavin’s hot, wet lips traveling down his chest, he couldn’t help but think about the way Gavin’s mouth had been tightly wrapped around his length barely a night ago. Since it had ended, Nines wanted to please Gavin in a similar way, though perhaps not exactly like that…

Remembering the fantasy he’d presented to Jose, Nines gently pressed two hands against Gavin’s chest as he tried getting the man’s attention in a calm manner before they both lost control over themselves.

“Gavin,” Nines slowly craned his neck upwards to gaze into Gavin’s half-open eyes.

“Hmm?”

“Gavin.” He knew the detective wasn’t listening to him as much as he would have been had he not been hurrying to slide his jeans down his hips. Nines could only watch in fascination at how quickly Gavin slipped out of the jeans. Shockingly, Nines noticed that Gavin hadn’t worn any underwear beneath the jeans.

His eyes widened as he peered down at the exposed hard cock jutting forward between Gavin’s legs, and in his momentary state of distraction and awe, Gavin was able to swipe Nines’ jeans and underwear clean off him. It happened so quickly that Nines barely had time to find purchase and balance by placing his hands on the edge of the bed before Gavin pounced on top of him, smothering his lips and cries with his mouth and tongue.
Nines didn’t mind the passionate assault, and he held onto Gavin’s cheeks in both his hands as he thoroughly kissed him back, but the moment Gavin pressed his erection over his own, Nines broke the kiss and tried pushing the detective off him.

Gavin groaned in frustration as he hooked a hand onto Nines’ hip and practically rubbed his lower half against Nines in desperation. It was rough and somewhat painful for them both, and Nines cringed as he gently bit down on Gavin’s neck to get him to stop.

“Gavin, please,” he panted softly against Gavin’s chest, trying to remain collected and calm. It was difficult with the way Gavin’s hips were gently moving against his own, and soon, Gavin’s cock began leaking along the inside of Nines’ thigh.

They both gasped, and then emitted a deep groan at the feeling and sensation of it before Nines whispered softly in Gavin’s ear: “I still need to pay you back for l-last ti-ime!” he stammered a few times of the last words when Gavin slammed his hips against him, but Gavin’s mind was curious upon hearing that statement.

He smiled down as he kissed Nines lazily. It was getting near impossible to break through the detective’s lust-induced haze, but Nines managed it when he gathered all his strength to sit up and wrap his thighs around Gavin’s as he pushed Gavin back down onto the mattress.

“Gavin.” He gazed down into his eyes and kissed the tip of his nose while Gavin’s hands wandered all over Nines’ broad, firm chest.

He sighed as he admired what he saw and felt, “Nines, you’re a perfect work of fuckin’ art…” he kissed the center of Nines’ chest, “you’re sculpted by the fuckin’ gods.”

Nines smiled, “Incorrect, Gavin; I was design-”

An index finger pressed against his lips, effectively silencing him.

“Shhh, shhh, don’t fuckin’ argue with me now when I’m so fuckin’ aroused.” Gavin bit down on one of Nines’ nipples, and Nines yelped as he leapt up on his feet and backed away until he was at the foot of the bed.

Gavin snickered as he nodded him over beckoning him with an index finger curling forward a few times, “Get back here…”

Nines smirked as he bent down and reached for his bag under the bed, “In a minute.”

Gavin watched Nines yank the bag from beneath the bed walk over to the side of his bed as he opened his bag slowly. Feeling impatience pooling in his loins, Gavin bit down hard on his lower lip as he saw Nines rummaging through the bag, and he was definitely teasing Gavin by searching for whatever it was he needed extra slowly.

Gavin groaned as he placed a hand on his forehead, “You’re such a fuckin’ tease, Nines!”

He heard the tall android chuckling, “I know.”

And he had to be so fuckin’ coy about it, too. Great.

There wasn’t much he could do at the moment, though. Nines was searching, and Gavin only relished in watching how taught and toned his arm muscles were as they flexed whenever he pushed back clothes, shoes, and other items buried deep within his bag.
Feeling his chest and abdomen tightening given how long he’d raised himself up to bend in that forward position, Gavin plopped down on the messed-up bed and stared at the ceiling, trying to get his mind to slow down enough to relax. Not the easiest thing to do when the object of every lewd fantasy he’d been having lately was standing by the end of the bed completely naked.

Gavin slowed down his excited breathing and let his mind pick up on the small, quiet sounds of Nines flipping through the contents of the dark bag. His mind was still focusing on the image of a nude Nines, and it didn’t keep his impatient and demanding erection down, even when he palmed it and begged it to stay down.

Soon, Nines was finished, and the first thing Gavin was aware of was a gentle hand running through his hair. He slowly opened his eyes, squinting at the lights up on the cabin ceiling. He had no idea how long he’d be able to control himself anymore, and the fading evening light from outside the cabin gave him no sense of what the time was as he lost all his patience. He rolled his head to the side to glance up at Nines. The android had finally moved so he was sitting beside him on the bed, a serene expression on his face.

“Hey,” he murmured, voice dry from arousal that hadn’t been satiated yet.

The way Nines’ voice had dropped an octave made Gavin’s brain numb as he swallowed thickly. “Hey.” His own voice wasn’t in a better condition; it cracked within a second, and he coughed as he tried to hide the fact that it’d happened.

Nines smirked at him, “You alright?”

Gavin nodded, “Mhmm, I’m fine.”

“What’s wrong?”

“Nothing,” he hastened to answer. He wasn’t about to admit to Nines just what he’d been thinking in his perverted mind when he saw him nude on the bed. Gavin didn’t understand why he was so sex-starved and aroused lately, but it brought him back to the days of being a teenager again. He could’ve sworn that he’d still not been as horny and lusting after sex even at that age, though…

“I want to try something, Gavin…” He was brought back to attention as Nines rubbed a hand down his chest and over his abdomen, but he didn’t bring his hand down any lower, unfortunately.

Gavin held back an annoyed whine of impatience. “Ookaaay,” he stretched the word out as he quivered beneath Nines’ penetrating gaze, “just please hurry if you wanna do something, I’m not sure if I can remain in this kinda position for too long, y’know?”

Nines smirked cruelly, knowing exactly what Gavin meant, “I know.” He let his hand trail down Gavin’s side, then along his hip and down to rest on his half-hard cock.

Gavin immediately bit down hard on his tongue from the touch alone. “Oh fuck!!!!”

Nines chuckled, and it didn’t sound menacing, though Gavin wanted to bite his neck for it.

“Did you not tell me that we should be honest with each other? That we should tell each other if there was something we wished to try?” Nines asked quietly, hand gently rubbing Gavin’s firm cock, encouraging his dick to grow harder with each swipe.

This was absolute torture, and Gavin had to wonder when Nines had developed this sadistic streak in him. He looked down to see that Nines was holding something in his free hand, but before Gavin could angle his neck to properly see what the object was, Nines pressed down hard over his cock.
“Fuuuuuuuuuuuuuck!!!” Gavin fell back down onto the mattress, completely feeling like jelly in Nines’ hands, ready to be shaped into any manner Nines decided he’d be. It felt so good to be at the mercy of someone so powerful, and it was another secret pleasure Gavin found he was associating with Nines lately.

He felt Nines’ hand stroking him up and down, taking his time with Gavin as he pressed a warm kiss to the center of his chest.

“Lower, Nines,” Gavin muttered, wondering if the android might cease this infernal teasing for once, and just read Gavin’s mind to give him what he really wanted right now. Sadly, Nines seemed to be enjoying his role as the teaser, and he just shrugged, eyes glued to his hand as it moved along Gavin’s erection.

“Youuu…ooohhh…”

Nines snickered, “You may want to be a little more clear, Detective…”

Fuckin’ hell…

“I would love to give you what you want,” another kiss landed on his heart, “but I can’t seem to understand you.”

Fuckin’ fuck, Nines…

Gavin sighed, “What do you have in your other hand?”

Nines hummed, “Me? Oh, it’s nothing.”

Unable to keep the curiosity away, Gavin opened an eye. “Nines, what’re you holdin’?”

“Focus only on the sound of my voice, and my hand steady around your damn cock.” Nines ordered, voice hard and low. The tone sent blood pounding straight into Gavin’s dick. The way he said it reminded Gavin of the time Nines had threatened to throw him out the doors of the DPD when they’d accidentally run into each other in the Break Room. The arrogant detective had back then purposefully poured some of his coffee over Nines’s head while joking to Tina that he wondered if Nines would spark electricity before he fizzed out, like the keyboard of a laptop if some beverage poured onto it.

Gavin found the deep growl in Nines’ voice purely sexy and desirable, and though he would normally seize up in fear if he’d heard Nines speaking to him—or to anyone-like that in the same tone of voice in the past, Gavin found he really enjoyed it and got off on it. He wanted to hear more of it, and he writhed on the bed while Nines stroked him. The detective knew he was already starting to leak prematurely, and he cursed his needy body as he watched Nines move and shift his hand carrying the items he’d fetched from the duffel bags. As Nines wove his hand over across the bed, Gavin froze, midway through enjoying one of the many sexual fantasies involving Nines he’d been dreaming up. It was then that he realized what Nines was carrying.

The android was holding three dark ties. One was the familiar blue tie Nines had worn during their supper with Cameron and Will, while the other two were brought in for a part of his disguise as ‘Robert’, though they resembled the ties Connor would often wear at the DPD. Gavin swallowed. His heartbeat sped up as he fumbled to get himself in a comfortable position close the headboard of the bed. He looked over shyly at Nines placing two of the three ties flatly on the bed by his feet. He wasn’t really doing this, was he? His dick seemed to hope so…

“Nines, I gotta ask,” he nearly cringed at how small and shy his voice sounded…what was he? In
puberty?

“…why the ties?”

Nines smirked at one of the ties as he wrapped it around his own hand once while straightening the ends of it out. “Though I often don’t mix work and play together, I once happened upon you taking your leisure time at the DPD,” his blue eyes playfully met Gavin’s, “and you were thinking you were alone, so you helped yourself to a very interesting adult film.”

Oh shit…

Gavin sat up against the headboard, but Nines pressed down firmly on his chest, forcing him back down. “I was especially fascinated with how intently you were gazing at the…restraints.” Nines trailed a finger slowly down Gavin’s chest, “Many people find that arousing, correct? I believe I’ve seen you watch pornography that used that particular trope, and you seemed to really enjoy yourself…”

Gavin hissed in embarrassment as he recalled that stupid time in the DPD when he thought he could get away with a little ‘personal’ time to iron out some ‘kinks’ he’d been plagued with. He could’ve sworn no one else was around when he’d opened that site on his personal laptop, but he cursed himself for being so careless in a building full of androids.

“Jesus, Nines!! You watched me watch porn? Dude!” He gaped in disgust at Nines, but his cock twitched and apparently thought it was hot. Gavin wanted to strangle it.

Nines shrugged once more, “It’s nothing shameful, Gavin,” he leaned forward and barely grazed their lips together before pulling away teasingly, “…after all, it seemed as if the couple practicing it were quite satisfied…”

Gavin hissed, “If you’re gonna restrain me, you can feel free to do it without all the fuckin’ teasin’!”

“I believe you’re in no position to be ordering me around, Gavin.” Nines told him, finally meeting his eyes after gazing down at the ties. The power and implication following a promise hung heavy in the air between them. Gavin swallowed.

Is that what he thought? What would he think if he knew the truth? Gavin thought back to how nervous and reluctant to trust Nines he’d once been, and now here was his exact doppelganger: a wild monster filled with nothing else but his desire for full sex and exploration with Nines. He had said they needed to be honest with each other, right? If he couldn’t be honest about this shit with Nines and accept him for who he was, then who could he be honest with? Gaviniver’s shyness soon dissipated as he felt Nines drape the tie on his chest.

“Am I making you nervous, Gavin?” Nines asked with an edge of innocence in his voice while his eyes remained predatory. It did weird things to Gavin’s body; seeing the dark-lust-filled center of Nines’s eyes while his voice was pure and almost child-like. What was Nines doing to him?!?!

“Not exactly,” Gavin muttered. He could feel his face flushing and was embarrassed to find himself blushing yet again in front of his partner as he thought about the wonderfully exciting things they were about to engage in that would involve the tie. Christ, he was worse than a teenage girl with all his silly fantasies!!

Nines pretended to be shocked as he gasped, “Why, I don’t think you’re being honest with me, Gavin…” the tie came up against his eyes, suddenly, and before Gavin knew it, Nines held it flatly
against his eyes and forehead.

“Nines?!”

“Hush.”

The tie rested against the back of his head, and Nines soon brought it over completely around Gavin’s skull as he tied a small, but firm knot at the back of Gavin’s head. “You were a little dishonest with me, Gavin,” he tsed in mock shame, “I think you deserve a little punishment…”

Fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck…

Gavin was melting with heat and lust as he heard Nines grab the second tie. He couldn’t see a damn thing from underneath the tie around his eyes, but he supposed that was the point.

“Tell me, Gavin,” Nines whispered as he grabbed Gavin’s left hand in his own and wove the tie around it, making an attempt at tying Gavin’s hand firmly to the left bedpost.

“…have you ever indulged in this sort of activity before?”

“Umm…” Gavin began lowering his left hand to scratch away at the little sensation the end of the tie was making as Nines moved it back and forth over his chest like the back-and-forth swinging of a pendulum’s blade.

Nines hissed angrily and grabbed his hand roughly, tearing it away from his chest. “Put your hands above your head.” Gavin complied and felt a thrill go through him as Nines moved to the top of the bed.

“Answer me, and don’t even consider fabrication as an option.”

Gavin swallowed as he surrendered to the dominant power Nines held over him. “N-no, this is my first time…” he stammered his response out as he tried hearing and sensing where Nines was moving next, but all he could see was darkness.

Nines carefully took each of Gavin’s wrists and used the silk ties to fasten his hands to the headboard. Gavin tugged and found that he was bound, but not tightly. If he really wanted to, he could get out.

He huffed out a chuckle that soon turned into a small moan, “Yeah…this…this is my first time doin’ this…”

Nines stroked Gavin’s nipples, and the sensation took him by surprise. He leapt back and almost knocked the back of his skull violently against the headboard, had Nines not protected him from the dangerous impact by wedging his hand between Gavin’s skull and the thick headboard.

“Do you want to give yourself a concussion, Gavin?”

Gavin shook his head, “No…”

He felt Nines tug at one of his nipples, and he cried out in shock more than pain. “The hell!?”

“Silence.”

Gavin grumbled, but allowed Nines to toy with his nipples for a while. He thought he would grow bored of it, but apparently, the android seemed fascinated with the hardened tips as he tugged at them and rolled them between his thumbs and index fingers. Gavin felt himself growing more aroused as
he couldn’t see; but only feel what Nines was doing.

Nines gently rubbed his palm against one of Gavin’s nipples. “So you’ve never even dreamed of doing this?”

Gavin moaned when he was sure he felt Nines’s tongue swipe across his nipple. “F-fuck, no, I haven’t!”

“Oh…” he heard Nines murmur, head tilted to the side as he watched Gavin. “That…actually makes sense.”

“How do you figure that?” Gavin asked, because, really? It didn’t make sense to him at all. He’d always considered himself a daring man when it came to sexual experience, but it seemed as if Nines was able to directly read through him, and he already knew that Gavin hadn’t ever tried being tied up or tying someone else up.

“Well, for someone that has a great need to always be in control of every situation,” Nines whispered, his warm breath hitting Gavin in the nipples, “I can see how it would be arousing and stimulating to give some of that control up…to let someone else be in control for a while,” Nines sighed as he explained. And when he said it like that, Gavin fully understood. He cursed Nines for being the only person-android-in the DPD who barely worked with him and barely interacted with him enough in all the time he’d been with the DPD, yet somehow, he knew Gavin even more than his ex-girlfriends did.

Feeling uncomfortable with the psychology around the issue, Gavin shifted, “We’re supposed to be looking for what can solve this case and be enough evidence against Jose in court,” Gavin pointed out, knowing he was changing the topic, but it was a thing he did whenever he was faced with a topic or situation that really made him uncomfortable.

Nines kissed one of his nipples before paying attention to the other one, “It can wait. The moon is full tonight, Gavin,” Nines told him with sincerity as he licked and kissed his way down Gavin’s stomach, “I want it to light my way as I enjoy you properly tonight.”

Though he couldn’t see shit, Gavin tried staring down at his partner, picturing that those blue eyes were probably meeting somewhere in the middle of his chest as Nines kissed his way back upwards along Gavin’s sternum. Gavin suddenly felt Nines’ hands shaking as they gently massaged his sides. It occurred to him then that Nines was probably nervous; this was a first time for him, especially.

Feeling a little uneasy that he was more than likely psychologically and unconsciously pressuring Nines into doing things he perhaps didn’t want to do on his volition, Gavin sat up a little, “I-” Gavin started, but stopped when he realized he had no idea what he wanted to say. He wouldn’t say that the kisses Nines was peppering up and down his neck currently weren’t fucking amazing to feel and enjoy. But there was no way he could sacrifice his partner’s discomfort for his own pleasure. If they were going to do this, he had to be absolutely sure Nines wanted it as badly as he did.

“Nines…”

The android stopped kissing him, and Gavin practically felt the look of concern cast down on his face.

“Yes?”

He shook, “Are you sure you wanna do this?”

Nines was silent for some time, and then he moved himself off Gavin’s body. Gavin wondered if he
had annoyed or upset his partner somehow, but then he felt the mattress dip as Nines pressed himself beside Gavin for a moment.

“Yes, I’m absolutely sure.” There was pure confidence in his voice that Gavin trusted, and he nodded as he felt Nines press a kiss against his cheek.

“Just focus on my touches.”

He did, and soon, Gavin felt Nines’ knuckles and fingernails trailing down his arms as they were still held up and tied up against the headboard. He felt Nines breathing along the side of his neck, moving closer to his ear before he bit down carefully and gently on Gavin’s earlobe.

“Shit!!”

“Lie back down.”

Realizing he had somewhat pushed himself up to a half-sitting position, Gavin obeyed Nines’ command as he rested his head on the pillow while he felt Nines massaging his arms still held up. Nines kissed his chest before taking a hard nipple into his mouth again.

Gavin started to stretch back out on the bed and froze. This was crazy. He couldn't do this, he really couldn't do this. Nines had to be uncomfortable with this!

….

But then his tongue swirled around the tip of Gavin’s nipple, and Gavin felt his conscience floating away to the back of his mind as his body and sexual demands came first. After all, Nines was a grown…android…he could make his own choices, right? He wanted this!!

He decided he was going to just enjoy it, and he felt Nines practically sucking his nipple like a child would, and it earned a half-moan-half-laugh out of Gavin’s mouth. It wasn’t that he found it amusing; it was just far too erotic for him to handle.

“Gavin, do you trust me?” The question that Nines asked was all it took to convince him that yes, he could do this. He wanted to do this.

Gavin wished he could see Nines right now, but felt that eyes could be far too distracting right now. He knew that was more than likely as to why Nines chose to blindfold him, and only his soul and intentions were raw before the android. There wasn’t a need to hide anything or bury anything. Even though his eyes were covered, Gavin knew he could still sense Nines fully, and Nines could sense him as well. It was much better this way…

“I do trust you, Nines,” he meant it sincerely. “I trust you with my life.”

Nines stepped back and watched him. Gavin was starting to feel uncomfortable when Nines finally moved. He reached forward suddenly, and Gavin could feel his breath down on the top of his thighs. He knew what was coming next, and though he wished for it more than anything else, he still felt a bit nervous.

“Nines… I don’t… I don’t think I-” he was interrupted when he felt a breath of cool air blowing down over his thighs. It was like a relaxing, peaceful breeze, which was what he needed in the warm, smoggy air of the cabin.

“Oh fuck me…”
Nines gave him a knowing smile. “Shh...I know,” he cooed as he coaxed Gavin’s legs apart further and nestled between them by lying flat on the mattress. “Please, trust me.”

He sensed the android’s long fingers crawl along the insides of his thighs. Once again, Gavin was both relieved and disappointed with the bindings and the blindfold; he wished he could see how uncertain or confident Nines was about this.

Nines reached up and ran a finger along Gavin’s jaw, then over his lips. He let his hand slide over to cup Gavin’s face in a move that was too tender. The android leaned over and kissed Gavin, gently pressing his lips against the detective’s in an almost chaste kiss. Gavin moaned into Nines’ mouth when the other man deepened the kiss. He was surprised to find himself turned on by the fact that he was completely naked while in this position; completely at the mercy of what Nines chose to do to him.

Sight had clearly been something he’d taken for granted, he thought, as he felt Nines pressing soft kisses along the insides of his thighs where his fingers had once been. He had to work with his imagination, sharpening the blade of his mind as he felt Nines mapping out a path with his tongue over the insides of his thighs, missing his cock by a few inches every time.

It was the worst kind of teasing, and Gavin was about to voice his complaint when he felt one of Nines’ hands on his right nipple. It pinched and gently rubbed the hardened nub, and Gavin hissed through his teeth as he felt his hips involuntarily bucking already, desperate to seek out that delicious friction.

Nines’ tongue began rubbing deliciously against Gavin’s naked abs, now, but no matter how much Gavin hissed and whined, Nines wouldn’t dare go near his cock.

“Nines! Please!”

Warm lips closed over his, and the hand at his nipple soon swam around it in little circles as Gavin moaned and cried against Nines’ mouth in a pleading manner. Even one touch would be so wonderful…

Nines pulled away from Gavin’s mouth and let his lips trail along his neck and over his shoulder. He pressed several light kisses on his shoulder as he moved down to capture the hard nub of Gavin’s right nipple in his mouth, causing Gavin to hiss as pleasure rippled through him when his tongue cradled it tenderly.

Gavin had a sense that Nines planned for him to come alone from his oral ministrations on his nipple, but he didn’t think it was possible, and he soon began shifting his hips off the bed and into the air, making his erection rub over Nines’ stomach. Nines allowed it as his hands trailed everywhere along Gavin’s body. He was touching everything, and it made Gavin crave more kisses as Nines sucked and nibbled a special spot on his neck.

He didn’t care if Nines wanted to bite down on the skin there, but Nines was absolutely careful and gentle with Gavin as he sucked and rolled the skin between his lips and teeth sensually. It was like the most erotic dance, and Gavin’s body was the dance-floor…

Nines trailed his fingers over the raised edges of the scar that was over Gavin’s nose. Suddenly, he continued his trail of kisses from Gavin’s neck and right on top of the scar. Gavin recoiled a little, feeling so exposed and…ugly…he didn’t want Nines to see the mark, but with the way the tie was wrapped and covering only his eyes, the mark was still exposed, clearly. He didn’t want to remember, but it seemed like Nines didn’t want to question him or do anything else with the scar. He kissed it once more before he whispered to Gavin that he was absolutely beautiful.
“I’m not beautiful,” Gavin sighed as he turned away from Nines when the android tried placing a kiss on his chin.

“You’re like a rose to me, Gavin.”

“A rose with thorns.”

Nines chuckled, “The very best.”

Nines continued exploring Gavin’s body with his tongue and lips. Every inch of skin Nines traced with his lips left Gavin’s body scorched with a passionate fire he didn’t think he’d ever felt before. It just paralyzed and weighed him down until he felt Nines’ tongue finally come to his dick. He paused over the leaking tip and Gavin closed his eyes, ready to feel warmth and wetness around his aching cock. Instead, he felt a gentle breath as Nines blew over the head and moved on.

“Nines!!” Gavin whined, clearly disappointed that the android had chosen to worship the insides of his thighs instead of his cock.

Nines snapped his eyes up to see a frustrated Gavin writhing on the bed, despite the binding holding back a little. He technically could loosen them, but it seemed as if Gavin didn’t want to. Perhaps he really was enjoying putting all his trust in him. Nines really hoped he did as he pressed the tip of his tongue against the top of Gavin’s cock and dragged it all the way to the head, licking away evidences of Gavin’s growing arousal. He hoped he was doing this right as much as Gavin had for him, and he sensed he was when he saw how Gavin threw his head back and moaned loudly.

Gavin shook with delight as he bit down a cry before trying to say something to Nines.

Nines pinched his nipples, “Do not speak.”

Having no other choice, Gavin snapped his mouth closed. Nines continued to explore every inch of Gavin’s body with his mouth, lips delivering lingering kisses in some places, mere brushes of his mouth in others. He avoided Gavin’s cock for the rest of his exploration, and Gavin wanted to beg him for more, but he knew it was better to exercise self-control until Nines decided to return his tongue and lips back to that sensitive area.

Gavin didn’t realize he was fidgeting and twisting his hands until Nines rose up and placed a hand over his wrists. He stopped moving and stared at the darkness he was trapped in. At this angle, he could feel Nines towering over him, and he had to wonder what exactly Nines was doing in this position.

There was more shifting before him, and Gavin felt Nines press a hand down on his right shoulder before it was removed just as quickly. He felt his legs being pushed apart further, and he gasped when he felt Nines running a hand through his hair.

As Nines braced himself up on his knees, he tilted his head at Gavin curiously while he stroked himself with his eyes strongly fixated and closing in on Gavin’s lower lip. Nines felt so aroused and on edge as he knelt in front of Gavin, his hips only a few inches away from his nose as he stroked himself firmly and slowly…

“Nines?”

The android studied him intently for another moment, simply working his own interested cock before he finally made a decision. He offered Gavin a smile he couldn’t see, and it was a mixture of a playful-yet-evil one. His eyes glowed in a way Gavin was unfortunately unable to witness as he looked down at Gavin’s pink cock, heavy with need.
In a second, Nines ducked down below, his head buried between Gavin’s legs.

“NINES!!!!”

Gavin keened when Nines finally placed his lips around his cock. Nines’ actions were a little surer this time, though he still seemed a little off on his rhythm as he had been when he was tasting Gavin minutes ago. Due to being teased for so long, Gavin found he really didn’t care. He felt his orgasm rushing nearer as Nines stroked and fucked the head of his cock with his tongue like he was made to do it.

All Gavin could do was gasp and moan as he fought against the bindings, hips arching against Nines’ face lewdly and desperately. He was drenched completely in sweat, but he didn’t care.

“Nines!” Gavin gasped, then moaned when the android let go of his cock, sliding his lips off it with a pop. “Wha-?” Gavin asked, already mourning over and missing the precious feeling.

“I believe I told you not to speak,” Nines told him, voice rough and fucked sounding. Gavin was breathing harshly, and his cock was bobbing against his stomach, aching for release. He tried to move his arms down to finish it off himself, momentarily forgetting that he was tied up. Nines glanced up at his silk bound hands and chuckled cruelly.

Nines pulled back, sitting up on his thighs and knees once more. He sat there, staring at the detective. “You can fight all you like, but you’re only going to make it worse for yourself.”

Gavin knew how right he was as his cock throbbed and begged him to behave if they both wanted to get out of this alive and intact. Eventually, Gavin struggled until he couldn’t, anymore, and he finally gave in and fell still and silent.

Nines hummed in appreciation, “That’s much better, you disobedient detective.”

Oh my fucking god, I hope he says that again sometime soon…

Gavin felt his heart pounding as he focused on how deep and low Nines’ voice was as he growled down at Gavin. He’d never been one for dirty talk or anything, but with Nines’ voice being what it was, it begged for it.

And beg, he did.

“Nines, please talk to me again…I need to…” he cringed but finished his sentence, somehow, “…I need to hear your voice again…”

Nines gripped his chin in a strong hand. “I said: shut up, detective,” he pressed a firm kiss on Gavin’s lips, and Gavin knew it was a part of the role-play.

“…or are you so inept that you can’t even follow a single thing I say?”

Gavin was practically purring as Nines kissed him deeper before sliding down to his thighs again.

Nines cocked his head to the side. He reached over and took Gavin’s cock in a hand, remembering how Gavin hand guided his hand to work over his own erection a day ago. Programming the motions beforehand, Nines began slowly pumping Gavin as he wrapped his lips around Gavin’s cock.

Gavin sighed. Finally. He was now able to focus on how smooth the ties felt wrapped and woven around his wrists. He felt how cool the wood of the headboard felt against his burning flesh, a
beautiful contrast. He noticed how soft and smooth Nines’ cheeks were whenever they rubbed along the insides of his thighs as he moved his head up and down while pumping Gavin at a steady pace.

Nines’ eyes fluttered closed as his palm moved over Gavin’s rigid flesh. Gavin’s breaths came out in pants as his eyes remained covered by the dark tie. Nines wanted him to focus for a little while longer on the sounds and touches only. Soon, he would be ready for more. He began rapidly pumping Gavin’s cock as he sensed the man at the peak of his arousal.

Nines wanted to be one with Gavin in a new way, and he quickly reached up and untied the garment from around Gavin’s eyes. It fell, and Gavin immediately looked down and fixated his eyes on the sight before him, nearly coming on the spot right away.

He was watching as Nines was stroking himself at the same time as he was sucking and pumping Gavin’s length. Gavin’s eyes followed Nines’ hand over his own cock, and he began feeling his orgasm about to hit.

It was then that Nines looked up and met Gavin’s eyes once while his lips were practically engulfing Gavin’s cock in the most intimate way possible, making them closer in this than anything else they’d been through together.

Suddenly, they both lost it. Warm, wet streaks erupted from the android’s cock as he came back up to rest a hand on Gavin’s shoulder. The watery liquid landed on Gavin’s stomach and chest. Gavin bit his tongue to keep his moan in. He knew if he let even the slightest sound out, Nines would leave him hanging there.

It was a beautiful sight to see Nines kneeling before him, his knees between Gavin’s legs as his arms flexed; one of them hooking strongly onto Gavin’s shoulder for support, while the other quickly finished himself off as he moaned Gavin’s name at the end of his orgasm. Gavin longed to touch his muscles as he rested his hands against the bindings and just watched Nines’ face contort from one that was clearly deep in the throes of an orgasm, to one that was content and completely satiated as he tilted his head back. He looked absolutely ravished and pleased…

Gavin couldn’t help himself as his jaw fell open and his tongue was already pushing the words out of his mouth:

“I love you.”

The android looked down at him through half-open eyes that were slightly pink and watery, as if he’d been crying. He gave Gavin a small smile and reached out with his android-semen-covered hand, and finally grasped Gavin’s cock. He moved his slicked-up hand over the hard flesh only a handful of times before Gavin felt his orgasm take over him. He felt warm splatters of come land on his stomach to mix with the cool watery substance that Nines ejaculated.

Gavin kept his eyes closed tightly as his breathing leveled out and his heart rate slowed to normal. Nines leaned over and kissed his lips gently as he untied his bindings and then snaked a hand in the back of Gavin’s hair. Gavin carefully lowered his arms, letting the blood rush back into the slightly numb appendages as he softly broke the kiss and buried his face in Nines’ neck. He put his arms around the android and hugged him close.

“Thanks, Nines,” he muttered into his partner’s neck.

Nines pet his hair a few times before he gently pushed them both down to rest on their backs. Gavin looked up at the ceiling, feeling his cheeks aflame when he remembered what exactly he’d confessed out loud moments ago. He hoped that Nines had a bad memory when it came to these things and
especially involving the height of sexual release, but apparently, he’d been incorrect.

Nines turned over as he smiled at Gavin mischievously, “So did you really mean what you said to me?”

Gavin slowly looked over at him, eyes sweeping along Nines’s neck before they caught sight of his chin and lower lip…

“Hm?”

“You said that you love me, Gavin,” Nines reminded him gently, “did you really mean it?”

Gavin swallowed thickly as he felt his throat tighten and his heart constrict. “Umm, I guess I was-”

Loud, thundering footsteps right out the back door of the cabin shook them both out of their daze. Nines and Gavin sat up in bed, quickly cleaning themselves off with the sheets as Nines’s LED light went yellow.

He gasped, “It’s Connor!”

Gavin flew across the bedroom towards his own bed. “FUCK!!!”

He barely had time to land on his own bed and cover himself up with his clean sheets before the back door burst open.

Nines was currently in the process of grabbing a small book on the bedside table and opening it up to a random page when Connor’s footsteps approached the bedroom door that was wide open.

Gavin made sure to pull up the sheets right until they rested on his chin as he leaned back and pretended to be asleep.

Connor strode in the bedroom wearing another tight yellow polo shirt and dark skinny jeans that seemed to pinch his long legs in all the right places. He stood in the doorway of the room, about to speak when Nines hushed him and pointed at Gavin.

Connor gasped, “Is he asleep?”

Nines nodded.

Connor began to whisper as he walked close to Nines, “I’ll try to leave soon, but I wanted to-” he was interrupted, and he gazed down at Nines’ half-naked form on the bed.

“Nines?” he raised an eyebrow in question, looking at the android’s naked chest.

Nines followed his gaze as he glared back up at Connor slowly, “What?”

Connor smiled impishly at him as he snickered childishly, “Why’re you naked?”

Nines sighed in frustration, “I’m half-naked, Connor, what is it?”

Connor nodded, “Right, well, Hank and I arranged a chat with Fowler, and we told him that we are suspicious of Jose being behind the murders!”

“Continue, I’m just going to get dressed, Connor.”

Gavin heard the sheets rustling as Nines politely asked Connor to turn around. Footsteps indicated
that Connor obliged him, and he prattled on while Nines dressed hurriedly.

“Anyway, it appears that Jose actually has a little criminal record of his own!” Connor stated with excitement as he paced with his back towards Nines, “in 2036, Jose robbed a small drugstore because he was high off of Xanax…”

Gavin smiled. So Jose was suffering from drug abuse and had anxiety?

“…in the winter of 2037, he attempted to cheat on his taxes, and he claimed bankruptcy even though he was employed…”

The list continued ranging from forgery, commercial robbery, a DUI, as well as an attempted suicide…

Gavin frowned when a thought hit him; the crimes Jose had committed weren’t violent or serious in nature, as no one had been hurt or threatened by him.

Nines seemed to agree with this, even though he was unable to speak to Gavin, who was pretending to be sleeping, still.

Nines stood by his bed, fully dressed as he sighed, “Connor, there doesn’t seem to be a violent pattern in Jose’s behavior.”

“You don’t think it’s him?”

“I don’t know.”

Nines not knowing something? This was a first.

Connor sat down in the middle of Nines’s bed as he looked down at the sheets. “Something’s still not right though,” his LED light was red as he studied some wet stains on the sheets…

“…after all, why would Jose be in the storage closet if he had nothing to do with the drugs there?”

Connor leaned forward to press two fingers on the wetness the sheets sported.

“Connor, I don’t know the first thi-HEY!!!”

Gavin leapt up in his bed at the sound of Nines’ abrupt, loud voice that seemed frightened. Gavin spun his neck to see Nines leaping over into the center of his own bed, slapping a hand over Connor’s mouth before he could shove the two fingers that he’d smeared in the stains he’d found on the sheets…

Gavin panicked as he clutched his sheets around his body, but rose from his own bed and glared down at Connor. “The fuck do you think you’re doin’?!”

Connor shoved Nines’ hand away, but Nines pressed it firmly against his lips once more.

“I cnnn theck thampplffss in mrreal thime!” he mumbled happily beneath Nines’ hand.

Gavin’s eyes widened as he looked at the wet stain gleaming from Connor’s fingertips.

“NOOO!!!” He leapt over into the bathroom while still clutching tightly onto the bedsheets around his body. He came back into the bedroom with a wet cloth and wiped Connor’s fingers while Nines crumpled up the dirty sheets after wiping them right from underneath Connor’s ass as he rested on the bed, still.
Connor rolled his eyes at them as he watched Nines shove the sheets in a dirty clothes hamper, and Gavin tossed in the wet cloth afterwards. They both looked frightened and panicked as they stared at him.

Connor stood as he held up two hands and shook his head, “I still think Jose’s a pretty good person of interest due to how aggressive and volatile I’ve known him to be.”

“You have?” Nines inquired as he took one small look at Gavin.

Connor nodded as he walked outside their bedroom. They followed him as they calmed down significantly from their little scare.

“Yes!” Connor explained as he walked a little slowly in front of them, “I’ve seen him yell and push Stephie around a few times before group sessions!”

Gavin gasped, “Why didn’t you say anything to us before, Connor?”

Nines nodded, looking stern, “This would have been helpful before.”

“Has he ever threatened her?” Gavin asked as he watched Connor stand by the back door, indicative that he was thinking of leaving soon.

He hummed as he paused by the door, “No, not that I’ve heard, but he really looked angry that one time she got the timetables for the therapy sessions wrong and printed out a previous season’s copy instead.”

Gavin rolled his eyes, “That’s not enough to go off of.”

“Yes, he probably was frustrated,” Nines concluded as he ran a hand through his hair and softened it out.

Connor shrugged, “Well, we’re still looking into him, and it appears he tried having his criminal record expunged a while ago…”

Nines gaped, “So do you think he’s hiding something from his past?”

Connor held up a finger and nodded, “I think so!”

“Good work, Connor!” Gavin nodded and smiled with pride at the RK800. “That’s good progress, so just keep it up!”

Though they were still mildly flustered and unnerved from the sudden interruption, they were thankful for the information.

Connor smiled as he opened the back door and waved at them, “Oh it’s fine! We’ll let you know what else we dig up on Jose!”

Gavin mimicked his smile as he held the door open widely for Connor, eager for him to leave.

“Sounds good, Connor.” Nines stood behind Gavin as he crossed his arms and placed a hand on his chin as he studied the outer perimeter of the cabin.

Connor took a few steps down the back porch before he turned and looked between Gavin and Nines a few times. It made both of them rather uncomfortable, and Gavin hissed out: “What?!?”

Connor beamed at him, “By the way, there’s no need to hide anything,” he winked at Gavin, “I
already knew you were having sex with Nines days ago.” He then winked at Nines and bounced off the porch.

He skipped along the path towards the woods, and then turned and waved at them excitedly.

“Goodnight guys!!!”

The back door of the cabin stood open wide as Gavin remained frozen with his mouth open and eyes staring intently into the woods where Connor disappeared. He was unable to blink for many minutes until Nines gently pushed him away from the door and closed and locked it.

Gavin pointed a shaky finger at the door as Nines dragged him back to their bedroom.

“H-h-how did he…”

Nines placed Gavin down on his own bed as he grabbed onto the sheet Gavin had wrapped around himself, still. He flatly spread it across both their bodies as he lay in bed beside Gavin and propped two pillows behind each of their backs.

Gavin was speechless. “H-how d-did he know?”

Nines resisted the urge to smirk as he pointed his index finger up on the underside of Gavin’s chin and closed his mouth gently for him.

He placed a soft kiss on Gavin’s cheek as he wrapped an arm around Gavin’s shoulders while pulling the shorter man to rest his head on his smooth chest.

“Shhh.”

“H-h-he…”

Nines kissed the top of Gavin’s head, “Androids know everything, Gavin,” he smirked down at the stammering detective he held tightly in his arms.

 “…after all, you should know that after spending so much time with one.”

Chapter End Notes

Connor's such an evil hoe lol 😒
AND
ANDDDD......
GAVIN CONFFESSED HIS FEELINGS FOR NINES!
About time, eh?
Gavin watched as one of the many bubbles in the bathtub rose up just above his nose, flying up into the air before bursting. It had been a quiet, peaceful morning, and he’d decided to spend majority of it in the hot tub with Nines. They were both sitting on one end; with Gavin’s back pressed against Nines’ chest as Nines wrapped his arms around Gavin’s waist and simply held onto him as they sat and enjoyed the steam rising from the tub.

Gavin was thinking about the case, and more so, Jose being the perpetrator of all the horrible murders. It just seemed…odd, considering what kind of a person they’d all seen and known Jose to be. He didn’t scream out ‘murderer’, but perhaps he was good at hiding who he truly was…

Nines pressed his chin against Gavin’s shoulder as he sighed in thought, “I don’t know if we should wait around for another murder to happen, or arrest the wrong person just for the sake of solving the case and closing it.”

Gavin nodded, feeling the exact same way. “We can’t exactly sit around and wait for a confession either, Nines,” he slightly turned and was met with Nines’ lips gently kissing the bridge of his nose. “…and we can’t go around beatin’ it out of him either.”

Nines hummed, and the low, gentle vibration of it from his chest pressing into Gavin’s back made his eyes close involuntarily in enjoyment.

“Gavin, do you think he’s innocent?”

Gavin felt this was the most important question yet. He had to be absolutely certain of it before he could relay what he thought to Nines, and then that way, perhaps they had something to work with.

“Hank said he saw him enter the storage and utility closet.”

“That’s not what I asked.”

Gavin growled in frustration, knowing that he couldn’t lie to Nines just to answer the question. Instead, he thought back to what Connor had said about Jose the night before.

“Connor says he’s seen Jose to be angry and possibly aggressive,” he wrapped his hands around Nines’s, “perhaps that’s worth considering as a clue, Nines.”

Nines reached up and gently stroked his chin, “Gavin, I’ve seen and known you to be angry, often,” he turned Gavin’s head slightly to the side and made sure the detective was looking at him through his peripheral vision. “In fact, you’ve threatened me several times, and even tried attacking me a few weeks ago,” he snickered, eyes glowing with mischief.

“But that doesn’t make you a murderer, does it?”
Gavin rolled his eyes and leaned close to Nines, slightly turning himself in the tub as he did so.

“Hey, I didn’t carry poison into an area with my own hands, now did I?”

Nines quirked an eyebrow at him, “Did you actually even locate the poison, yet?”

Gavin blushed as he shook his head, “No…but we will!”

Nines chuckled, “Is that a promise?” He felt Gavin stirring as he grumpily turned back to face the other end of the tub where their feet were resting ahead before them.

“Leave me alone, Nines,” Gavin pushed away some of the little clear bubbles that were swamping his chest, “I’m not in the mood.”

Nines rubbed his chest with his palm, purposefully touching and stroking Gavin’s nipples. He hummed in thought as he nipped the skin on the back of Gavin’s neck, “But you were in the mood just an hour ago, no?”

Gavin gasped as he felt his cheeks heat up when he remembered clawing at Nines like a greedy cat when they woke up naked and tightly pressed their bodies together…

They could hardly keep their hands to themselves, and within a few moments of them stirring from their sleep, Gavin had begged Nines to take him yet again, but this time, Nines had been extra gentle, slow, and he’d helped Gavin move above him on his lap while he simply held onto Gavin’s hips.

That position had definitely been interesting, and Gavin didn’t think it would be so wonderful to move up and down on Nines’ lap as he looked down at the face of complete rapture and pleasure; Nines’ eyes closed as he moaned deeply and softly while his biceps and triceps flexed as he held up Gavin’s strong body…

Not wanting to remember all the details vividly, Gavin splashed some water into Nines’ face when he leaned his neck over Gavin’s shoulder curiously.

“Fuck off, Nines,” Gavin hissed with a tone of playfulness in his voice, “you keep distractin’ me whenever I’m tryin’ to think!”

Nines gently kissed the back of his neck again, “But it’s a welcome distraction, no?”

“Stoooppp!” Gavin felt the kisses heading down to the center of his back where they stopped their little trail.

Nines obliged, and he instead stroked the back of Gavin’s head, “What?”

When had their relationship turned so...domestic? They really were behaving like a couple who had been together for over a few years, and Gavin wasn’t sure how he felt about it. While he preferred this over arguing with Nines in the DPD as they had a few times after they first were introduced to one another, this direct contrast was also a little unnerving. Not sure how to properly present this issue to Nines, Gavin could only think of starting out his thoughts by focusing on the obviously sexual dynamic that never seemed to go away between the two of them.

He shifted as he grabbed Nines’ hands in his own, looking down at how large they were in comparison to his own. “Don’t you think this is getting to be too much, Nines?” His voice was timid and shy, as if fearful of Nines saying ‘yes’.

Nines pressed his chest tighter and closer to Gavin’s back as he whispered down in Gavin’s right ear,
“Do you mean us, or the case?”

Gavin growled, “You know exactly what I’m talkin’ about, Nines, don’t play games, alright?”

“I like you, Gavin.”

Gavin hung his head low in embarrassment, “Shut up.”

“And you told me you loved me, remember?”

He hissed, his cheeks practically on fire now, “I said shut up, Nines!”

Nines nipped the top of his ear, and Gavin hadn’t been expecting it. He yelped and rose from the tub, quickly grabbing the towel that he’d laid out on the edge of the tall standing shower. He cloaked himself in it as he started drying off.

Nines watched him with a playful, devilish smirk he was currently trying to hide beneath the cover of a hand on his mouth. It made Gavin even more angry as he dried off his hair with another spare towel. “Stop starin’ at me like that, Nines!” he hissed as he flung the towel down at his feet, “…you’re too sexual for me!”

“And that’s a negative because…?” Nines chuckled as he too rose up from the tub, his nude form dripping with water slowly as it made its way dripping down to his…

Gavin roared as he turned around and looked in the other direction. “You fuckin’ pervert!!”

He heard Nines walking up to him, but he didn’t dare to turn around. He felt Nines gently stroking up and down his back as he slipped a hand beneath the towel and just rested it on top of Gavin’s naked ass.

“We can focus on the case later, I think,” Nines suggested as he reached forward around Gavin’s waist that was almost pressing tightly against the bathroom vanity countertop. With nimble fingers, undid the little knot Gavin had made when he wove the towel around his lower half.

Gavin gasped as he tried stopping Nines, but the android was too quick for him, and he already had rolled the towel down and off his hips.

“Nines!”

“You can tell me why you still are suspicious of Jose after the second dance lesson this afternoon…” Nines gently pressed on Gavin’s shoulders and turned him around, “…after all, Jose will be present for it, and I’m sure Stephie needs a dance partner…” Nines began sucking on Gavin’s neck roughly, and Gavin was enjoying it before he tried shoving Nines off him.

“Nines!”

The android moved back one step as he stared deeply into Gavin’s eyes. The look that was there made Gavin freeze as he stopped fighting and pushing against Nines. What was this man doing to him?! Why was he so weak against him, and why had he already stopped fighting him?! What the fuck was happening?!

Gavin swallowed these questions down as Nines pressed his forehead against his own and simply let their foreheads touch as he smiled down at Gavin, his eyes resting on his pink lips for a moment.

“Do you really love me, Gavin?”
He knew that Nines would ask that question sooner or later. Truthfully, Gavin wasn’t sure. He’d been so crazy and over-powered by lust the other night, that he felt his brain had taken a vacation and left his heart in charge of everything else. He hated that. He often relied on his brain to help him in situations where his heart was actually supposed to do majority of the decision making, and for the most part, it always helped him out. But now, Gavin’s brain was definitely long gone as his heart pounded miraculously in his chest when he looked deeply into Nines’ blue eyes.

He wasn’t certain how to react, but he knew Nines was expecting an answer…maybe not today, maybe not tomorrow, but Gavin knew they couldn’t avoid this topic for long.

Gavin was certain it hadn’t been lust alone that he felt for Nines; something else was ever-so-present, but with all the sex they’d been having lately, Gavin felt it was much better to wait until all his lust had cleared away from his mind before he could provide Nines with a direct and honest answer.

But for now, Gavin pressed a kiss right into the center of Nines’ lips, begging Nines silently not to pursue this topic for the time being. The android sensed it, somehow, and he kissed Gavin’s forehead as he gently pressed their bodies together closely.

They remained in that position for some time, simply holding onto each other in a warm, intimate embrace before Nines decided to make love to Gavin yet again as he hoisted the shorter man up on the countertop.

As much as Gavin enjoyed it, he had no idea how he was going to get Nines to stop. But there was no way he was going to lie to himself and deny that he enjoyed the way Nines pressed his warm back right against the cool surface of the mirror behind him on the wall as he repeatedly pressed himself deeper and deeper inside Gavin. Their moans and deep, passionate cries bounced off every wall of the bathroom, but for once, Gavin didn’t mind as he let Nines’ deeper voice bring him to another powerful orgasm that shook him from head to toe.

It seemed that things weren’t going too well when everyone in the group was back in the large gym. While majority of the couples seemed rather ‘closer’ and cozier with one another, Jose seemed particularly…grumpy and moody. As he and Stephie instructed the couples to get together as soft music played on in the background to accompany and guide their dance steps and moves, Jose seemed to scowl at everyone in the gym.

His blue eyes seemed tired and fed-up with something, but Gavin and Nines decided to play the ‘waiting game’ and to observe whether or not Jose would give off any idea or a potential clue that would help swing and shift things in the light that he was possibly guilty...

It didn’t seem that way, however, especially when Jose yawned and simply stood back as he watched everyone dancing away. Stephie was walking around the gym, every so often pausing and either giving a couple a comment, giggling and squealing in delight, or just smiling like an overly excited child as she beamed at everyone with equal amounts of joy and zeal. It was a little disgusting to see as she cooed and fawned over every couple dancing as if they were performing the most intense and captivating ballet. Sadly, reality painted a ‘duller’ and blander picture, as each couple in the gym had taken to the same slow-dancing as the first lesson.

Jose wasn’t too impressed as he stood wearing the most ‘normal’ and most ‘regular’ get-up Gavin had ever seen him in. He was simply wearing a blue sweatshirt and black skinny jeans with black sneakers. He stood leaning against a wall as he crossed his arms over his chest and looked absolutely bored.
Stephie soon bounced up to Gavin and Nines, and she cheered as she gently pet their hands that were tightly woven around each other’s bodies.

“Robert, Jack,” she sighed a dreamy sigh as she twirled around them in a small circle, “I’m so happy you’re close to each other now without either of us having to force you two!”

Gavin snorted, already about to rudely respond when Cameron nodded and winked at them both from across the gym.

“I’d say they’re the cutest couple here, eh Stephie?”

Gavin gasped as he pushed away from Nines slightly, so he could lean back and glare at Cameron across the gym. “Don’t encourage her, Cameron!”

Cameron smirked as Will rolled his eyes and held tightly onto his lover.

“Well, it sure as shit is a good distraction from her parading around us!” Cameron called back as he swayed about with Will hanging onto him tightly.

Gavin grumbled as he pressed against Nines again while Stephie’s wide eyes and rosy cheeks faced them before she leapt away, squealing and clapping like a little ecstatic child on Christmas morning.

She bounced over to Jose, and she grabbed one of his hands excitedly as she tugged on it.

“Jose! Let’s dance!!”

He sighed and held up a hand, clearly refusing it, “No, Stephie.”

She pouted, “Why not???”

He gazed at her with exhausted eyes, “Because I’m tired, Stephie,” he looked over at everyone else dancing closely together with a small roll of his eyeballs, “just leave me alone.”

That unfortunately didn’t deter the female android, and she chuckled as she yanked his arm again. “Come on, don’t be such a grumpy old man, Jose! Dance with me!!”

Her high-pitched begging soon caught a few people’s attention as they looked over at the two counsellors engaging in back and forth tug-of-war; Jose trying to remain as close to the walls and as far away from the dance floor as possible, while Stephie was trying to drag him closer to her so she could lead him into a dance.

It was proving to be silly and futile, as the more Stephie struggled with Jose, the angrier and more vitriolic he grew. His face was soon dark red as he kept trying to evade her small, grabby hands.

“Stephie, stop!”

She giggled, thinking it was a joke, and she made one more grab for him, “Come on!! Let’s just relax and enjoy everything, for once!!”

“Can’t she see that he doesn’t want to dance?” Gavin sighed and whispered against Nines’s cheek as he held onto his taller partner while they slowly danced about.

Nines almost shrugged, “It’s none of our concern.”

Gavin knew that was true, but Stephie was starting to cause a scene as she whined and cried louder and louder. Soon, everyone was slowing down in their moves, and they’d chosen to take a deep
interest in what Stephie and Jose were doing.

Stephie suddenly yanked Jose particularly roughly, and he stumbled against her as he was pulled forward with a surprisingly strong amount of force. He glared at Stephie, and right in front of everyone else, he raised both hands and shoved her hard in the chest. Stephie gasped as she went stumbling down backwards, and she crashed down roughly onto her back.

A few people gasped as she fell down on the gym floor with a dull ‘thud’. She froze for a moment, eyes wide and jaw open as her lips were pursed in an ‘o’ shape that depicted nothing but shock and surprise as to how and why Jose could’ve reacted in such a violent way.

She gaped up at Jose while he LED light was a sad yellow, and she pressed a small hand on her chest, her lips quivering. “J-Jose, why would you do that?” Her voice was so small and innocent that Megan and her lover Silvia seemed to get angry and they chose to show contempt for Jose immediately. Both women raced over to Stephie, helping her on her feet as they glared at Jose.

Even Chrissie and Michelle didn’t seem impressed and they snorted and pointed at Jose rudely before they left the gym.

Cameron and Will followed next, Cameron leaning in and whispering to Jose: “Way to be a man, asshole.”

Stephie wiped her teary eyes as she shook her head and gently stood up on her own, moving her arms out of Megan and Silvia’s grasp. “I’m fine, everyone,” she laughed softly, but she was still crying. “I’m fine, I promise.”

Jose waved a hand as he walked out of the gym, “Whatever, I can’t deal with this right now.” The doors slammed behind him, and Stephie soon sobbed loudly, her emotions clearly out of control now.

Gavin gently grabbed Nines and pointed at the gym doors while mindful to keep his voice down, “Go after Jose, I’m gonna try to talk to her and calm her down, okay?”

Nines nodded and kissed him on the forehead as he swept past him and out the doors. A few more of the guests soon left in a hurry, and Gavin quickly bid Megan and Silvia a goodnight as he gently walked beside Stephie.

He silently watched her while she was packing up her belongings and cleaning the gym. She was in the middle of putting the bleachers back together in an organized fashion when Gavin saw both Hank and Connor’s faces in the glass inserts of the large gym doors.

He motioned for them to go away with the wave of a hand as Stephie turned around and grabbed a tissue from her purse. She dabbed her eyes with it a few times, and she locked the back doors of the gym leading to the outside perimeter of Heaven’s Salvage.

She gave Gavin a weak smile, avoiding eye contact with him. It seemed as if she was really hurt or embarrassed.

“Jack, what can I do for you?” She placed the tissue back in her purse when she looked around and found that the garbage bin that was usually in the gym had already been removed for garbage day and cleaning.

Gavin gave her a small, but genuine smile, “Sorry for the way Jose’s been treatin’ you.”

She smiled, though her cheeks flushed a deep pink, “Oh, it’s…it’s fine.”
“No, it’s really not, Stephie.”

She began turning off the lights in the huge gym, “Let’s take a walk, Jack.”

Gavin allowed her to lead him down the hall, and he was relieved to see that the hallways were completely barren and clear as he walked beside Stephie and turned a small corner to face a large, white bench resting against the wall.

Stephie chose to sit down on it then, rearranging the contents within her white purse. Some items rustled about as Gavin sat down beside her, looking up behind her at the large rows of statues and decorations spread around the center of the hallway while the evening sky peeked in at them from the large windows.

“I’m so careless sometimes,” Stephie suddenly announced as she sniffled and shook her purse a few times, “I don’t know how I’m able to function these days.”

This sentence was rather interesting, and Gavin straightened out, ready to ask Stephie more about it, when he saw Hank and Connor’s heads poking out from the side of a big horse statue. Hank’s head poked right out of the horse’s ass, while Connor’s stuck out from beneath its midriff.

Gavin rolled his eyes when he saw Hank and Connor mouthing different things to him at the same time. He couldn’t read their lips, nor did he care as he tried ignoring them and looked back at Stephie.

“May I ask what’s goin’ on these days?”

She paused, almost as if forgetting that she had said that statement, before her LED light flickered yellow and she smiled down while looking into her purse. “Right!” she giggled and pushed a blonde hair strand behind her ear, “I just feel stressed lately.”

“Why?” Gavin glared over at Connor, who pulled out a marker from his shirt pocket and was scribbling something down on Hank’s small notebook that he often carried around with him.

Gavin was grateful that this was all happening behind Stephie’s head as she dug through her purse, completely unaware of Hank and Connor raising the paper of the notebook and waving it in the air at Gavin like a flag.

Stephie sighed as she grabbed a few items and pulled them out of her purse one-at-a-time, clearly intending to take this time now to clean everything out of it. Behind her, Hank and Connor looked like they were really about to explode as they tried doing anything to get Gavin’s attention without alarming Stephie.

“Well,” she began softly, and Gavin looked over to see Hank trying to add something else to the notebook, but the marker must have died, for he was shaking it a few times before he shoved it in his pockets and yanked out his iPhone.

Gavin turned his eyes back to Stephie quickly when she looked at him, “we’re already half-way through the program, Jack, and now that everyone is making so much progress, Jose’s and my job is going to be a little hard…”

Gavin didn’t follow, but he tried focusing on keeping his attention to her while he saw Hank holding up his large iPhone screen and making it face him. He briefly saw the words:

KEEP HER TALKING, BUT REMEMBER TO ASK ABOUT HOES
Gavin coughed violently when he saw the last word on Hank’s iPhone.

Ask about what?!?

That had to be a fucking typo…it had to!

He cleared his throat as he remembered what Stephie had said, “Right, err;” he coughed again while she pulled out some napkins and flattened them out over her lap, “can’t believe the program’s already half-way done!”

He didn’t know why he had said such a stupid thing, but he felt it was because of Hank’s shitty auto-correct.

Stephie smiled and hummed happily, “Yep! Time flies when you’re having fun, right Jack?”

He looked over and saw Hank practically about to throw a fit as he handed the iPhone to Connor to get him to text out what he wanted to communicate properly and correctly.

“Right…” he looked at Stephie quickly, “bet this was a wild summer, huh?”

“Oh, I wouldn’t say that, Jack…”

His eyes were back at the iPhone screen, and this time it read: ASK HER ABOUT JOSE!

Ooooh…right... ‘Jose’…

He rolled his eyes, “Jose seems to be handling the stress poorly, I think.”

She shook her head, “No! He’s usually not like that, but he-” she gasped, almost as if she’d caught herself about to reveal something very important…

It caught Gavin’s attention, but also the spies behind the horse statue as they froze and waited for Stephie to finish her sentence.

She didn’t, however, and she smiled as she shrugged, “Forget it, I’m just being silly.” Her LED light flickered yellow a few times before it went blue.

Gavin wasn’t about to let it go, and he smiled warmly, hoping his calm demeanor and voice would coax the android into speaking with him more.

“No, you can tell me, Stephie,” he offered her a kind smile when she met his eyes, “I promise this’ll stay between us only.”

Hank and Connor quickly were texting something again, but Gavin ignored it, despite how angry they were making him. Why couldn’t they just fuck off and let him work?! He was doing fine on his own!!

Stephie played with a strand of her hair as she looked down shyly at her feet, “Sometimes Jose frightens me a little…”

Gavin frowned, “Has he ever threatened you?”

“No!!”

“Or hit you?”
She gasped even louder at this, as if he had slapped her or hit her himself. “Jack! Why’re you asking me this!”

Gavin looked up at Hank’s raised iPhone screen:

**HE POOPED HER IN THE GYM**

*Oh for fuck’s sakes…*

He knew Hank meant ‘pushed’, so he said: “But Jose pushed you in the gym, Stephie…” he smiled patiently, “…we all saw it.”

She sniffled again, and Gavin reached for a tissue as she was starting to bawl and sob again. She grabbed it and whispered a ‘thank you’ before she wiped her eyes.

“Jose’s not a bad man,” she sighed, “he just sometimes doesn’t understand that words can hurt people!”

Hank and Connor were waving at him with the iPhone, desperately trying to get his attention, but Gavin was purposefully ignoring them both. The more Gavin ignored them, the more they tried to get his attention.

Connor soon climbed on top of the back of the horse, straddling the back of it between his thighs as he waved at Gavin with both hands like he was in desperate need of a rescue, or something.

Gavin bit down on his tongue as he tried forcing a smile at Stephie, “That sounds to me like he’s hurt you, Stephie.”

She seemed nervous, and she soon began tearing the tissue into little bits as she picked at it with her fingernails while she sobbed harder, “He’s hurt a few other people around him, too…” her voice died down as she sobbed and sniffled.

“Who else??!”

Gavin saw Connor get off the horse as Hank waved the iPhone in the air before him. This time, it read:

**HOES DOES BUGS!**

*Jose does drugs…*

He decided to get to the point. “Have you heard of or known Jose to use illegal substances, Stephie?”

She gasped, “Like d-drugs?!”

“Yes.”

Hank and Connor were waving at him frantically, but Gavin had enough of it.

“FUCK OFF!” He’d screamed it loudly at them, and he watched them hide behind the horse statue.

Stephie gasped as she leapt back in sheer terror and fear.

Gavin realized what he’d yelled out beside her, though he meant it for Hank and Connor. He swallowed and began apologizing when he saw how hurt Stephie seemed as she grabbed another
tissue and wiped her eyes and cheeks.

“Stephie…I uh…I apologize for that…” he glared over at Hank, but the older man was already texting something else on his iPhone while Connor shook his head at Gavin.

“Oh, it’s alright,” she pet her eyes with the tissue softly, though she inched away from Gavin a little, “are you sure you’re feeling well, Jack?”

The iPhone screen read:

**ASK HER IF HE KNEW THE VICTIMS, OR IF THERE IS A CHANCE HE KISSED THEM SOMEHOW!**

**KILLED, HANK, KILLED!**

He felt his frustration growing, and he growled at Hank and Connor, hoping to get them to disappear, but all it did was frighten Stephie again.

“Jack!”

He stopped, “Sorry, I’m just…”

What the fuck could he really say?

“Maybe you need some rest…” she crumpled up her tissue and threw it into a small trash-bin by the side of the bench.

“I think I could use a lifetime of a vacation, Stephie…” he whispered as he read Hank’s text bearing the sentence:

**WE NEED MORE INFO ELSE WE HAVE TO CRAP THIS CASE**

*Yes, we need info else the case will get scrapped, Hank, thanks. Way to go, Captain Obvious…*

He offered Stephie a small smile and comforting glance as he stood up, “I’m always here if you wanna talk, Stephie, but you shouldn’t let Jose bully you.”

She shook her head, “He’s my friend; I don’t think he’s capable of hurting someone physically.”

Gavin scratched his head as he saw Connor’s hand flying out from the horse’s ass, suddenly. He used his hand to point and mime out a small gun motion firing off with his index finger and thumb. A moment later, Hank’s hand slapped Connor’s away.

“But you said he hurt others too, Stephie…” Gavin reminded her as he stuffed his hands in his jean pockets and studied the android carefully. It really seemed as if she knew more than she was letting on, but was too afraid to talk. This was definitely a bad sign, and it was not good for the case.

Stephie shifted uncomfortably as she gripped the hem of her small green skirt and pulled it down over her kneecaps, though she wasn’t cold.

Gavin saw Connor’s hand sticking out from the horse’s ass one more time, and he lost it.

Stephie smiled as she spoke softly, “Jose’s-”

“WOULD YOU GO TO HELL ALREADY?!” He screamed at Connor again, but it frightened Stephie. She was practically trying to run away as she gathered her purse to her chest and looked
with wide eyes down at the floor. She was beyond scared of Gavin, and she shook like a small child as she whimpered.

Gavin held up two hands as he tried calming himself before speaking, “I’m sorry, I’m sorry,” he ran a hand through his hair, “I really meant that for someone else, I think…”

She quirked an eyebrow but nodded, looking around the corner for an escape. “Jack, I’m really sorry to cut our chat short, but I have to-”

He nodded and smiled, “It’s fine, I understand.”

No hard feelings.

Stephie offered him a gentle smile as her face partially lit up. “Thank you, Jack,” she placed her purse over a shoulder as she was starting to make her way down the hall.

“I appreciate you being so empathetic and caring enough to ask me how I am; not many people would do that for me.”

Gavin huffed, “It’s nothin’, don’t worry about it.” It wasn’t like he was doing her a huge favor, anyway. Gavin watched as she waved at him in gratitude before she disappeared down the halls as she called out: “Goodnight Jack!”

“Goodnight, Stephie.”

Gavin heard the footsteps of Hank and Connor approaching him from behind the horse, and then he saw his two colleagues. He turned, not wanting to speak with either of them as he paced down another hallway and made his way out the doors towards his cabin.

Gavin only hoped Nines was there before him…

[\\\;;;\\\;]

Gavin’s disappointment had been increased by at least 100% when he found the cabin he shared with Nines empty. He hoped Nines wouldn’t take much longer, as he felt he had good information to share with his android partner. While there was a chance that it would all still lead to nothing, Gavin wasn’t letting go of his suspicion over Jose being the murderer.

Now everyone had seen how angry and violent the man could be, and there were so many witnesses that only a fool would be able to deny it at this point. Gavin felt proud for the first time since he’d arrived at the counselling resort. He could hardly believe that it had been nearly a full month that he’d been at Heaven’s Salvage…

Time really did fly by…

But Gavin knew he’d grown closer to Nines only because of this strange case, and as much as he hated admitting that fact to himself, he knew it was a strong, truthful one. Nines would probably never end up talking to him-let alone liking him-had it not been for the two of them being thrown into this ridiculous thing.

He had to be grateful, but Gavin was slightly upset and hurt as he wondered why Nines hadn’t ever approached him before. The android had admitted to watching Gavin and spying on him before, so clearly he had some sort of curiosity?

Oh, who was he kidding?!
Gavin Reed was one of the worst people when it came to previous treatment regarding Nines in the DPD! It was no wonder Nines didn’t like him enough to approach him or talk to him! Anytime he’d ever tried, Gavin had pushed him away with rude comments, jokes, or sometimes even the threat of physical force or violence. He’d been nothing but a dick to Nines, and he felt remorseful now that he’d had the pleasure of knowing how wonderful and caring Nines was in the last month.

Gavin had completely underestimated the android, and for what? He wasn’t sure.

Bias? Stupidity? Immaturity?

He sighed as he draped himself on a single couch in the sitting room of the cabin, turning on the lights in the ceiling as he sat and simply tried thinking of how he could voice his thoughts to Nines regarding Jose.

He’d have to start somewhere, but for some reason or another, Gavin was having trouble thinking clearly. Everything was a huge murky mess in his mind, and he found that the more he tried organizing his thoughts, the less cooperative his mind was choosing to be.

Gavin gave up on the task midway through, and instead decided to do what he often would do whenever he was frustrated or upset: masturbate.

It seemed like the perfect time to do it, too, given how Nines was still out, and everyone else was more than likely asleep at this hour of the night. He could definitely rub one off without being caught.

Gavin focused his thoughts on Nines as he unzipped his jeans and let them fall to the floor. He wanted all his clothes gone; the barriers each chipping away as he did this freely. This was all a representation for how he’d eventually ‘chipped away’ and stripped at each protective layer of his usual guarded personality. Prior to arriving at Heaven’s Salvage, Gavin had never been the type to discuss feelings, thoughts, and share emotions with anyone…but now? Now he was ready to sit in the buff and beat off to the thought of fucking Nines silly.

When he was completely naked, he got back down on the couch as he remembered the way Nines had looked standing before him on his knees the other night; all majestic and powerful, eyes wide and aroused. He thought about the delicious sounds his partner had learned to make while Gavin had sucked and licked him into a mind-blowing orgasm, and Gavin’s cock was soon fully erect.

He’d already lost himself in the motions and sensations of enjoyment as he allowed the mental imagery to carry onward. He focused his thoughts on how wonderfully Nines had mastered the art of kissing and sucking, and that nearly made Gavin stumble off the couch in ecstasy.

He let the mental pictures continue, remembering how easily Nines had always aroused him to no end, how his partner had shifted so much and changed so much in personality and character in such a short amount of time. When Nines had previously been so uptight and aloof, now he’d been something of a male-Lolita; always craving sex in a variety of new ways that surprised and impressed Gavin to no end.

Fueled by his lust, he pressed the heal of his palm down against his straining erection as he ignored time, situations, everything…

He didn’t even hear Nines walk in…

Gavin knew he had when cool air hit the scorching hot heat of his body, sending a shocking sensation right down to his toes. Luckily, Nines closed the door quickly, his long legs bringing him
over to join Gavin in the living room.

Gavin didn’t even bother covering up what he was doing, for he really felt no shame in it. He was merely doing what anyone would have done when someone they really were attracted to was gone. No crime!

Nines stared at him and shook his head as he shrugged out of his sweater and let it hang on one of the armrests of a longer sofa in the living room.

He rolled his eyes once he saw Gavin continuing his motions, “Must you really do that now, at this time?” Nines walked over towards his partner slowly, and eyed Gavin’s hand on his cock, the motions slowing down slightly.

Gavin smiled weakly, wondering if Nines was angry with him. “I was thinking of you?” It was the best he could offer. He gave his cock a few more tentative strokes now that Nines was giving him small, unimpressed glances.

“Well who else would you be thinking of?”

Shit…

Gavin frowned, not realizing how badly his previous statement could have come off.

“I’m sorry, Nines,” he began, his stroking motions coming to a halt, but before he could continue, Nines stood before him as he was already pulling his own shirt off…

“Nines?”

The shirt was thrown over the back of the sofa Gavin was sitting on, and Nines peered down at him with a smirk, “I didn’t say stop, Gavin.”

Oh fuck…

This was getting interesting…

Nines pointed at his hands around his length, “While you’re doing that, would you mind telling me what you were thinking of?” he interrupted again before Gavin could speak, “And do go into details, Gavin…”

Watching as Nines began taking off the belt of his dress pants, Gavin swallowed his lust down and willed himself to speak clearly.

“I was trying to imagine what it would feel like, with your hot mouth on my cock,” Gavin hissed as he pictured it right then, “your inexperience is so fuckin’ arousing, Nines…”

Nines pulled down his dress pants, “How so?”

Gavin eyed the exposed pale flesh and sighed, “I want to feel everything you do as you learn for the first time what pleases me.” He let out a low moan, watching the precum bead at the tip of his cock already. He thumbed his slit, gathering the pearly drops and smoothing them down his erection, giving himself a bit of lubrication. He sped up his strokes, tightening his fist to give himself more pleasure, but before he could really go at it, Nines growled in a warning.

“Continue, Gavin!”

He was brought back to Nines, and he looked up at the android’s handsome features. “I wanna know
if you’d ever let me cum in your mouth, Nines…would you swa-” he was interrupted by his own
dick throbbing deliciously, and he was unable to finish his sentence.

It seemed Nines knew what he meant as he chuckled deeply, “Rather adventurous, aren’t we,
Gavin?”

Gavin had no idea what to do as Nines bent down and pressed soft wet kisses all over his face, his
lips not leaving the slightest bit of his skin untouched as he peppered kisses anywhere he saw fit.

Gavin groaned as he tried pushing Nines off of him, but it encouraged the android to lick against his
closed lips as he struggled and turned his head away from being assaulted his tongue and lips.

“Stop.”

Nines sighed at him, eyes hurt as his chin quivered for a moment, “Why?”

Gavin swallowed as his head rested against the couch and he stared up at Nines’ blue eyes. He
practically saw the pain and raw emotions in them staring back at him, and it was a painful reminder
of how he’d treated Nines way before they grew as close as they were now.

If there was a time to be honest, now was the time.

He stopped stroking himself completely as he stared seriously at Nines. “Are things gonna change
between us once the case is over?”

Nines froze for a moment as he grabbed both armrests of the sofa and leaned in closer towards
Gavin, “No.”

He sounded serious and sincere enough, but Gavin was still somewhat uneasy.

“Are you sure?” he quirked an eyebrow at the android, hearing the wind gently blowing in through
one of the open windows.

“You don’t need to pretend to like me…,” he cringed, “…especially after I-” Gavin was unable to
finish his sentence,

“I like you a lot, Gavin,” Nines interrupted, and he looked down at Gavin’s chest as if waiting to be
scolded or hit.

Gavin felt his body responding to that genuine confession, and he bit down on the insides of his
cheeks as he closed his eyes and tried mentally asking his erection to go away before Nines could
feel it as he pressed his body over Gavin’s.

“I don’t deserve you…not after the way I-”

“Shhh,” Nines silenced him as he smiled and kissed the top of Gavin’s head, “I think I even love
you, Gavin Reed…”

Gavin’s breath hitched in his throat, but Nines continued, “What I feel for you must be love,
especially given all your flaws.”

Nines chuckled with genuine feeling, and Gavin felt his eyes burning. This was a highly emotional
moment, and the old Gavin Reed would definitely have tucked his tail between his legs and run in
the opposite direction. But he was no longer the same Gavin Reed, and they both knew it.

He cleared his throat, “Nines,” he didn’t know what to say as he looked around the room, trying to
avoid the android’s eyes. The tension was growing, and Nines shifted above Gavin as he settled in his lap. Unfortunately, it was directly adding pressure against Gavin’s thighs and cock, and he bit back a moan as quickly as he could. His voice had slipped out through his throat and lips all too fast, and his moan didn’t go unheard.

Nines gasped, his breath hitching in his throat as he pressed his hips more firmly against Gavin’s once he knew it was creating pleasure for the man.

Gavin shook his head, “No, don’t-”

Nines looked at him with hope and passion, his eyes brimming with tears, “You-”

“Shut-”

A pressure of hips against his, and a slow thrusting motion soon made him moan again in the room. Gavin couldn’t help but press his feet down firmly, planting them flat against the floor as he rose up to meet Nines’ hips and motions equally and slowly as he kept his eyes on Nines’ full lips.

“Fuck…”

Nines leaned down and kissed him softly, his hands resting on Gavin’s abdomen simply and chastely, before they tugged gently at the tip of his cock…

No!

He didn’t like this position at all, and he tried pushing Nines off him quickly. It didn’t work at first, but Nines simply chose to trust Gavin as the man stood from the couch and gently turned Nines around so he could sit once his boxers fell off due to Gavin’s fast fingers.

Gavin groaned in anguish, and he grabbed Nines’ hand in his own as he gently lifted his prying fingers away from his cock. As good as Nines was making him feel, there was no way they could do this unless Gavin was on top. The sooner Gavin made Nines understand that, the better it would be for them both.

He held tightly onto Nines’ hand still, forcing the android to sit down as Gavin wedged a leg between his partner’s thighs, and he sat upright as he straddled Nines faster than the android could’ve thought possible. Before Gavin knew it, his cock came to press and slide against Nines’ equally hard one, and they both emitted a content sigh.

“Nines…” He could’ve sighed and breathed his name a thousand times, and it wouldn’t make any difference in not stopping the wonderful feelings they were sharing. The android was determined, and he roughly pulled Gavin down, rubbing his cock right where Gavin’s opening was...

Gavin watched in shock as Nines gently and carefully began stretching and working him to open up to his wide, thick length. It was truly amazing to see how Nines was able to help Gavin’s body adjust to two of his fingers in such a short amount of time.

The lights provided them with an intimate glow as Gavin straddled Nines’ naked waist with his body. He shifted until he found a comfortable position, hissing and wincing as Nines continued stretching and preparing him with the steady pumps of three fingers now.

Gavin tilted his head back and he pressed a hand against his forehead. He sighed in pleasure as he massaged his temples while Nines stroked his length a few times before rubbing it back and forth over his own hard cock. He knew his partner was doing anything he could to make him comfortable and relaxed, and it was a beautiful, welcome sight and feeling.
Gavin was beyond erect within a few seconds of that, and he whispered and breathed out expletives as Nines parted his legs and guided his own cock until it was definitely pressing against his hole…

This was their last chance to stop and take control back, before they would both live the next day (or longer) in regret.

Gavin grabbed onto the last bit of control he still had in his brain before the lust clouded over, and he slapped a hand down on Nines’ as he moved it between his legs, the tip of his cock just barely hovering around his entrance.

Nines stopped stroking his cock against Gavin’s opening, and Gavin closed his eyes as his cock wept forth precum uncontrollably. He cursed his body for betraying him as his mind was still working clearly enough, and he finally opened his eyes and tossed Nines one last pleading look.

“Nines, please…” That broke through the lustful void between them, and Nines ceased immediately.

He pressed his palms on Gavin’s chest as he leaned forward, a serious-but-hurt expression on his face, “You want to stop?”

His question was one that tugged at Gavin in many ways. His body was screaming: NO! I DON’T WANT TO STOP, EVER! And his mind was screaming out: YES! THIS IS INSANE AND SO FUCKING WRONG, AND YOU WON’T ACCEPT ME OR TRULY LOVE ME AFTER WE LEAVE THIS PLACE!! But he didn’t know which of them to listen to as he gaped down at Nines with a wide-open jaw.

“I…I…” he whined in his throat like a child that had his favorite toy taken from him. He leaned his head up, and then slammed it back down on Nines’ shoulder as he closed his eyes and shook his head.

“No…” he couldn’t stop himself, and he knew he wouldn’t ever forgive himself for what he was about to lose himself in, “I don’t want to stop.”

Nines smiled, leaning forward to kiss him, but Gavin pulled back abruptly, “I just don’t want things to go back to the way they were after all this…”

He was such a sick, selfish motherfucker. He was a pig, he was disgusting, he was filth itself. He hated himself more than anything as Nines kissed his neck happily while his hands gently guided his cock against Gavin’s hole once more.

He knew had no right to be asking this of Nines, but Gavin knew he was selfish. He didn’t want to ‘buy’ or ‘force’ Nines to love him, but he needed it, and there was no hiding it now that he’d had a little ‘taste’ in less than a few weeks.

He liked being greedy and needy at once, and he wanted to be able to ‘settle’ down for once in his life. Gavin had never expected to fall for a man—much less an android—but here he was in that reality. All he wanted was to be with Nines, and he draped his hands over the back of his partner’s neck as he slid against Nines’ lap fully.

Eager to be inside that tight heat again, Nines kissed Gavin’s cheeks softly, noticing how Gavin was covering his eyes with a hand as he moved his hips down and helped Nines slide his thick cock inside his body. It was a mutual feeling that had finally been eased of the tension and feelings of being held back, and Nines moaned loudly in unison with Gavin once his cock was fully buried to the hilt inside him.

Nines gently pulled Gavin’s hand away from his eyes, “Don’t,” he whispered desperately, “I want to
see you…” He felt Gavin resisting for a moment, probably due to mild embarrassment and shyness, still. He eventually let Nines move his hand down lower to rest between their bodies to wrap around his own erection.

Gavin’s ass was pressed firmly against Nines’ cock as he kept inching his way inside him, and he settled himself beneath Gavin comfortably as he placed both his palms on Gavin’s chest and toyed with his nipples.

The sights were beautiful for Nines; Gavin’s head lowered as he stroked himself in time with the rhythmic pattern of Nines fucking up into him, his eyes closed tightly as he fell against Nines every once in a while…

Nines’ hands flew up to hold tightly onto Gavin’s hips as he helped him move a bit faster along his cock. He knew he should’ve taken it slowly, but the moment he’d sunk in Gavin’s tight heat, he’d lost it. Nines was unable to be as gentle as he should’ve been, but Gavin’s body was responding nicely as Nines bit and kissed his way down to his chest. Gavin looked over at Nines and witnessed his LED light flickering yellow, turning on and off as he fucked himself on Nines’ cock.

It was a most beautiful, rapturous sight to behold, as Nines threw back his head and closed his eyes while sighing at the height of pleasure and content. His neck was long, and Gavin leaned forward, his abs flexing slightly as he wrapped his hands around Nines’ shoulders and kissed his throat softly a few times.

Nines enjoyed every kiss, his forehead leaning against the top of Gavin’s head as he increased his pace a little. It caused Gavin’s balls and cock to tighten up, and fearing he would spill himself too soon and embarrass himself, he fell back slightly, hands leaving his erection for a moment as he simply enjoyed moving in Nines’ lap.

Nines was having a difficult time controlling how rough he was being with Gavin, and he wanted to slow down to check if Gavin was okay, but it was an impossible thing to do as Gavin began riding his cock like he was professionally skilled at it. They soon began rutting against each other uncontrollably as Gavin’s breaths came out in broken sobs.

This felt so…so incredibly right. It wasn’t an act anymore, not with the way Gavin was handling him passionately and gently in his hands as he bounced in his lap like his life depended on it. Nines and Gavin felt so wanted and desired, and that made their hearts swell with more desire and passion.

Gavin soon felt Nines closer to him as he slid his hands up along the back of Gavin’s head, pulling him down for a deep kiss. Unlike the other times, this was different; this wasn’t just a fuck…they were making love.

Gavin kissed him with equal amounts of energy and fervent passion, his tongue slipping past Nines’ lips as he panted over his partner’s mouth…the moment Nines’ tongue stroked his, Gavin couldn’t control or hold back any longer.

He came with a deep, long groan, practically sighing and screaming at the same time as he emptied himself deeply against Nines’ stomach and chest. He was spent within a few short minutes, gasping as his hips twitched one last time, his fingernails clawing at Nines’ skin as he rode out the last bits of his orgasm while his hand pumped his erection as it grew flaccid.

Nines tugged at his nipples, and while he could still remain ‘dominant’ and in control over Gavin’s body, Nines draped a strong thigh and hand over the left-side of the detective’s body quickly. Effectively trapping their naked lower halves together, he rolled Gavin over to his side swiftly. They were heading down to the floor in seconds as Nines got off the sofa.
“Wah!?” Gavin gasped and mumbled unintelligibly as he was softly rolled over onto his back as Nines pressed them both down to the floor. Nines soon pushed himself on top of Gavin as he slid out of him and stroked their cocks together quickly as he grabbed one of Gavin’s hands in his own.

Gavin moaned thickly as he grabbed Nines’ thick bicep, holding on as he closed his eyes and writhed in pleasure until Nines had stroked himself to completion. Nines’ cock twitched as he shot out what looked and felt like warm water into Gavin’s hand.

Gavin stared down at his hand coating in the liquid, and it even smelled like clean rainwater…it dried off shortly as Nines regulated his breathing.

The android slumped sideways, propping his weight on the right-side of his body before he rolled over onto his back. He slid up a naked thigh and bent it at the knee as his foot rested flatly on the floor. His hands fell away from Gavin’s arms, and he stared deeply into Gavin’s eyes, his cheeks deep pink as the wind gently blew cold air onto their skin.

Nines was lazily dragging the tips of his fingers on Gavin’s arms and shoulders as he pressed a single kiss to Gavin’s neck.

“Well…” Gavin sighed.

“Well.”

“That was…”

Nines chuckled, “It was.”

Gavin stared at the ceiling as he saw how dark the room had gotten from the night sky surrounding them.

He grunted his question while he was still awake, “What did you say to Jose?”

Nines sighed, “Not a lot, Gavin.”

“Tell me.”

Nines rolled his eyes, “I was trying to ask him about the previous offences…”

Gavin nodded, “Let me guess, it was a failure?”

His partner shook his head as he rested a hand on top of Gavin’s head for a moment, then slowly worked it through his hair, “Not exactly…”

Gavin turned to him, silent as he expected Nines to continue.

“He didn’t deny that he had committed crimes, however…” Nines sighed as he draped an arm over Gavin’s chest, simply trying to feel his beating heart.

Gavin raised an eyebrow, “However?”

Nines bit his lower lip before he spoke on, “However, when I scanned him for any signs of a lie or any indication that he was being dishonest with me, I was unable to find any…but he broke down sobbing against my chest like a child.”

Gavin leaned up a bit, ignoring the bits of the response that didn’t seem important to him. He glared at Nines in confusion, “How’s that possible?” he turned to Nines as he rested on his side so they
were almost face-to-face, “we all saw how much of an asshole Jose was today!”

Nines shrugged calmly, “That doesn’t make him guilty, Gavin.”

Gavin growled as he hid his face in Nines’ chest and forcefully pulled the android’s hands to wrap around his back and shoulders. “This is fuckin’ annoyin’ me already!!”

He felt Nines kiss the back of his neck, “I know,” he kissed the top of his head, next, “I feel the same way.”

Gavin closed his eyes for a moment before he remembered what Nines had said about creatures in the woods near the cemetery.

“Do you think Jose knows we’re onto him?” he cleared his throat, “I mean, the shadowy-monster-things you and Hank saw only showed up in the cemetery…”

Nines hummed in thought. “Well he was out inspecting the grounds with Stephie, so I don’t think he was trying to hide or run from Hank and I…”

“Shit.”

One by one, their theories and the evidence against Jose wasn’t holding any water. Gavin felt his head spinning as he closed his eyes again and breathed against Nines’ chest. He let Nines stroke his back and sides softly as he lay soft kisses in random places. They enjoyed the silence before Gavin looked up at Nines.

Nines smiled at him in a way that presented to Gavin that he knew Gavin wanted to speak, so he waited patiently for Gavin to collect his thoughts and words.

Gavin looked down bashfully suddenly, “Either way,” he spoke softly, “if we get him or we don’t, I just wanted to tell you that I really enjoyed gettin’ closer and closer to you in the last month, Nines.”

Nines slid an index finger beneath Gavin’s chin as he brought Gavin’s head up to eye-level with his. He stole a kiss quickly as he breathed down happily and comfortably at Gavin, “Your sincerity is most appreciated, Gavin.”

Gavin rolled his eyes, “Just shut up and cuddle me, before I slap you.”

Nines snickered but obeyed, as his hands wove around Gavin and held him close.

“As you wish, darling.”

Chapter End Notes

We're coming closer to the end of this fic :( Sad announcement :( 
It was another Friday night when all the guests at Heaven’s Salvage had decided to hang out yet again in the Entertainment Room. It had been a quiet-but not boring-evening as a few of the men were gaming yet again, while Will, Megan, Silvia, Nines, Chrissie, and Michelle sat at the large kitchen table and talked softly together.

Gavin was half-sitting-half-lying down on the large sofa, one of his legs resting over the headrest of the sofa, and the other on the armrest while he positioned his neck and head awkwardly to rest on a pillow that was close to Cameron’s right thigh. Cameron was reading a book intently while wearing headphones and listening to soft jazz music.

Gavin felt the noise in the room was growing too much with the violent game Max and Peter were playing with Steve (just like so long ago), and he soon borrowed one of Cameron’s earbuds and shoved it into his right ear as Cameron held onto the left one, still reading and allowing them both to enjoy the soft jazz.

He appreciated the awesome taste in music Cameron had, and Gavin closed his eyes as he crossed his arms over his chest. He placed his feet up into a higher and more comfortable position on the parts of the sofa not typically meant for feet, but he didn’t care as he felt it was the opportune moment for a small nap. Suddenly, right before Gavin had the chance to catch said desired small nap, his feet were shoved off the sofa.

He yelped as he turned and glared at whoever had done it while Cameron’s earbud was yanked out of his ear by an intruding, rude hand. He frowned even more when he saw Jose glaring down at him
while Stephie also entered the room, closing the door behind herself softly.

Jose threw the other earbud piece at Cameron while frowning down rudely a Gavin, “Feet off the damn furniture, Jack!!”

Gavin resisted the urge to stick out his tongue at Jose, knowing that Cameron was smirking at him as he shut off his music and wrapped his headphones carefully around his iPod.

Stephie and Jose clapped, clearly trying to get everyone’s attention.

“ATTENTION EVERYONE!!” Jose yelled out loudly over the volume of the game, and everyone in the room sighed and reluctantly stopped whatever activity they were engaged in as they glared over at Jose for interrupting them.

Jose didn’t care as he stood tall and proudly next to Stephie. As Gavin studied her quickly, he noticed that while she seemed like her happy, usually-bubbly self, there was also a way in which her eyes darted around the room that nervous or anxious people usually would portray and do. She was working hard on hiding it, though, and as she looked at Gavin, she offered him a half-smile before she gazed over at Jose.

Odd.

He wanted to think more on it, when Jose clapped again.

“I wanted to take this moment with Stephie and join you all on your ‘recreational activities’ for a very special reason…”

It indeed had to be a ‘special reason’, as Jose or Stephie had never interrupted or joined the group when they were having Entertainment Night. Those nights were often reserved for the group members to bond together without the influence of the therapists.

Stephie stood up towards the center of the room as she beamed with joy and held her hands together behind her back.

“Everyone…” she paused for an effect, clearly.

All eyes were on her, and no one stirred.

“I’m excited and pleased to announce to you all that Jose will be leaving us within a few days to start a new job as a counsellor for an elderly retirement home!!”

A few people clapped awkwardly, but majority of the group members seemed stunned. That included Gavin and Nines.

They both exchanged confused glances as Stephie cheered and jumped back as she wrapped her arms around Jose’s neck in a tight hug.

“I’m sooo happy that you chose to take this job, Jose,” she smiled as she let him go slowly, “but we’ll all miss you!!” she pouted a little before pressing her cheek against his while she squeezed their faces together.

Jose brushed his clothes off as he offered Stephie a neutral expression, “Thanks Stephie,” he pushed away from her as he gazed at everyone with a self-righteous, selfish grin on his face, “I’m happy that I’ll be moving onto other things, but I can’t say my time here at Heaven’s Salvage was all that bad…”
Gavin frowned at Nines. This murdering bastard definitely had gone and done this at the last minute to get out of jail free. This was his trump card, and it was a clear sign he was running away like a sick fucking coward. Not only was he running away without still answering to his crimes, but he was possibly going to prey on the innocent elderly, too…

The room was up in whispers, and Cameron stood on his knees as he leaned against the upper end of the couch, “I think we should all celebrate Jose’s last day here!!”

A few people cheered as they agreed with the idea.

“As long as there’s cake, I’m in!” Michelle smiled as she helped herself to a cherry in a small fruit bowl on the table.

Her fiancé Chrissie slapped her on the shoulder, “From the looks of it, you don’t need more sugary foods and junk!”

Michelle gasped in horror, “Well we can’t all be androids who were meant for the fashion industry!!”

Everyone soon began shouting out ideas for the party they were going to organize and hold for Jose at once. Gavin couldn’t focus on his inner thoughts when he heard food items, party items, and other entertainment ideas being thrown around the room.

He had to leave before he went insane…

His phone saved his life, and in the middle of all the shouting, Gavin felt his phone vibrating in his short’s pockets. He quickly exited the room, not even bothering to excuse himself as he rounded a corner and headed into the men’s bathroom.

He answered his phone quickly, “Reed.”

“Gavin, it’s me!”

He sighed as he heard the excitement in Connor’s voice slamming into his eardrums with full force. Perhaps he should have gone bowling with Stephie…

He ground out, “Noooo, who else would it be? Mephistopheles?!”

Connor paused before asking: “WHO?!”

“Oh shut the bloody fuck up,” Gavin kicked at a bathroom stall door, making it burst open crudely and loudly, “what do you want, Connor?”

Connor got right to the point, “I found something interesting out in the woods after I left you and Nines a few nights ago, and I think you guys should check it out with Hank.”

“You’re not coming?”

“No, I sadly have to repair a broken door handle in Jose’s office.”

Gavin sighed in frustration, not even bothering to ask how that happened. “Alright,” he began as he remembered Jose was going to leave Heaven’s Salvage.

“Hey Connor?”

“Hmm?”
He paused as he stood before the large bathroom mirror, frowning at his own exhausted expression staring back at him, “Did you know that Jose found another job at a retirement home?”

There was silence on the other end of the line, which confirmed everything for Gavin.

“What???”

Gavin sighed, “Guess that’s a ‘no’…”

Connor began panicking, “You better tell Hank! I should go!”

“Connor you-” the conversation was rudely cut off by Connor hanging up just like that.

Gavin hissed in anger as he resisted the urge to slam his phone into the mirror. He chose instead to glare at his own reflection as he spat at himself in the mirror. He’d never been so angry or disappointed. They were going to lose the case due to Jose leaving, and they didn’t have even the smallest bit of evidence with them to make an arrest or call Fowler. What utter shit.

He watched as his saliva dripped down the glass, making his reflection even stranger and odder than he usually found himself to be whenever he frowned.

This was the least of his fucking worries, however…

The trio met without Connor at the top of the same hill Hank and Nines had tumbled down. Hank seemed a little fearful and reluctant to proceed forward as they approached the cemetery. Gavin didn’t blame him, however, thinking about how creepy the dark, shadowy creatures must have been as they stalked Hank and Nines in the woods…

He hoped they wouldn’t run into them as they all grazed their way through the cemetery. Gavin barely had time to look at all the gravestones and markings Hank had told him about when Nines made his way for the woods quickly. His LED light was red, and he soon broke into a run as he crossed the thickets and entered the woods.

He must have found something!

“Nines! What’re you doin’?!?”

Nines ignored him as Hank gasped in a low warning, “It’s not safe there, you fool!”

As soon as he’d stated that, the dark, shadowy creatures loomed down at them once they were barely in the woods. Hank and Gavin fell to their knees as they cradled their heads in fear, eyes closed tightly.

It was loud and frightening as the creatures swooped above their heads, but Nines didn’t seem fazed in the least.

“Nines?! What the fuck?!”

Was he possessed, or something?! The sounds these creatures made were horrifying! They had to leave!!

Gavin was trying to get him to get down before one of the creatures attacked him, when Nines kicked at something. He was bold and brass in his movements, and Gavin could only hope and pray that whatever these shrieking beasts were, they wouldn’t be able to completely annihilate an android.
Whatever it was that Nines was ‘fighting’, he aimed his kick at a tree stump that had been meant for a resting place. A loud clattering noise sounded at the forest floor, and Nines grabbed Hank’s flashlight as he turned it on and shined it down at a small object while his LED light blinked yellow many times…

Hank and Gavin gaped down at a small projector lying in the grass right by their noses. At the same moment they were studying it with confused expressions on their faces, Nines stepped roughly on it and crushed it beneath his weight slowly.

“Nines, what’re you-”

They heard the creatures flying around howling in almost what sounded like ‘pain’…suddenly, they snarled and gave out a few more dying shrieks before they’d disappeared in a flash before Hank’s and Gavin’s eyes.

It was as if they’d never been there in the first place…

Gavin and Hank slowly raised their heads as they helped each other off the ground and back on their feet.

“Nines?”

“How did you do that?” Hank asked, panting and wheezing heavily, as if he’d had the scare of a lifetime.

Nines glared at them, “It was a simple holographic trick; nothing more.”

“A fuckin’ distraction meant to keep us away from pokin’ around in here…” Gavin finally understood as he nodded over at Hank.

Hank straightened himself out as he brushed his jeans off, “Well I guess that means Jose clearly is guilty, seeing as he was trying to hide something and keep people away from the cemetery.”

Gavin pointed at the projector, “Yes, this was him trying to buy time, I think,” he glared up at his friends, “and it fuckin’ worked, too, seein’ as the son of a bitch is going to leave Heaven’s Salvage while he still has to answer for a lot.”

Hank froze as he stared at Gavin with an open jaw, “Excuse me?”

Oh shit…what good timing…

Gavin ran a hand through his hair as Nines glared at him, “Just explain it now, I’ll collect this as evidence.”

As Nines bent down to pick up the pieces of the busted projector, Gavin pulled Hank close to him as he kept his voice down, “Jose and Stephie walked in the Entertainment Room today and announced that Jose got a job in another place as a counsellor for the elderly…”

Hank stomped his foot in the ground, “Christ…”

“Yeah…”

“What’re we going to do now?”

Gavin shrugged, “Apparently the fucker’s gonna get away with murder; we don’t have enough evidence to make an arrest.”
Nines approached them quickly, “I think we should keep a close eye on him before the ‘goodbye’ party happens in a day.”

Gavin nodded, “I’ll look around for more clues if I can,” he sighed loudly, “perhaps the son of a bitch will get a little sloppy now that he thinks he’s gettin’ away…”

“Hmm, perhaps,” Nines looked over at the cemetery, eyes slightly expressionless. Gavin knew it was his way of expressing frustration without voicing it out loud. He only wished he could be as calm and composed as the android. Sadly, he was human, and prone to many more uncontrolled emotions as he shivered in worry.

“Can’t believe the fucker gets a little ‘going away party’ too…” Hank whispered in heated anger.

Gavin nodded as he looked over at Nines, “Yeah…sucks…”

Having nothing else to add, Hank gestured over at the broken projector bits Nines had collected in a small white bag.

“I’ll take those, Nines,” he grabbed the bag gently as he pet Nines on the back, “take care of yourself and Gavin when you get back, alright?”

Nines nodded and smiled warmly, “We will.”

“Good work, Nines!” The older man flashed Nines a thumbs-up as he looked intently at the projector while chuckling. At least he could be ‘happy’ with their progress, though Gavin thought it still meant next to nothing in the span of everything else.

Hank exited the woods rather quickly, as if running away from some threat that still loomed in the large dark woods. Gavin was happy and grateful for the fact that they’d discovered the creatures to be a sham, but he had to wonder how Jose had found time to set this entire scheme up.

Frankly, he also wondered how he had the brains to doctor this all by himself…he didn’t really seem to be all that ‘bright’, in Gavin’s personal opinion.

It had to have been when he was out and about catching Nines and Hank snooping around…

Maybe, maybe not. He really didn’t know, nor did he have the energy to piece it all together. He just wanted to walk back to the cabin he shared with Nines and curl up in bed next to his android partner. Perhaps then he would be able to think clearly…

It was already mid afternoon the next day when Gavin realized he’d been avoiding Nines. He wasn’t sure why he was doing it, considering the fact that Nines hadn’t done anything to personally offend Gavin. Gavin supposed he was more than frustrated with the fact that the dark, shadowy creatures turned out to be nothing but a shallow, empty ruse at distracting them from the real point of the investigation.

Still, the trip to the cemetery had been creepy one, and Gavin wasn’t sure how Nines and Hank had made it to the cemetery and woods back and forth in one piece to begin with. A onetime trip was enough for him, and he hoped they would never have to return again. Truthfully, Gavin wasn’t sure how Connor had actually noticed the holographic images to begin with. Clearly, the android was capable of a lot more than he let on, and Gavin had to admire and appreciate him a lot for it.

As Gavin spent majority of the rest of the day cooped up inside of the cabin he shared with Nines, he
realized that he was thinking about a lot of things he’d taken for granted in the past before. Partnership and friendship had been a great one to start with. He was feeling a little more than guilty, considering the fact that he had never appreciated Connor and Hank as his partners, but he was grateful for the fact that he been given this opportunity to grow up and shape himself up.

Perhaps he had a lot more growing up to do, but at least he could enjoy the momentary peace and solitude he had as he sat thinking a lot in the cabin.

It was only then that Gavin discovered that everyone around him had actually grown a lot more too; Connor was a lot more wise, stealthy, and observant. Hank seem to be far more patient and industrious in his planning and thinking than ever before. And Nines…

Nines had learned to love, and that was the biggest achievement to Gavin. It had not only affected him, but it had taught him that he too was capable of love.

Before he could get lost in the sappy romance, Gavin reminded himself that he was still ‘on duty’. He needed to be on guard and alert, and he soon began blaming Nines for being the cause and source of his distraction.

This was why Gavin Reed was currently trying to avoid the android, but it suited him just fine as he was called to help the women decorate and organize the gym with balloons, photos, fancy décor, and other party-items.

What a dump.

Gavin didn’t notice what time it was that Nines left the cabin until he decided that he’d had enough of his own brooding.

It was time to go for a walk…

He left the cabin in the early afternoon, noting that he had roughly over two hours before the party was to start. It was amazing to see how quickly two hours would go by, however much he tried not thinking about the time. Gavin really tried not thinking about time slipping through his fingers as he watched Cameron and Will walk out of their cabin with a few items and ‘gifts’ they were probably going to give Jose…

*The only ‘gift’ this fucker needs are a pair of handcuffs…*

Gavin smiled and waved at the couple as they saw him before making their way over to the large gym.

He wondered if he would ever be able to see Will and Cameron again as they disappeared in the gym. Gavin frowned at his own thoughts, realizing that in the last month and some odd week he’d been living at the counselling resort, he’d grown far too attached to certain guests. He cursed himself for being human and seeking what every individual sought in their lives: friendship and companionship.

Was he really such an asshole for wanting a small group of people to hang around him and keep him happy?

He hoped not, but he wasn’t able to make a decision and form a judgement as he walked closer to the gym doors when he saw that an hour had definitely gone by.

The gym was buzzing with activity; Megan and Silvia were in a corner by the bleachers, with Megan sitting on top of her lover’s shoulders as Silvia boosted her up while standing on a stool. They were
trying to post a few balloons on the wall above, glitter and sparkles in their hair as they giggled and playfully groped each other.

Nines was over in the far-left-hand corner, standing on top of a ladder as he checked the speakers in the gym while Cameron and Will organized tables meant to hold refreshments and beverages.

Caleb and his older partner Mitch were going through a laptop, selecting songs from a list that they wanted to play. Steve and his android partner were busy removing the small green and yellow ‘x’ marks that were always present on the floor for the dancing lessons, and Max and Peter were writing down a list of food to bring in and order…

Everyone was helping out, and it made Gavin’s heart swell with a strange emotion he hadn’t felt in years.

He felt like…a member of a family…

It sounded strange in his thoughts, even, but there was no other way to put it; he felt like one part of a large family in the month and odd week he’d spent at Heaven’s Salvage.

He didn’t want to wrap up the case any time soon, but he knew if they didn’t have a strong lead, Captain Fowler was going to pull them out of the resort, soon. Their reports on the progress of the case were due soon, and Gavin really had nothing else to write.

If he wrote anything, he’d be pulling lies out of his ass, and he didn’t want to do that. He sensed that Fowler already had enough of his attitude during the years, and this would probably be the final nail in his own coffin.

It was just better to admit flat out that they’d failed, and that Jose would walk away Scott-free off the hook. After all, they couldn’t always win, could they?

Gavin wondered what he was going to say to Fowler, but as he looked up at Nines beaming with pride at the decoration and balloons on the walls, he felt his stomach and chest burn with a familiar sensation of warmth that he’d always felt for Nines since they grew closer…

If there was anything productive and sincere Gavin could do, it was to tell Nines how he really felt about him. He was so sure of his feelings as he stared at Nines smiling down at the other guests while they all exchanged jokes and rounds of laughter. Nines had never looked better…he really seemed to fit in, and as his eyes gazed over at Gavin, the detective gave him a small smile of his own and nodded over at Nines, indicating that he wanted to talk to him alone.

Nines caught onto the hint, and just as he made his way over to Gavin as the shorter man stood by the doors, they opened wide as Stephie strolled inside the gym.

She squealed in excitement and delight, and she pointed at the decorations within the gym, her eyes wide and filled with joy.

“You guuuyssss!!” She giggled and ran over to the women first, giving them large, tight hugs.

“Everything looks sooo beautiful!!” More people flocked towards her, eager to show off the work they’d done.

Gavin figured now was his chance, and he gently pulled Nines out of the gym as they stood against the walls on the outside of it.

“So what did you want to tell me, Gavin?” Nines breathed down at him with serenity and a state of
calm in the middle of the failed investigation case that Gavin was always unable to do. He didn’t like failure, but the sooner he accepted that this was over, the better it was for him to handle and deal with, psychologically.

He rubbed his forehead as he grunted out at Nines, “I just…I just wanted to say…” fuck…why was this so hard to do?

He cleared his throat, “I just wanted to say: thank you, for bein’ by my side during all this, Nines.”

Nines stared down at him, a small, surprised expression crossing his features.

“I truly couldn’t have done anything without you, and I just wanted to let you know I’m grateful for everythin’.”

Gavin couldn’t believe that he’d actually thanked an android for doing something for him. It had to be a first, as he hadn’t even recalled thanking Connor for anything, ever. But then again, Nines was different…

Gavin gently rested a hand on Nines’ shoulder. Looking deeply into his eyes, he knew he had nothing to fear. Nines soothed and calmed him, and he owed it to the android to tell him the truth. No more hiding…

“Nines,” Gavin began, hearing loud laughter emanating from the other side of the gym doors.

“I…”

He was interrupted by Nines grabbing onto his cheeks softly, pressing their lips tightly together in an intimate-but-brief-kiss. The moment had ended too soon, and Nines pulled away as he pressed a hand against the gym doors.

“I have to help them finish up here, Gavin,” he opened the door, and all the noise from the gym flooded into the hall, effectively breaking their moment.

But Gavin wasn’t going to let it go that easily, and he stepped closely behind Nines as he called out in pride and confidence: “I love you!”

Nines froze immediately, and Gavin had to wonder if he’d fucked up. He’d been honest and truthful, though, and he realized he’d uttered his confession with absolute sincerity.

Nines turned around slowly, and he ran back towards Gavin. He smashed their lips together again, this time making sure the kiss was long, hot, and passionate…

Gavin wrapped his arms around Nines, fully reciprocating the deep kiss when he heard ‘oooos’ and ‘awwws’…

Gavin and Nines broke apart from each other and turned to glare at the rest of the guests. They were spying on them, and even Stephie giggled and began sighing at their romantic exchange as they held open the gym doors.

Fucking…fuck…

Gavin glared at them, “Don’t you guys have decorating to do?!?”

Cameron gave him a playful wink, “And we all know what you two have to do!”
Everyone else laughed as they scattered once Gavin growled deeply at them. Nines gently rubbed his back as he whispered in Gavin’s ear: “I left some items back in our cabin, I’ll be back in a bit, alright?”

Gavin held him close in a small embrace as he sighed, “Be quick, okay?”

He felt Nines slowly detach from their hug, “I promise I’ll try.”

Gavin watched him walk down the halls towards the exits slowly, and he paused midway walking as he stopped and looked over his shoulder at Gavin.

They exchanged shy smiles before Gavin felt Will and Cameron tap on his shoulder. He turned reluctantly to them, “What’s up?”

Will smiled, “I o-ordered c-cake, and it should b-b-be h-here soon!”

“Wanna help us bring it in?” Cameron asked as he gently wrapped a hand around Gavin’s shoulder, already ushering him towards the back of the gym doors.

“Yeah…sure…”

He didn’t know when he’d given them the impression that he’d agreed, but he figured he could use some fresh air and a break.

Nines grabbed a few paper plates and bags leftover from their supper with Cameron and Will, gazing one more time around the cabin, checking to see if all their bags were packed. Captain Fowler had informed him that they had to leave early in the morning, and he was mentally preparing for the yelling and screaming they would no doubt face the moment they got back to the DPD.

His conversation with the angry Police Captain had been less than favorable and pleasant, but he knew that for the first time since…ever, he had lost. It wasn’t easy for the prideful android to admit that to himself, even, but he knew he had to ‘get over it’. Perhaps there would be a chance later for them to pick the case back up, but Nines knew his conscience wouldn’t be clear if more victims came in.

Why did innocent people and androids who wanted to love each other, build a life with each other, and strengthen their relationships have to die and mindlessly suffer? What was the motive for this psychopath?!

He felt increasingly frustrated as the answers weren’t coming together and piecing themselves properly in place within his mind as they once used to. He had lost, but that wasn’t the issue; it was that he had to understand he failed everyone, especially himself. There had been no instances of him displaying his ‘advanced’ techniques and capabilities, and he had truly felt useless in the last few days, no matter how hard he tried forgetting it.

All he could do now was gather whatever bits were left of his shattered pride and ego, pack them up in his bags and suitcases, and carry them off with him to the DPD to face being reprimanded by Captain Fowler. He didn’t need to hear it, but he knew their superior didn’t care what they wanted; he was just going to let them have it, either way.

It was unavoidable, though, but Nines knew that he’d come to enjoy himself tremendously during his time at Heaven’s Salvage. That wasn’t something Fowler-or anyone else-could take away from him, and he would be happy leaving the resort with that notion in mind.
A loud buzzing sound echoed in the cabin suddenly, and Nines soon learned that Gavin had left his cellphone behind.

He snickered as he approached the phone, unlocking it as he went through Gavin’s texts. He knew he shouldn’t have been snooping around, but he considered himself close enough to go through Gavin’s phone with a little peek here and there…

There was a notification from Tina Chen asking Gavin how things in ‘Gay Land’ were, but nothing else new. Nines scrolled around through the texts, still, until he landed on the names of the deceased, previous guests of Heaven’s Salvage Hank had forwarded to Gavin.

**Beverley Perkins- 1999-2038**

**Andrew Morlan- 2001-2037**

**Thomas Klinehart- 2002-2038**

**Jennifer Clark- 2001-2035**

**Hailey Coleman-2003-2039**

He didn’t think anything of it, knowing that Gavin had kept the text for some purpose or another. He went to scroll through more old texts when his LED light went red…

Wait…

Nines quickly turned back to the list of names, and he practically dropped the phone as his eyes widened…

No…

He grabbed the phone tightly in his hands and burst through the door of the cabin, heading for the gym in a hurry.

[\\\\;;;\\\\]

It was finally late afternoon, and Gavin had just gotten out of the washroom, trying to wash off some of the icing of the cake that had accidentally gotten on his hands and shirt. He’d slipped like a clumsy kid and dipped a few of his fingers into the cake, but they managed to save majority of it.

He nearly collided into Chrissie and Michelle as they ran into him with panicked and worried expressions on their faces. Soon, Max and Peter ran behind them.

“Where is he?!”

Gavin sensed the concern between them all, and he sighed, “I’m right here.”

Michelle shook her head, “No! Not you!”

“We’re looking for Jose!”

Max held onto his husband as he whispered before them all, “Stephie went looking for him too, and we wanted to help her find Jose…”

Gavin began worrying a little more, now. Had Jose abducted Stephie?! Gavin quickly asked for the time, his worries mounting as he felt his heart throbbing wildly in his chest. It was a little past the set
time for when the party was supposed to begin.

“You guys haven’t seen Jose yet?”

Max rolled his eyes while Peter stuttered, “Well duh! Of course we haven’t!” he said with attitude, “why else would we ask you?”

Gavin pushed back the insults and arguments that his mind was threatening to supply, and he held out his hands, trying to usher the small group back down the hall. “Alright, well you guys get goin’ back inside, and I’ll look for Jose.”

“He’s probably in his office or something!” Michelle cried as her fiancé pulled on her arm. Peter and Max waved at Gavin, wishing him ‘good luck’ as they too went back into the gym.

True to his promise, Gavin went over to Jose’s office on the second floor of the mansion, but it was empty…

All the lights inside were off, and nothing inside the office had been out of place or arranged in a way that was a cause for concern. Yes, the door had been locked, but the counsellors always did this when their sessions and appointment times were over.

Perhaps Jose was in the washroom?

Gavin hurriedly checked the washroom on the second floor and first floor of the mansion, but they too were completely empty…

Feeling his chest tightening in concern, Gavin didn’t know where else to look. He didn’t want to raise any alarms over nothing, but there was something in his gut tugging at him and telling him that something wasn’t right at all…

As a detective, he decided to follow the lead, thinking about all the places Jose could be. He didn’t want to start searching the grounds yet, but he guessed he had no choice. He’d been walking down another hallway towards the exits when he saw the large, oak door of the basement open just ajar…

[HANK! HANK! PICK UP!!!] Nines practically screamed into Gavin’s phone once he learned that both Jose and Gavin weren’t in the gym, or in any of the halls in the mansion. Cameron and Will told him that Gavin had gone to find Jose, and soon, the rest of the guests began hanging around the inside and outside of the gym in worry and concern as they were unable to locate the therapist and one of their members.

Nines asked them all to wait by the gym and remain calm as he went searching for ‘Jack’ and Jose. He’d been trying to get a hold of Hank or Connor using the cellphone, but neither of them were picking up. He couldn’t search for them now, either; Gavin’s life was potentially in danger, and time was of the essence.

Nines decided to leave a message when Hank finally picked up halfway into his outgoing message.

“Hello—”

“It’s an anagram, Hank!!!” Nines interrupted loudly.

“What?!” The Lieutenant moved to get somewhere with better reception when Nines was yelling into the phone, and Nines kept repeating the statement loudly.
“IT’S AN ANAGRAM! All the names of the deceased people we found in the cemetery have the exact same letters as the names of the victims!!”

Hank wasn’t following, “Nines, you sound like you’re outta your mind!!”

“All names are anagrams!” Nines begged as he checked in all the rooms of the mansion for Gavin, “they’re anagrams!”

“Beverley Perkins is Evin Byers Kepler! Andrew Morlan is Dawn Erma Lorn!!” he explained the rest quickly as he heard Hank gasping, slowly catching on.

“Thomas Klinehart? He’s Kamilah Thorsten! Jennifer Clark is Jere Francklin!”

Hank finished the last name, “Hailey Coleman is Michael Yolane…”

“Yes!!” Nines screamed out, though it was in relief that Hank was getting it.

“Where’s Gavin?!”

It was a question Nines had, as well, but when he found the wide-open basement door of the mansion, relief took over as his question and prayers had been answered.

Gavin hadn’t been down in the basement for long before he felt more than uneasy. The air was stale, and the temperature was cold. While the rest of mansion had been very modern and renovated, the basement looked like a home from the late eighties. The wallpaper and paint was chipping away and dirty, and the carpets were torn in many places.

Gavin walked until he’d run out of steps before he felt cement on his feet. The floors were cold and dry, and as Gavin gazed around the large interior of the basement, he saw a large indoor pool hanging beneath his feet right in the center. It was empty, thankfully, but Gavin still felt his heart throbbing in fear. Had he kept on walking while staring at the ceiling, he definitely would have fallen down in to the pool…

Reminding himself to be more cautious, he continued searching around until he found a large, old dresser and closet resting against one of the walls of the basement. He wasn’t sure what it was holding inside, but he propped it open as he took a peek inside.

This must have been the same dresser Connor said held some android and human blood…

Though Gavin supposed it was a silly rumor Connor had heard one of the guests spreading, he couldn’t help but feel himself shivering in fear as he gazed inside the large closet.

It seemed to be normal on the outside and inside, and there wasn’t a lot Gavin could do with it when there were no traces of blood on it. Nothing to fear, right? Nothing there except only a small light shining out of a small hole in the center of the back of it.

…

A light?

Gavin paused, and pressed his eyes against the hole. A hidden secret…

He wasn’t able to see anything clearly, but he knew he was onto something when he heard a faint cry and a muffling sound from the other side of the closet…
It had to be hiding something.

Gavin stepped away from it, moving over to the side as he heaved the closet/dresser aside roughly with a push of his shoulder. It made small groaning noises, but it eventually moved out of the way to reveal a small medium-sized doorway…

It was exactly like something he’d seen out of those old, cheesy horror movies about a haunted house, and for a moment, Gavin was sure he was dreaming. He just had to be…this all had to be unreal…how did this go undetected for so long?!

Wanting answers impatiently, Gavin looked at the hole in the center of the door and gave the handle a jiggle.

It was unlocked.

Somehow, this frightened him more than it would have had the door been locked…

Someone was definitely in there…

Something inside him told him it was better to call Hank or Connor for help, but he remembered he’d left his cellphone behind in the cabin. It was too late to go back for it now, as Gavin heard the noises behind the door increasing in volume.

Someone needed help, and they needed it now!

He cursed himself for not even waiting for Nines. What kind of a lousy detective was he?!

Gavin opened the door slowly and carefully, making sure it didn’t squeak or make any noise as he poked his head inside another long hallway and began walking. There was one more door at the end of it, and it was painted completely in black. It didn’t have any numbers, letters, or signs on it, and Gavin had no idea where it would lead him.

For all he knew, it could have been another boring storage closet the owners had thought to cover up during the renovations of Heaven’s Salvage.

He’d decided to turn back and go get help when he heard another muffled cry, followed by the definite sound of scraping against the floors…

That was it. Someone was definitely in danger, and Gavin knew the sounds of a struggle when he heard one.

He raised a leg and kicked down the dark door as hard as he could. It crashed against the other side of the wall, inside whatever room it was leading to. Some dust and debris floated high in the air above him, causing Gavin to cough as he wiped his eyes and fanned the dust out of his face.

Once his vision had cleared, he stepped inside the new room before his eyes widened and he gasped in horror.

He knew he should have brought a weapon with him, but there was no way he could have snuck it about with everyone around…

Oh how he wished he had when he saw Jose sitting in the center of the empty room barren of any furniture before him. A single lightbulb swung from the ceiling a few times, and the old pipes in the walls of the room clanked and sung about in pain as their groans were heard loud and clear.
Jose was sitting on an old black chair, his eyes wide as plates as he stared at Gavin with black duct tape over his mouth. Behind him stood Stephie. She was holding a needle in her hands and it was pointed inches away from Jose’s neck…

His vein there throbbed as he shook his head at Gavin. He was tied up tightly to the chair; both his hands and legs bound together as he breathed in panic through his nose, nostrils flaring as sweat poured down his forehead and chest.

Stephie smiled down at the needle in her hands, her LED light red and dangerous, “Thank you for joining us, Jack…”

He could hardly believe it, “It was you?!?” How someone as gentle, funny, bubbly, friendly, and welcoming as Stephie could be capable of such things was beyond Gavin, and his eyes and mind refused to believe it for a moment as he stared at her from head to toe.

She had somehow changed her clothes from the time Gavin had seen her in the gym, and until now. She was wearing a long white dress with sparkles and glitter that glowed even now beneath the dim lightbulb in the tiny room they were in. Her makeup consisted of dark green eyeshadow and red lipstick she’d never worn before. It all gave her a very ‘vixen-like’, dark appearance.

Regardless of the clothes she was wearing, it was when she looked up at Gavin that he knew she wasn’t the same Stephie deep inside everyone had known and gotten along with. Her eyes were cold and lifeless as she smiled at Gavin as if he were a guest she’d invited over for tea before slaughtering them.

“How,”

She glared at him while still holding the needle tightly between her fingers, “Don’t take a step forward, Jack,” she stroked Jose’s cheek with a free hand, “not unless you want Jose here to have a rather unfortunate accident…”

Gavin knew there was Aconite in the syringe, and he stepped back with his arms up in the air as he nodded at Stephie, “Okay, I won’t do anything, I promise you.”

“I don’t want to have to kill him, Jack,” she cried in panic as she began sniffling, “but he has to die!!”

Gavin looked at Jose before taking a quick glance at Stephie, “Why does he need to die, Stephie?” Perhaps he would be able to buy time if he kept her talking. He prayed Nines was on his way, NOW.

The blonde android looked over at him, and the first tear fell from her eyes, “Because he is going to leave me!!”

Gavin was confused, “Stephie, he’s not going anywhere-”

“He got a new job!!” She shrieked in terror at him as she bit down on her lower lip and shook her head. A few of her tears dripped down onto Jose’s shirt, looking like little diamonds beneath the light.

Her voice was broken and shattered, “They all wanted to leave me!!”

Gavin felt his heart beating wildly in his chest, and he willed himself to remain calm, “Is that why you killed them all?”
She shook her head, “I couldn’t kill every single android or human here, but I killed the ones that left the program too early!”

“Is that what some of the numbers meant, Stephie?”

Gavin’s mind flashed to the gravestones bearing the scratch marks mostly present beneath the numbers ‘8’ and ‘9’.

The female android nodded as her hands shook, the needle glistening dangerously in the light. Gavin never took his eyes off it.

“Dawn left me on August 4th, Thomas left on August 5th, and Jere left on the 9th of August…the rest left sometime in September, but I have never forgotten!” her eyes grew dark as she remembered the previous guests she’d slaughtered.

“They all forgot me, but I made sure they would stay with me…”

It was true; she had marked all the months and exact dates on the gravestones of the names that were the anagrams for the victims.

He wasn’t through with his investigation, “What about the things in the woods?”

She knew exactly what he was referring to, and she glared at him, even more infuriated that he’d dared to ask the question to begin with, “I hate people who snoop, and you and your Robert were snooping too much! That’s why I asked Jose to search the grounds with me the night I caught Don Westbrook and Robert together!!”

Gavin glared at her, “Yeah, well we know they were a fake, now!”

Her hands shook violently, causing Jose to whine and whimper as he closed his eyes and looked away from the sharp needle only inches away from his neck.

“Everyone leaves,” Stephie sobbed, “I just wanted them to stay with me and just continue to be my friend!”

It was an odd excuse or reason to do such crazy shit, but Gavin didn’t care how ‘charming’ and ‘amusing’ it seemed; murder was murder.

“That doesn’t give you the right to kill them, Stephie!!”

She threw her head back up and frowned darkly at him, the eyeliner and mascara running down in thick black lines down her cheeks, “And why not?!”

“Because it’s ruthless, senseless murder!!”

She sobbed as she pressed the needle a little closer to Jose’s neck, causing him to squeal in fright. It was practically poking his skin, now, and Gavin really began to panic.

“I didn’t want to kill anyone, and I don’t even want to kill Jose,” she wiped her nose with the sleeve of her dress, “but I tried getting you off my trail as best as I could, especially when I knew you found my poison.”

Gavin remembered when Jose had been caught sneaking into the storage and utility closet. He gasped as he pointed a finger at Stephie, “You sent him in there?”
She only nodded as she closed her eyes and sobbed loudly.

“You were gonna frame him?!”

“NO!!” her loud cry made Gavin’s mouth snap shut.

A pleading look crossed her face that nearly made Gavin’s stomach churn in disgust. She’d once seemed so calm, peaceful, and loving, and now…now a monster stood in her place. He could hardly recognize the old Stephie beneath the layers of makeup and tears.

“I was just trying to get you guys off my case…”

“You’re still a murderer, Stephie!” Gavin’s loud voice hit the walls of the small room, and Stephie cradled her face in a hand while she still pointed the needle at Jose’s neck with another. The man whined and stared at Gavin with desperate, frightened eyes he had to look away from before he lost control of himself.

“I wanted them to be with me! I wanted them to always remember me!!” she cried and wailed as her tears flowed like a river down her eyes, “everyone who comes into this program is so needy at first when they want something from me or Jose, but then when things are okay between them and their partner, they just forget about us like we never even existed!!”

Thundering footsteps soon approached, and Nines flew into the room, barely missing Gavin’s back as he nearly slammed into him.

“Gavin I-”

“Nines?!”

Stephie sniffled as she looked between the two of them, wiping her eyes with a hand, “Oh, I get it!” she giggled, and it sounded so evil, suddenly, not at all like the ways she’d giggled and laughed before in the past.

“Your real names aren’t ‘Robert’ and ‘Jack’, right?”

Ignoring the fact that their cover was blown Nines stepped past Gavin as he growled down at Stephie, “I knew it was you!”

Stephie smiled painfully at him, “Yeah, well your lover thought it was Jose, apparently.”

Gavin and Nines watched in horror as Stephie tapped the needle with an index finger as she prepared to inject it into Jose’s neck.

“This has to be done!” she cried as she stretched out his skin between two fingers, the vein prominent as it stared at her, “this is the only way we can all be together…”

Before she had a chance to inject the poison, Nines darted forward and snatched the needle out of her little, delicate fingers. The needle flew into the air, and it smashed against the lightbulb. The glass of it exploded everywhere, and while the room was dark for a minute, Gavin raced ahead and dragged Jose out of the chair as he quickly used a shard of glass to cut the ties that held him.

He tore the duct tape off his lips in one quick swipe while Nines and Stephie struggled in the corner, their LED lights flaring red.

Jose sighed in relief once the duct tape had been roughly peeled off his lips, “Oh my God! Thank
you! I’d been meaning to wax my mustache for some time, but—"

Gavin ignored him as he leapt back up to his feet and grabbed tightly onto one of Stephie’s hands as she was trying to stab Nines in the eyes with a broken piece of lightbulb glass. It sliced through Gavin’s skin when he held up a hand and shielded Nines’ eyes from it.

He screamed, and that broke through Stephie’s murderous rampage. She gasped as she stepped back in fright. It was like day and night: her eyes had once been so evil and dark, and now, it seemed as if the spell had been broken, and the old, loving Stephie was back…

She gazed at Gavin with large, round eyes full of concern and worry, “Jack?”

Gavin cradled his cut hand, his blood already dripping heavily down onto the floor. It stung like a motherfucker…

“Oh gross, I think I’m gonna be sick…” Jose turned away from the sight of the dripping blood, face growing pale.

Nines was at Gavin’s side as he held tightly onto his partner’s hand, “Gavin!”

Gavin hissed as he looked at Nines, “I’ll be fine,” he glared over at Stephie, ready to ask Nines to attack her, when he saw how scared and hurt she looked.

She held the glass in her hands, still dripping with blood as she peered at her own reflection in it.

“This is not me!” She shook her head a few times as she dropped the glass and fell to her knees, crying and wailing loudly, “this isn’t me!!”

She cried harder than a lost child, and Gavin felt Nines wrapping a torn piece of his own shirt around his wound as he held Gavin to his chest tightly while Stephie wailed and cried on the floor by their feet.

Gavin didn’t want to admit it, but he kind of felt sorry for her…

She had simply faced a case of ‘living out her intended purpose’, and then had been cast away like an old, forgotten shoe that was no longer in fashion anymore. But that was how all people and androids were basically treated anyway; as expendable units.

Gavin himself had felt that same way when his ‘relationships’ had all ended; the promises and dreams all shattered, broken, and left to turn away in the dust and wind as a reminder of his pain and misery…

But that didn’t ever bring him ideas of fancies of murdering someone.

He could only listen to Stephie’s wild sobs as she held her face shamefully in her hands while Nines told Connor to call Captain Fowler at once.

They had a lot of explaining to do.
Chapter End Notes

So there we go 😊😊 Poor Stephie 😊😊😊
I'm not saying she was justified, but dayyyum, girl! you need better coping mechanisms 🤦‍♂️
To anyone who guessed it was her, great work! I tried not making it way too obvious,
and I went out of my way to really make Jose gross and disgustingly annoying, which in
turn kinda made Stephie the 'cute' one, but it's always those ones I don't trust, myself
LOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOL
This fic isn't over quite YET, though
O.o
Stay tuned!
Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Captain Fowler and a few backup officers from the DPD arrived within half an hour. Their police cars practically flew into the parking lot of Heaven’s Salvage just as the sun was starting to set. The sky wasn’t as beautiful as Gavin remembered it, however; it was just a pink row of fluff with dark blue clouds that seemed to frown down on the sad spectacle of Stephie being arrested.

The female android didn’t put up a fight, and she followed Gavin and Nines willingly outside the mansion while the other guests and Jose gathered around in the center of the parking lot as they whispered to each other.

They too couldn’t believe that Stephie had attempted to take Jose’s life, but it was a sad fact no one could avoid when Stephie was carefully searched by an officer before handcuffs were put on her wrists.

Captain Fowler strolled up to her as Nines and Gavin followed closely behind, and he seemed baffled and bewildered as he pointed and gaped at Stephie.

“You boys sure she’s the perp?!”

Nines and Gavin both nodded, far too exhausted to offer words or a deep, thorough explanation.

“But she’s seems so lovely!!” Another officer gasped as they gently pushed down on the top of Stephie’s head and helped her get into the backseat of the police car.

Right before the door closed, Michelle waved at Stephie while winking at her: “Call me, beautiful!”

Her fiancé Chrissie grabbed her hair and pulled it roughly, “HEYYY!!”

Gazing at the two women fighting, Captain Fowler shook his head, “I’m sorry you boys had to deal with this shit for almost a month and half.”

Connor and Hank pushed through the crowd of the guests before Gavin or Nines had an opportunity to speak, “I had fun!” Connor cried as he bounded over to Captain Fowler and flashed him the widest, brightest smile ever.

Captain Fowler glared judgmentally at the clothing Connor was wearing, which consisted of the same tight jean shorts and a crop top that was blue. His abs and stomach were clearly visible, and Fowler shivered as he looked away from the sight.

He sighed, “Yeah, I bet you had a good time here, Connor…”

Hank pet Fowler a few times on the shoulder, “We all did, Jeffrey…”

Fowler gestured at Nines and Gavin with a nod of his head in an upwards jerking motion, “Glad to see you two so cozy next to each other without wanting to tear each other from limb-to-limb!”

Gavin blushed as he scratched the back of his head and neck, while Nines beamed at Captain Fowler, “We learned a lot from each other, actually…”

Fowler raised an inquisitive eyebrow at him, “Oh really, Nines? Do tell…”
Gavin slammed a hand over Nines’s mouth to silence him before he could say something potentially embarrassing. Nines glared at him and Gavin flushed a deeper pink. This earned them both a tired sigh from Captain Fowler, who instead turned around to speak with Hank and Connor instead.

Close call…

As they spoke, Gavin felt someone tapping on his shoulder, followed by the sound of someone clearing their throat. He turned and faced Cameron, Will, Steve, Megan, and Silvia. They had confused looks on their faces, though Gavin didn’t blame them. He hadn’t been honest with them from the very start…

“So your r-r-real name’s n-n-not ‘Jack’?” Will asked politely, though he was unable to keep a disappointed glare out of his eyes for long.

Cameron stood beside his lover as he shook his head and Nines and Gavin.

Gavin looked down remorsefully, “No,” he felt Nines gently placing a hand on his back, “I’m Detective Gavin Reed.” He felt it was appropriate to disclose the truth, finally, even if there was a chance he’d never see these people again.

He pointed at Nines, “This is my partner, ‘Nines’.”

Silvia raised a light brown thin eyebrow, “Like partner partner? Or…work partner?”

Steve gasped, “Wait, you’re a cop??”

Nines glared at him, “Haven’t you been listening??”

The android placed a hand on his hip as he frowned at Nines while holding his iPhone in another hand, “I was checking when the next season of *RuPaul’s Drag Race* will premier! Sorry!”

“Can’t believe that show is still running…” his partner received a glare from him, but before they could start bickering like Chrissie and Michelle, Gavin interrupted them.

“Nines and I work for the Detroit Police Department,” he looked especially guiltily at Cameron and Will, “I’m so sorry we didn’t tell you guys the truth from the beginning…”

“We couldn’t,” Nines added on quickly, “we were investigating murders at Heaven’s Salvage.”

Will finally smiled a warm smile that presented understanding and forgiveness within, “You g-g-guys d-did well.”

Cameron looked down, moving dirt between his shoes as he grumbled. Will gave him a stern look and shook his arms gently before he finally faced Gavin and Nines.

“Will’s right,” he offered them a genuine smile very slowly as it crept from one side of his face to the other, “you guys did what you had to do in order to catch the criminal.”

“You saved our lives!” Megan curled against Silvia, and the red-headed woman kissed her lover’s LED light as it flickered to blue.

Gavin smiled at the display of affection and cuteness, “It’s all good.”

“That’s what we’re here for.” Nines nodded at them all with a small smile, and Steve finally looked up at Stephie inside the back of the police car.
“So why did she do it?”

Gavin looked at her, feeling unnerved and perturbed as he stared at Stephie in the backseat of the police car. “She said she was trying to keep people who left her with her forever.”

Nines seemed to understand her motive as well, even though he’d heard the last portions of her confession a little later. He turned and addressed the small group, “She found something special in the dependency of the guests within the program as she nurtured and helped them…” he looked at each of the guests with a small smile, “but what was meant to be nurturing and caring was unfortunately mixed in with possession and control.”

Stephie’s LED light turned red when she looked out the window as Jose pushed his way past the group in the center of the parking lot and made his way towards the police car.

An officer tried holding him back, but he pushed past the man as he pointed a finger at the window between himself and Stephie.

“Just so you know,” he began as she looked at him with guilt and remorse shining in her large eyes that were still tear-stained, “you’re not my ‘BFF’ anymore!”

As Stephie started crying and tapping on the window to get his attention, he turned and huffed as he strutted over to the entrance of the mansion again.

He turned and walked backwards while speaking to everyone staring at him, “I’m so done with this shit!!”

Gavin rolled his eyes as he whispered to himself, “That makes two of us, bud.”

He felt Nines gently grab his arm in a silent plea for him to turn and face him. Gavin didn’t disappoint or refuse his wish as he looked at Nines with tired eyes. It seemed as if the android was also equally exhausted, it seemed, but he still managed to offer a handsome smile at Gavin.

“Are you alright?”

Gavin knew he was referring to his cut hand, and he looked down at the crude bandage Nines had fashioned for him out of his own shirt.

Gavin waved at him with his injured hand, “It’s alright, I won’t need stitches, I think.”

Nines gently took his hand in his own and held it up to his lips. He kissed the back of it tenderly as his eyes searched Gavin’s deeply. “The wound is a bit deep, darling…”

When Nines had used the word ‘darling’, Gavin felt his heart flutter and fly off into the air before it came crashing back down to the earth. It was such a beautiful word on its own, and when Nines said it, it was even more radiant…he would never grow tired of hearing the word uttered as long as Nines was the one saying it.

Cameron cleared his throat as he gazed over at Will, throwing him a longing, loving glance as his eyes shined brightly, “Hey, if we’re all going to be honest with each other now,” he took a step back as he reached inside his jean pockets, “I’d like to be able to take this opportunity to ask you something, Will…”

The other guests moved out of their way as Cameron grabbed one of Will’s hands in his own and as everyone watched, Cameron got down on one knee while fishing out a small red ring-box from his pocket.
Cameron smiled shyly as he looked up at Will, and then briefly down at the little box in his hands, “I was going to wait for a better time to do this, but I feel now’s the right time.”

Megan and Silvia gasped as they held onto each other tightly, and soon, Michelle and Chrissie ran over to them as they all hung around the middle of the parking lot, eager to get in on what was going on.

The guests all gasped, and Nines gently pulled Gavin to his chest as he wrapped his long arms around him and pressed his nose in his hair.

Cameron smiled warmly at Will as he opened the small box. Everyone squealed when they saw a large golden ring glowing in the evening lights surrounding the resort.

Will gasped as he held a hand over his mouth while the other was tightly clasped in Cameron’s, their fingers interwoven lovingly as they stroked each other.

“William, please do me the honor of spending the rest of your life with me,” Cameron began as he gazed into his lover’s eyes, “for I can’t possibly imagine even spending one more day without you in my life…”

Will began sniffling as he looked between the ring and Cameron.

“Please marry me, William…”

Everyone held their breath as they waited for his answer, but luckily, it didn’t take long. Will nodded frantically and happily as his tears caked his cheeks. He took off his glasses and placed them in his golf-shirt pocket as he wrapped his hands around Cameron’s neck in a tight hug.

“Of c-c-course I w-w-will!!”

Cameron and Will kissed passionately as everyone else clapped and cheered.

Michelle let out a dreamy sigh as she rested her head on Chrissie’s shoulder. “They’re almost as cute as we were when we proposed to each other…”

“I can’t argue with that, even though you’re such a slut sometimes,” Chrissie mumbled, but it was in a happy tone as she kissed her fiancé’s forehead.

While the guests flocked around William and Cameron to celebrate their new engagement, Hank and Connor joined Nines and Gavin as they watched Fowler and the rest of the DPD drive Stephie away into the night.

Hank slapped a hand over Gavin’s shoulder, “That was some good work, Reed,” he winked at Gavin, “personally, I didn’t think you had it in ya!”

Connor shoved Hank playfully, “I was on your side all along, Gavin!”

Gavin waved them both off as he saw Nines smirk down at him with a little bit of lust toying back and forth in his eyes.

Gavin pointed towards the guests, “Connor, Hank, get the fuck outta here for a moment, I need to talk to Nines alone.”

They understood it perfectly well, and they smiled between each other as if they knew a little secret before they went off to join the little cheers and celebration in the middle of the parking lot as Gavin
and Nines hung back near the entrance of the resort.

“What do you think will happen to Heaven’s Salvage now?” Gavin asked Nines as he stared at the fields and meadows before them on the other side of the road before the parking lot.

He felt Nines exhale a long breath as he looked down at Gavin in his arms, “The same thing that’ll happen to us, I wager.”

Max’s voice interrupted in a loud cry: “WE’RE ALL INVITED TO THE WEDDING!! OH MY GOD!!”

Gavin and Nines shook their heads as they exchanged small smiles, chuckling at the cheering group ahead.

Gavin looked up at him, expectant of an answer.

Nines beamed down at him: “We’ll press on, and we’ll just love each other.”

It was an answer that was better than perfect for Gavin.

**EPILOGUE**

It was early autumn, yet the weather was rather warm, still. September slowly gave way to October, and the Detroit Police Department was filled with Halloween decorations already. Majority of the officers and detectives were already planning a Halloween party on a Friday night, and costume plans were in motion as the office buzzed with activity.

Hank was sipping on pumpkin juice as Connor brought over a bag of Halloween cookies for him, gasping as he saw Hank finishing the extra sugary drink. He yelled at him to watch over his blood sugar levels, but Hank rolled his eyes as he put on his music, the volume blaring as he kicked his feet up on his desk and moved his head in time to the music.
Captain Fowler shooed a few female officers out of his office as they tried suggesting costume designs for him and attempted to decorate his office with little Halloween cut-out witches, goblins, and ghosts. He was wearing a silly vampire cape that Tina Chen had forcefully attached to his uniform shirt, and he glared at everyone in the bullpen as he slammed his office door shut.

Everyone else was in a pleasant mood as they discussed plans, get-togethers, and just had a generally calm day at the precinct.

Gavin was sorting through his mail as he cleared his drawers and desk, organizing and arranging one pile that consisted of letters he’d already read, and new ones he’d just received. He looked down at one that was wrapped inside a soft, light pink envelope, and it had his name and Nines’s written on it in fancy handwriting.

He opened it up to see a handwritten letter that was an invitation for a wedding…

Dear friends,

We’re eager and overjoyed to extend this invitation to you, and we hope you will RSVP as soon as you can! You two were really good to us, and we want you to be our first guests to attend our upcoming wedding.

Remember all the love and good times during the cloudy, rainy days, and we look forward to seeing you at the wedding. (You get the front row seats!!)

Thank you for everything, ‘Jack’ and ‘Robert’!

Sincerely,

Cameron and Will

At the bottom of the invitation card was a picture of Will and Cameron sitting side-by-side on a sandy, bright beach, holding hands. They were wearing dark sunglasses as they were dressed in white suits-no doubt their wedding gear already selected out.

Gavin folded the invitation letter and placed it on the desk beside his laptop. He smiled down at it when he felt two hands gently massaging his shoulders from behind. He leaned back as he looked up and smiled into the warm blue eyes of his lover, Nines.

Nines looked down at the letter and smiled, “We’re going?”

Gavin grabbed Nines’ left hand in his own and kissed the back of it, “Of course we are, love.”

Nines ruffled his hair playfully as he kissed the top of Gavin’s head, “Good, now come on, Fowler wants to see us.”

Gavin turned and watched Nines walk up to the small steps leading to Fowler’s office. He enjoyed the way Nines’ hips swayed a little, and a playful thought crossed his mind as he rose from his seat and ran to join his partner.

He stopped suddenly, almost halfway there, and turned to look back at his desk.

Gavin jogged back to his desk, grabbing the invitation letter and placing it in his jean pockets before he shut down his laptop and closed the lid.
A great HUUUUUUUUUUUGEEEEEEEEE BIIIIIIIIIIIG thank you to everyone who read this fic, commented, gave it likes/kudos, shared it, or even glanced at it briefly 😊😊😊

It was a fantastic journey for me to share this with everyone, and I really hope it was as enjoyable for the readers as it was for me as the author! 😊

I had the wonderful pleasure of talking to many cool people because of this fic and this fandom, and I really feel pleased and honored to have exchanged ideas, or made anyone smile or laugh.

Thank you all once again,

Happy Sunday!!

Avixi

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