bears a will and a why and a wherefore

by haisydaisy

Summary

It's 1974 and they're partway through their first tour.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

Roger’s bottle clinks as he sets it down amidst the growing cluster of empties. He burps, grinning to himself as he leans his head against the wall, taking a moment’s breather from the raucous celebrations around him.

In less than thirty-six hours, he’d be on his first flight to America. *The American leg of their first tour*. Albeit, as the opener, but it was damn near impossible to not swell outrageously with pride at the thought of their roaring send-off in Birmingham just a week prior. Another grimy hall packed to the gills, drinks pressed into his hands and girls pressed up against his chest. John shyly ducking his head during the encore to hide his grin, Freddie gleefully shaking him and shouting incoherently in his ear as they’d stumbled off the stage, Brian’s stupidly long arms snaking their way around his waist in a dingy corridor, his lips sucking at the tender skin below Roger’s ear—

*Fuck.*

Yeah, that was another first, he supposes.

With the tour a week away, somewhere between finalizing the van and sorting through Freddie’s absurd collection of nail polish, he and Brian had kissed. *Heatedly*. And yeah, maybe when he’d reached down to cup his bottom, Roger had all-too-eagerly wrapped his legs around his waist and
buried his fingers into the *frankly ridiculous* mop of curls that were in part responsible for the semi-permanent hard-on he’d sported for months. And a few days later, in the carpark of the grotty Blackpool bedsit they’d snagged for dirt cheap, they’d fucked. It was clumsy and awkward at times (they were forced to pause for Roger to curse violently when he set an amp down on his foot in his frantic hurry to clear space in the back of the van), and the sheer incredulity of the situation had them bursting into intermittent fits of hysterical giggles. After stumbling out of the van smelling like sweat and sex and Freddie’s freesia-scented hand cream that Roger had nicked to use as lube, Brian pulled him close, hands coming up to carefully cup his cheeks.

“That was brilliant,” he said. He kissed Roger sweetly—first on his lips and then another on the bridge of his nose—before fixing him with a broad crinkle-eyed grin that had his knees buckling and his cock hardening once again in his pants. “I’ll see you tomorrow, Rog.”

It was precisely then that Roger realized exactly how screwed he was, and the enormity of the thought left him swearing darkly to himself and patting frantically at his pockets for cigarettes.

So yeah, first tour, first trip to America, first international flight for fuck’s sake, certainly not his first fuck, but his first time *getting* fucked, first time with a bloke, and his first time feeling so completely in over his head and out of control—fuelled by blinding hot desire and nothing else as he dug his fingers into lean thighs and took Brian in his mouth in Plymouth, fucked in the toilets somewhere near Cambridge, twice when Brian was inconsolable over a less-than-perfect solo in Manchester, and quite enthusiastically in the back room of a rowdy pub where he’d done his first line after Freddie had the crowd eating from his palm in Wales.

They haven’t talked about *them* at any point. For a drummer, he’s a little too familiar with the wrong side of timing (as Brian had wryly pointed out when Roger dragged him behind a skip when they were meant to be packing up in Glasgow), but Brian’s transition from crawling up his arse figuratively to literally is especially inopportune. The harrowing thought of a conversation to parse through his incomprehensible feelings for his best friend and bandmate against the backdrop of their *first* tour turns his blood cold. But he knows this is more than sex, he isn’t an idiot—too shrewd for self-denial—and quite frankly he’d spotted and relished in Brian’s looks and lingering hands (Freddie’s “you’re *such* a Leo, darling” as he’d sketched out their crest ringing in his ears), long before the intensity of his own attraction knocked him flat on his arse.

So he and Brian carry on in their game of chicken, both of them refusing to pay heed to the fact that there’s a good deal more tender kissing each time they steal away, and perhaps Roger’s no longer complaining about having to share the cramped gloomy rooms they’re put up in, and maybe he’s fallen asleep a few times on Brian’s chest. And if he’s got his head tilted back in the shower under water long gone tepid, slowly jerking himself off to vivid mental images of Brian under stage lights, brows furrowed in concentration as his fingers fly across that *fucking* guitar, *well…*

He’s saved from finishing the thought by a hollering Freddie, dragging him by the arm across the room until he’s pushed unceremoniously into an overstuffed booth beside John. Freddie gestures excitedly to a bottle placed carefully in the middle of the drink-stained table.

“Sorry to interrupt your maudlin wall—wall… *fuck* what’s the word!” he exclaims loudly. There’s another cluster of empties below the table.

“Swallowing?” someone offers unhelpfully and there’s a roar of laughter as Freddie clutches his chest dramatically.

“Wallowing. Your maudling—maudlin *wallowing*”

“Fucking get on with it, Freddie!” John calls unexpectedly, usual dryness cut by the fact that he’s
equally, if not more gone. John grins as everyone laughs again, and Roger can’t help but swell with affection and squeeze the back of his neck. Touring’s a good look on John. If he’d worried about how their shy bassist would cope in the constant throng of bodies and attention, John’s proven him wrong so far, bouncing cheekily to the beat on stage, even throwing in a few spontaneous twirls during their last few stops that leave the crowd howling.

“Now John—and no, not you, Deaky, you wank—but our dear manager John Reid has ever so kindly gifted us this—” begins Freddie. He stops again, hands on his hips. “Fuck, where’s Brian gone now, once we make it in America, I’ll have you all in ankle chains!”

“Right here, Fred,” Brian says from somewhere behind, and crosses over to them in two loping strides, beer in hand, ruffling Freddie’s hair before pulling up a lone barstool and swinging a leg over in a fluid easy motion. Flushed cheeks tell Roger that he’s been keeping up with the rest of them, and the mugginess of the bar has his curls in a fluffer cloud than usual. They haven’t fucked since they’ve come home, no dearth of urgent “to-dos” in the lead up to their departure, the last-minute rehearsals growing increasingly meticulous, and it’s really just the adrenaline (and in Roger’s case, cigarettes) keeping the weight of crippling exhaustion at bay.

(And maybe there’s something a little terrifying about fucking at home, that makes whatever it is between them real in a way they can no longer avoid. Becoming not only a thing, but a thing that can’t be chalked up to the crazed high of their first tour, but can however, sour the simple ease of the years before and destroy everything that they—and John and Freddie—have painstakingly worked towards. But he knows, embedded in his psyche is a reflexive aversion to stability so of course, his distress manifests somewhere so low in his stomach that it might just be in his balls.)

He’s never been more grateful for Freddie’s antics, as the bottle of some posh vodka he doesn’t recognize is uncapped with a flourish and poured. At least making a production of eagerly reaching for a glass is a decent cover for the fact that his trousers are yet again pulled embarrassingly tight over his crotch.

“Alright, dears,” Freddie’s saying excitedly, once the glasses have been doled out. Freddie’s certainly drunk, but Roger knows him well enough to tell that it’s a jittery nervousness underlying his excitable bounce, that only he and Brian—and now John—can pick up on. He feels a sudden surge of fondness (with a tinge of protectiveness mixed in) for their frontman, who’s now raising his glass for a toast.

"Here’s to Queen—and to you lot, I suppose—and to everything so far and… to America!"

“To America!” he shouts with the group in return. Then they’re all clinking glasses and hands are ruffling his hair and slapping his back. He takes a hearty swig of his drink, but hardly acknowledges its smoothness and distinct lack of burn, thoroughly distracted by the fact that he and Brian have locked eyes as he swallows. He’s forced to take two hurried gulps to cover his splutter when Brian cocks his head slightly and shoots him a subtle smile, just verging on sly.

*Ah, fuck.*

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He’s drunk.

He’s at the bar now, sitting with Neil, an old friend and witness to his early attempts at rock n’ roll back in his school days. It’s a welcome distraction from the forced trajectory of his thoughts. They reminisce over his rows with hall-owners enraged by the six-inch nails he’d taken to casually hammering into the floors of the tiny venues whose stays were no longer a match for the way he’d started pounding his bass. The nostalgia’s nice—grounding in a welcome way—given that the vodka he’d put down like juice now has his head swimming. He’s content as he half-listens to Neil recounting old tales to a group of people whose names or jobs he can’t for the life of him remember.

His eyes fall languidly on the barmaid. She’s short, young, and clearly new, focusing intently on the labels before passing bottles over to a gathering crowd. He wonders absently how they’d managed to flaunt John Reid’s vodka—evidently not from this bar—so openly in the first place. The moment she looks over at him, the answer’s clear, as her cheeks colour spectacularly before she hurriedly turns away. He snorts to himself. She’s sweet, her nervousness endearing, and he entertains himself with thoughts of dragging her into his lap, cupping the curve of her breast with one hand, tangling the other into her hair as she nuzzles her long nose against his neck and rolls his nipple between those impossible fingers…

The scrape of his chair is loud as he stands suddenly, gripping the bar to steady himself when the room goes for a spin.

“Smoke,” he mutters to the questioning glances. He shakes his head and tries not to stumble as he makes a beeline for the doors.

He trudges to the side of the bar, ducking from a group of rowdy men gathered near the front. The square carton already a comforting weight in his palm, he’s automatically flipping the lid with his thumb and shaking out two cigarettes, impatiently tucking one behind his ear. But he stops dead in his tracks because life is a bitch, but more pressingly, leaning against the wall is the very man who’s hijacked every thought in his mind tonight. In the flesh.

“What are you doing out here?”

He knows he’s slurring slightly, but the way Brian turns his head to look at him while maintaining his heavy lean against the wall leads him to believe he’s no better off.

“Air,” he says simply, and he makes a half-hearted gesture at nothing in particular. Brian tipsy is something he’s certainly seen, but it’s still uncommon enough to send a spark of thrill through his chest.

Though it feels like anything Brian does at this point seems to have that effect.

“You can smoke, you know,” Brian says after a moment’s silence. This earns him an incredulous laugh, as Roger’s seen him wrinkle his nose in disdain when someone (fine, typically Roger) invariably blows smoke too close to his face, received many a reproachful look when he stress-smokes until his fingers are stained, and more recently, picked up on the slightest pause that suggests that Brian’s steeling himself before kissing him when he knows the acrid taste of his Bensons are still fresh on his lips.

“Nah.” Roger says, and it’s deeply unfair that the very cause for his whirring brain and rollercoaster anxiety is also its cure, because he finds himself instinctively shoving the carton back into his pockets. “—s’fine.”

(If in small part because he’d decided immediately that he’ll be kissing Brian tonight the moment
he’d spotted him… well he’s never claimed to be a saint.)

“Alright?” he asks.

“Yeah,” Brian sighs heavily, pulling a face and closing his eyes. “Bit drunk.” He opens one eye to give Roger a sideways look. “Come here,” he adds gently.

Roger stumbles forward without thinking until he’s standing between Brian’s legs and lets his hands fall lightly onto his chest. Brian slides a few inches down the wall until they’re eye-level with one another, and places his hands atop Roger’s, rubbing the undersides of his fingers with his calloused thumbs. He’s looking at him with the exact tenderness that’s thrown Roger’s world into complete disarray. Roger wants to speak, wants to make some wildly inappropriate quip—perhaps randily wag his eyebrows the way he’d done after they’d built up those first few fucks between them—but unformed words dry up in his mouth when Brian suddenly yanks him into a tight hug, one hand tightly gripping his waist, the other squeezing the back of his neck. He lets him go after a moment, but he’s still looking at Roger with that fucking expression that’s got him somehow too in and too out of his head, feeling like he’ll either float away or turn to stone.

Now he’s overwhelmed. It’s the heavy exhaustion, the crazed excitement of the past few weeks and everything still to come, the drink, and Brian. They’re each enough on their own (maybe not the drink), but combined, he’s left dazed on a night out, vaguely aware of a pricking in his eyes and a tension in his chest akin to a lump in his throat….

He realizes—to his horror—that he’s about to cry, just as his forehead starts to scrunch of its own accord, panic surging when Brian’s brow furrows slightly as he picks up on his sudden distress. He’s loosing it but it’s still him that’s falling apart, and in this life, he’s yet to come across a feeling that he hasn’t been able to fuck away. So he does what he knows best, and seizes fistfuls of Brian’s hair and crashes their lips together.

He starts at the force of their jaws slamming, but the sharp ache only lasts the moment it takes for Brian to realize what’s happening before he’s kissing him back. It’s furious and clumsy, and Roger’s distinctly grateful that sex loosens Brian’s moralist ideals enough to let—whatever the hell that just was—pass without question. Subconsciously, there’s a part of him waiting for Brian to turn his methodological lens on him, as he’s done with just about everything he’s come across in life so far. Objects, principles, analyses—in his mind, they’ve made the cosmos legible, so how could they be anything less than enough when it comes to making sense of his immediate world?

Brian pulls back and his lips are swollen, the want so obvious in his eyes that Roger knows there’s no danger of any questions or difficult conversations now. He bends forward suddenly, cupping Roger’s bottom with so much gusto that his feet nearly lift off the ground. Maybe it’s the taste of rockstar life he speculates, that’s finally managed to suppress Brian’s moral rigidity.

But when Roger palms the bulge in Brian’s crotch over his jeans, he knows it’s the cheeky curve of his arse that’s entirely responsible.

He struggles to unlock his front door, because Brian’s parting his hair and blowing raspberries into
the back of his neck as though they’re five years old. It’s absurd, and they’re giggling as the noises grow louder and goofier. They spend too much time out on the front step, jumping, squirming, making a racket until Roger finally bats Brian away and manages to swing the rickety door open.

They stumble across the threshold, Brian expertly ducking his head under the low doorframe like he’s done at least a thousand times before. The moment the door’s shut behind them, Roger pulls Brian towards him, letting his hands wander towards Brian’s bottom this time and they kiss some more in the cramped corridor until they get too hot. Roger dumps his jacket in a crumpled heap on the floor, rolling his eyes when Brian hangs his neatly on the coat stand. It’s adorned with so many scarves now that it looks like some sort of deranged willow tree, and he’d be lying if he said it hadn’t made him jump a few times when he’d gone for a piss in the middle of the night. But it effectively does the job of reminding him—

“Shit. Did Freddie say he was at Mary’s tonight?”

“No! I mean— did he say?” The I wasn’t paying attention is the silent addition to his question. “Shit. Okay. Okay. You’ll just go to the front room in the morning and we’ll just tell him that we fell asleep on the floor in my room because we were listening to—“

He stops when he spots the slow grin unfurling on Brian’s face. “She turned up ages before we left, Rog. They left together. You said bye to them, don’t you remember?”

“They did?” he says. “Right. Right.” He sighs with relief when he recalls Freddie’s exuberant goodbye, kissing him on the forehead, both cheeks, and on the lips while Mary watched in fond exasperation.

“Distracted, were you?” Brian coyly sidles up to him, grazing his waist with his fingers. “You were awfully quiet today.”

“Got a lot on my mind, I suppose.” His fingers find the ends of Brian’s curls. “Touring’s big business,” he adds nonchalantly.

“What happens when I show you even bigger business then?”

It doesn’t really make sense, and even before Roger can snort, Brian’s stooping forward and scooping him up easily by his thighs, hooking Roger’s legs around his narrow waist. He’s pulling so hard at the hair at the nape of Roger’s neck that he’s breathless and all he can do is cling as Brian hoists him higher and moves towards the bedroom. Vaguely, he realizes that Brian’s navigating his pitch dark flat with an ease that threatens to set off his emotions from earlier — so he tilts his head back and closes his eyes and focuses on the hickey that Brian’s starting to suck into his neck.

Roger sucks in a short breath as he lands flat on his back on the middle of his bed. There’s a pause, and he manages to prop himself up on his elbows just in time to see Brian toss his shirt to the side before he’s got a lapful of curly-haired guitarist straddling his thighs. The round cheek of Brian’s arse fits perfectly in the palm of his hand and he squeezes, reaching up with the other hand to press
Brian’s nipple. The quiet moan that escapes his lips goes straight to Roger’s cock, which hardens beautifully at the sight of Brian’s bulge in his jeans.

“Looking at something?” Brian smirks.

“Can’t say.” He hooks his thumbs into Brian’s waistband. “Might have to get these out of the way first.”

Once Brian’s jeans are tossed somewhere out of sight (which—thanks to his legs that never end—takes forever) and he’s made quick work of his own, they’re kissing again. He’s leaning back for Brian to grind against his crotch, relishing in the shudder that courses through his body when he rakes his nails over Brian’s back. Brian’s sucking hard at his neck again and when he takes Roger’s nipple this time between his thumb and forefinger, the effect is instant. Hot desire floods low in his groin. He buries his hands in Brian’s hair, dragging his face upwards for their lips to meet. Even an inch of space between them feels like a mile, and he lopes a leg around Brian’s waist and pulls him impossibly close.

Each time they’ve fucked, it’s started out like this, both of them wrestling for dominance, clashing teeth and nails leaving crescents in each other’s backs, biceps, thighs, until one of them eventually gives in. It’s a fight Roger’s more than happy to lose tonight, and he’s pushed onto his back while Brian pins his wrists above his head with one hand and wraps his long fingers around Roger’s throat, squeezing enough to make his breath constrict. Brian’s mouth finds his again, and he bites down hard on Roger’s lip. He’s still choking Roger, thumb pushing lightly on the pressure point below his Adam’s apple—and it’s hot—but it’s the contrast against Brian’s soft curls that are trailing against his collarbone that’s so overwhelming that he doesn’t even realize he’s whimpering until Brian pulls back.

“Rog,” he says softly. “You alright?”

He’s so overwhelmed by desire that he can’t seem to form words, so he nods weakly and tries to pull Brian back towards him.

Brian chuckles—low and breathy—and surveys him. His hands cup Roger’s face as though he’s made of glass, and rubs his thumbs below his eyes. He’s got that look on his face again, and in Roger’s bed where the dim lamplight makes a soft halo around Brian’s curls, he looks ethereal.

“You look like an angel,” he mumbles, the words slipping out of his mouth before he can stop them. He’s too out of his head to cringe at himself. Brian laughs and drops a kiss to the tip of his nose. The tenderness of the exchange is making him feel things and it doesn’t help that Brian’s still holding his face and looking at him so intently that he can almost hear the cogs turning in his head.

Brian takes a deep breath, like he’s gearing up to speak, and Roger acts instinctively, cutting him off.

“Just fuck me already.”

Though his voice is still husky with desire, something akin to a flash of hurt crosses Brian’s face. It’s fleeting, and then Brian’s curling his fingers, pulling at his hair as they’re kissing again. He’s back at Roger’s neck, sucking and biting, palming Roger’s breast tightly before bringing his lips down to pull at his nipple. Brian’s deft, urgent motions send electrical currents coursing through his body, and it’s perfect, exactly what he needs to get out of his head. He tries to reciprocate but he’s drained and all he can do is clutch weakly at Brian’s shoulders and clamp down on his lip to stifle the loud moans threatening to pour from his mouth.
He shudders when Brian palms his balls, bouncing them gently in his hand, and manages to lift his head just in time to see Brian spit into his hand before wrapping his fingers around the length of Roger’s cock.

“Fuck,” he breathes heavily. Brian’s grip is tight—a hair’s breadth from uncomfortable—and each jerk sends a hot jolt of pleasure through his body, “Oh fuck…”

Brian’s looking at him with blazing eyes as he continues to pump his dick. The eye-contact is intense, but Roger’s transfixed, he can’t bring himself to tear his eyes away. And when the wet heat of Brian’s mouth engulfs Roger’s cock, he goes rigid, gripping so tightly at his sheets that they’re in danger of tearing. Brian’s alternating between flicking the tip with his tongue and sucking at his shaft until his body’s spasming and he can’t keep still. He starts to rock his hips forward, pushing himself further into Brian’s mouth who tightens his grip on Roger’s hips in response. They hit a rhythm as he tangles his hands into Brian’s hair, his eyes closing with pleasure at the sounds Brian’s making as Roger fucks his face.

Waves of warm heat rumble through his body with each thrust. It’s so intense that he doesn’t even notice that his thighs hurt and his abs are burning from the position he’s holding to keep staring at his cock bobbing in and out of Brian’s mouth. They go at it a while longer until Brian pulls back and pushes his hair out of his face. Then he’s surging forward and pressing a hard kiss to Roger’s lips before he leans back on his heels and wipes his mouth on the back of his hands.

It might be the hottest thing Roger’s ever seen.

“You’re so fucking dirty,” he says, and though his limbs feel like they’re vibrating, he’s glad he’s finally able to string words together. “Who would have thought, eh? Brian fucking May?”

By way of reply, Brian’s looming over him again, hair falling in curtains around his face. He rests his forearms on either side of Roger’s head, dipping forward until there are just a few millimetres between them. Roger closes his eyes in anticipation of a kiss, but instead Brian’s long fingers are pushing themselves between his lips.

“So dirty.” And then Brian’s curling his fingers upwards so they’re tickling the roof of his mouth. “Just like that,” he breathes as Roger sucks hard on his fingers. “Turn around,” Brian says drawing his hand back, and he’s already on his front before his brain catches up—only to go spectacularly blank as Brian gently runs a hand through his hair, kisses his shoulder chastely, and delivers a stinging slap to his arse.

He gasps heavily and bites down on his pillow in an effort to block the keening he can’t seem to control, as Brian tenderly rubs the redness from his cheek. He pushes Roger’s thighs to kneel between his legs, digging his fingers into the flesh of Roger’s arse. And it’s all Roger can do not scream when Brian shifts his pelvis off the bed and pushes a long finger—wet with his own saliva—between his cheeks.

Roger’s always found Brian’s large but delicate hands particularly mesmerizing, but watching his fingers flurry across the frets of his guitar is nothing compared to the way they move inside him. Brian’s got his thumb pressed against the top of his crack and he’s drawing slow circles around Roger’s prostate with his middle finger that leave him frenzied and desperately bucking his hips. He reaches for his own cock, but all he’s able to do is loosely hold the head in his palm as Brian strokes his back before slipping another finger in.

He puts all his effort into keeping still, trying urgently to resist the urge to fuck himself on Brian’s hand, only because he knows that he won’t last long and he knows what’s still to come. So instead, he focuses on relaxing the muscles in his arse and thighs, relishing in the feeling of Brian stretching
His cock thrums in anticipation when Brian kisses the dimples in his lower back before he slides his fingers out with an ease that leaves Roger groping blindly at his nightstand until his hand closes around the tub of vaseline and tosses it to Brian, twisting to watch him lube up his cock.

Brian’s beautiful. He can’t pinpoint the transition exactly, but what he once considered gangly and awkward is now lithe and graceful. Roger’s no stranger to his own good looks, the boyish sort that invite attention wherever he goes and permit him generally to get what he wants. But Brian’s beauty is striking and magnetic, his gangly frame and thin face balanced by features so delicate that he looks—in this moment especially—almost otherworldly. And as Brian moves towards him with his fingers circling his shaft, Roger turns to his front and resumes his previous position, because looking at Brian right now feels too much like looking directly into the sun.

He’s no stranger to good sex—he’s a wizard with his fingers, his mouth, his dick—but he’s never felt as dazed nor has anyone managed to take him apart quite like this. He can’t put together a coherent thought in his mind, and trying feels like catching sand through his fingers. He twitches and jolts spasmodically, breath coming out in heavy shudders when Brian curls his fingers in the ends of his hair and pulls. Dimly, he’s aware that they’re speaking—no, babbling unintelligibly, punctuated with gasps and pants—and that’s he’s desperately clinging to the pillow with one hand and Brian’s forearm with the other. Feeling so much in his body and so little in his mind, pleasure slamming into him so hard that he’s unravelling, coming apart thrust by thrust. And when Brian releases his cock to firmly cup his balls, every nerve ending in his body explodes.

And then Brian stops. His hand is on Roger’s chest, holding him flush to his own, the only thing from keeping his body crashing forward. The pressure in his cock is unbearable, and he needs Brian to keep going or else—or else—“Brian,” he manages somewhere between a sob and a whimper, as he’s reaching back to scratch weakly at Brian’s thighs. “Wha—”

“Rog, I think I love you.”

And then even before he can process, Brian’s pushing into him again at full force, and it takes all of
four hard thrusts before his vision goes grey and he’s exploding, coming so hard that he’s sure his heart will stop. There’s no thought of Brian in his head—no thought of himself—he can’t tell where he ends and the world begins. Brian’s stroking him a little too urgently for his aftershocks and he realizes that Brian is still pounding into him, taking long dragging breaths until he freezes suddenly, going rigid. Then he’s breathing raggedly and sagging against him until Roger collapses, flopping bonelessly into the pillows, taking Brian with him.

There’s nothing but the sound of ragged panting. Brian’s lying on top of him and the warm blanket of his weight is a grounding force that keeps his mind blissfully blank, dimly aware of the wetness between his cheeks. He’s too spent to think let alone speak, so he lies there under Brian until the shudders slowly start to leave his body.

He’s not sure if it’s ten minutes that pass or ten hours, but he slowly comes back to himself, limbs trembling as he shifts out from under Brian who lists to the side like a rag doll. He tests his weight on wobbly legs and walks shakily to the door, pausing to turn back towards the bed.

“Be right back,” he mutters. There’s no response.

It’s only when he’s in the bathroom clutching a bunched up towel does everything catch up to him, slamming into him with a force that leaves him breathless all over again. The pressure of having to steal away—one eye on the time, the other on the door, shushing each other urgently—with the added factor of navigating sex with two cocks instead of one kept them firmly grounded in their heads all the previous times they’d fucked. A latent intensity certainly underlying each of their furtive encounters, but never did Roger expect it would build into this so soon.

Should he pretend he didn’t hear the words that slipped between Brian’s lips? Bury it deep into the moans and gasps and general sex-babble and carry on like nothing happened? No. He knows exactly what he heard. The night’s been a blur—especially since Brian had slammed his bedroom door shut with a coy grin on his face—but this stands out so clearly in his mind that the thought of pretending it didn’t happen feels almost laughable.

He buries his face in the towel and in an effort to quell his rising anxiety, takes a breath so deep that the fibres tickle the inside of his nose. He tries to parse out what all this means and work out his next steps, but his frayed mind forcefully draws blank until he’s mechanically padding back down the corridor to his bedroom. Never a planner, he takes a deep breath at the door before boldly pushing it forward.

He makes his way carefully to the bed, where Brian’s lying on his back with an arm thrown over his head.

“Brian,” he says gently, shaking the towel out. “Brian, let’s get you cleaned up.” When Brian doesn’t move, Roger sweeps the towel over his stomach and between his legs. He perches on the edge of the bed and—without the slightest idea of what he’s going to say—pokes lightly at Brian’s arm.

“Brian,” he repeats when there’s still no response. “Can you look at me?” There’s silence but for Brian’s deep, shuddering breaths until he’s mechanically padding back down the corridor to his bedroom. Never a planner, he takes a deep breath at the door before boldly pushing it forward.

He makes his way carefully to the bed, where Brian’s lying on his back with an arm thrown over his head.

“I’m sorry,” he stammers. “I don’t know what— it just slipped out Rog, I swear, I’m so sorry, I’m so sorry…” He trails off, looking anguished.

And of course it’s only fitting that he’s still bound to the emotional roller-coaster that is his day, because suddenly, he’s overcome with the inexplicable urge to laugh. It’s one part palpable relief, that this—this thing has Brian just as out of sorts as he is. That he’s not going crazy, that he’s not the
only one who’s feeling so overwrought, whose emotions are on overdrive, building up and pushing out of him before he can even begin to identify what they are. Once this realization settles, he’s suddenly aware of how absurd this all is, the perfect storm of every tired trope, every cliche in the book put on full blast thanks to how earnestly Brian wears his heart on his sleeve. And now, he’s pressing his lips together as tightly as he can, but he can’t hold back the broad grin spreading across his face.

“Rog…?” Brian looks confused, mixed with a tinge of hurt that clenches Roger’s heart.

“Bri— no, I’m sorry, I’m not laughing— well I am laughing, but I’m not laughing at you.” Brian’s bewildered expression only makes it worse and a hysterical giggle escapes him before he manages to clap his hands over his mouth. He forces himself to take a few deep breaths to compose himself.

“Sorry,” he says, after a moment. “Sorry— no, don’t look like that Bri, I’m not— fuck it, c’mere.” And then before he knows it, he’s leaning forward and cupping Brian’s cheek and kissing him softly. “We’re a right mess,” he says, pulling back. “Both of us. That’s why I was laughing. Not at you. Well, maybe at you a bit. But at me too.” Brian surveys him for a moment, his expression unreadable until he groans and throws his arm over his head again.

“Brian.” Roger laughs, trying to pull his arm away. “It’s fine. Don’t be embarrassed. Listen— will you listen?” he adds. Brian uncovers his face with a suffering sigh, cheeks still faintly tinged with pink.

Roger thinks it’s the prettiest thing he’s ever seen.

“Right,” he says once he realizes that Brian is waiting for him to speak. “Right. So I think it’s fair to say that neither of us really know what we’re doing.” Brian nods and he continues. “And it’s a lot. It’s really good, the best I’ve—” he cuts off, catching up with his words and not sure how to continue.

“But it’s a lot, what with… everything,” Brian offers finally. He’s looking a little less mortified now and he trails his hand absently across the folds in the sheets. Roger can’t help but reach over to link their fingers together.

“It is. But I don’t want to stop.”

“Neither do I.”

“How about this? Let’s just— take it as it comes. Focus on the tour, yeah? And then once all that’s over, we can… we can have a proper chat,” he finishes somewhat lamely.

Brian seems to be mulling this over. “Yeah, alright,” he says. “After the tour.” There’s a weight to his voice that suggests that he’s still a touch embarrassed. But then he opens his arms to Roger who barrels into them without a moment’s hesitation, dropping his head with a soft thud onto Brian’s chest. They manage to drag the sheets out from below them and soon Roger’s engulfed in a warm cocoon thanks to the thick woollen afghan Freddie managed to nick from God knows where, and Brian’s arms wrapped securely around him. He’s exhausted—spent in every sense of the term—and he’s blinking heavily until he can’t fight the fatigue forcing his eyes shut.

“Freddie’s gonna have our hands bleeding tomorrow,” Brian mumbles sleepily from somewhere above him.

“Mmmm… fuck ‘im,”

“—d’rather fuck you.”
“That can be arranged.” Brian’s laugh rumbles through his chest beneath Roger’s ear and he feels a kiss pressed against his hair.

“Night, Rog.”

“G’night Bri.” He manages somehow to nuzzle even closer to Brian’s neck. “Timing’s never been your strong suit, has it?”

“Shut up.”

He laughs—so tired that he’s already forgotten what he’d just said—and surrenders happily to what he dimly recognizes will likely be his last good sleep for a while. But he’s always been a glutton for punishment—and the most inconvenient punishment at that—and he knows (and perhaps relishes) in the fact that a lack of sleep is by far the least of his coming worries. But wrapped in Brian’s arms, well-fucked and blissed out, he can’t bring himself to care.

_Ah, fuck._

End Notes

After hanging out in the shadows of this fandom, I've finally decided to take the plunge and contribute for once. And by plunge, I mean a week little toe/ass-first dip into the shallow end of the kiddy pool after months and months of reading so much fabulous work. Also, most of Roger’s emotional turmoil here is a straight lift from my personal history and ongoing trajectory of having my feelings hurt by water signs. Thank you for reading and feel free to drag me in the comments! xo

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